

ONE CONTROL BJF-S66

By Dave Hunter



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One Control's collaboration with Swedish electronics designer (and former Mad Professor staffer) Björn Juhl has already yielded cool results in the form of resurrected Juhl/BJF designs like the Honey Bee overdrive. But now you can add a crafty and clever Juhl-designed micro amp to the list of fruits from this partnership: the BJF-S66.

The world of tiny-yet-powerful solid-state amplifiers has grown exponentially in recent years, and the BJF-S66 is a worthy, welcome addition to the party. It measures 10.25"x 3.25"x 3.75" and weighs just 3.5 pounds. Yet it can deliver 100 watts of power into a 4-ohm speaker load, 66 watts into an 8-ohm load, and 30 watts into a 16-ohm load. (This grading of output power according to speaker impedance is common to most solid-state output stages). But potency isn't the only highlight here, as we'll see.

Thirteen Controls

Juhl is the man behind BJF effects pedals, which are now marketed by One Control. His stated intention for the BJF-S66 is to capture the sonic essence of vintage blackface Fender amps. And wonders of size, weight, and power aside, the BJF-S66 is, functionally speaking, a fairly traditional amp head. Lead and rhythm channels share a 3-band EQ stage with bass, treble, and mid, plus a bright switch. Both channels use the single gain control, but each channel has its own master volume. The lead channel also has a lead boost control for an extra dose of gain. Each channel has its own pair of reverb controls, governing level and dwell, but they share a tremolo stage that is controlled by depth and speed.

Around back, there are 1/4" jacks for individual tremolo, channel, and effects loop footswitches, or you can connect One Control's own 3-button FS-P3 footswitch (\$119, sold separately or included with \$699 amp/footswitch bundle) to do it all. The effects loop send and return, a preamp out, and

Compatible with 16-,
8-, and 4-ohm speaker

3.5 pounds



a speaker out round out the back-panel features. A center-positive jack is used for the dedicated 24-volt DC external power supply (included).

Inside the sturdy brushed-aluminum casing with a fold-up metal handle, the preamp is a discrete, all-analog, solid-state circuit, coupled to an efficient class-D power amp not unlike what you see in many diminutive guitar amps and powered FRFR PA and monitor units these days.

Head Case

I tested the BJF-S66 with a 4-ohm 2x12 cab with Celestion Neo Creambacks and a 16-ohm 1x10 cab with an Eminence Legend, using a Collings City Limits with Throbak humbuckers, a Novo Serus J with Fralin P-90s, a Fender Telecaster, and a range of pedals both in front of the amp and in the loop.

In general, the BJF-S66 delivers robust, punchy, blackface-like lead and rhythm tones through either extension cab. Predictably, you get more headroom from the 100-watt and a 2x12 (even at relatively similar volumes in the room) and a little more softness and bounce from operating at 30 watts into the 16-ohm 1x10. Otherwise, though, tone characteristics stay relatively consistent. At middle settings on the tone knobs, rhythm tones are round,