



EarthQuaker Devices

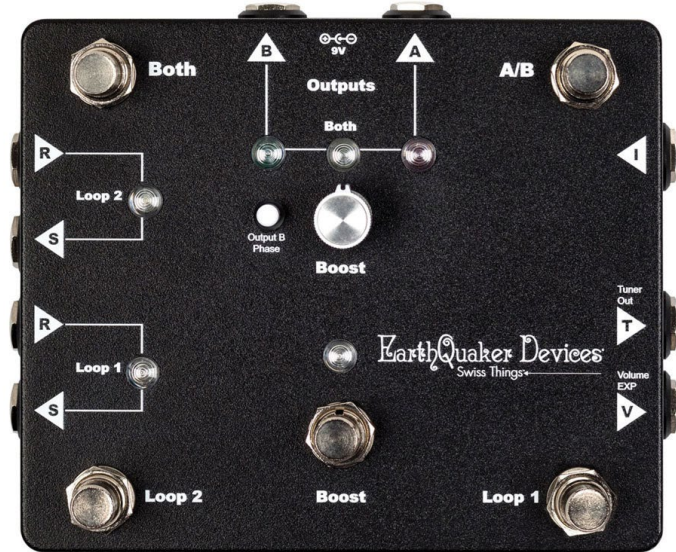
SWISS THINGS PEDALBOARD RECONCILER

TESTED BY MICHAEL ROSS

IF YOU'RE LIKE many guitarists today, you've put together a pedalboard comprising a range of effects, possibly including multiple instances of some. In doing so, you've certainly dealt with your share of issues, such as the need to turn multiple effects on and off quickly or at once, which can require some fancy and even treacherous footwork. For that matter, using a plethora of stompboxes and cables can suck the tone out of your beloved guitar/amp combination, whether the pedals are true bypass or not.

Recognizing these issues, among others, the folks at EarthQuaker Devices have come up with Swiss Things pedalboard reconciler, a pedal that, like the Swiss Army knife that inspired its name, contains an aggregation of tools designed to make life easier for pedal-loving guitarists. Swiss Things offers two effects loops with true-bypass switching, an AB-Y box with an isolated transformer and phase invert switch on output B, 20dB of adjustable clean boost, a tuner output, an expression pedal input for volume control and a quiet, high-headroom output buffer, all in one compact signal-routing box.

How do these tools help? By employing the effects loops, pedals that degrade your tone in bypass mode can be removed from the signal path when not in use. Having two switchable loops can also minimize or eliminate pedal dancing by letting you turn multiple pedals on and off with one tap of a foot switch. EarthQuaker Devices has cleverly made one of the loops unbuffered in deference to pedals, like some vintage-style fuzz effects, that don't react well to a buffered signal at their input. And thanks to the company's Flexi-Switching system, you can either tap a switch quickly to latch the effects, or momentarily engage effects by holding down the footswitch for as long as you'd like to hear the effect, then releasing it. I set up Swiss Things with a Red Panda Particle in Loop 1. This allowed me to engage some of that pedal's wilder effects



momentarily at the apex of a solo. Loop 2 had nothing in it and behaved as a mute for tuning. I used an expression pedal into the expression input for volume and found the taper smooth and wide ranging. From the outputs, the signal went to a Supro Comet amp and a 1966 Fender Bandmaster head into a 1x12 custom cabinet. I kept both amps on at once, using Swiss Things to create a wet/dry rig by placing an EarthQuaker Dispatch Master delay/reverb between Output A and the Comet, while leaving Output B to the Bandmaster dry. With my dirt pedals before the input of the Swiss Things and my amps set clean, I used the boost to raise my volume without adding drive.

While my arrangement was but one of many potential setups, it should give you a sense of what's possible with Swiss Things. As noted above, output B is transformer-isolated, which can help block interference caused by ground loops. This output also includes a phase switch for use with pedals and amplifiers that invert phase. Thanks to these features and EarthQuaker's high standards for materials and construction, my rig operated with absolutely no noise whatsoever. Pretty impressive!

SPECIFICATIONS

Swiss Things

CONTACT earthquakerdevices.com

PRICE \$249 street

CONTROLS Boost knob and footswitch, foot switches for Loop 1 and 2, outputs A or B, and outputs A and B. Output B phase switch
I/O 1/4" input, Loop 1 send and return, Loop 2 send and return, Outputs A and B, tuner out, volume/expression pedal input

DIMENSIONS 4.75" x 5.65" x 2.25"

KUDOS A brilliantly thought-out solution to multiple pedalboard problems

CONCERNS None

Sometimes you try a pedal and wish the manufacturer had done something differently. With Swiss Things, EarthQuaker has done everything right, including placing the expression jack after the "dirt" effects loop (Loop 1), which lets you change the volume of your fuzz, overdrive or distortion without affecting gain. For offering the effect junky an audio equivalent of everything from a scissors to a saw in a solidly built pedal, Swiss Things gets an Editors' Pick. **E**