



# SUPER VEE

GET DOUBLE-LOCKING VIBRATO ON A STRAT, WITHOUT TAKING A CHISEL TO IT? THAT SOUNDS LIKE VEE FOR VICTORY TO **ANDREW GREGORY**

**Fender's vintage vibrato bridge is fine for subtle wobbles, but it's never been the most stable unit when it comes to more prolonged sessions of whammy abuse. One solution to this is to fit a Floyd Rose vibrato system, but this sort of permanent modification could drastically reduce the re-sale value of your guitar.**

The Super Vee is a locking vibrato that can be fitted to a stock Fender Stratocaster without any permanent modification. The distributor claims that it can be fitted to any Strat using only basic hand tools, so if you want to get more wobble out your whammy, this could be the answer.

## MMM... SHINY

The Super Vee comprises a locking nut and a bridge assembly, both of which are nickel-plated to match our Mexican Strat's existing hardware. In contrast to the rather industrial styling of the Floyd Rose, the Super Vee is totally in keeping with the smooth curves of that design classic, the Fender Stratocaster. The Super Vee logo is also similar to that of the Fender Custom Shop 'V' logo, itself borrowed from Cadillac.

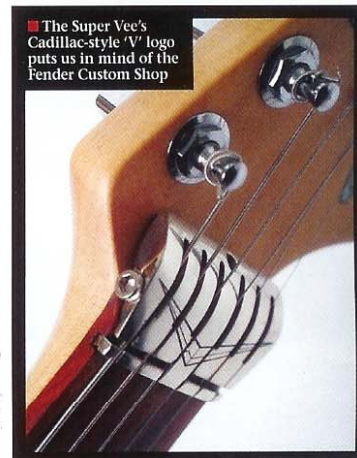
The replacement locking nut does require that the guitar's existing nut be removed, but it should then drop neatly into the vacated slot. You may also need to install a shim in the neck pocket to increase neck angle, but that's about as heavy as it gets. The

Super Vee nut features a one-piece string clamp that's shaped a little like a comb: the strings pass over the metal nut and through the teeth of the comb on their way to the machineheads. Two Allen bolts (one on each side) squeeze the teeth together when they're tightened, locking the strings behind the nut.

Down at the other end, there are six string clamps to hold the strings in place (you have to cut the ball ends off first), the bridge saddles are adjustable for height and intonation, and there's a fine tuner for each string – if you've ever used a Floyd Rose locking vibrato, you'll feel right at home here. What you won't recognise, however, is the pivot mechanism: rather than a knife-edge or ball-bearing pivot, the Super Vee's bridge moves on a thin, bendy strip of steel. One side of the strip is attached to the bridge assembly while the other is screwed down flush to the body. As there's no metal-on-metal movement, there's no friction and (in theory) less chance of the mechanism wearing down over time. And, because there's no permanent modification involved, you can easily return the guitar to its original state when you come to sell it.

## PERMIT TO TRAVEL

As it's set up on the test guitar, the Super Vee will comfortably bend down by around seven semitones and up by about three. That's more than your average vintage Fender vibrato, and what's more, the strings return



The Super Vee's Cadillac-style 'V' logo puts us in mind of the Fender Custom Shop

perfectly to pitch. However, with no extra routing behind the bridge, the Super Vee's upwards travel is necessarily limited. This means that the Super Vee can't offer quite the same usable range as a Floyd Rose – you could set it up to bend right down until the strings are hanging off the fingerboard, but as there's still wood behind the unit, upward travel is restricted.

However, it does offer a wider bend range than a traditional vibrato, with much better tuning stability – as the strings are locked at the nut, you can hammer that whammy bar as much as you like and the guitar will stay perfectly in tune. For those of us lucky enough to own a vintage Strat, the fact that this is a completely reversible mod will be the most attractive feature of all, and with that in mind, it's a very nifty piece of kit. **GB**

## GBINFO

### SUPER VEE VIBRATO

PRICE: £199–229  
MADE IN: USA  
TYPE: Retrofit vibrato system for Fender Stratocaster-type guitars  
OPTIONS: Version to replace six-screw vintage-style vibrato (as reviewed) – £199; version to replace two-point fulcrum vibrato – £229

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## GBOPINION

### SUPER VEE GOLD STARS

- ★ Great looks
- ★ Increases vibrato range & tuning stability
- ★ No permanent modification

### BLACK MARKS

- Less range than a Floyd Rose

### GBRATING

