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Modifying the Olympus FBK01 flash bracket to allow better use of external remote triggered flashes with the Olympus E-series or top end, C series cameras. When used with system flash the E/C series forces a preflash under most circumstances making remore triggered flashes difficult to use without special counting or delayed triggering. And even then, the exposure set after preflash, may not then be correct for the added flash levels with the remote flashes.

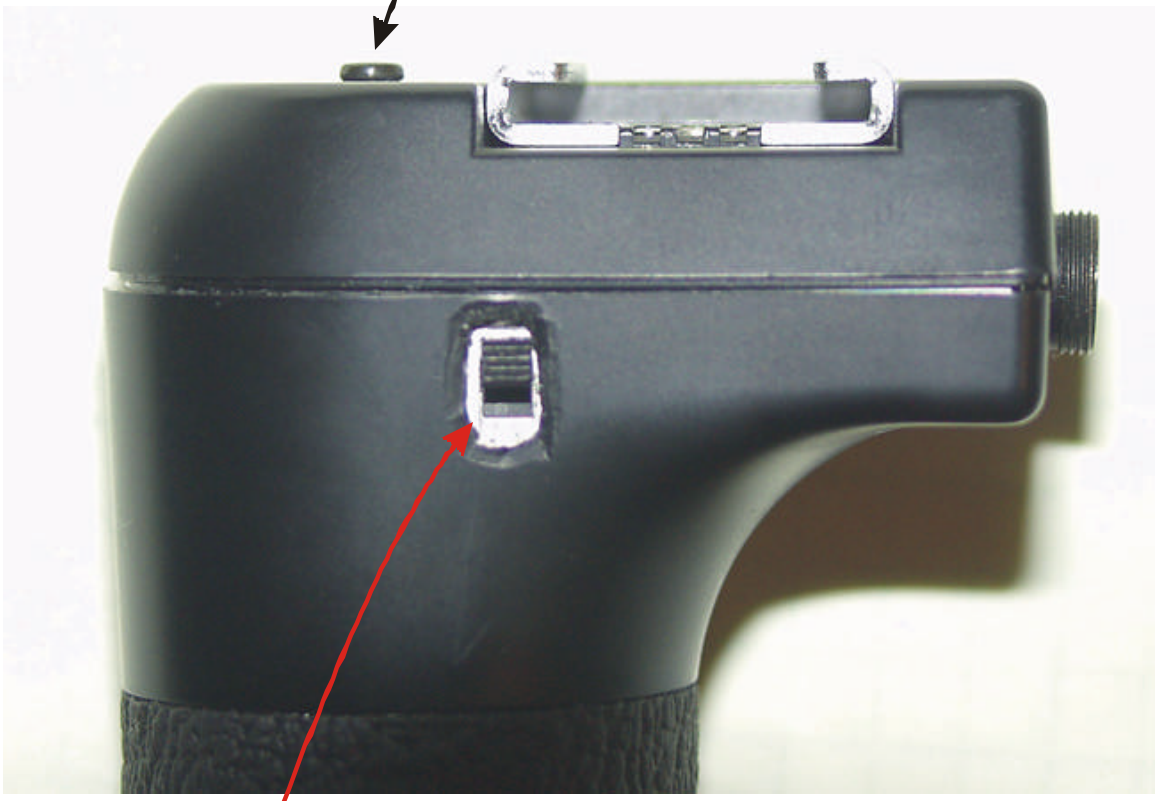
A fairly well known trick for using the system flashes like the Fl40,50 etc flashes in manual or Auto mode (not ttl), but with preflash disabled, is to insulate the back left hand pin of the flash shoe with tape. This works well but is flakey if you need to change backward and forward between modes. Here is a simple modification to improve the bracket by adding a switch. When the built in, on camera flash is used (eg in a E10/20 series) this modification does not help prevent preflash. It only works, when a system flash alone is used but with built in flash in down position (off.). The new added switch just allows you to switch between disabled and enabled preflash very rapidly and reliably.

By fooling the camera into thinking the FL40 etc is a non system flash the preflash gets disabled. This allows the auto or manual (GN setting mode) to be used on the flash. This gives maximum control over flash to the photographer: Choose whatever manual exposure setting is desired on the camera. Then set the Fl50 flash to whatever setting relative to the manual setting used on camera one needs, so as to provide a mix of natural and flash. I often use the auto mode (not ttl) on the flash but set the aperture a stop or two below the camera aperture. This mixes natural and flash 50:50 or 75:25. I then use remote triggered slaves to provide added fill where needed. Having flashes with a wide range of flash power settings is very helpful for the remotes. The remotes can also be run auto, but I usually run them manually to provide just some fixed local level of fill.

To remove the top of the flash bracket, remove the two easily visible screws under the top edge of the grip. A third screw must be removed which is hidden deep inside the handle. Either the leatherette from the grip must be removed and the whole plastic top assembly removed, so the screw can be accessed, or a long screw driver slipped through the center hole at the base of the flash handle. This requires feeling for the screw at the left edge of the top and is difficult to do. See picture showing general location. If you don't remove the screw and try to pry off the top, you will break the weak plastic tab, which is held by the third holding screw. In my case I replaced the tab mount when I added a thick plastic rib to mount the added slide slide switch in the handle. See pictures. So the tab is not essential if you just break it, and then the added screw makes the assembly stronger.

I mounted the slide switch on a thick piece of ABS plastic I filed it to fit snugly into the handle. ABS is very easy to work and glues well with proper ABS pipe glue (not PVC glue). The grip itself is ABS. You can get scrap ABS from local plastic stores like TAP plastics in California.

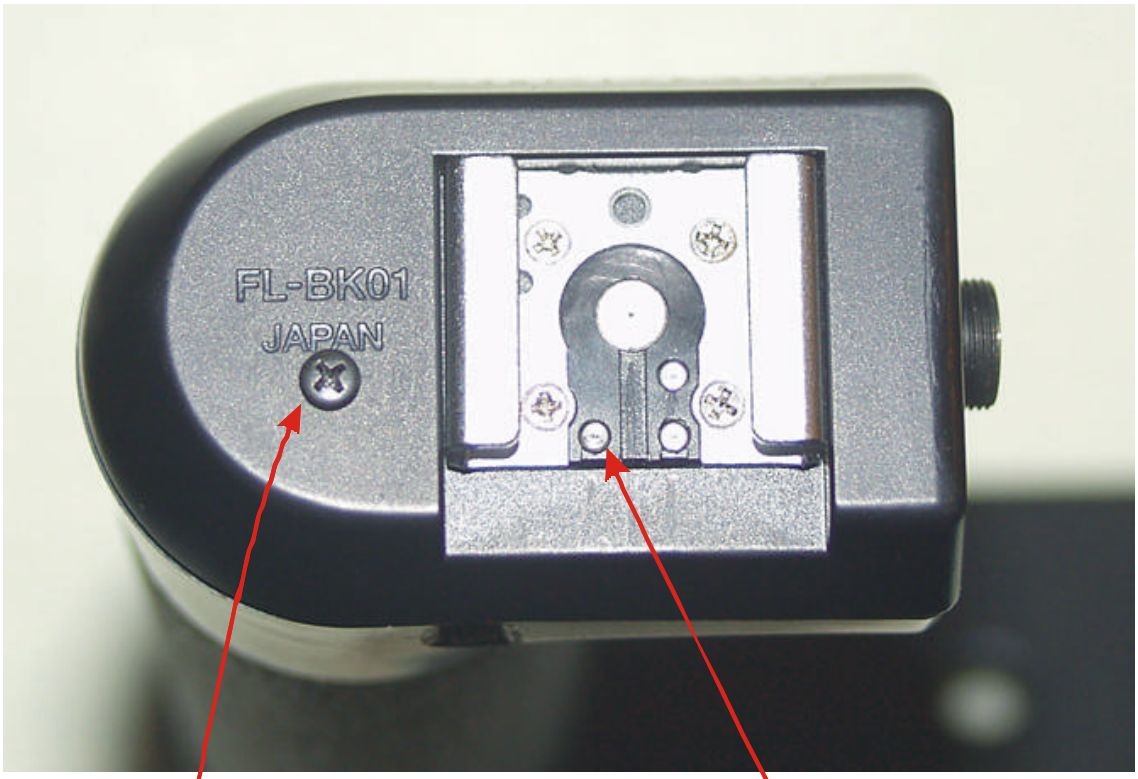
New mounting screw for top plate



Added minature C & K brand slide switch

To remove top remove these 2 screws,
and one difficult to reach internal screw.

Two easy to access top plate screws.

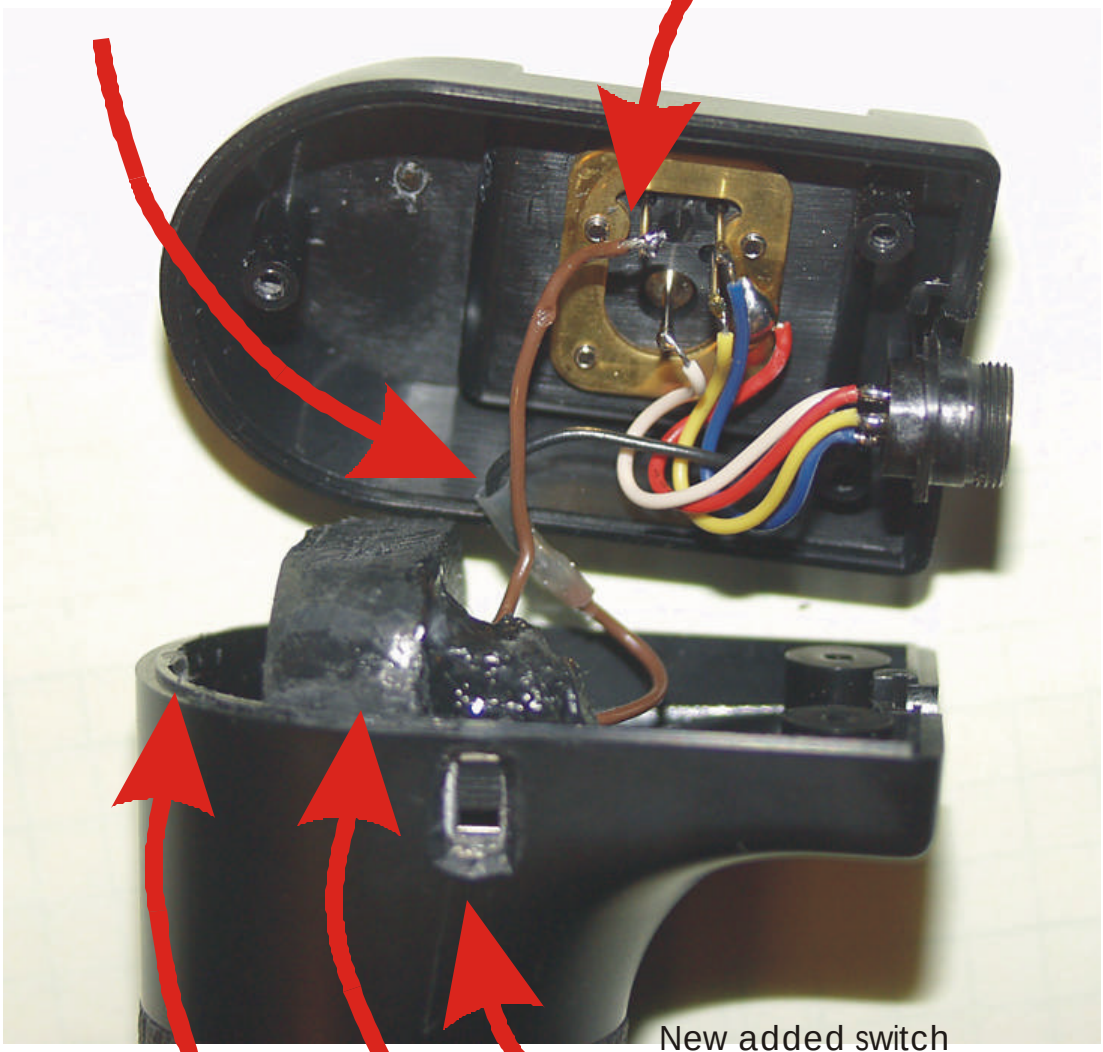


New added screw is stronger than internal tab mount it replaces

This pin is disabled by switch.

Desolder black wire from
left hand rear contact of shoe.
Connect to added switch.

Add new wire
from LH rear contact
to switch.



New added switch
disable/enables preflash
camera trigger. When disabled
allows remote slave triggered
flashes to be used.

I removed mount tab
and replaced with
screw from top into added
plastic rib..

Added plastic rib mounts switch.
And new screw for top plate.
Made from ABS plastic.
Glue with special ABS pipe
glue from hardware store