

Restart Tooting FEB 2020 comments from T.C.H.G.

Item 2 an old hair-drier (cautionary tale)

TG 2020-02- Feb 10th Edn 3

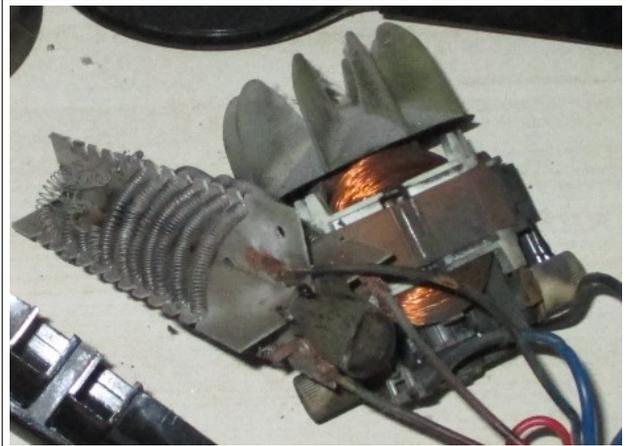


This hair-drier, a Parlux 380-HT professional model, at first sight looked a reasonable candidate for repair. It came in with no 'history', and the fact that the mains plug had been removed might have rung 'alarm bells'. The switches operated with reassuring firmness, and outwardly it did not look too bad.

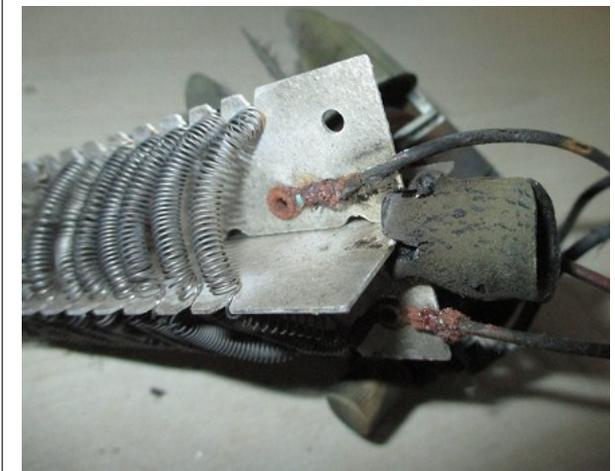


After taking the hair-drier completely to bits, a different story emerged

The impeller motor was held in place by two screws, fixed into two moulded pillars on opposing side of the inside space. One screw came out easily, after which the motor fell loose; withdrawing the motor showed that the other pillar had mysteriously sheared off half way up; only one spade terminal was still connected to the motor, the other one had come adrift somehow.



It was clear that the hair-drier had been dropped on a hard surface at some stage in its career, causing the weighty motor to break free within the casing, as described.



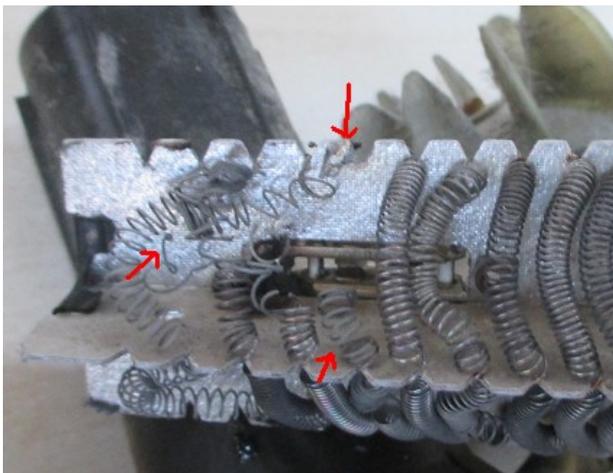
The rubber buffer cushioning the motor looked rather worse-for-wear – probably mainly the effect of age.



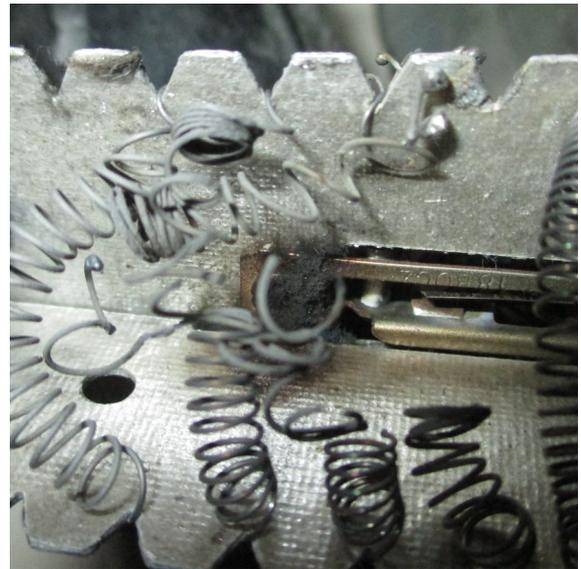
The remarkably rusted appearance of the terminals on the element caused suspicion that the hair-drier had spent time in a skip, or at least somewhere very damp.



There was a moulded hood over the element. This had a strangely wrinkled appearance in places, suggestive of overheating.



When the hood was removed, the true state of the element became apparent. The red arrows mark places where the element has grossly overheated, tangled with adjacent element parts, and in places fused completely



The situation has been saved by two things. A thermal cut-out, to be seen in the middle-right of the photograph above, has almost certainly operated, keeping the melting element from starting a fire. After the beginning of this process, the short-circuiting bits of element may also have blown the fuse in the mains plug. At least, one hopes so.... there was no longer any plug to inspect.

Hair-driers and safety

The element rating of this hair-drier was 1440 watts (the motor took 85 watts). Without the forced blast of air from the internal fan, the element and casing would melt and probably catch fire or cause one within seconds. Therefore all reputable driers have 'thermal cut-out' elements within. There will be self-resetting ones on the element which re-energise when the drier cools down, and there should also be a 'one-time' cut-out which will permanently disable the complete drier if the first one fails. These driers can easily have the air-flow blocked by accident – by a towel, or by bedding, for example.

For this reason, the otherwise attractive 'vintage' hair drier such as the one shown here should be used with very great caution, and should **NEVER** be repaired for anyone. They do not necessarily have any safety cut-outs and are frankly **DANGEROUS**.



Vintage hair-drier. Attractive, but only to be used with extreme caution, and never to be repaired at Restart or Repair Cafe functions



Conclusions

What was the unknown story behind this hair drier? The forensic examination suggested the following sequence: whilst in use, the hairdrier had been dropped on the hard floor of the salon. The motor had fallen silent, and a split-second later, a bright-red glow had issued from the 'business end' of the drier, followed by banging and popping noises, a torrent of blue, purple, green and red sparks, followed by silence. Hairdresser explains to customer that this is part of the new 'Theatre of Hairdressing'. Retreats to back regions, finds a new hair drier, and pours a large G & T to steady nerves. End of hairdrier.

I would have no hesitation in recommending the Parlux hair drier, based on the actual construction of the one seen here, before the little 'accident'; they continue to be available, and the Superturbo 2000 looks like the successor model.



The Italian Parlux Superturbo 2000