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Subject: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please

Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Sun, 19 Mar 2006 13:19:44 GMT

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Looking for opinions from a few different forums. I've been happily listening to my TAD-60 amp driving the Silver Iris OB speakers for a couple of months now. The amp came with EL34 (Svetlana) tubes. Running them 8-16 hours a day, it's just a matter of time before needing replacements. The amp is set up to take EL34, KT88 and 6550 tubes (triode and ultra-linear mode.) I'm looking for opinions on which way I should go. This is a bit of a major purchase for me these days, so I could use some experienced guidance here. Things to consider include longevity under long hours of playing, non-fatiguing high end, taunt bass and good midrange for acoustic instruments. I'll be listening mostly in triode mode (unless one of the other tube types proves to sound better in ultra-linear mode.) I listen mostly to jazz and folk with some classic rock thrown in quite a bit. Here's the amp I use. <http://www.angelfire.com/biz/bizzyb/TAD-60.html> Here's the speaker drivers used (mounted on open baffles.) <http://www.hawthorneaudio.com/drivers.htm> Let's hear what you experienced tube rollers have discovered with amps that can do this type of conversion. Thanks. Dave  
my amp

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Subject: Re: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please

Posted by [colinhester](#) on Sun, 19 Mar 2006 13:49:46 GMT

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How do you like the Svetlana tubes? Are they the SED/Winged-C version? I hear through the boards that this is a pretty good tube, and at \$64/matched quad it seems like a fair deal. I'll be putting these in my Cayin in the next month or so.....Colin

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Subject: Re: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please

Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Sun, 19 Mar 2006 14:12:04 GMT

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These are the standard Svetlana EL34's. I've always liked the EL34 sound in vintage amps (liked it better than 6L6 types.) I haven't had any other brands to compare in this amp. I did have some JJ's in a vintage amp a year or so back and thought they were nice tubes. Haven't heard any others. This new amp is in a completely different league from my previous vintage amps, so can't compare. As well as EL34, KT88 and 6550, there's also 6CA7 and KT90 to consider. If no clear winner comes from these discussions, I'll probably stick with EL34 as a known quality. Leaning toward JJ's. The JJ EL84's I had running in a Scott integrated were substituting for 7981's and held up great. That's quite a feat. I've never heard a KT88, and only heard 6550 in guitar amps, so don't know anything about them. Heard a pair of 6CA7's several years back, but was too long ago

and in old vintage amp, so can't make any meaningful conclusions there, either.Dave

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Subject: Re: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sun, 19 Mar 2006 14:22:35 GMT

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Dave; I tried 6CA7 in mine and I wasn't too thrilled. Have you read up on the new KT 77's? A lot of guys are saying they are a direct drop-in for the EL 34's except they sound a lot better. Tubesandmore has them for 80\$ a matched quad and I am going to try those out.Other than that I use the EL 34 Winged C's and they sound great. I paid 60\$ on E-Bay for a new quad of them. They biased up nicely and after about 30 hrs they sound nice and smooth.

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Subject: Winged C's  
Posted by [colinhester](#) on Sun, 19 Mar 2006 14:36:10 GMT

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Sold!!! I'm getting the Winged-C's. Thanks for confirming what others have said.....

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Subject: Re: Winged C's  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sun, 19 Mar 2006 17:20:46 GMT

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My Pleasure. But I am still trying the KT 77's also.

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Subject: Re: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please  
Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Mon, 20 Mar 2006 10:14:48 GMT

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I had the EH "fatbottle" 6CA7 in Ella and preferred them to the stock Valve Arts. Better defined, more powerful bass and mid-range, not as forward on treble. I tried JJ's just before Ella left for Texas and found them kinda lifeless. Really didn't like EH KT-88 in the ASL MG 15. Nasty treble, poor imaging.Tubes are as subjective as cables, maybe more. I've found my cables. Hope you find your tubes.

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Subject: Re: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please  
Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Mon, 20 Mar 2006 19:19:39 GMT  
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Ok, because of recomendations here and a couple other places, the consensus seems to be to try EL 34 Winged C's. Come about May or so I'm ordering a set.Thanks guys!Dave

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Subject: Re: Need to re-tube soon. EL34, KT88, 6550? Opinions, please  
Posted by [colinhester](#) on Mon, 20 Mar 2006 19:57:41 GMT  
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I'm pretty excited about trying them myself. I'm also going to replace the drivers with Mazda chrome plates. Your TAD amp is a very nice piece of gear. Paul was just starting to take pre-orders when I orderd my Cayin from him. I now wish I had the TAD, but oh well.....Colin

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Subject: Re: Winged C's  
Posted by [colinhester](#) on Tue, 28 Mar 2006 01:19:21 GMT  
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Got th Winged-C's today. They are much smaller in diameter than the stock (Chinese) tubes I was using. I can't wait to get them installed and give them a listen.....Colin

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