

# PROPER ENGLISH

## Radial Engineering Tonebone Plexitube distortion

By Eric Kirkland

**T**HE HOT BRITISH tube distortion is one of the most popular pedals from Radial Engineering's award-winning Tonebone pedal series, revered for its ability to accurately create the tones of a modified "Plexi" stack. Since its initial offering, Radial has received praise for the pedal's tone and numerous requests for a more feature-laden British-style pedal. The company's response comes in the form of the new tube-driven Plexitube distortion pedal.

### Features

Indeed, the Plexitube picks up where the Hot British left off. In addition to recreating the sound of the original Hot British pedal, the Plexitube has a second high-gain channel, more control over the distortion, several voicing options and an effect loop insert on channel 2 (lead). The new Plexitube distortion creates its immense range of Brit-style distortion and tone through an onboard 12AX7 preamp tube and a specially designed multistage solid-state drive circuit. Of course, the pedal features true-bypass operation when turned off.

Features include a drive knob for both channels, global high- and low-frequency controls and independent output level controls. The EQ can be adjusted further with switches for voicing, midboost and top-end response and independent contour knobs for each channel's midrange.

For players who like to run one channel with effects and one without, channel 2 features an insert loop that lets you add effects. This greatly enhances the Plexitube's flexibility, making it possible to switch between a chunky rhythm distortion and an intense high-gain lead tone that features delay, chorus, flanger or whatever effects you want.

### Performance

I plugged the Tonebone Plexitube and a Burstbucker-loaded Les Paul into my Fender Vibro-King. The Plexitube's two channels offered modern edgy distortion that was very lively. Channel 1 featured slightly less gain than channel 2, but the unit overall pro-



**KA-CHING!**

**LIST PRICE:** \$350.00  
**MANUFACTURER:** Radial Engineering Ltd., radialeng.com

vided a very bright attack, screaming harmonics and tons of sustain. The Plexitube's tonal options kept me busy for days, like a kid let loose with a mad scientist's kit.

### The Bottom Line

The Plexitube provides everything you need to generate layers of searing Brit-style preamp-derived gain. ■

**PRO:** Versatile, built-in effect loop, loads of gain

**CON:** All those controls take time to dial!

# DOUBLE PLAY

## Seymour Duncan SFX-03 Twin Tube Classic distortion

By Eric Kirkland

**S**YMOUR DUNCAN is one of the oldest and best-known names in pickup design and manufacturing, but the company is relatively new to the crowded pedal market. I guess the old adage "Better late than never" is applicable here, because the Seymour Duncan SFX-03 Twin Tube Classic is a little masterpiece of tube tone.

### Features

The Twin Tube Classic has Rhythm and Lead channels built around a pair of micro 6021 tubes, which were originally developed for use in military devices. The quality of their performance is outstanding, and because the tubes



aren't sensitive to vibrations or jarring, they should last the lifetime of the pedal. Although most other tube-powered pedals run 12AX7 preamp tubes at low voltages, Seymour Duncan cooks these little wonders with a hot 240 volts. The resulting tone is smooth, warm and thick, like a great tube amp cranked to 10 (or 11).

Basic features for this well-built, heavy-duty pedal include global bass and treble controls and individual volume and gain controls for the rhythm and lead channels. The pedal is true bypass when switched off and comes with the necessary AC power adaptor.

### Performance

I tested the Duncan TT Classic with a Les Paul Custom, a vintage Charvel and a Fender Vibro-King.

Playing just one chord through the Duncan's Rhythm channel brought a big smile to my face. The tone was old-school, with the midrange bloom of a "Plexi" on 5 and the warm crunch of a pushed Bassman quarter stack. Switching over to the Lead channel made things even better. The high gain tones here were sweet, rich and extremely organic (think Duane Allman at Fillmore East). The fact that all this comes from a single pedal makes it all the more impressive.

**KA-CHING!**

**LIST PRICE:** \$299.00  
**MANUFACTURER:** Seymour Duncan, seymourduncan.com

### The Bottom Line

The Twin Tube Classic produces beautifully thick and juicy output tube-style distortion, and its two channels provide everything players of classic rock, metal and blues could want. ■

**PRO:** Luscious tone, very well built

**CON:** No midrange control

