

# VVT Amps Lindy Fralin Model

by Ray Matuza

It only stands to reason that a guy whose day gig involves running his own successful and renowned pickup company knows killer tone when he hears it.

So when the Jones hit to seek out a custom made map that combined the best of his favorite *Blackface Vibroverb* and *Vibrolux*, [Lindy Fralin](#) called upon **Tony Albany** and the guys at [Vintage Vacuum Tube Amps](#) to see if they might be up to the task. And that they were.

The holy grail would be to produce a 6L6 based 30 watt tone machine capable of a beautiful clean sound as well as a smooth, crunchy overdrive and be put captive into the smallest and lightest workable cabinet.

Beginning with a 2x10 *Mojotone Tweed Super* amp kit for the basic prototype, *VVT* and *Fralin* tweaked their hearts out for six months until they got it right.

Residing in a rather compact 20x20 cabinet, the *VVT Lindy Fralin Model* strikes a vintage pose in its white Tolex with oxblood-like grill cloth.

The point-to-point construction and components are top notch, utilizing [Mercury Magnetics](#) transformers and a 15 inch [Weber Classic](#) Alnico speaker to transfer the tone, which, after much experimentation Mssrs. Fralin and Albany found to be simply the best.

The *VVT Lindy Fralin Model* is a cathode biased straight forward, no bells and whistles affair. The “Plexi” top panel is simple and clean with its Input, bright switch, volume, treble and bass controls followed by the reverb control, standby and on/off switch. Chicken-head knobs let you know where you’re at. Two *TAD* matched 6L6 tubes supply the power with two 12AX7s for the preamp. A pair of 12AT7s are for the reverb driver and phase inverter. Rectifyin’ is courtesy of an [Electro Harmonix](#) 5U4GE. The cool thing is that the *Lindy Fralin Model* can also accept a deuce of 6V6s in place of the big bottles in the power section for a whole different vibe. Because of the higher plate voltages, *VVT Amps* stresses that only modern tubes (like the supplied [JJ Electronics](#)) should be used. You don’t want to blow the thing up, do ya?

If you think a 15 inch speaker might get as loose and

floppy as your Auntie Mabel’s arse, you might be in for a pleasant surprise. With an obviously wider bass frequency range than a 12 inch, the *Weber’s* bottom remains tight and punchy with a nice lower mid section as well. Single coil and humbucker equipped instruments alike snuggled up quite admirably to the *Weber Classic*.

First impressions? The *Lindy Fralin Model* with my *Strat* spoke with gorgeous single coil chime and harmonic complexity, unabashedly magnified with a full transparent tone and organic beefy sustain. Very articulate and touch sensitive, the amp displays a more than impressive amount of projection. Both *Lindy* and *Tony* attribute this to the cross shaped members (called an integral diffuser) placed across the speaker opening in the baffleboard which help disperse the sound and tame some of the “beamy” high end.

All tone controls are unobtrusive and very musical. While the treble is subtle up to around 6 on the dial, the bass is more evident from the get go but remains transparent throughout its range with no muddiness. The bright switch surrounds the notes and chords alike with an airiness without compromising the inherent full tone of the amp.

In addition to the *Strat*, the *Lindy Fralin Model* warmed up nicely to my other 6 string friends. The *Carvin California Carved Top* sounded sweet and detailed while my *Ibanez AS200* spoke with a very articulate, full and warm bodied tone.

Archtops? This little box makes a nice jazz amp as well with clear, well defined chord structures and beefy single notes. With the fat axes pushing the volume past 3-1/2 caused a little mush in the low end which could probably be remedied by changing the first preamp tube to something with a bit less gain.

The reverb fills out the sound with a pleasant mix behind the dry signal. Throughout its range, the effect is very complimentary and doesn’t send your playing out to see even when dimed. For the dirty stuff, cranking the chicken head to the red(!) produced a bubbly, organic and throaty overdrive with real honest to goodness

preamp/amp interaction. Very sweet with gobs of sustain. Doing a quick swap to the matched pair of 6V6s morphed the amp into a kind of *Blackface Deluxe* vibe with breakup noticeable at lower levels. The bottom felt a little less tight with a bit more perceived glassiness in the top end.

Whereas the 6L6 bottles speak “tux and bowtie” the 6V6s are more “t-shirt and jeans”—not quite as complex but with a grittier and nice fat tone.

Also *VVT Amps’* attention to detail gets a big thumbs up for the extra long line cord and groovy little spare fuse holder inside the back of the amp.

The collaboration between *VVT Amps* and *Lindy Fralin* has turned out to be a winning combination. The *VVT Lindy Fralin Model’s* beautiful, three-dimensional tones are equaled only by its straight-forward and no-nonsense design.



VVT Amps Lindy Fralin Model—\$1799.00

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