

Tube of the Month

304TL

In about 1938, Eimac was experimenting with making more powerful tubes by paralleling two or more smaller tubes they already had in production. The variation between tubes was very small so parallel operation wasn't a problem. The 304T was made from four of the 75T triodes. I don't think it was a big sales success at the time, but early in WWII with the military need for powerful tubes, mass production of the now designated 304TL had started. Several pieces of equipment used the 304TL, but it made a good pulse modulator for early RADARs and eventually hundreds of thousands of these tubes were made.

After WWII, these tubes flooded the surplus market. Thousands were broken up to get the grid material. In early versions, the grids were made from a platinum alloy. Hams could buy them for less than a dollar to power their KW amps. With the popularity of grounded grid amplifiers in SSB service, the 304TL became the source of many construction articles in ham magazines. The example shown is the earliest version of the 304T.

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