

Clubs: Alpha C830.2 Driver Review

The Alpha C830.2 is the one of the newest offerings from Alpha Golf Clubs. Don't be put off by the obscurity in the name. This club should be one of the first clubs you try, not the last.



[Alpha](#) has been a large player in a secondary market. On the [Long Drivers of America \(LDA\)](#) circuit, you can find the C830.2 drivers in quite a few bags. Not all golfers are going to swing out of their shoes like those guys, but Alpha has designed a solid club that goes toe to toe with the best drivers out there.

Golf Digest even singled out the [Alpha C830.2](#) earlier this year in their Hot List as one of "the best drivers you've never heard of." Titleist, TaylorMade, Callaway: those we've heard of. It is easy to dismiss the so-called "second-tier" clubs, but Alpha is a great example of a small company making quality clubs. After spending a few months with the C830.2, I remain surprised.

Build

The C830.2 has a two-piece construction with a super-thin SP700 titanium face insert. The design of the new model uses an "oval" Increased Target Design (ITD) technology face to expand the sweet spot. This helps give the C830.2 quite a bit of forgiveness.



The head is at the highest legal size (460cc) and Coefficient of Restitution (COR, 0.830) possible. The center of gravity is positioned low and back from the clubface to create a boring, medium-height trajectory proven to deliver the best results. To help workability, Alpha employs the use of what they call Optimum Hosel Technology (OHT) that minimizes the distance between the shaft and the center of the face to reduce torque. Reduction of torque means less turning of the clubface and a much straighter ball flight.

The C830.2 is also one of the most durable clubs around by virtue of its preference of LDA tour players. In fact, I've read in a few places that nobody has managed to cave in the face of the C830.2. This is quite impressive given its regular users, the 380-yard drivers of the LDA. Alpha has built a solid club in the C830.2 that has earned the respect of some of the most demanding customers on the planet.

Look and Feel

The Alpha C830.2 has a good look and shape to it. When I compare it side-by-side with some of the other big-name drivers, it falls between the pear-shaped driver heads and the rounder models from Callaway and TaylorMade, though it's more apple than pear if you know what I mean. The Callaway takes the rounded look a bit too far, but the

C830.2 finds a good compromise between that and the more traditional pear-shaped heads of the Titleist driver I currently use.

Another nice feature of the C830.2 is its deep face. I recently switched from the Titleist 983K to the 905S and really like the 905S's deeper face. As soon as I took the wrapper off of the Alpha, I could see that it had a similarly deep face. Because misses high on the clubface of a deep-faced club typically produce an acceptable ballflight, drivers in the recent years have gone deeper and deeper. The Alpha has followed suit with the C830.2.

Aesthetically, the C830.2 has a clean look. From the top, the driver has a wet black look to it. There is nothing dull when addressing a ball with this club. The crown is interrupted only by the "alpha" symbol alignment mark. At first I wasn't crazy about the mark, but it grew on me as I tested the club and provides a simple means of alignment.



The finish on the Alpha is cleaner and sleeker than polished granite.

The bottom of the club is pretty standard with a high shine, almost mirror-like titanium finish. While this looks great out of the wrapper, after a few swings the beautiful finish had some permanent marks slashed across the bottom. The standard information including loft, and clubhead size is stamped on the bottom for your reading pleasure. Finally, the Alpha logo can be found on the toe of the club giving the C830.2 a pleasing overall look.

Performance

I'm not on the Long Driver's Tour, so going into hitting this review I tried not to let all of the talk get my adrenaline going. I didn't want to make any swings I wouldn't normally

make. I hit the 9.5° C830.2 with a stiff shaft. My current Titleist 905S also has 9.5° with a stiff Fujikura Speeder, so the clubs were fairly similar. Something I like to do is take a few full waggles and practice swings to get a feel for the stiffness of the shaft and the weight throughout the swing. On those I couldn't feel much of a difference between the C830.2 and my 905. This similarity was confirmed when I hit the first drive with the Alpha.

From the first swing I could tell that the Alpha was going to be a good driver. It produced a ball flight very similar to my Titleist. I'm use to a bit of a lower boring trajectory that has a lower spin rate and the ball jumped off of the C830.2 in a way that I nearly forgot which driver I was swinging. Only when I was addressing the ball could I really tell, because throughout the swing and looking at ball flight, the drivers were almost perfectly identical.

True to the nature of technology and the limits imposed by the USGA, there was no noticeable difference in the distance I hit the Alpha. I consistently landed it at or near the same spot I hit the Titleist (around 260-265 carry). The only real difference, if I'm being picky, was that the C830.2 wandered a bit more left and right on me. It wasn't significant and would not keep me from playing the C830.2, but it was noticeable. While the spin rate felt low (boy do I wish I had a launch monitor) I think it may have been more than the Titleist because of what appeared to be more sidespin (turn) in the flight.



The stock Platinum shaft tested similarly to the Fujikura Speeder found in Titleist's line of woods.

I talked about the shaft being similar to my current driver as well. The Alpha's custom-made "Platinum 2" shaft was great for my swing speed of 110-115 in that I could feel like working the ball either left-to-right or right-to-left was relatively easy. I can not stress how nice this is because a lot of manufacturer's stock shafts fall well short of any standards. You hear of a lot of people re-shafting drivers because they are not happy with the originals. With the Alpha, I don't think it would be necessary... even after several swings.

The C830.2 makes a solid sound at impact. I am someone who is very turned off by [the sound the new Callaway FT-3 makes](#) which is not only 'pingy' but hollow as well. The Alpha not only feels like a solid piece of metal, but it sounds like one too. Little things like this can make the difference, and I've checked off quite a few of them in favor of the Alpha C830.2.

Overall, I'm obviously pleased with the performance of the Alpha... and surprised too. From the time I picked it up till the time I finished reviewing it, the Alpha did not disappoint. Reading [some of the other reviews](#), I figured that this club would deliver, but I did not think it would be nearly as good as my Titleist. Well, I was wrong... and it nearly is: only the slightly increased variation in left-right prevents it from toppling my favorite.

Conclusion

Alpha has quite the club on its hand. I can see why Golf Digest rated the C830.2 so high and other reviews have done the same. I honestly think that if you stamped the head of this club with "TaylorMade," "Titleist," or one of the other bigger manufacturers you would have one of the best selling drivers and Alpha could charge at least another \$100 for it. The C830.2 is simply that good. It may not be as sexy, but it more than gets the job done.

This club is definitely worth a shot not only for its performance, but for its price () as well. They have a solid club that has been proven by some of the most demanding customers in the world for drivers. So don't just take my word for it, take theirs as well. I'm not getting rid of my Alpha C830.2 any time soon. It just may find a spot in my bag permanently.