

# sticksNstuff

woods • metals • spheres • little helpers • magic potions

## A BIGGER BANG

Nothing pulls a golfer out of the winter doldrums like thoughts of swinging a new hammer on the first tee once the spring thaw sets in. Then again, out West we don't have to wait for the birds to return before we can get out there and blast away with the latest lightweight, mega-sized cannons technology can muster. We've spent the winter sizing up eight of today's most explosive drivers, on courses and driving ranges from Southern California to the Oregon Coast to the English countryside. We passed them around, listened to the comments and then drew our own semi-educated conclusions. One company you've definitely heard of, the rest are up-and-comers or confirmed "boutique" purveyors of power. But if you want distance, they're all worth a look.



### DRIVER

#### ALPHA V2 430 cc & C830.2 460cc

\$295 each | ●●●

[www.alphagolfclubs.com](http://www.alphagolfclubs.com)

**SAT (Specs as Tested):** 10.5 degrees, Alpha Platinum 65 shaft

**Rippin' Rap:** Members of the professional long drive circuit have touted Alpha Golf's arsenal for a while now, but Average (length) Joes can cash in on their thunder for one of the most reasonable price points on the market. It just depends on what you're looking for — a more compact classic look or full-on 460cc bruiser. They've got 'em both. More than 30 players switched to the V2 in the 2003 Re/Max World Long Drive Championship. Both give a solid, decidedly non-metallic feedback, more whack than ring.

**Look of Launch:** The Titanium V2's deep, blacked-out face gives you immediate feedback on point of impact. It might give you a Darth Vader complex, but with the highest allowable COR, it wields more killing power than any ol' light saber. With its slightly closed face, the C830.2 might take a little adjusting at address, but for players favoring the fade, it'll iron out the wrinkles in your ballflight while stretching your distance.

**Geek Speak:** The V2 features a 15-3-3-3 Ti-Forged active beta face insert and high-strength 15-5 steel crown. The C830.2 goes with an "airtight" cold-forging process, SP700 titanium face with "Increased Target Design" technology and 6A4V titanium crown.

**Straight Dope:** Very different in look and shape but similar in performance, these sticks should appeal to any Alpha male. The V2 even gave a Bay Area pro pause after he measured it up against his regular stick. "I hit it farther. Interesting." For mid-handicappers, it packs a punch, too — even off-center hits yield a nice, high flight pattern, which means more distance. You can certainly wallop with the C830.2 as well, comparing favorably with the other drivers tested.

**FG Verdict:** There's a reason why guys like Re/Max Long Drive runner-up Danny Lurette have Alpha in the bag.



### DRIVER

#### CALLAWAY Tour 460cc

\$399 | ●●●●●

[www.callawaygolf.com](http://www.callawaygolf.com)

**SAT:** 9.5 degrees, Aldila NVS

**Rippin' Rap:** Callaway's Fusion distance and accuracy in you allows you three options to c personal shot shape. Plus, a and deep-face design and VF perhaps Callaway's best driv

**Look of Launch:** Sweet, as Gods, this can't be Legal! Bu like a softball on a stick and not that a Babe Ruth swipe i trailing edge, you can literal launching the ball so quickly

**Geek Speak:** Precisely posi corrective spin characteristi flaws that produce a slice or sending your ball farther and fairway.

**Straight Dope:** The sound i right away — more thwink t experience the rocket-like v know that sound means dist testing range, one passerby without even looking at the driver is awesome, isn't it? I flies forever."

**FG Verdict:** Big Bertha has l better drivers, and the Fusio



### DRIVER

#### INNOVEX CfD 460cc

\$199 each | ●●●

[www.innovexgolf.com](http://www.innovexgolf.com)

**SAT:** 10 degrees, CS230 Graman shaft

**Rippin' Rap:** Innovex believes in their Triple-P plan, in which golfers Pay Purely for Performance rather than brand names and Tour endorsements, so they're far from a household name. But President Kevin Downey is a vet of Callaway and Slazenger with a mission to provide Tour-quality clubs at affordable prices, and the lifetime warranty on Innovex products is hard to pass up.

**Look of Launch:** Traditional in shape, the CfD's forged titanium black head is simple and sharp, with as deep a face as we tested,

promoting the confidence neede how hard you swing.

**Geek Speak:** The Cup Face De spot, producing higher ball spee the ability to get more repeatab points across the face of the cl.

**Straight Dope:** At just under \$ the CfD, especially when you ac hits from the Cup Design and the low- and high-handicappers she and that's the mark of any good

**FG Verdict:** Spend the \$199 to buy a couple months' worth of F

