

## Media Vidcast – Apex Ti Fusion 250, Apex Ti Fusion Plated, Apex Ai150

Hosts:

Zack Oakley – Sr. Product Manager

Brian Williams – VP of R&D

### Intro

**Zack:** Hello, Zach Oakley here from Callaway Golf. Here to join you on another media vidcast. I'm joined by our VP of R&D, Mr. Brian Williams, and we're going to talk to you guys about a few exciting irons that are coming this summer under the Callaway line. Brian, thanks for joining.

**Brian:** My pleasure to be here.

### Apex Ti Fusion Plated

**Zack:** The first one we're going to talk about is kind of an extension of a product we launched last year, the Apex Ti Fusion. So, we've got two different Apex Ti Fusion Irons that are coming, but in a slightly different look than we did when we brought out the Apex Ti Fusion last year. Just as a quick refresher, can you just give us a very quick synopsis of what Ti Fusion stands for, what it means to you guys in R&D, and why it was important for us to kind of continue to push this technology story?

**Brian:** You bet. One of our most exciting platforms, Ti Fusion gave us the opportunity to use Titanium to face construction unlike anyone else had done in the past before. We'd seen Titanium used in the industry before, but always with trade-offs. Either slow faces or lightweight construction that required companies to put weight in a kind of a suboptimal way.

So, Ti Fusion, we've got a proprietary process to braze these materials together. We have a very stable and strong steel body with a very active and fast Ti face, so strong and stable. It gives us great ball speeds, but with robustness, there's an excellent consistency in this product, where we see consistent spin robustness. We see ball flights that want to get into a launch window and stay there very consistent distance and a great sound and feel.

**Zack:** Yeah, it kind of is the complete package in terms of performance. You've got consistency, you've got feel, you've got distance. I think one of the things that when you look at that iron, obviously we came out with it in a darker finish and we had always talked about wanting to come out with it in a chrome plated finish, but there are some challenges between Chrome and Titanium.

And we had to solve for that, one because Chrome will hold up better than a black PVD will and two, there's a lot of players out there who don't like to play the look or don't like the look of

darker irons. They want to play something that's Chrome, that's kind of more traditional. Talk a little bit about that process.

**Brian:** Yeah, that's right. We knew we wanted to have a Chrome finish, but the chrome plating process is very difficult to work with. Titanium is a reactive material. So, we had to develop a process that didn't exist before. Our team spent the better part of a year to do that. We knew this was a finish that we wanted to have for our better players, players that had grown up on, on chrome plated irons. And we knew we wanted to have this for quality as well. We knew we could improve the wear on the finish by getting to Chrome plated. So, we found it, we're very, very confident in the quality and how it holds up and now gives us a premium look for these products.

**Zack:** Yeah. So, Ti Fusion obviously all about innovation, bringing out in a construction and then in the new Ti Fusion plated that you guys will see this summer, we're innovating even around a finish. One of the other things we've done is we've added a model to the Ti Fusion line and the Apex Ti Fusion 250, which will come in the chrome plating as well.

#### Apex Ti Fusion 250

**Zack:** I think this was something that when we looked at the original Ti Fusion, we always kind of positioned it if we're looking at kind of our current line architecture as the 150 or kind of in that pro players performance space, but there's a lot of players that are in that 14-handicap range or so who maybe couldn't play the Ti Fusion. So, the 250 is going to have all the same technology as your Ti Fusion platform, but in a more forgiving, a little bit more distance-oriented package.

**Brian:** That's right. So, you have a little bit longer blade length and a little bit more top line and soul. So, just a more forgiving shape that'll open this up to a much wider pool of players.

**Zack:** So, Ti Fusion Plated, Ti Fusion 250 plated under the Apex franchise. Those are going to be coming out on 7/9 - that's our intro and our presale. And on 7/25, those will PAR. They'll be at 350 a stick. I think when we're putting in innovation in here, this is commanding a premium price point. Having worked with golfers, consumers, testing that you're going to see the performance that obviously justifies that.

#### Apex Ai150

**Zack:** Moving on. We have another line extension under the Apex family, this one coming in we launched the Ai 200 and the Ai 300 last year. That platform was about bringing two forged body forge face materials together. Having some distance technology, having some consistency. Those were really the Ai 200, right in that player's distance space for that, call it 10 to 12 handicap. And then you've got your Ai 300, which is your 12 plus handicaps, more of that game-improvement forged performance product.

That obviously left us a hole with where we've had in the past the Apex Pro historically. So, we've got the Ai150 coming to market this summer. Talk a little bit about what the Ai 150 stands for, what you guys were trying to accomplish, the project goals there.

**Brian:** The Ai 150 really completes the franchise for us; it gives us our fastest players iron. It gives us that iron head shape that the single digit handicap wants and, in a way, to bring the Ai smart face technology to that player. So, just as a reminder that, you know, we use the Ai Smart face for us to be able to increase speed while maintaining spin and launch.

So, it gives us a consistency advantage where shots all over the face are going to have a consistent carry distance and spin profile. So, kind of our best technology for a player to experience consistency when they're out there on the course and they're in different types of lies, maybe uphill downhill, you don't get clean strikes all the time. You're using the face, and the Ai smart face gives us our best technology to have that player have a consistent outcome. So, now we have that and really completed the line.

**Zack:** Yeah one of the really cool things about this iron that, when talking with your team was kind of the shaping that we used, and I think in the past we've, when we've had Apex Pro models, we've kind of taken the core apex or what is the position the Ai 200 is currently in and we've made a smaller version of that we've taken out some offset, thinned out the top line.

But one of the things that your team did this time was start with the Apex TCB, which has obviously been a huge success for us on Tour. It's one of our most played Tour iron models out there. And using that as kind of the starting point to get to the shape that we want.

**Brian:** That's right. The starting point on this Tour validated iron that our highest profile players have in the bag and then building it up from there to add a little bit more forgiveness for that kind of single digit handicapper.

**Zack:** I was talking with Ryan Richie (from our R&D team), we were talking about the X Forged Irons, and one of the things we talked about was the Tri Sole and how that really started a couple years ago with X Forged in 20, 23, 24 when that project was ongoing. But seeing that sole now kind of make its way across our iron line. Talk a little bit about what we've seen with Tri Sole.

**Brian:** Yeah. It's a space for us to continue to lean into, and it's one that was developed out there working with Tour and talking about turf interaction and figuring out how Tour players think about turf interaction and how we could translate that into the core golf consumer and core market. And so, we have a little leading-edge relief that's a feature for us that we've seen time and again, prove that it helps a player to get in and out of the turf without digging. There's some early kind of onset bounce effect and just helps players get through the turf efficiently. And we've seen players get more and more confident, and that usually leads to an increase in speed and distance potential.

**Zack:** Yeah. So, we've, we've talked a lot about kind of the, the precision nature of this, this golf club. We're talking about golfers who are in that low to mid-single digit range. So, they are, they are competent players that are looking for something that's precise, that's going to have good distance gaps that's going to be able to help them hit their number. Obviously, the Ai design that we're using for precision, the turf interaction is a key piece of that. The shaping is another part. But we do have the 455 Face in the long and mid irons here. We kind of talk about this as a player who's looking for precision without giving up distance. Talk a little bit about 455. I know it's a material use in Ai 200.

**Brian:** Yeah, it's, it's one of our best performing materials, very strong through the use of Ai optimization, we can get a lot of consistency out of it, as well as speed. And then we partner that with a 1025 forged body, so still an overall soft feeling product one that's easy to customize and bend.

And then I think just speaking to the commitment on precision, we also have our weight, uh, placed strategically behind the striking surface. So, when we go in, we know this is a player who's going to be custom fit, they're probably going to do some over length or under length and some bending. You know, our ability to reinvest weight and hit swing weight targets behind the striking surface allows us to really protect the center of gravity and really continue to have that product be built with precision even as it goes through a custom process.

We're not just putting weights into the hosel and moving the CG heelward. So, it's just a commitment to us and our fitting approach to really protect the fitting integrity of the club performance.