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Subject: Re: Yes; Martinelli Horns are the best looking horns out there.

Posted by [Russellc](#) on Thu, 27 Jul 2006 00:23:59 GMT

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I know. It uses the desirable aluminum dome. Usually, unless you find one that someone installed a symbiotic diaphragm in, which basically makes it a 908 8b. Some of the early examples of the 902 will have a number that you won't see on all the Altec lists out there, but it is the same dome. It is basically the same as the 802 versions use, the difference being (unless the 802 has been updated) is the way the leads attach. On the early 802 style diaphragm, the leads attach by screws. On the 902 style, they are a slip-on deal. When upgrading older 802 with new diaphragms from Great Plains, you must buy a kit to change these wires, as the screw-on types are no longer made. The 902 8b uses a non-perforated centering ring, which means the diaphragm is not exposed to the magnet chamber. The 902 8B usually comes with a loading cap and no felt, which I always remove and install felts. This makes it like a 902 8a, with the exception of the centering ring, which is perforated, (in the 902 8A) exposing the diaphragm to the magnet chamber. Some say this gives the warmer sound of the 902 8a. Frankly, I don't know if I hear a difference in the perforated vs non-perforated centering ring. The 902 also uses a tangerine phase plug in both versions, while the 802 8d uses the standard phase plug. Allegedly, the tangerine plug gives a bit more extension on the high end. Two exceptions to the general 802 has standard phase plug rule are, the 802 8g, which is a 802 (alnico mags) but does have a tangerine phase plug. In my opinion, this is the Altec driver to have. Similarly, the 808 8B also is basically an 802 8g, (alnico, tangerine phase plug) but has loading caps and symbiotic diaphragm. Change the diaphragm to the good aluminum one, remove the phase plugs, install felts and you have a 802 8G. The 808 8A usually has the symbiotic diaphragm (not always) no loading caps, but standard phase plug. All 802 and 808 drivers have perforated centering rings, so the diaphragms are exposed to the magnet chamber. Additionally, the 908 8B... Basically a 902 8B with a symbiotic diaphragm. Install aluminum diaphragm, and it is a 902 8B. Remove the loading caps and install felts and it is almost a 902 8A, with the exception of having a non-perforated centering ring, unlike the perforated version used in the 902 8A. To mix things up, there are apparently a few 902 8b and 908 8b that DO have perforated centering rings, but I have never found one. Finally, the 909 drivers, which use a pascalite diaphragm, (otherwise a 902) which is supposed to have the higher power handling of the symbiotic diaphragm and the higher end extension of the preferred aluminum dome. I don't know what the 909 centering ring situation is. As to the 806 and 807, they have a slightly smaller body compared to the 802 8d, and slightly less magnet, and some say slightly less extension. I have never used these versions and can not comment on their sound. Hope this helps more than confuses, it took me a lot of time and money to figure this out. Russellc

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