

REVIEWED:

Framus FR 212 CS CB

# FRAMUS

## FR 212 CS CB

Speaker cabs are as big a part of a guitarist's signature sound as the instrument or amp, so we took a listen to a high-quality option

Words: Rob Sandall

**Can you** imagine buying an acoustic guitar from a shop that told you they didn't know what the top was made from – and anyway, it didn't really matter? Of course you wouldn't. It's the part of the instrument that shifts most of the air and it has more effect on the tone than anything else.

Of course, in an electric set-up, it's the speakers moving the air, so no wonder they can make a big difference to the sound. But, just as a solid spruce top doesn't guarantee a great-sounding guitar, chucking a couple of top-brand speakers into any-old box probably isn't going to work either. Build quality, design and materials are all important too.

Framus is, of course, well-versed in the creation of blindingly good amplifiers, many of which have been reviewed in this very magazine, but you may not know quite how savvy the company is at building tonesome speaker cabinets. When one arrived at Pickup Towers' main portcullis, we were suitably intrigued, and very excited.

So, let's take a bit of a look at what we're packing here. First things first: it looks great. Anyone familiar with Framus will know that its colour scheme fits with the rest of the range: the reddy-brown hue of the grill, the black covering and the silver Framus script font. Classy, understated, and professionally finished, it exudes professionalism.

And because the box itself is covered in a neutral black, it should look right with most amps resting on top. (Okay, that's not the most important reason for choosing a cab but let's face it, no one wants their gear to look like a lash-up of bits and pieces, do they?)

This cab's a nice size, too, big enough to push the sound out without being cripplingly heavy or impractically dimensioned. Again, the sound of the cab is the big deal – rather than the weight – but there are some very heavy boxes out there. There was a bass cab that actually broke the rear suspension on one of the Pickup-mobiles a while back. That one wasn't much fun to lug up two flights of stairs either.

Not that this Framus cab is under-powered. It's rated at 100W/8 Ohms. Nearly all of our favourite guitar amps are 100W max, so we don't reckon there would be many situations where a second cab would be a must.

Inside the Framus CS CB are two Celestion Vintage 30 speakers. These bad boys were built by Celestion – probably the most renowned speaker manufacturer amongst guitarists – for a very specific purpose. The company was keen to keep the sounds of the 70s alive with its speakers, but was also very aware that new materials and building techniques were allowing scope for lighter, better power-handling and cheaper products.

The Vintage 30s, then, are a blend of old and new, capable of the sweetest tones and authentic speaker distortion but able to handle the whoomph of a 100W amp going full-tilt (don't be fooled by the '30' designation).

So how does this cab perform? Obviously enough, coming from Framus and loaded with Celestions, the answer is 'very well indeed' but let's get a bit more specific.

This cab has a closed-back

(presumably, that's why the 'CB' in the model name). Generally, that will give you a more pronounced bass end and the cabinet plays a more important role in shaping the sound.

That also makes the quality of the cabinet more important. Fortunately, this Framus cab adds the kind of warmth and response most players want, without losing clarity or bite at the high end, so you can build your own sound on that foundation.

Most experienced players would probably agree that when you're standing in the same room, a closed-back cab never responds quite like an open-back and a 2x12 doesn't give you the bass response of a 4x12 but with a small amount of tone adjustment, this cab can take you very close to the best of all of those worlds – even more so for recording duties.

If this cab was an acoustic guitar and you tried it out in the shop, you'd want it. But it's a cab. When you hear it, you'll still want it.

Good work, Framus. **PU**

**Framus**  
FR 212 CS CB

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SRP: £289  
Prices Include VAT

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**WHAT IS IT?**  
A very nicely-built speaker cabinet for electric guitar amps, loaded with two tonesome Celestion Vintage 30 speakers.

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**WHY SHOULD I WANT ONE?**  
When you've saved up for the guitar and amp of your dreams, you owe it to yourself to invest in a speaker cabinet that will deliver your sound.



8 ◀ pickup