



**GREAT VALUE**

# GIANT TCR Alliance 0

**TWO FRAME MATERIALS; ONE NICE RIDE**

Two materials, carbon and aluminum, work together to create a combination of stiffness and comfort (a, b); Shimano 105 brakes and other parts perform well (c).

There's no doubt that Giant's new, race-oriented TCR Advanced SL (reviewed in BICYCLING, Jan./Feb. 2009) is an amazing bike. But complete bikes in the Advanced line start at \$4,200; the price for frame and fork only is \$3,600. The TCR Alliance 0,

however, is one of the finest everyman performance bikes on the market. The frame is a 50/50 blend of carbon and aluminum: If you draw a diagonal line from around the upper headset cup to about the rear dropout, everything above the line is carbon, and everything below is aluminum. The goal is to improve the ride comfort of an aluminum frame without the costs associated with full carbon. And while we won't pretend that it matches the stratospheric performance of the Advanced SL, the TCR Alliance 0 is impressive. We say so not because it sets new benchmarks for stiffness, handling or ride quality, but because of the way it combines these attributes; the right stiffness in the right places creates a crisp, responsive feel. And the bike has fast reflexes (its geometry is identical to the Advanced SL) and a low front end (if you prefer—it comes with a healthy spacer stack). The ride dances a fine line: There's enough crackle to give it life and liveliness, but it mutes road noise and broken pavement. Actually, compared with some full-carbon frames in this price range, the Alliance provides a smoother ride and bet-

**\$2,150**

- SIZES** → XS, S (tested), M, M/L, L, XL
- WEIGHT** → 18.63 lb. (S)
- FRAME** → Giant Alliance carbon composite/aluminum
- FORK** → Giant carbon w/ aluminum 1.25 to 1.125-in. steerer
- COMPONENT HIGHLIGHTS** → Shimano 105 front derailleur, brakes, shifters, crankset (53/39), Ultegra rear derailleur; Mavic Aksium Race wheels; Race Face Cadence bar and stem; Fi'zi:k Michelin Lithion tires

**Buy it:** If you want to experience race-bike performance

**Forget it:** If you want a relaxed riding position and handling

ter feel. On the whole, the experience is similar to riding the Advanced SL, only with the volume turned down a few notches—and a good set of race wheels would make the Alliance louder. That's pretty amazing performance for the everyman.—*Matt Phillips*