

The Smithers Report

A News Digest of Activities in the Tire Industry

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WHAT'S NEW IN TIRES

P Zero All Season Plus with Elect marking improves EV battery life, Pirelli says

Pirelli has introduced in North America its first replacement tire developed specifically for electric vehicles, the P Zero All Season Plus with Elect marking. Tires with the company's Elect marking offer low rolling resistance, which increases driving range while reducing battery consumption.

Compared to a non-elect P Zero All Season Plus product, the new Pirelli tire has shown a reduction of 15% of rolling resistance. Another key advantage of the Elect marking is noise reduction, for quiet inside the cabin. Finally, for immediate grip the tire is designed to bite into the asphalt instantly. In terms of structure, the new tire line is designed to support the weight of a battery-powered vehicle.

The new P Zero All Season Plus features the Pirelli Noise Cancelling System (PNCS), which uses a sound-absorbing material applied to the inside circumferential wall of the tire to improve driving comfort. PNCS-equipped P Zero All Season Plus Elect tires show a 5% decrease in cabin noise versus the leading original equipment competitor, the company said.

A new compound formulation used in the tire increases abrasion resistance to compensate for the high torque and the overall vehicle weight as well as traction in line with the demands from EVs. The adoption of functionalized polymers in the compound also created an improvement in wet grip and handling, Pirelli added.

The new P Zero All Season Plus Elect will fit some of the most popular EV high-performance models and will be available from 18 to 20 inches. The tire comes with a 50,000 mile limited treadwear warranty.

(Pirelli – Rome, GA)

IRSG releases paper on circular economy and future of end-of-life tires

The International Rubber Study Group (IRSG) has announced that its current paper, "Rubber Focus March 2022" is now available. The briefing paper provides an overview of the Circular Economy: Future of End-of-Life Tires and an update on the current state of knowledge in global end-of-life tire (ELT) management systems.

The report aims to bring together how the ELT management system has evolved and been adopted by various countries over time. The focus paper touches on the challenges currently faced by the industry, the IRSG said.

As part of its work program, the secretariat of the IRSG has undertaken a series of briefing papers, each of which will focus on different rubber-related issues.

(International Rubber Study Group - Singapore)

WHAT'S NEW IN TIRES

New Hankook tire line specially designed for electric vehicles

In May Hankook Tire will launch its iON family of tires designed for high performance, premium electric vehicles.

Characteristics of the company's first EV tire line include reduced rolling resistance, notably lower rolling noise and high resilience, which translates to more range per battery charge and a more enjoyable driving experience, the company said. In addition, the new Hankook iON products are particularly designed for the instant high torque produced by powerful electric vehicles.

The iON products will be available in three designs at the market launch, in sizes between 18 and 22 inches: in Europe from May 2022 as the Hankook Ventus iON S summer tire pattern, and from September 2022 for the winter as the Hankook Winter i*cept iON. The Hankook Ventus iON A tire will be available as an all-season version for the North American market.

Further specific product designs are in the pipeline.

(Hankook Tire – Seoul, Korea)

RELATED MATTERS

Registration opens for Latin American tire and retreading trade events

Registration is underway for Expobor 2022 and Pneushow 2022, rubber and tire retreading events held in Latin America. The biennial trade shows that feature rubber technology, machinery, and products for the tire industry are being held June 22-24, 2022, from 1-8 p.m. at the Expo Center Norte in São Paulo, Brazil. The shows offer opportunities for business, networking and forming of strategic partnerships, organizers said.

Held concurrently, the events feature displays of the latest machinery and equipment, raw materials, products, and services for the rubber and tire retreading industries, in Brazil and other countries, according to Brazilian event promoter Francal Feiras.

Professionals from the rubber industry and from sectors that use rubber in their production processes (pneumatics, automobiles, construction, clothing, mining, oil and gas, tire retreading, transport, international and local trade, among others) participate in Expobor and Pneushow, show planners said.

Registration for both shows is free and restricted to professionals. Register at <https://expobor.com.br/home-ing/> and <https://pneushow.com.br/home-ing/>.

(Expobor and Pneushow - São Paulo, Brazil)

2022 Tire Hall of Fame nominations being accepted

The Tire Industry Association in the US has opened nominations for the 2022 Tire Industry Hall of Fame with forms available at www.tireindustry.org. Nomination forms must be received by Friday, July 1, 2022.

The hall of fame recognizes the outstanding accomplishments of individuals who have contributed greatly to the growth and/or development of the tire industry or have demonstrated high standards, ideals and leadership in the management of their businesses in the tire community. The awards are open to all individuals in the tire industry, including manufacturers, inventors, publishers, equipment suppliers, tire association executives, tire dealers, tire and rubber recyclers and retreaders. Hall of Fame membership may be awarded posthumously.

Inductees are chosen based on contribution of new ideas promoting the well-being of the tire industry; service that is exemplary within the tire industry; and respect of their peers. Candidates' civic, cultural, educational or charitable endeavors are considered but are not primary to the selection.

The Hall of Fame inductions will take place Monday, October 31, 2022, during TIA's Tire Industry Honors program prior to the opening of the 2021 Global Tire Expo/SEMA Show in Las Vegas.

For more information, contact: Dave Zielasko, TIA vice president of marketing and communications, at dzielasko@tireindustry.org.

(Tire Industry Association – Bowie, MD)

VEHICLE INDUSTRY NEWS

NHTSA finalizes occupant protection safety standards for automated vehicles

The US Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently issued a first-of-its-kind final rule to ensure the safety of occupants in automated vehicles. The rule updates the occupant protection Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards to account for vehicles that do not have the traditional manual controls associated with a human driver, but instead are equipped with automated driving systems.

"Through the 2020s, an important part of USDOT's safety mission will be to ensure safety standards keep pace with the development of automated driving and driver assistance systems," said US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "This new rule is an important step, establishing robust safety standards for ADS-equipped vehicles."

Steven Cliff, NHTSA's deputy administrator, added: "As the driver changes from a person to a machine in ADS-equipped vehicles, the need to keep humans safe remains the same and must be integrated from the beginning. With this rule, we ensure that manufacturers put safety first."

Before implementing the new rule, occupant protection standards were written for traditional vehicle features, including steering wheels and other manual controls. The rule updates the standards to clarify what is required of manufacturers when applying the standards to ADS-equipped vehicles without traditional manual controls. The final rule clarifies that vehicles with ADS technology must continue to provide the same high levels of occupant protection as current passenger vehicles.

NHTSA also initiated rulemaking last year to set safety standards for automatic emergency braking, a driver-assistance technology that can help avoid crashes with vehicles and pedestrians.

(National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – Washington, DC)

WHO'S DOING WHAT

Professor R. Krishna Kumar appointed technology advisor to JK Tyre leadership

India's JK Tyre & Industries has appointed Professor R. Krishna Kumar of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, as technology advisor to Chairman and Managing Director, Raghupati Singhania and Managing Director Anshuman Singhania.

The expert in vehicle dynamics and tire technology was instrumental in setting up the "Raghupati Singhania Centre for Vehicle Dynamics and Tyre Mechanics" at IIT Madras and driving it for last 18 years. Working on future-ready technologies, Kumar's contribution to the company has been precious over the years, JK Tyre said. The company added that its research association with IIT Madras is one of India's longest academia-industry collaborations.

Vehicle dynamics and tire technology are rapidly changing, thanks to electric vehicles and safety and environmental concerns, and the challenge is to develop pre-emptive solutions, according to JK Tyre. The situation calls for a nuanced, focused and structured approach in all areas of technology development. The endeavor will be boosted by the strategic appointment of Professor Kumar, the company added.

(JK Tyre & Industries - New Delhi, India)

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