



Continental

on the offensive!

Imagine a range of truck tyres that offers higher mileage, lower fuel consumption, reduced rolling resistance, improved retreadability and a considerable increase in safety. Sound too good to be true? It's not, reports CHARLEEN CLARKE, who reports that Continental's brand new truck tyre range offers meaningful and tangible benefits to transport operators

Rival tyre manufacturers, be warned! Continental Tyre South Africa is on the offensive! We have been hearing rumours about the company's all-new range of truck tyres for some time. Now they are here. And, boy oh boy, were they worth the wait...

Clearly tired of being a small player in the commercial vehicle industry, the company has launched six new tyre patterns, available in five different sizes. They will become available over the next six months, and will all be produced locally at the plant in Port Elizabeth.

Dieter Horni, managing director of Continental Tyre South Africa, says that the company has made significant investments in its Port Elizabeth factory in order to produce world-class quality tyres. "We have invested R200 million in the factory over the past three years, and we will continue to invest in our production facilities," he reports. R20 million was invested specifically

in the truck tyre production facility.

He stresses that the company will always produce a quality product. "Cheap tyres that are being imported to South Africa from China and East Asia are a big challenge for us. We do not produce the cheapest of the cheap. We are proud of the fact that we produce a premium product," Horni notes.

These new generation truck tyres boast significant design updates to the casing, inner liner, bead and belt package. Compounds have also been improved and kept to South African specifications.

And the company's latest range is a case in point. According to Brian Clarke, general manager, commercial vehicle tyres at Continental Tyre South Africa these new generation truck tyres are made from superior lab-engineered rubber compounds, they are infinitely suitable for South African conditions, and they're ideal for demanding everyday applications. "We want to offer the lowest overall driving costs to customers,"

he tells **FOCUS**.

But what do these design updates mean to operators? Clarke says that these improvements translate into higher mileage and lower fuel consumption. "The new range also offers reduced rolling resistance, improved retreadability and a considerable increase in safety," he explains.

Continental has cited quality and new casing technology as the basis for the all-new truck tyre design. The stiffer casing has been designed in a new optimised contour that allows a considerably larger air volume to be created that increases the load-bearing capacity and the mileage significantly; furthermore undesirable movement of the tyre is reduced. The tyres comprise a four-ply triangular belt that absorbs the forces from lateral and radial movements and reduces the intrinsic movement of the tyre at the root. This ensures a more stable ride with increased driving safety. The steel cord bead reinforcement has been re-designed

and improved considerably compared with its predecessor, offering a stable seat on the wheel rim.

AIRKEEP TO THE FORE

One of the most important features of the new range is the incorporation of Airkeep

from a special non-air-permeable rubber and maintains a constant air pressure for considerably longer than conventional tyres. Gradual loss of pressure is thus effectively counteracted. The new technology increases reliability, reduces fuel consumption and extends the tyre life

Incorrect pressures also impact on the performance of tyres. "If they are not inflated properly, even modern truck tyres cannot provide all safety-related properties like optimum side support and the best possible transfer of braking power to the road surface. Furthermore the economy suffers noticeably



The tread design of this tyre ensures optimum resistance of damage on and between construction sites.

technology. "This is an innovative inner liner, which maintains the tyre inflation pressure at a constant level for up to 50% longer than before – an important contribution to improving the rolling resistance and thus saving fuel," explains Clarke.

The inner layer, which was developed by the German tyre experts, is made

noticeably in practical use.

As Clarke notes, this technology offers significant benefits to operators. "A large percentage of trucks are driving on our roads with incorrectly inflated tyres. Today, the majority of truck breakdowns are almost always the result of tyre pressure checks being neglected," he tells **FOCUS**.

both in terms of fuel consumption and tyre life," says Clarke.

The solution is Airkeep. "Continental tyre engineers have managed to effectively combat the creeping pressure loss resulting from the natural diffusion of air, ie the escape of air molecules from inside the tyre, with the completely new Airkeep technology. ▶

The whole interior of the tyre, the so-called inner liner is coated with a special rubber compound in the process, patented by Continental. The enlarged molecules in this 'airtight' layer of rubber form a tightly packed structure comparable to a bird's coat of feathers. This slows down the constant escape of air. The oxygen molecules need up to 50 per cent longer to get through the labyrinth-like structure of the Airkeep inner layer, thanks to this all-new technology. This reduces the maintenance work for the tyres considerably without the risk of driving on incorrectly inflated tyres," Clarke explains.

The new Airkeep technology offers users definite economic advantages. If the inflation pressure is up to 10 per cent lower, the fuel consumption of a truck will rise by three per cent. The Continental tyres run with less rolling resistance and reduced wear thanks to the constant air pressure. Both have a direct influence on the fuel consumption and the costs per kilometre for the vehicle. Furthermore the tyre wear is significantly more even.

The life of the tyre is raised significantly due to the use of the new coating technology throughout the range. Moreover, there is less risk that the tyre will heat up due to the low pressure and the resulting energy-producing flexing. In extreme cases this could even destroy the tyre. The correct use of the new tyre first time around also guarantees the ideal re-use of its casing in retreading.

COMPREHENSIVE RANGE

As mentioned, the company has launched six new tyre patterns, available in five different sizes.

HSR 2 - Heavy Truck Steer - Regional Traffic

This tyre features wide shoulder ribs, a rib design with narrow grooves (for a quiet ride and avoidance of stone trapping) and a greater tread depth of 1,5 mm, which means greater endurance and a smoother ride. The robust silica tread compound ensures even wear and a reduced wear rate.

HDR 2 - Heavy Truck Drive - Regional Traffic

This drive axle tyre's tread pattern, with 2 mm more tread depth, is unidirectional to deal with a powerful retarder, withstanding high lateral forces as well as sudden braking and driving torque. The arrow-shaped pattern minimizes typical drive tyre wear effects and the open shoulder and numerous grip edges offer excellent power transmission over various road conditions.

HTR 2 - Heavy Truck Trailer - Regional Traffic

The HTR 2's extra wide shoulder ribs are designed to withstand lateral forces which,

together with the strong compound, offer increased tread endurance and lighter running, resulting in lower fuel consumption. The narrow grooved rib design (1,5 mm more tread depth) prevents stone trapping and presents a quieter ride.

HSC 1 - Heavy Truck Steer - Construction

The tread design of this tyre ensures optimum resistance to damage on and between construction sites. The increased structural strength is due to the reinforced steel belt design and durable casing. Improved tread contour and compound enhance mileage on and off-road.

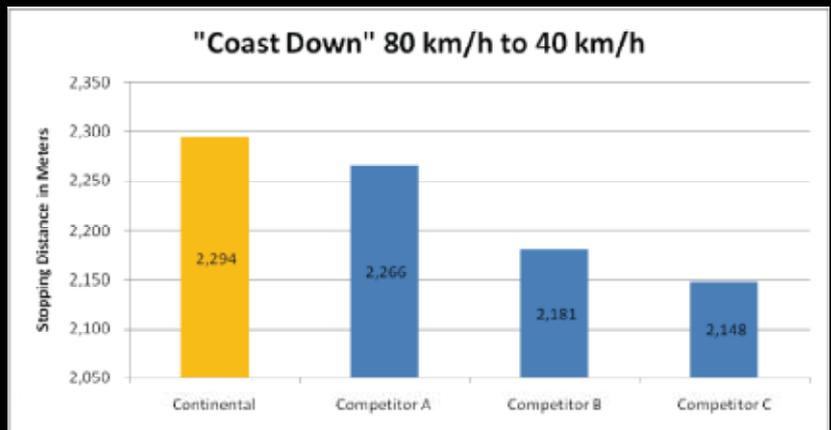
"The latest range of truck tyres translate into higher mileage and lower fuel consumption and an increase in safety."

Benefits - guaranteed

Let's face it, talk is cheap. It's easy to claim benefits associated to a new truck tyre range – but are those claims really valid to transport operators?

Continental claims that its new tyres offer improved rolling resistance and fuel consumption, two vitally important factors playing a significant role in the choice of tyre for every fleet. In order to put this claim to the test, the tyres were recently evaluated at Gerotek.

Four brands were tested over a period of four days (one brand per day) and the data was correlated by independent Gerotek technicians and verified daily. Rolling resistance was tested using a "Coast Down" test from 80 km/h to 40 km/h. Fuel consumption was determined by means of a flow meter accurately measuring fuel consumption at 60 km/h and again at 80 km/h, under controlled conditions. The results depict clear cost advantages speak for themselves:





Cutting-edge truck tyre products are on par with the best in the world.

HSL 2 – Heavy Truck Steer – Long Distance

This tyre boasts significantly reduced rolling resistance and excellent fuel economy, attributable to its wide shoulder ribs and narrow grooved rib design. These grooves also offer low noise travel and light running advantages. The specially combined compound of the HSL 2 offers the lowest possible fuel consumption through its rolling resistance base and wear resistant cap.

HDL 2 – Heavy Truck Drive – Long Distance

This tyre features a tread design that is optimised through numerous tread blocks with a multitude of grip edges, cross supporting elements especially for retarder use, arrow shaped patterns which minimise

typical drive tyre wear effects and reduced self-deformation of tread elements, which guarantees the lowest possible rolling resistance.

SIZES					
HSR 2	HDR 2	HTR 2	HSL 2	HDL 2	HSC 1
315/80R22.5	315/80R22.5	385/65R22.5	315/80R22.5	315/80R22.5	12R22.5
		295/60R22.5*			315/80R22.5
					12.00R24*

* Denotes imported tyres

By the end of the rollout of the range, Continental will have renewed its complete premium range in the goods, transport and construction vehicle segments. "We now have the most modern product range, offering all the benefits and advantages expected from the modern transport operation. This product offensive is a unique

chance to improve Continental's market position, to a stronger one, as the market emerges from the economic crises," notes Clarke.

And he says that this is just the start of things to come. "These cutting-edge truck tyre products already place us on par with the best in the world in terms of product performance and quality. However, we will be launching numerous innovative products in time to come," he predicts.

We will watch and wait! ■