



FALKEN'S NEW ALL-SEASON TYRES

“Teamwork of European experience combined with Japanese precision”

In 2013, Falken presented the all-season tyre AS200. Now, the tyre manufacturer is introducing the successor into the market. Since July, it has been on sale. Apart from products for passenger cars, Falken also produces all-season tyres for vans and transporters. From now on, the Euroall Season Van11 will be available too. Our editor spoke with Markus Bögner, Managing Director and COO at Falken Tyre Europe GmbH, about the new all-season tyres.

The Euroall Season AS210 is the successor of the AS200. Will the AS200 still be available or will it be taken out of the range of products step by step?

At the moment, we are still producing the Euroall Season AS200 in Turkey and Thailand. In the long run, it will gradually be replaced by the AS210.

How long was the development period of the Euroall Season AS210?

The development of a tyre is a lengthy,

complex process. It took two winters and a summer to develop our Euroall Season AS210.

All-season tyres are still considered to be a compromise. On what features did you focus when developing the tyre?

All-season tyres are interesting for many people. They combine the main characteristics of summer and winter tyres without changing tyres every six months.

We developed the Euroall Season AS200 for this compromise: A tyre with high longevity and solid winter grip when used in a normal way. Nonetheless, the seasonal change between summer and winter tyres is still the best solution.

What kind of experiences did you make use of when developing the new tyre?

Comparable to all the other products from Falken, the Euroall Season AS210 is teamwork of European experience combined with Japanese precision. We made use of the performance parameters of the Eurowinter HS01 and the ZIEX ZE310 Ecorun, and also of the predecessor.



Markus Bögner, Managing Director and COO at Falken Tyre Europe GmbH, will deliver all-season tyres to the whole of Europe.

As of August, you announced 20 further sizes at the trade fair. To what sizes will that refer in detail?

When launching the product, there will be 48 sizes, from 13 – 19 inches in the series 40 – 70 with speed indexes: T / H / V. In the year 2019, there will be 20 further sizes.

Will there be any special point-of-sale activities or materials?

Like all our products, we will support sale with different communicative measures, which will include respective print materials like delivery programmes, flyers, etc. Moreover, the Euroall Season AS210 will be part of our current petrol voucher campaign. Customers and dealers will benefit from purchasing. Further measures will follow in the future.

Are you also aiming at the original equipment business with your new all-season tyre? If yes, could you already go more into detail?



The Euroall Season Van11 is to have good wet and winter characteristics.

Both the replacement business and the original equipment market in Europe are interested in all-season tyres. Thus, all-season tyres are also part of our total package in the original equipment business. We have already been offering the new AS210. Unfortunately, I am not able to go further into detail at the moment.

What will be your target markets for this tyre? What will be your biggest market?

Our target market consists of the whole of Europe, above all Western Europe and parts of Southern Europe. That certainly includes Germany, but also Italy, where there has been an extraordinarily high increase in all-season tyres recently.

Where do all-season tyres have a general potential for improvement?

The potential for improvement refers to finding the right compromise and paying attention to the different trends, which will develop in the years to come.

You also introduced a new all-season tyre for vans into the market. Did you have to meet different requirements when developing an all-season tyre for vans compared to developing for SUV/passenger car?

Because of the growing market in the all-season segment, we developed a special all-season tyre for vans and transporters too. Many transporters and vans are used as delivery vehicles. When guaranteeing safe deli-

very of goods and of course people, the tyre has to be reliable in any weather condition. As a consequence, we paid a lot of attention to both good performance in wet and snowy conditions and mileage.

What did the development focus of the Euroall Season Van11 look like?

When developing the Euroall Season Van11, we focused on good wet and winter characteristics. Thus, the tyre is equipped with good label values.

How long was the development period?

The development period took nearly two and a half years.

Where will the all-season tyre, which is to be produced in Thailand, be available?

The tyre will be sold in all the European markets. **(akl)**



The Euroall Season AS210 will be the successor of the Euroall Season AS200.

MICHELIN WILL TAKE OVER CAMSO

Concentration of OTR activities

Michelin and Camso have come to an agreement according to which Michelin will take over the company Camso based in Quebec/Canada. The OTR (off-the-road) activities of both companies are to be concentrated in a new division, which will be managed from Quebec. Camso, which has a net turnover of one billion US dollars, has been designing, producing, and selling OTR mobility solutions since 1982. Camso is considered to be the market leader regarding among others rubber chains for agricultural devices and snowmobiles, and offers tyres for agriculture, construction machinery and materials handling. "Michelin and Camso

Michelin will take over Camso for about 1.45 billion US dollars.



MICHELIN
A BETTER WAY FORWARD



have many common values. This takeover will be a wonderful common chance. Michelin will benefit from all the competencies, which Camso has in the markets of off-the-road mobility, and Camso from Michelin's competence in special markets", announces Jean-Dominique Senard, Chief Executive Officer at Michelin Group. After getting the usual approvals, Michelin will take over Camso for 1.45 billion US dollars.



JAAP VAN WESSUM, GENERAL MANAGER AT EMEA, IN AN INTERVIEW

“Avon is a positioned as brand with an incredible history”



Jaap van Wessum, General Manager at EMEA Cooper Tire & Rubber Company Europe Limited, wants to make better use of growth potentials in Europe.

Mr van Wessum, the brand Avon is to be newly positioned in Europe. Could you go more into detail?

Traditionally, Avon was extremely well presented in England. At the moment, we are noticing a significant growth in the whole of Europe. There have even been added countries, where Avon has not been presented so far. Thus, we will be able to boost our business especially in those countries. First of all, we would like to mention the German-speaking countries, where Michael Lutz recognizes a lot of growth potential as General Manager of these regions. The Netherlands and Spain will of course be interesting markets too.

How will you generate attention in these countries?

We have already noticed bigger interest coming from trade. We would like to further boost this development with a newly desi-

gned marketing campaign together with brand ambassadors. We think that there will be an increase in the tier-2 segment, which means in the quality segment, in the whole of Europe. Avon finds itself positioned with an incredible history in these markets. Many trade operators think that is a brand with a great history and new product developments in a rather attractive, margin-oriented area.

Now, we are planning a selective distribution, with exclusive partners. At the moment, we are agreeing on a strategy with partners with an already strong regional representation, e.g. in Italy and France. We are also able to see opportunities for a trustful partnership in other countries, where we would like to grow in the future, with players already accompanying us on our journey in England.

What products will be in the focus of your marketing?

About two years ago, the replacement of products started. At that time, we focused on a range of products having the right structure for the summer that means in the V, W and Y areas. The ZV7 has covered all of this. Then we added the SUV area for the ZX7. These product launches worked as signals for trade that Avon was getting into the market with new tyres. It was similar in the winter area. The WT7 and the WV7 were the products, which trade immediately noticed.

This year, we will introduce the ZT7 – a tyre for the small and compact class. Thus, we will have a nice range of products for summer and winter. All our summer products having the speed index “V” and higher, also have label value “A” for wet grip. That will again be a good argument for the brand Avon in the quality segment. Normally, you find the label value “A” only in other price segments.

How will your plans for the all-season segment look like?

We are having a close look at the all-season brands and are definitely going to commit ourselves in this area too. At the moment, I am not able to tell you when we will add such a product to our catalogue.

You have already mentioned that Avon will continue working in the quality segment.

Yes, exactly. Referring to this topic, it will be very important that our partners understand the way we will like to have our brand marketed. It is a quality brand combining so many advantages that it will still be competitive in spite of the fierce competition in this area. We will need the right partners really having Avon products on stock and immediately being able to deliver. This type of support is extremely important when setting up a brand.

Let us have a short look at the special characteristics of the German market.

We have noticed that Avon has already achieved certain brand popularity in Germany, although there has been a focus on the motorbike and motor sports areas so far. We think that we will have the possibility of further development with new partners. We will build up specific marketing programme in coordination with our partners. The Brand Ambassador Programme consists of four pillars. First of all, you have to build up technical know-how and sales knowledge in trade. The second pillar is a

further expansion of brand popularity with important instruments in digital marketing, but also in the area of traditional POS measures. The third pillar refers to the margin. We certainly want our partners to earn money with our brand, because that will be the only possibility of convincing trade of our Avon products and of guaranteeing sustainable commitment to our brand. The last aspect, and this should not be neglected: We all would like to have fun together. An event like this one here in Castle Combe shows what that could mean.

Now we are here at the traditional Avon production location in Melksham. There is a further plant in Serbia. Are there any plans or will there be any necessities of expanding capacities?

We are looking at this topic from a global perspective. Avon belongs to Cooper Tyres. Three regions are highly important for the parent company Cooper. Those are North America, Europe and China. We are going to increase our business in those areas. The brand Cooper will e.g. increase its original equipment commitment. The expansion of production capacities will only happen in combination with further growth in the OE and replacement market.

What marketing measures will be implemented in order to increase the radiance of the brand Avon?

We would like to position both brands, Cooper and Avon, well in the markets. That

also means that there will be two different marketing strategies for the brands. Cooper is more the 4x4 brand with stronger presence in the original equipment business. Avon is an original British brand, which is traditionally deeply rooted in motorsports, and thus more focused on the performance area. We will communicate these two positions more expressively. But don't get me wrong: We will neither only focus the Cooper range of products on the off-road and 4x4 area, nor Avon only on the high-performance area. Both are to be considered as complete brands, but the specific experiences of the brands are meant to be used.

At the moment, we are developing the marketing strategy for Avon. As one part, we will definitely further address the digital channels. There will e.g. be a new website, the launch of the German version will be rather soon. A tyre selector will be integrated, which is supposed to be the fastest in the market. The increased focus on digital marketing has already shown some results, also concerning our partners. All in all, our marketing will have a more targeted approach.

We have as well included our traditional advertising measures when reorganizing our marketing campaign. As a result the brand Avon will have a new look-and-feel image. Traditional values will be combined with modern elements.

(kle)



A group of dealers visited the traditional track Castle Combe and was testing Avon products.



RONAL GMBH

30 years of tyre production in Landau

Since the beginning of production in Landau in 1988, the respective plant of the Ronal Group has developed itself into a successful employer in the region. More than 800 people are employed at the location in Landau in Germany's Palatinate region. Apart from the wheel plant with a capacity of nearly two million wheels, there is also a development and testing centre.

The Ronal Group runs a total of six development centres. Apart from the centre in Germany, there are further in Switzerland, Portugal, the USA, Italy and Taiwan. The Ronal Group produces its moulds itself in Härkingen/Switzerland and in Portugal. 97 per cent of the produced wheels are for original equipment manufacturers. Nonetheless, the company also produces for the aftermarket based on the same procedure.

Sustainability: Planblue

The Ronal R60-blue is among others a flagship. The group has a holistic approach

concerning the concept with the name Planblue, as it refers to a consistent implementation of sustainability and ecological and social responsibility. According to company information, the location in Landau offers the advantages of producing with a 100 per cent of green power and of having short delivery distances, because many of the customers are located in Germany, which is considered to be the most important market.

For 30 years, wheels have been produced at the location in Landau. The technology portfolio is very comprehensive and consists of low-pressure die casting, flow

forming, multi colour rim, and laser and pad printing. Moreover, a great deal of importance is attached to the environment and energy efficiency, e.g the energy management is certified according to DIN EN ISO 50001.

The Ronal Group places a lot of importance to the quality of the aluminium that is used for production, because it receives more than 50 per cent of the aluminium from members of the Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI), which guarantees the strict compliance of sustainability criteria and high-quality aluminium. Since April, the Ronal Group itself has been a Downstream



Checking the quality of the painting.



Although some robots are used, manual work is still important.



Wheels are checked on in-house test benches.

Supporter member of ASI. The aluminium bars are scanned via a barcode in order to guarantee retraceability.

Fully automatic x-ray machines

The x-ray procedure is a further example of quality management. Each wheel is x-rayed by fully automatic x-ray machines in all the different plants. A special programme identifies the design and checks the quality of the wheel based on the specific customer requirements. Riser drilling (gating object with sieve-like filter) is performed on the X-rayed wheels. This waste material is melted down externally and then channelled back into the production process. Further chips and burrs, which could result from wheel production, are melted down too.

Furthermore, all the wheels of the Ronal Group are tested with helium in order to provide tightness of a 100 per cent, explains Klaus Werner, Managing Director at Ronal GmbH, during a tour of the company. Moreover, the wheels are tested concerning imbalance. They are brushed on automatic machines, then manually prepared in order to be burr-free and grounded down for the painting. Several steps of visibility tests of each wheel belong to the quality standards of the Ronal Group too.

Investment in energy efficiency

The Ronal Group has already regularly invested in the past, but some innovations are to be carried out in the future. Klaus Werner says that further investment is planned in the area of energy efficiency, e.g.

waste heat utilization of the production plants for heating, which will also be used in the painting plant later on.

1.9 million wheels per year

Only recently, a training room for surface treatment was equipped in the plant. All the employees will be informed about their tasks and the company in a comprehensive way. 6,500 wheels are produced per day at the location in Landau, which means 1.9 million per year. Many robots are used in production, but when walking through the factory, you can still notice that manual work is important.

The in-house test benches are a further specialty. Here you are able to test how the wheel will behave when touching the curb or what kind of rigidity will be noticeably in case of extreme cornering in a continuous operation test. Simulated tests are important in order to guarantee safety and high quality, and to boost technology. Fatigue testing is a different type of test, which is carried out for the construction pattern release and as continuous monitoring when producing wheels.

After finishing the wheel and a final control provided by the employees, the wheels are put on pallets and prepared for delivery. The aftermarket wheels are transported to the logistics centre RONLOG in Forst, where you can also find the sales department and customer service of Ronal GmbH. About 70 employees work there. Next year, the Ronal Group is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

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Klaus Werner working as a guide during a tour of the company.

