

Media Release

Automechanika Leading International Trade Fair for the Automotive
Sector
Johannesburg Expo Centre, 18 - 21 March 2009

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GOODYEAR WINS FIRST AUTOMECHANIKA SOUTH AFRICA INNOVATION AWARD

Goodyear is the winner of the Innovation Award at the first Automechanika South Africa automotive trade fair, which is being staged at the MTN Expo Centre, Nasrec, from March 18-21. The presentation of a Gold Award was made by the vice president, Automechanika Messe Frankfurt from Germany, Stephan Kurzawski, to Goodyear's regional manager: Gauteng, Bernie Andrews.

The winning product was the new Max Tyre Technology that delivers tangible cost savings and improved efficiencies for truck owners, as well as increased safety and performance. In terms of environmental considerations the technology provides a substantial reduction in fuel consumption, lessens harmful emissions and landfill waste.

Lower rolling resistance, better braking capability in the wet, less noise, pollution, better operation efficiency, greater load capacity and longer tyres life are some of the claims made of the company's long haul range of Marathon LHS II (long haul steer) and LHD II (long haul driver) truck tyres, which results in lower cost per kilometre.

The Regional RHS II (regional haul steer) and Regional RHD II (regional haul driver) tyre range – aimed at the largest sector in South Africa's truck tyre market – are said to offer similar benefits for shorter haul operations.

All these new generation tyres utilise Duraseal technology, which enables a punctured tyre to repair itself and remain serviceable until it is retreaded. The result is less downtime and a reduction improved safety.

This product was selected from eight finalists out of an original entry of 24 products.

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Second place and the Silver Award went to Durban-based PFK Electronics for the PFK Alcohol Interlock, a tethered alcohol breathalyser-based immobiliser that prevents a driver from starting a vehicle if over the legally allowed alcohol limit.

Third place and the Bronze Award went to Bosch for its Aerotwin wiper blades, a new generation of windscreen wipers characterised by extremely flat styling, with no joints or brackets. They are already used as standard equipment by a number of European manufacturers and they are available as a retrofit for 80 older model passenger cars, using a Quick-Clip adapter.

Bosch, in fact, had 50% of the finalists with its Aerotwin wiper blades, the new BEA 460 exhaust gas analyser, KTS 340 compact control unit diagnostic tester for mobile use and a range of universal lambda sensors. The latter three products were awarded "Highly Commended" certificates.

The other two finalists that were "highly commended" were High Tech for its tow bar socket wiring tester using wireless communication between the plug and receiver to establish if the wiring is correct and Bohler Uddeholm Africa for its Frontius CTM welding machine. It is able to weld different types of metal – including aluminium and steel – in applications as thin as 0.3mm through a cold metal transfer process.

The aim of the competition is to showcase products perceived to be pioneering in South Africa's automotive aftermarket and to award the winner and finalists through focused exposure at Automechanika SA via media coverage and display of the finalists' products on the Retail Motor Industry organisation's stand. The arrangements for the Innovation Award were made by the editor of the RMI's monthly magazine, Automobil, Wynter Murdoch.

An eight-person jury, comprising aftermarket and motor industry experts, an automotive journalist and standards authorities assessed the products on the basis of design, engineering, perceived economic and environmental efficiency, user benefit, safety, quality and aftermarket relevance.

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