

Joint press release

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Ergon and BASF revolutionize the bicycle saddle

- ST Core Ultra: innovative design principle combines optimum pressure distribution and active motion support
- Core made of BASF's Infinergy® ensures direct response at low weight

With the ST Core Ultra, Ergon and technology partner BASF are propelling the development of the bicycle saddle to a new level. Using new materials and a groundbreaking design principle, crucial parameters such as ergonomics, comfort and dynamics are being redefined.

The innovative saddle will be presented for the first time at the Eurobike 2017 exhibition in Friedrichshafen, at the RTI Sports stand in Hall B4, stand 102. Eurobike will be taking place from August 30 to September 2, 2017.

Koblenz/Ludwigshafen, 23.08.2017 – There have been no significant changes to bicycle saddle technology since the 1960s, with most models conforming to a standardized principle: rails – saddle shell – padding – cover. The disadvantage of this construction is that the saddle shell has a dual role: it bears the load of the cyclist and is simultaneously the seat shell, being the substructure for the padding. This results in a stiff seat shell, which restricts seating comfort.

Ergon's research team decided to focus on this aspect in particular. This led to the development of the revolutionary TwinShell technology, with an ergonomic core. Two shells function in isolation from each other in a sandwich construction, held in a floating arrangement by a high-performance elastomer damper made of Infinergy®, an expanded thermoplastic polyurethane (E-TPU) developed by BASF. The lower, supporting shell performs a load-bearing function while the upper, flexible seat shell supports the padding.

This design principle not only increases comfort but also allows for an entirely new form

of pedaling ergonomics. As a result of isolating the seat shell from the supporting shell, the saddle follows the natural pedaling movements in all directions. This has the advantage of systematically combining optimized pressure distribution across the sit bones, efficient pedaling ergonomics, excellent vibration damping and active back protection for the first time.

The Ergon core is made of Infinergy®. This innovative material is setting new standards in relation to damping and suspension due to thousands of light and highly elastic foam particles. The high elasticity optimizes the damping of pressure in the seat area. As soon as the pressure impulse has passed, the foam springs back into its old shape. The material retains this property even under continuous load. The Ergon core thus ensures a direct damping response and the highest possible resilience, as well as maximum durability at minimal material weight. This E-TPU foam has already been used with great success by leading manufacturers in the safety and running shoe sectors.

Franc Arnold, Ergon founder and chief executive, is convinced that the ST Core Ultra represents a huge triumph: “The idea of a design principle using TwinShell technology and an ergonomic core has been around for a while, but we were never able to find a suitable material on the market to implement this project. Now, Infinergy® from BASF has exceeded our expectations. I am absolutely certain that Ergon will cause a stir in the bicycle industry with its ST Core Ultra.”

The ST Core Ultra will be available in Europe and the United States from February 2018.

More information about Ergon: www.ergonbike.com

More information about Infinergy®: www.infinergy.basf.com

About Ergon:

„Ergonomics for cyclists. Engineering in perfection“. This is the philosophy of the Ergon brand. To meet this high standard, Ergon operates its own Research and Development department since 2004 at its company location in Koblenz and counts on high-qualified specialists such as: Industrial designers, sports physicians, racing cyclists, sports scientists, engineers, bike enthusiasts – all professional experts in their field. Adding a strong network of German partners for material research, production and testing, makes Ergon to what it really is. A brand that stands from the beginning for – German Innovation – with the aim to develop products that offer the perfect Ergonomics for cyclists.

About BASF

At BASF, we create chemistry for a sustainable future. We combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. The approximately 114,000 employees in the BASF Group work on contributing to the success of our customers in nearly all sectors and almost every country in the world. Our portfolio is organized into five segments: Chemicals, Performance Products, Functional Materials & Solutions, Agricultural Solutions and Oil & Gas. BASF generated sales of about €58 billion in 2016. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (BAS). Further information at www.basf.com.

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