

Tech tyres – Types and styles

TECH TYRES TYPES AND STYLES

There are many different types and styles of Scooter tyres and there are many which have come and gone. We can only talk about what is available now and what we stock these days. And we can only talk about a tyre which are worth keeping or a tyre which only suits a certain style of Scooter.

But even with popular selling tyres manufacturers randomly stop making them!

This is true for Mitas (Sava) and Continental tyres, often taking their best selling tyre off the market for reasons unknown to anyone!

After covid it is even worse with some tyre models not been remade.

In this article you will find we have removed links to our sales site for popular tyres for reasons out of our hands.

There are loads of no named tyres or tyres which are very good but may only offer a number of types so it's not worth stocking them and there are others with well known names which don't have the E markings to sell in Europe so I won't talk about those either.

At MB Scooters Ltd we list 8 different manufacturers, we concentrate on four of them because they offer different variations in types, styles and sizes. We also carry other makes through demand but these offer very little in terms of amount of tyres available and are very limited. With tyres its an ever changing world of – tyre come and tyres go!

People often ask 'what is the best tyre'? 'I've got a suchandsuch and I'm not happy what's better'? etc here I will try to list tyres and what they are like and try to compare tyres to suit you.

SCHWALBE TYRES

We no longer have anything to do with these tyres, please shop elsewhere. Since we pulled out with the problems Schwalbe have stopped making Scooter tyres.

SAVA TYRES WERE BOUGHT OUT AND ARE NOW CALLED MITAS TYRES

As with Swallow tyres been called slippery Swallows, Sava has a bad stigma from the old days as ditch finders! But why? Well it's based on the old B14 Classic Whitewall tyres. Having talked with the Road importers it turns out Sava made two versions, type 1 for the Eastern block who wanted a tyre to last forever and were like plastic and then type 2 which the West Europeans required. Some of the Eastern block ditch finders did find the way into the UK. Today we only get the modern correct rubber with the Sava B14's.

Lets look at Mitas quality, most people have heard of them (well when they

were known as Sava) but even I didn't know some of these things as I was involved with another brand. Mitas make hundreds of tyres for different vehicles and they also make anything rubber, they employ hundreds of people and apart from Heidenau in Germany they are the only European Scooter tyre manufacturer which are located in Slovenia!

Mitas make tyres for lots of manufacturers including Dunlop and in 2011 they made 22'000 tyres for a Honda Scooter, they had 2 failures in 22'000 tyres and Honda gave Sava a right bollocking. Wow only 2 in 22'000 trust me that's nothing but it proves the quality that Mitas now offer and they even tightened up quality control after that! Today Mitas is part owned by Goodyear!

There are two Mitas importers in the UK, 'Road' and 'Race' and both work with each other and both work with feedback to the factory and both have given us the job to promote the Mitas brand in to Scooters. Our aim was to get all Scooter racers onto Mitas within 2 years. There were already racers using them as Charlie Edmunds started using the MC31 Softs on the front some time back and won the championship. Guy Topper also won the championship a year later on Mitas tyres and as I speak June 2013 Mitas got 3 race wins at 3 Sisters. In the wet most are using Mitas Racing wet Monsum MC20, so part of our job is already done as a sales company. When the best in the sport use them obviously others will follow.

Since taking Mitas on MB have specially brought into the country the MC31 350:10 Super Soft's and 350:10 Medium and 100/90:10 Medium compounds which are used in the Italian Race series but never imported into the UK before.

Since we took on the job to sell the race tyres, the majority of racers use them, we did our job. But as usual someone turned up with cheap imports and sales dropped, so we've stopped offering these tyres!

The quality of the Mitas race tyres is the best in the game, the side wall is stronger than others making them safer as a road tyre, they warm up quicker than other tyres and fitting them to rims is hard making them a top tyre.

Mitas like Heidenau also offer a 350:10 full slick non road legal Racing tyre, not allowed on the track but the scrutineers seem to turn a blind eye, not sure whats going on there. Anyway these make ideal tyres to lay down the rubber on a sprint Scooter or make different tyres for a custom bike.

Mitas racing's history has a Moto GP rider who used to test and develop the MC31's with the UK importers. Early race tyres were the MC18 with a racing compound, today that has been removed as a race tyre and now uses a new modern road compound. I still know of some racers using the MC18 as a rear race tyre, they are that good. The MC18 looks like a Raceman to the unknown as it has a similar tread. The Mitas MC18 is about 20mm smaller than a Raceman making them perfect to adjust gearing and fit a Vespa perfect. Today MB have made the MC18 in a 350:10 Whitewall as a direct competition to the Raceman Whitewall and are exclusively distributed by MB to our dealer net work.

But as with every deal you get someone wants your action and our Whitewalls come through Europe from different distributors spoiling our agreement!

Mitas have turned the very popular Racing MC20 Wet Monsum into a road version with a road compound. The Monsum is a similar looking tyre to the Weatherman with block treads. These are such a good all round wet weather tyre they are marked up with the new modern 'Snow and Mud' markings making them a full year round tyre even in the worst conditions. MB have had the MC20 made as a 350:10 White Wall and is the only real modern sports tyre competing with the Weatherman White Walls.

Again are exclusively distributed by MB to our dealer network (until the crooks took over).

MB have been given exclusive rights for both the MC18 Sports Touring tyre and the MC20 Road all round block tread road tyre to be made in Whitewall's as well as Blackwalls.

MITAS RACE TYRES

All Mitas 'race' tyres are all rated at P 93mph, they are also intermediate wet tyres and can be used on the road (apart from the Slicks)

Ideally these can be used for racing in this order and they make a great road race tyres as well.

FrontMC31 Super Soft, Soft or Medium. MC0 Soft or Medium, MC20 Wets
Rear MC31 Soft or Medium. MC0 Soft or Medium, MC20 Wets

Mitas offer these race tyres

350:10 MC31 Super Soft Blackwall
350:10 MC31 Soft Blackwall
350:10 MC31 Medium Blackwall
100/90:10 MC31 Soft Blackwall
100/90:10 MC31 Medium Blackwall
350:10 MC0 Soft Racing Slick Blackwall
350:10 MC20 Racing wets Blackwall, a different softer compound to the MC31's and road MC20's

Mitas offer these Sports Touring tyres and are for front or rear fitting and come with a P 93mph speed rating making them a great all round road tyre.

New from Mitas are these excellent tyres

350:10 Touring force

350:10 MC20 Monsum Road Blackwall
350:10 MC20 Monsum Road Whitewall
350:10 MC18 Road Blackwall
350:10 MC18 Road Whitewall

Mitas cover all aspects of Scooter tyres from a real full Race tyre to a old

timer Vintage/Classic Scooter road tyres. These come in various shapes and sizes. As with the Race tyres they are identified by a number but we have named them to help identification. All Classic tyres come with a J 62mph speed rating.

Mitas Classic B13 are an old style small block tread, looking very 50's, 60's and 70's making a perfect tyre for that old timer Vintage, Classic or restoration Scooter or an ideal Urban run around tyre. These come in Black and Whitewalls.

350:8 B13 Classic Blackwall
350:8 B13 Classic Whitewall
400:8 B13 Classic Blackwall

Mitas Classic B14 is similar to the B13 Old Timer tyre and is aimed at the more popular larger wheeled Classic and Vintage Scooter. Again they come in Black and Whitewall.

350:10 B14 Classic Blackwall
350:10 B14 Classic Whitewall
400:10 B14 Classic Blackwall

Mitas offer a more modern metric tyre in the MC12 and MC13's, still called a classic style but uses a more up to date tyre design and tread pattern. These tyres are aimed at small automatics and Small Frame Lambrettas and Vespas.

300:10 MC12 Blackwall
300:10 MC12 Whitewall
90/90:10 MC13 Blackwall

If you've never seen a Mitas tyre take a look. The quality is excellent. As is back up and resupplies. Good enough for the modern racers, good enough for road riders from Vintage to fully tuned engines. And a clever idea from Sava with their Whitewalls is they dye the Whitewall in a blue ink which stops the Whitewall getting dirty when you're assembling a rim, all you do once they're fitted is wash off the dye with soap and water.

CONTINENTAL SCOOTER TYRES

As with the Mitas suppliers, Conti has backed us as well to be one of their main Scooter tyre distributors and have backed us to help regain a market share from the job we did with the other German tyre brand.

Continental is a high street name if their ever was one, they have been making Scooter tyres for years. Their longest lasting and well known tyre is their Original K62 Whitewall and Blackwall an old style Classic looking Scooter tyre for Vintage, Classic, Urban and Touring Scooters. These need no more explanation except as they have probably been around for longer than any other Scooter tyres and are available in these sizes listed. These are nothing special, just a Scooter tyre of old but cover most vintage Scooters. Don't expect to race around the track on them but they will quite happily do the length and breadth of Britain.

300:10 K62 Original Classic Blackwall
300:10 K62 Original Classic Whitewall
350:10 K62 Original Classic Blackwall
350:10 K62 Original Classic Whitewall
400:10 K62 Original Classic Blackwall
400:10 K62 Original Classic Whitewall

Moving on from the Original Classic, Continental have introduced a slightly more modern 'New Classic' tyre. This also has a small block tread but looks more Vintage in appearance and is the perfect tyre to do a 50's, 60's, 70's restoration on a Classic or Vintage Scooter. This is a really nice restoration tyre with a modernised grip yet still looks period. Available in these sizes.

300:10 New Classic Blackwall
350:10 New Classic Blackwall

Continental also cater for the older Vintage Scooters with their wheel barrow looking LB type tyres for old timer Lambrettas and Vespas. But these days they are made with modern materials to cope with the modern world.

350:8 Vintage LB Blackwall
350:8 Vintage LB Whitewall
400:8 Vintage LB Blackwall
400:8 Vintage LB Whitewall

In later years Continental have introduced a totally new tyre aimed at long distance high mileage use with good grip and a modern sporting look. These tyres get a new uni directional fitment which means they can be fitted front and rear but on the front to aid how long these tyres will last you can fit them in the opposite direction! Sounds strange but works based on load breaking and water shredding. These new tyres come with higher speed and load ratings with reinforced side walls to make for great Rally touring tyre and are ideal for all Lambrettas and Vespas. The only downside to these tyres is their name the 'ContiScooty', great tyres shame about the name..... it's only a name no one sees it when your riding rings around your mates. One advantage is they offer 350 and 100/90 sizes. Available in these sizes

350:10 ContiScooty Blackwall
100/90:10 ContiScooty Blackwall

From Touring to Sports Touring tyres Conti offer 3 Conti Twist type tyres aimed at all round Scooter use. All looking similar with cross wrap tread profile like no other Scooter tyre, these tyres stand out in the crowd.

ContiTwist's are a harder longer lasting compound which look identical to the TwistSport and it's only the tyre side wall description which differentiates them. As with the ContiScooty these come with a full tyre range so you can use a larger rear with a standard front.

90/90:10 ContiTwist Blackwall
300:10 ContiTwist Blackwall

350:10 ContiTwist Blackwall
100/90:10 ContiTwist Blackwall

ContiTwist Sport is a medium grip all round tyre offering a bit of the ContiTwist and a bit of the ContiTwist Race. These only come in one size ideal for standard set up Lambrettas and Vespas.

350:10 ContiTwist Sport Blackwall

The ContiTwist Race is aimed at racing Scooters but are still road legal, the feed back on the road are these tyres are the bees knees in dry and wet conditions. They look similar to the Twists but have less treads putting more rubber on the road, the side wall is as strong as the Sava race tyres again making them a safer road tyre. For some reason these stopped production.

350:10 ContiTwist Race Blackwall

And that's it from Conti they have dropped the old ContiZippys for more modern tyres yet still keeping the older style tyres.

Continental used a Turkish manufacturer for an all weather tyre which we tested and was fantastic and ended up one of our top selling tyres. Then what happened? Conti dropped them!

So what happened? The UK suppliers went direct to Anlas to supply us our chosen tyres from Anlas. I tested the first two Tournees on our motorway challenge and proved a perfect working tyre at all angles in all weathers.

350:10 SC500 Winter grip 2 Blackwall

350:10 Tournee Blackwall

DUNLOP

Dunlop a household name in racing, only offering one tyre worth using and that tyre is the choice of champions. TT range of racing Scooter tyres have been used for years with the BSS0 Scooter racers and the tyre has developed through the TT90, TT91 and now in the last few years the TT92. The TT92 has been used for the rear tyre and Charlie Edmunds has won many a championship on it as has others. I've used the TT91 on the front racing the IOM TT with no problems in torrential rain or in blistering heat! Some racers still prefer the TT91 but that is not made anymore. The TT92 is a very expensive tyre to buy and difficult to get. But when you have one the quality is again excellent. Dunlop do offer another very good all round road tyre but unfortunately is again difficult to get. Both tyres only offer a J speed rating of 62mph, But good enough for the top race boys then good enough for any Scooter rider who wants to push the limits without worry to how many miles you will get from a tyre!

One of the later tyres to come from Dunlop are the Scootsmart, a very good popular tyre.

350:10 Scootsmart

100:10 Scootsmart

350:10 TT92 Blackwall

HEIDENAU

The only scooter tyre made in Germany and as you would expect the quality is 100%. The K61 is a tyre I used on the rear racing the IOM for a week, they are very soft and I shredded the first tyre doing the full TT course keeping up with super bikes. The grip is excellent and holds the road really well. Use them normally and they will last much longer and again work in rain or sunshine. Personally I think they are an ugly tread, but what do I know? If they work as good as I know and you like them then try them out you will not be disappointed. Heidenau have upped their game by making the the K61 into a 93mph speed rating on their 350:10 tyre but kept the 100/90:10 tyre a 81mph rating, still no problem though. Heidenau also offer a block tread mud and snow tyre the K58 these now come as a road and a race version which competes with Mitas MC20 Wet race tyre. The K58 Racer is expensive and hard to get in the Uk so at the moment we're not stocking it.

Heidenau upped their game with the perfect Sports touring K80SR tyre which has been my preferred tyre to use on the road.

350:10 K80SR Blackwall

100/90:10 K80SR Blackwall

350:10 K61 Blackwall

100/90:10 K61 Blackwall

350:10 K58 Blackwall

MICHELIN

A favorite for Scooterists from day one! They have offered various tyres over many years. Today some of the original tyres have been discontinued and replaced with the tyres available today. Some of these tyres have been around since the 1980's and are still Classic tyres that Scooterists still love and use. Michelin offer excellent tyres to suit Urban town commuting Scooters and are ideal for those long distance mile crunching rally tours. Not only do they offer Lambrettas 350:10 as a front and rear tyre but each range offers a 100/90:10 as a rear tyre to improved handling set up. They also offer a full 300 and 90/90 range for small frame Scooters. Michelin tend to make a harder tyre giving a longer tyre life.

Designed as a race tyre from the 1990's the S1 has been a favourite tyre for Scooterists for many years. Today probably the worst made tyre on the market but still popular for those who wont listen.

90/90:10 S1 Blackwall

300:10 S1 Blackwall

350:10 S1 Blackwall

100/90:10 S1 Blackwall

Available from the mid 1980's the S83 has been used by Road Racers to Vintage and classic bikes and forum feedback is there are plenty still using this modern block tread design.

300:10 S83 Blackwall

350:10 S83 Blackwall

350:10 S83 Blackwall high load version

100/90:10 S83 Blackwall

The SM100 is the latest of the modern Michelin traditional Scooter tyre range, ideal for all types of Scooters and again offer a full size range.

300:10 SM100 Blackwall

350:10 SM100 Blackwall

100/90:10 SM100 Blackwall

PIRELLI

OEM for Vespa Scooters for many years and loved by most, a thin width tyre which suits the all round used PX styles. A Classic small block thread ideal for all Classic, Urban or Touring Scooters. Demand is not massive so we may drop this tyre over time.

300:10 SC30 Blackwall

350:10 SC30 Blackwall

SIP

Only 3 Scooter shops have ever made real Scooter tyres and had direct involvement in design, testing and production. I'm sure someone will come along and argue that statement, hey ho, moving on. Stage 6 in Germany had the Heidenau Slick and K58 race tyres made, only any good or racing! MB had various tyres designed and made by Schwalbe for the road as did SIP who have for a few years developed their Performer tyres for road use to work in wet and dry conditions made by V rubber in the Far East. V Rubber do offer good all round tyres and at a very good price. The SIP Performers are ideal for all Small and Large Frame Vespas and Lambrettas. Not only do SIP offer very good tyres they offer the best Tubeless wheels on the market for Lambrettas and Vespas.

300:10 SIP Performer Blackwall

350:10 SIP Performer Blackwall

BGM

BGM are new to tyres and have produced some excellent tyres which are made by Heidenau and they probably have the best tyre range from classic to sports and have lifted the bar with speed ratings to 93mph to 111mph!

350:10 Classic Blackwall

350:10 Sports tubeless Blackwall

350:10 Sports tube type Blackwall

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People often buy with their pockets and how far they will get from a tyre. It's not right as explained in our Scooter tyre Tech article but this is Scooterists so as people ask how far will this tyre go? I'll try to list the tyres we stock into ratings based on compound softness to hardness. There's no fixed rule but it should give you an idea.

1 is super soft to 10 super hard. It's only a guide and the middle ones may be not in a perfect order as different factors effect mileage.

- 1 Sava Super Soft MC31, Sava MC20 Wets
- 2 Sava Soft MC31, MC0
- 3 Sava Medium MC31, MC0
- 4 Dunlop TT92, Conti Twist Race
- 5 Heidenau K61
- 6 Sava MC18, MC20, Conti Twist Sport, Heidenau K58
- 7 Sava B13, B14, Conti Classic, Scooty, Twist, Michelin S83
- 8 Conti K62, LB, Michelin SM100, SIP Performer
- 9 Pirelli SC30
- 10 Michelin S1

So many tyres! So many styles! And so many shapes and sizes! We looked at each type of tyre and did something no one else had done before. We learnt from working with the other tyre brand that we the Scooterists, dealers and wholesalers knew a little bit about Scooters because that's what we did and started to list tyres named to suit the type of Scooter we rode. Check out Continental they named a tyre the SCOOTY! Now I'm sure you as a Scooterist doesn't want a tyre named in that way, even though it's a great tyre it's let down by bigger people than us that think they named a great tyre!

So we looked at the types of Scooters and listed them into categories to try and pin point the STYLE of Scooter so it gives you an image of the Scooter and tyre to suit it. Ok it's only an idea but it's worked especially when a tyre was only given a number to identify it. These are;

- Racing – For the track and the nutters out there who what to use the engines potential
- Sports – Modern performance for the street sleeper from touring to road racing
- Touring – High mileage Rally going or a longer lasting tyre
- Urban – From a Classic mod Scooter to a daily hack
- Classic – For the era of mass Scooter production
- Vintage – Looks to suit the bikes age. Old timers deserve tyres that reflect the era they were created

Thinking a Lambretta model A, B, C, D, E and F is a Vintage style as would be all the early Vespas. A Series 1 and 2 is a Classic as is the GS styles. Series 3 are a Classic but could also be an Urban commuter Scooter along with the SS180's. GP's could be a Urban, Touring or Sports Scooter as could any of

the later range used in modern years as a rally bike or commuter Scooter. And then we have customisation where anything can happen. Like I say there is no fixed rule it's just a way to try and help you pick a tyre to suit you and your Scooter.

- Racing – Sava MC31, MC20, MC0 Super Soft, Soft, Medium, wets. Conti Twist Race, Dunlop TT92, Heidenau K61
- Sports – Sava MC18, MC20, B14, MC12. Conti Twist, Twist Sport, Twist Race, Dunlop TT92, Heidenau K61, K58
- Touring – Sava MC18, MC20, B14, B13, MC12, MC14. Conti Scooty, new Classic, Twist, Twist Sport, K62, Pirelli SC30, Michelin S1, S83, SM100, Heidenau K61, K58. SIP Performer
- Urban – Sava MC18, MC20, B14, B13, MC12, MC13. Conti Scooty, new Classic, Twist, K62, Pirelli SC30, Michelin S1, S83, SM100. SIP Performer
- Classic – Sava MC18, MC20, B14, B13, MC12, MC13. Conti Scooty, new Classic, K62, Vintage, Pirelli SC30
- Vintage – Sava B14, B13, MC13, MC12, MC13. Conti new Classic, K62, Vintage

As with all things..... tyres are a personal choice. It may come down to you have used them in the past and you liked them so you stick with them. Some are so blinkered like this they are not prepared to change even though tyres have come on miles in the last 30 years! It maybe you just want the latest must have tyre that's new to the market. You may have tried a tyre and it was too soft and didn't last and you want a longer lasting one or you want a softer gripping tyre to what you've had before that's given you no confidence in the wet. You may have seen someone riding like a nutter and you want some of that as it's given you confidence in the way someone rides. There's so many factors which effect tyres. One tyre may suit you and another may not, it really comes down to a personal preference. Today at MB we are all Scooter riders we all have a history of riding and using different tyres but today we are fitting and handling them on a daily basis and we get lots of feedback from customers so we are now very experienced in tyres.

If you really have no idea give us a ring and we'll help you out. Tel 01709 869756

You can read more about tyres here

- Tyres – Whats right
- Tyres – FAQ's
- Tyres – Tubeless
- Tyres – Split rims
- Tyres – Tubeless fitting
- Tyres – Tyre store

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