



MICHELIN

A better way forward



Michelin have chosen to launch their new sports touring tyre, the Pilot Road 3, at PalmerSport's Bedford Autodrome, which is in stark contrast to many tyre launches insomuch as it is being done in the UK.

20 Dealers were picked from around the UK to learn about the tyre and also pit their wits around the course. Thankfully the weather was a balmy 23 degrees C and only a flutter of white clouds interrupted the sunshine.

What is unique is though, is that the agenda includes driving four wheeled vehicles around carefully designed racetracks...I think that's a first for any 2-wheel tyre launch!

So, on to the technical stuff. Michelin have sought to move the game on from their impressive Pilot Road 2 and it looks as though they really want to be kings of the wet with the addition of their SIPE technology, which are very small additional tread cuts in the tyre sculpture to act as a break in the water surface tension. This serves to cut through the film of water and put the tyre back into terra-firma. They decided not to re-design things in the carcass and compound area as they felt it didn't need alteration but what they have found, is that in back to back tests they are achieving 4% extra tread life. A short film was shown using data from DEKRA - Europe's leading test company for quality and safety, to show how the tyre can stop shorter in the wet and it proved impressive viewing with the tyre stopping up to 5 metres shorter than the Pilot Road 2. I guess that can make the difference between burying the front end of your bike in a car and not...

After the technical briefing and a spot of lunch it was over to the cars to try and negotiate four different circuits in four different cars. First was a Caterham, which is really a rollerskate with a 2 litre engine attached with none of the airs and graces of more modern cars, then on to the next circuit and we found ourselves in power steering luxury with a Porsche GT2 closely followed by a thrash round in a Renault Clio 'cup' car which tried it's best to launch me off the track numerous times.

Lastly we strapped up into a 450 bhp BMW M3 which was quite mind blowing and I'm really chuffed to say I got round, as I was fully expecting to land the thing on its roof...



Well, 20 people were counted back in, all with wide eyes and grins and it had been a fab day and off we went full of beans after a great days activity. My goodness, doesn't my own car feel slow now...