



Clearly, the new T30 Evos don't lack cornering confidence

Portugal. Warm-up felt quick, though a January morning in the UK may tell otherwise. Both steered impeccably, and on the extremely twisty and fun mountain roads I could also brake while turning with little or no standing up from the front end.

The ride on both bikes was pliable and enjoyable; especially the heavy Yamaha, which normally feels akin to a boxer in ballet shoes – it felt a different bike. Not once did the tyres dent my confidence, and even when the oncoming logging lorries decided to use both sides of the road they went about their business of giving me feel and grip without complaint.

I wanted it to rain so Bridgestone's claims could be verified – but alas we had to endure dry, twisty, quiet roads, so any wet performance will have to wait until we try them in the UK. Bridgestone are confident the T30 Evo will prove to be the leader in wet-weather riding.

The T30 Evo is out now, priced the same as the outgoing T30. Sizes will be limited at first to the most common: a 120/70 ZR17 front, with 160/60 ZR17 and 180/55 ZR17 rears. **R**

Can the T30 Evo put Bridgestone back on top?

Sports touring tyre gets new compound and pattern

By Matt Hull

WANT TO HAVE your cake and eat it? Then Bridgestone's T30 Evo could be the tyre for you.

The T30 sports touring tyre was new just a couple of years ago and gained a good reputation. It lasted a decent length of time, gripped well and gave the sporty feel riders were looking for. But riders also said they wanted more confidence in the wet, so the boffins started to fiddle. The result is the T30 Evo.

The idea is not to spoil what is essentially a great tyre, so Bridgestone retained the T30's carcass. To improve wet-weather performance the T30's tread pattern has been modified by extending the grooves to the edge, creating a rib in the centre that adds stiffness to the blocks in between while accelerating. The changes also mean you have a larger contact patch when leant over. Sub-grooves also come into the centre of the tyre to help channel water away, again for better traction in the wet. Along with a new compound for the front tyre and the sides of the dual-compound rear, the rest is the same as the T30.

Considering the changes are apparently fairly small, Bridgestone's claimed improvements are quite dramatic. They say their own testing has shown they've

increased wet grip by 20 per cent and braking performance by 9 per cent. They were also surprised to see that the new compound and carried-over construction worked so well together that tyre life was extended by a whopping 22 per cent.

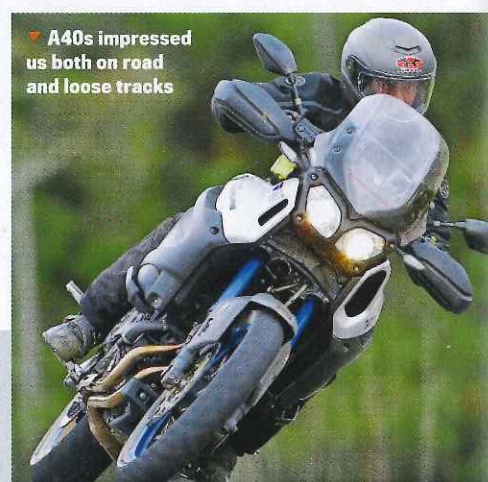
These claims need more investigation than was possible on our initial test rides. We tried them on two bikes – a Yamaha XJR1300 and a Honda CB650F – in

New A40 trailie tyre

Bridgestone's Battlewing adventure tyre has been around since 2006, so it was slightly overdue a revision. But despite its age the Battlewing still had good longevity, stability and dry grip, so Bridgestone decided to mix in a little of the tech used in the T30 Evo to help in the wet. The result is their new A40.

A new tread pattern and compound aim to give better wet grip. Wider grooves on the rear add to the trail look, while again helping water dispersal. The front tyre gets a new steel belt for better deformation and profile.

Testing the A40 was a joy. Fitted to a Yamaha Super Tenere, they proved super stable, super grippy and tremendous fun the whole time. We found an amazing road whose



A40s impressed us both on road and loose tracks

surface was breaking up, but was like a Portuguese version of the Stelvio Pass – mile after mile of left, pick it up, throw right, tighten up, accelerate out, brake, turn left and repeat to fade. The A40 didn't wince once.

It's designed as a 90 per cent on-road, 10 per cent off-road tyre, but on shale tracks they gave confidence and enough grip for some occasional greenlane antics, in the dry at least.

Sizes are just 110/80 ZR19 front with a 150/70 ZR 17 rear for now, which covers the most popular adventure bikes. More sizes will follow.

And meanwhile, there should be plenty of Battlewing bargains to pick up.

A40 adventure tyre replaces the nine-year-old Battlewing

T30's grooves have been extended for better wet grip

