

## History



### WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

From its very beginnings it is obvious what Dunlop set out to do, to deliver a better driving experience for drivers and a better riding experience for riders.

Funnily enough the story does not start on four wheels or even on two, but on three. In 1888 Dunlop's founder, John Boyd Dunlop, was watching his young son riding his tricycle on solid rubber tires over cobble ground. He noticed that his little boy was not going very fast and did not seem very comfortable. In trying to provide his son with a smoother ride and better handling Dunlop took the tricycle, wrapped its wheels in thin rubber sheets, glued them together and inflated them with a football pump. That way he developed the first air cushioning system in history and laid the foundation for the first pneumatic tire.

Less than a year later, Dunlop's invention made its racing debut on two wheels. Enabling a little-known rider to easily beat his stronger rivals in a series of bicycle races, thanks to the advantage given by his pneumatic tires, immediately establishing the role of motorsports as a feature of the Dunlop heritage.

Dunlop immediately patented his idea and started to develop his invention into a commercial venture, founding what quickly became known as the Dunlop Pneumatic Tire Co. Ltd. In 1890 Dunlop opened its first tire plant in Dublin, Ireland and three years later its first tire factory in mainland Europe in Hanau, Germany. By 1895 Dunlop tires were also being sold in France and Canada, and manufactured in Australia and the USA. By 1898 the business had outgrown its Dublin base, and production was transferred first to Coventry, England and then in 1902 to the 400 acre site in Birmingham, England - later known to the world as Fort Dunlop. In 1910 Dunlop planted its flag in Malaya, establishing 50,000 acres of rubber plantation. In 1913 the first Japanese tire factory opened its gates in Kobe. In twenty years, Dunlop had made the solid tire obsolete and grown from

pioneer to the first global multinational company. It manufactured worldwide, and sold worldwide.

Its founding father's entrepreneurial spirit became the ethos of the company, obviously realizing that to be a successful multinational corporation the company would have to remain a pioneer in research and development as well as in business. Dunlop's objective was and is to continuously produce better products to enhance the performance of vehicles and the driving experience of its drivers.

## TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY

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#### TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY

By the start of World War II, Dunlop was the byword for success in a range of activities – not only tires where it reigned supreme on and off the racetrack, but also brakes, wheels, golf and tennis balls, flooring, and other industrial rubber products. It was a supremacy that was to last until the end of the 1960s.

In 1984 came the consolidation of Dunlop's European and US tire operations with its Japanese business, as part of the Sumitomo group. In 1999 Sumitomo and The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company decided on a global alliance, becoming the world's biggest tire producer. Dunlop in Europe is now part of that joint venture encompassing six companies and is embedded within Goodyear Dunlop Tires B.V.

Our technicians and designers in Europe, the USA, and Japan are committed to sharing their expertise with each other for maximum global benefit so that Dunlop manufacturing sites on three continents continue to supply exceptional performance tires. The strength of the Dunlop brand and company manifests itself in eight main areas which define Dunlop's ongoing quest to provide drivers and riders with better driving and riding experiences:

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