



Wheel Products Europe

NEWSLETTER

November 2007

Another innovation from Alcoa!

Alcoa presents new 22.5 x 15.00 forged aluminium trailer wheel

Alcoa is the only aluminium wheel producer to present this new wheel, designed for use on trailers and semi-trailers. It fits the new 455 / 45 R 22.5 Michelin tires designed to increase the load height in trailers to 3 meters as well as the 455 / 40 R 22.5 from Goodyear and Dunlop and other brands that recommend the use of this wheel dimension.



This new wheel & tire size enables a lower floor / more volume with the use of 22.5" hub, axle and brake configurations.

The Alcoa wheel has a 120 mm offset and load rate of 5150 kg. It weighs 32 kilo versus a steel wheel of 49 kilo. This is a weight reduction of 17 kilo, or 35 % per wheel. The total weight reduction can add up to 120 kilo per trailer.

The wheel is available as from January 2008.

Completion of Dura-Bright® production line in Hungary on schedule

In March 2007, we announced the installation of a Dura-Bright® line at the Alcoa Wheel Products manufacturing facility in Hungary. This new line, the third global facility for the Dura-Bright® treatment, was a necessity to increase the production capacity of the popular Dura-Bright® wheels and provide the European customers with efficient and timely delivery.

The new production facility was completed in November, with the official opening early December 2007. The first "European" Dura-Bright® wheels are expected to roll off the line in January 2008. In the meantime, Dura-Bright® wheels will continue to be shipped via Alcoa's European central stock for short term delivery.



New valves

As from November 2007, wheel valves will gradually change. From that production date onwards a new family of 4 valves will cover the entire range of European Alcoa wheels. Wheels come with valves installed ex-works, except for 22.5 x 17.00 wheels.

All 4 valves will have the T-shape grommet that already has proven to significantly reduce the oxidation in the valve hole area of the wheels. These new valves do not need any lubrication / greasing or special care when replacing.

The redesigned nut creates/enables a larger contact surface that evenly distributes the forces in the valve hole area. It also significantly reduces the chance of damaging this area when applying too much torque. This new nut with a hex size of 14 mm fits all 4 valves and is therefore interchangeable.



Pictured from left to right: 40MS-00N, 54MS-00N, 70MS-07N2 and 83MS-00N

All new valves have slotted heads which deliver more grip and easy replacement with the use of a screwdriver.

These valves and nuts are nickel plated and come with a nickel plated dome type dust cap that includes a seal for 100% air tightness.

22.5 x 11.75 WorkHorse™ wheels now with increased load rating of 5 tons Baumeister KG, Germany specify them on trailers

Alcoa's WorkHorse™ wheels (without ventilation holes), which were introduced last year, meanwhile have completed their first months of hard work on construction vehicles. This wheel has been developed originally with Daimler Chrysler for their construction vehicles and is now also available for use on trailers. The company Baumeister KG in Nordkirchen, Germany, equipped two open bulk trailers with these wheels, initially intended for construction trucks on disc brakes, to protect the brakes from sand and gravel.



Mr Franz Baumeister, the owner of this construction materials transport company, stresses the wheels' benefits on construction vehicles. The main advantage, according to Mr Baumeister, is the encasement of the brakes by the wheels. "On one hand, no foreign objects can get to the brakes and subsequently contaminate or damage the brake system. On the other hand, the wheels stay very clean since no lining wear or dirt can reach the outside, which makes cleaning very easy."



Two 3-axle tipping trailers show, during day-to-day operations, that - although these wheels have no ventilation holes - there is no overheating of the wheels. One of the trailers, mounted behind an articulated truck without a retarder, reveals - after a normal trip - only lukewarm wheels. The second vehicle is equipped with a retarder. Here, the temperature increase of the wheel prompted by the residual heat of the brake system is not noticeable at all. The brake discs and brake linings indicate no particular wear brought on by the effect of the heat. Consequently, in both cases overheating is out of the question.

15 years ago, Mr Baumeister was already convinced of the qualities of Alcoa forged aluminium wheels for use in the construction industry. And thanks to the weight savings, all of his investments in Alcoa wheels have paid themselves back several times.

National Express goes for Alcoa Dura-Bright® with XBR™ Technology

National Express, one of the UK's largest coach fleets, has specified Alcoa Dura-Bright® wheels on its new Frontline coaches. A mixture of 65 Volvo and Scania chassis have been supplied earlier this year fitted with Salvador Caetano bodies and Alcoa Dura-Bright® wheels, with another 57 on order before the end of the year.

Richard Ball, Fleet Standards Engineer says: "The Dura-Bright® wheels give the coach an impressive appearance, with the added bonus of no extra work load being created when cleaning the wheels. The fact that the unladen weight of the vehicle is reduced is a further benefit, as we aim to keep the coach as light as possible to help keep fuel consumption to a minimum. With our fleet of 500 coaches, which have almost 1,000 scheduled stops nationwide and cover millions of miles per year, we have to take the whole package into account and the Alcoa Dura-Bright® option on our newest fleet works very well for National Express."



Alcoa Dura-Bright® wheels to be cleaned with a sponge or cloth, using only a mild detergent and warm water!

Alcoa Dura-Bright® wheels are easy to clean; they can be cleaned in the same way and with the same products the cab of a truck is cleaned with.

Do not use abrasives, abrasive tools or strong chemicals on Dura-Bright® surface. The Dura-Bright® treatment can be harmed by the use of abrasive tools and/or strong chemicals. Consequently all the benefits this treatment offers will disappear and the use of abrasives, abrasive tools and/or strong chemicals voids the warranty as well.

The Alcoa cleaning products ALclean and ALpolish should NOT BE USED to clean Dura-Bright® wheels! These products were developed to clean the Mirror Polished wheels.



Alcoa Month of Service

Within the Alcoa Month of Service, an "Action Project" was undertaken in Belgium. This is an activity by volunteers, for a good cause, where Alcoa employees roll up their sleeves. On Saturday October 13, a group of 15 Belgian Alcoa employees performed a variety of jobs in 't Hoeveke, a day-care facility for the mentally handicapped in Lummen, near the village of Paal, where Alcoa Wheel Products Belgium NV is located. This volunteer work was done just in time for the official opening of 't Hoeveke's new building on October 19. After the work, we also presented a \$3,000 check to the directors of 't Hoeveke.



Friderici Spécial: the very first Alcoa customer in Europe! A short history of this transport company



Friderici, founded in 1890, bought its first motorised vehicle in 1915. Since then the company continued to grow and in the 1970s the activities expanded beyond the Swiss borders to the Middle East. All kinds of transports were carried out, from wine to cement and gravel, from containers to parcels, heavy transport and industrial removals – always using modern and optimised vehicles.

This was also the time when the first trucks on Alcoa wheels entered the fleet. The first Kenworth K-100 trucks were imported directly from the United States in 1975. All were equipped with a large cabin, air-conditioning, and... Alcoa wheels.

Besides the visual appearance of these vehicles, there was also a fundamental technical and economical reason for buying these American trucks: despite being very well equipped, the K-100 trucks were notably lighter than the European trucks. From then onwards, Alcoa wheels have been standard on the Friderici vehicles.

“In 2001 the company was restructured and returned to its core business: since then, Friderici Special S.A. specialises in heavy transport, mobile cranes and hoist vehicles, industrial removals and in specific transport solutions for certain customers, such as cement transport.” says Blaise Hochstrasser, General Manager.

“With 140 employees, 80 vehicles and around 180 trailers and semi-trailers, which are partially constructed and produced in our own workshop, we are able to undertake all kinds of special transport from Russia to Saudi Arabia. Obviously, with Alcoa wheels, which offer many advantages compared to steel wheels.”



“They are not only lighter, which is the main reason why we specify Alcoa wheels, but a lot stronger, which is a must with the heavy special loads we carry. On these long journeys, we cannot afford to have to replace wheels frequently. The investment pays itself back...”

We opt for the Mirror Polished finish because we like our vehicles to look their best, which is at the same time an extra motivation for our drivers”.

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