

# A new tyre and some old chat.

Eagle-eyed readers of the CAMS Approved Tyre List for Group N may have noticed a new addition recently – the Toyo Proxes R888R in 185 (max 6.5"rim) and 205s (max 7.5" rim) for 13" wheels, and 185 for 14" (max 6.5" rim).

The overseas blurb states: "The new Proxes R888R takes track performance and grip to a whole new level, with a fast warm up time, increased dry grip and sustained performance over multiple laps and heat cycles... new Proxes R888R precise steering response and feedback to the driver allowing full control in order to optimise lap times..."

So another high performance radial into the mix – they certainly look the goods and I am sure some will bang on a set. (Might be guilty of this myself.)

But taking a step back - is that the look and feel we want for historic touring cars, as we experiment with smaller tyre sizes looking for better turn-in and optimized lap times? (Yep, I'm guilty of this too...) The membership nationally has previously declined 50% aspect radials 'as not looking right', and even if we had not, CAMS would have been highly unlikely to approve them.

The fact remains that our time on 60% aspect radials is limited as we represent such a small market for the major manufacturers. Over the recent years the case has been put to major Japanese companies to supply Australian historic cars across 10", 13" and 15" sizes in 60% aspect, but it simply isn't worth their while.

So what does the rest of the historic racing world do? They revert to historic

racing tyres. Two companies specialize in making classic period-look tyres for historic racing: Dunlop Racing and Hoosier. Both have a tyre for every wheel size the category runs, and they are already on the CAMS list. So in effect there is more or less a control tyre waiting for us in both of these brands.

This was raised a few years ago and one state was not happy to "investigate the use of a control tyre in Group N" so the matter was dropped. However at the August Club meeting the issue was raised again with quite some support; most agreed the racing on period rubber would be better as the field would be drawn together, the fun and the spectacle would be greater with more drifting and the cars would look more period with less negative camber and castor. As a result there was a motion to look into it further and this is on-going.

Then of course the next weekend was the Goodwood Revival, which revved up

this line of thinking even further. Those who watched it live via the web or later on YouTube could not help to be amazed and excited at the controlled drifting in the touring car races and many have said how fantastic it would be to have that sort of spectacle here.

Will it ever come to that? Who knows. But when the inevitable slow down and/or supply cut in 60% aspect radials from Japan arrives it may be a decision made for us. Should we cut to the chase and start thinking about a period control again, right now? Your thoughts would be welcome.

As well, a restriction to six new tyres per meeting to give the less well-heeled a bit more of a fighting chance was discussed the August Committee meeting, the AHTCA delegates have been asked for comment.

In the end it's all about keeping it fair, keeping it fun, keeping it affordable and keeping it historic.

*Chris Ralph*



The look of 185 radial tyres in Australia...



...and period tyres in the UK. Are these inevitable as 60% aspect radials dry up? Could even be fun!



The new Toyo R888R.