



profil

A close-up of a mountain bike wheel with a black Schwalbe tire. The wheel is set against a black background with several colorful ribbons (red, blue, orange, purple) crisscrossing behind it. The tire has 'SCHWALBE' and 'ADDIX' printed on it.

Addix: the new generation of compounds

Four new rubber compounds
for mountain bikes

Schwalbe opts for green: Road Cruiser with Green Compound

The new compound on the tread is composed of renewable and recycled raw materials ... Page 4

Getting the cycling boom on the road!

German ADFC calls for a genuine cycle infrastructure instead of cosmetic measures ... Page 9

Individual and modern: elements for the slatwall

Specialist retailers can use the new slatwall elements to turn their shopfitting system into a Schwalbe shop.

Shopfitting with slatwalls: Schwalbe provides new accessories for brand presentation.



Increasing numbers of specialist retailers are showcasing their goods on slatwall. These modern rail systems offer several advantages

at once since they take up very little space, are flexible in design and can easily be reconfigured again and again. They also look very

high-end whether as a single-coloured back wall, or with a wood and metal background.

In readiness for Eurobike, Schwalbe is bringing out two brackets for the popular rail systems which will hold folding tires, tubes and small parts (lengths: 20 and 40 cm), a wired tire bracket (length: 75 cm) as well as a logo sign (format: 18 x 40 cm). "A modern shop offers the customer a pleasant buying experience, and it emphasises the specialist retailer's expertise. The slatwalls not only promote attractive shop design, they also enable high-end brand presentation with our new elements," according to Philipp Hawle from Point of Sale Marketing at Schwalbe in Germany. As with the other shop system products from Schwalbe, goods are credited to the price of the elements. For further information and to order, please contact your Schwalbe field sales promoter.

Addix: advertising media for the new compound

Schwalbe is supporting the introduction of the four new Addix compounds with free advertising media for specialist bicycle retailers.

Is it possible for specialist retailers to show how compounds perform? Yes, literally by touching it and trying it out. Four black rubber balls with coloured dots are made of the same rubber

compounds as the four new Addix compounds. Simply by dropping them it is easy to see how they differ in terms of rebound elasticity and damping. A small leaflet also provides further explanations about the details of the rubber compounds, their enhancements compared to



predecessor versions, and information about the Addix tire range. A selection of creative stickers completes the offering with wording ranging from "Addix", "Grip is your friend", and the unicorn motif. To order, please contact your Schwalbe field sales promoter.



Arousing curiosity about Addix: four rubber balls in the four Addix compounds, stickers and a leaflet containing all the information.





101st Rund um Köln tour

■ It's the oldest one-day race still held in Germany: Even on its 101st occasion, the cycling classic Rund um Köln had lost none of its appeal. On 11 June, about three weeks before the start of the Tour de France in Düsseldorf, approximately 200 professional cyclists rode the 206-kilometer route around Cologne and through the nearby region Bergisches Land, which is also home to Ralf Bohle GmbH. Andre Greipel, local hero and holder of second place in the previous year had his sights set on victory this year. After 140 victories, he still hadn't won the title of his home town's traditional race.

But on the day of the race, he was slowed down by a flu infection, and instead Austrian Gregor Mühlberger from Team Bora – hansgrohe won his first professional title. Once again, Schwalbe was well represented as a premium sponsor at the two-day cycling festival in Rheinauhafen, with six categories in the professional race. The company had an info stand in the finish line area, and Schwalbe Race Support provided the open-category race with three service vehicles.

Tour de France: Fabio Aru rides two stages in yellow

On Schwalbe Pro One HT, handmade tubular, Fabio Aru not only won fifth place in the Tour de France as well as the mountain jersey, but he also made such a strong showing in the Pyrenees that he wore the overall leader's yellow jersey for two stages. "Taking Froome's yellow jersey was a fantastic feeling",



said the 27-year-old reigning Italian champion from team Astana. Aru won the Vuelta a España in 2015, and wore the leader's pink jersey in the Giro d'Italia for a day. He finished fifth overall in the final rankings of the Tour de France, 2017.

Anniversary tour at the whim of the weather

■ For the 15th Tour Transalp, the organizers (bicycle magazine "Tour") included several peaks along the route, such as the Timmelsjoch and the Stilfser Joch in stages two and three. The route was divided into seven, one-day stages from Sonthofen across the Austrian and Italian Alps to Arco on Lake Garda, and covered 867 km, a difference in altitude of 18.233 meters and 19 passes. But things didn't go according to plan: the fourth and fifth stages had to be cancelled due to severe weather. The roughly 1,000 participants from 35 different nations did not see the sun again until Lake Garda. As in many preceding years, Schwalbe was on hand to support cyclists along the route with its race support vehicle (photo) and a service stand in the finishing area. "Our Schwalbe Pro One tubeless tires were especially popular", reported the race support staff.



Dear Dealer,

This man really did reinvent the wheel. 200 years ago in Germany, Karl Drais designed his Draisine velocipede, the predecessor of the modern bicycle. However, rather than showing signs of old age, it is constantly being reinvented. It rolls forward actively, sportily and trend-consciously, helping to solve problems such as air pollution, noise, lack of exercise and the threat of total gridlock in many cities. But this wonderful vehicle is still performing below its abilities. Just think of its huge potential if an appropriate infrastructure, secure cycle parking, solutions for hire bikes, bike sharing or a complete mobility chain existed!

The Velo-city Conference, the world's largest bicycle conference with more than 1,500 delegates, was opened by the Dutch king and took place in Arnhem-Nijmegen in the Netherlands in June. The conference conveyed the certainty across all the presentations that the great era of the bicycle as a future means of transport is yet to come. For the first time, the responsible EU Commissioner was handed the draft of an EU Cycling Strategy. If implemented, the strategy has the potential to increase the proportion of bicycle traffic in the European Union by 50 percent by 2030.

The successors of the Draisine are fully focused on growth. Whether at association level or with our products, we at Schwalbe are also doing everything we can to promote the bicycle.

Best regards

Frank Bohle

■ Masthead

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The top-selling Road Cruiser is the first tire to roll on the new Green Compound.



Schwalbe opts for green: Road Cruiser with Green Compound

Sustainable upgrade: Schwalbe gives its Road Cruiser a “green” update for 2018. The new Green Compound used on the tread is made from renewable and recycled raw materials.

Schwalbe said to itself, “Cycling and recycling – they’re just meant to go together.” Now the company is introducing the new Green Compound as the third milestone, after GreenGuard puncture protection and tube recycling, for more sustainable tires and tubes.

The “green” rubber compound on the tread provides formidable standard quality in terms of grip and durability. The rubber is now mainly natural rubber which is sourced from sustainable rubber trees. The remainder comes from recycled rubber materials, such as rubber gloves and door seals.

As the tread forms the majority of the composite tire product, it also offers the best options for recycling. René Marks, Schwalbe Product Manager Touring, explains, “Depending on the tread, it accounts for 70 to 80 percent of the total rubber on the tire, thus representing a substantial amount of rubber that will now be produced more sustainably.”

What are the benefits of using recycled material? “It means we consume fewer resources because efficient recycling of

rubber materials and increased use of renewable raw materials saves energy and raw materials when manufacturing new tires. Added to this, René Marks stresses, “We no longer use carbon black for the Green Compound.”

Green milestones

- **Green Guard:** one third of the Marathon’s puncture protection belt is composed of recycled latex products.
- **Schlauch-Recycling:** German specialist retailers can take advantage of a returns system to send used tubes back to Schwalbe free of charge so that they can be recycled and used in the production of new tubes.
- **Green Compound:** the compound on the tread of the Road Cruiser is made from renewable and recycled raw materials.



Schwalbe is deliberately starting its environmentally-friendly makeover with the Road Cruiser all-round tire. This top seller has been delighting specialist retailers and consumers alike for almost two decades. The tire manufacturer is thus demonstrating that the Green Compound is not merely a trial but rather a broad-based development that won't end with the Road Cruiser.

New tread, new sizes – and almost 40 versions

The new Road Cruiser, identifiable from the green labels, rolls on a state-of-the-art, dynamic tread with a pronounced central tread and high-grip shoulder area.

There are also two new versions in the popular 27.5 size: 37-584 and 44-584. This means that the popular everyday tire is available in almost 40 variations with new tread, stylish colors like coffee, brown and creme among them, fitting modern and classic city-bikes as well as popular leather saddles and accessories. The three full-color versions are not equipped with Green Compound though, which is reserved for black treads only.

And when will other models featuring the Green Compound be available? "Haste makes waste," says the product manager. "The next logical step for us is to use the Green Compound for our other Active Line standard tires. Maybe the future generation of the Green Compound will also be suitable for our top models. The process isn't complete, in fact it's only just begun to take off."

Bestseller goes green

As a Schwalbe field sales representative, Holger Schmitt (51) has been looking after the specialist bicycle trade in southwest Germany since 1996.



Interview

What sort of response have you had to the Green compound during initial discussions with specialist retailers and manufacturers?

After tube recycling and GreenGuard, retailers and manufacturers are very open to more sustainable products. So in addition to the advantages for the environment and resource use, there's a feel-good factor which comes from using recycled material in tire production. Overall, the tire has really unique selling points for OEMs, dealers and consumers who are looking for something special.

How important is the Road Cruiser to specialist retailers?

The Road Cruiser has been one of our most widely retail-ed tires for many years. I'm sure the Green compound will further reinforce its acceptance. The new tread design has also been successful. It's grip, rolling resistance and mileage all inspire confidence. And the Road Cruiser is often fitted to new bicycles. So it's quite easy to sell the tires again if the customer has been satisfied with them.

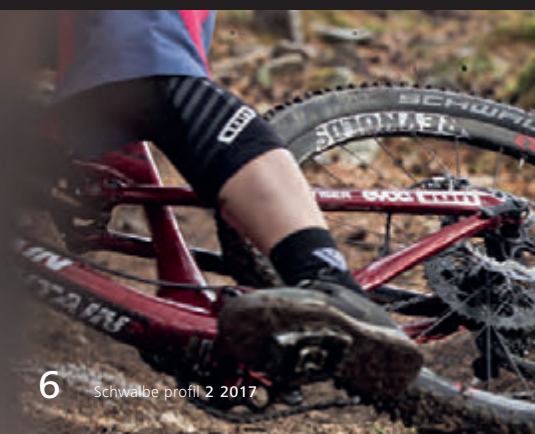


Photo: Nathan Hedges



Photo: Tom Malecha

Red for Speed, blue for Speedgrip, orange for Soft, purple for Ultrasoft: the four Addix compounds will shake up the MTB world. Schwalbe varied the raw materials, dosages and mixing processes to do this.



ADDIX

The new generation of compounds for MTBs

Schwalbe is launching its 13 MTB tires in the Evo line with new compounds developed from scratch.

The rubber compounds go by the name of Addix which solves the typical trade-off between grip, rolling resistance and wear across a much wider range than ever before.

Improving grip and rolling resistance, durability and damping are the typical conflicting aims of tire technology. Enhancement of one property always comes at the expense of another. A single compound can never be the answer to everything. So ultimately it's all about making intelligent compromises aimed at edging that little bit closer to perfection.

To develop a completely new generation of rubber compounds, Schwalbe's technicians didn't leave a single stone unturned, not with the formula, nor with the process or the mixing technology. 30 employees led by head developer Markus Hachmeyer and compounder Wolfgang Arenz have been working on the new formulas and processes since 2015.

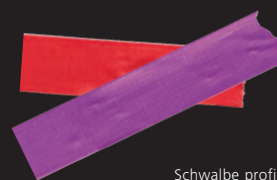
Every rubber compound is made up of natural and synthetic rubbers – along with many other solid and liquid ingredients, including carbon blacks, silica, silanes, oils, sulphur, anti-oxidants. Markus Hachmeyer says, "The quality of these raw materials co-determines whether a tire will be outstanding or just mediocre. And there are countless options for selecting, combining and measuring them. So a good formulation requires highly specialised expertise, high-quality raw materials and extensive testing – it goes without saying that the final recipe is top secret."

The formulas are only one part of the equation. The mixing process is the other. Here the margin for error is tiny. The difference between hitting a home run and making mistakes is minuscule. The interdependence between the parameters which define the physical and chemical process is extremely complex and even changing only one of the parameters can produce an entirely different result. So to achieve success, there are three things that have to interact perfectly: the formulas, the process and the technical equipment – and all three are trade secrets, of course.



"The most sophisticated mixing process of the bicycle tire industry"

The Addix compounds offer a new level of quality in terms of all parameters. Among other things, Schwalbe uses a mixing technology that originates from the car tire industry. Markus Hachmeyer explains, "We now have hardware throughout our plant that we are using to implement the most advanced and precise mixing process in the bicycle tire industry. Entirely new dimensions are opening up to us because we can vary all the parameters indefinitely. It's this high-end mixing technology, controlled by our specifications, that actually makes completely new compound



properties possible. So with ADDIX we're achieving a whole new level of performance and quality.

Never before have we taken such an ambitious step with the compound. It's obvious that with ADDIX we've become even better. To mention but two striking advances: in terms of durability, our tires have become much more impressive across the board, and the low-temperature properties are now excellent, and not only in the soft compounds."

Addix compound in four versions

Schwalbe has created four Addix compounds to meet the specific requirements of cross country, all mountain, trail, enduro and downhill:

- **Addix Speed, red identifier:** for XC racing. There's only one thing that Addix Speed really loves and that's speed. So the rolling resistance has been significantly reduced yet again. It's lower than with the previous PaceStar, but at the same time Addix Speed is more durable and more resilient.
- **Addix Speedgrip, blue identifier:** the universal compound for Cross Country, All Mountain and Trail. Resulting in a version with Addix Speedgrip, for almost all Evo tires. Durability is 62 percent higher compared to its predecessor PaceStar, with grip up by 35 percent.
- **Addix Soft, orange identifier:** a compound for Enduro and Downhill as well as for challenging all mountain and trail riding. It also impresses when used in combination with other Addix tires – more speed: Soft on the front, Speedgrip on the rear. Or more damping: Ultra Soft on the front, Soft on the rear. It's significantly more durable than the previous TrailStar compound. Tip: Addix Soft is also ideal for e-MTBs. Here it really plays to its distinctive strengths

BIKE accolade

Though barely out on the market, Europe's leading MTB magazine BIKE scrutinised the Addix compounds immediately, tested them in the lab and put them through their paces in off-road terrain. The outcome – top marks in all four disciplines of Cross Country, All Mountain, Enduro and Enduro Race! Quote: "The new miracle tire keeps its promise... The new Magic Mary Addix Soft not only demonstrates impressively low rolling resistance in the lab, but also top grip when cornering. Until now this had been a sheer impossibility." (BIKE 6/2017)



of great damping and grip and, due to the optimised low-temperature properties, it does this all year round!

- **Addix Ultra Soft, purple identifier:** Extremely soft compound for tough challenges in Downhill and Enduro. Outstanding damping has been further improved over the previous VertStar compound, while at the same time Addix Ultra Soft is suitable for all-weather use due to dramatically improved low-temperature properties when it comes to grip and damping.

Does the new compound really make such a huge difference? "Absolutely!" says Markus Hachmeyer. "All the tests in the lab and in the field demonstrate that, in the direct parameters as well as in the complex properties, Addix performs considerably better than any other compound before it."

The Head Compounder

Wolfgang Arenz is undisputedly the most highly acclaimed specialist for tire compounder in the bicycle industry, who has now been head compounder at Schwalbe for two years.

What was it that persuaded you to move to Schwalbe?

The unique intensity. Schwalbe only knows one product: bicycle tires. I notice this every day. All the strategic considerations revolve around the one topic, new ideas are always welcome and everyone works towards the same goal. My expertise is in demand not only for new formulas, but also for the entire manufacturing process, and the suggestions I make can also be radically creative. There's targeted investment in innovations for the industrial workflow – perfect conditions for a rubber nerd like me.

How were you received by the team? After all, you used to be competitors.

It was a fantastic experience from day one. When you're as specialised in a subject as I am, it's amazing fun to have real partners by your side in development who understand as much about tires as I do. They're not just satisfied with my first shot at the target. They want more, they want the finished product. It's a new kick, it's wonderful.



Markus Hachmeyer (left), Senior Product Manager, and head compounder Wolfgang Arenz developed the new Addix compounds.

Addix is setting new benchmarks for MTB tires. What's next?

It goes without saying that the innovations made possible by Addix are not just reserved for mountain bike tires. Anyone who knows me, knows how close to my heart racing bikes are. There's no-one but Schwalbe who takes tires for everyday use, for city and trekking, as seriously as they do. That's a challenge I find just as exciting as the sporty high-end tires.

Getting the cycling boom on the road!

Burkhard Stork, Federal Chairman of the German Cyclist's Association (ADFC), Berlin, calls for, "Protected cycle tracks instead of painted cycle lanes." The Federal Association represents more than 160,000 members in approximately 700 local groups and is networked internationally with other associations of the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF).

Interview

Cycle traffic has never attracted as much interest in Germany. Isn't that a good situation overall?

Yes and no. The cycling boom is happening mainly in people's heads. Lots of people have rediscovered the bicycle and there has been a noticeable increase in the number of people cycling in towns and cities but virtually nothing has happened when it comes to developing cycle infrastructure. And where attempts have been made, then they consist of half-hearted measures such as painted narrow cycle lanes that are often obstructed by parked cars. There are no solutions for safely turning left or right. Even so-called cycle paths fail to give any priority to bicycles;



Burkhard Stork, "We need networked mobility with much less car traffic – that's the future."

they are not seriously kept free of through traffic and are therefore merely cosmetic – quite simply, the hope is that people enjoy cycling or cycle in large numbers. The truth is, they don't!

Various studies, such as the German Mobility Panel for example, demonstrate that the proportion of cycle traffic has been stagnating for the last five years. Incidentally, sales figures for bicycles are similar. In 2016, they actually dropped by seven percent. At long last we want to get the cycling boom on the road!

Your aim is to bring about a transport revolution that results in a 40 percent share of cycle traffic in cities. What are your key requirements for this?

More money: Copenhagen and Amsterdam put more than 30 euros per inhabitant a year into cycle infrastructure. Almost everywhere in Germany, this figure is less than five euros. We want 30 euros too. For the federal government, this equates to 800 million euros a year and also needs to be accompanied by

significantly higher funds from both the federal states and the municipal authorities. We also need binding quality standards for cycle infrastructure, for example protected cycle tracks on main roads that can't be blocked by parked cars or that cars can't drive onto. Next point: reorganisation of towns and cities with priority for cyclists, pedestrians and local public transport which often comes at the expense of car parks. Most projects fail on this at local level. We also need secure cycle parking and 30 kph [20 mph] speed limits in towns and cities. Around 30 million people cycle regularly in Germany. The most interesting group is the 60 percent of the population that would like to cycle more but are worried about doing so for various reasons. We can only become a true cycling country when all cyclists, young and old, feel safe. The industry simply can't sell as many downhill mountain bikes as it will earn from 50 percent more commuters who switch to bikes.



Protected Bike-Lanes, rental bikes: Burkhard Stork visits Chicago's bike share program Divvy.

More and more international cities are becoming bicycle cities. Which ones stand out most?

New York became a bicycle city within a few years, as did twelve other cities in the USA that are involved in the industry organisation "People for Bikes". This is a movement promoting cities that are more bicycle-friendly. Paris has become a bicycle city not only due to the Velib' bicycle hire system but also



Bike country now! More than 100,000 cyclists in Berlin demonstrated for this at the ADFC rally.

because of the Paris Plage – a synthetic beach with cycle paths and footpaths along the banks of the Seine from the Louvre to the city hall. It used to only be in place in summer but in the autumn of 2016 they simply left it as it was. The three kilometer long expressway is now completely closed to cars. Two thirds of the traffic looked for new routes but a third simply stayed away. The aim is to make the associated district, the 1st arrondissement in the center of the city, car-free by 2020. In Shanghai, they launched from the start with a million hire bicycles that can be booked via a smart-phone app.

Or Hong Kong where you can obtain an Octopus card that allows you to use all means of transport from hire bicycles and hire cars to underground and overground trains. We need networked mobility with far fewer cars. That's the future!

Tips for tire/rim combinations for Plus-Size models

For 2018, the ETRTO (European Tire and Rim Technical Organisation) is announcing new recommendations for the tire/rim combination of the new Plus-Size and Fatbike sizes as well as Road tubeless. There have been no standards for these sizes until now which has resulted in a diverse selection of rim designs and therefore to a wide range of different characteristics for fitting, pumpability and lift-off safety. In 2017, a new standard was adopted for tubeless straight side rims, so-called hookless rims for low-pressure applications (<5 bar MTB).

Felix Schäfermeier, Schwalbe Junior Product Manager Race and former professional cyclist, is a member of the responsible ETRTO committee. Here he explains three points in advance:

■ **Mountability:** In addition to the tire’s internal diameter, the contour of the rim is



crucial for good, user-friendly mountability. The most important criteria are shoulder diameter and shoulder width, flank height as well as depth and contour of the drop-center. This becomes particularly obvious when fitting a tubeless set-up. The better the rim layout, the easier fitting and pumpability are.

■ **Contour rims/tires:** The inner rim width has a decisive effect on the contour and

width of the tire. In general, the trend today, regardless of segment, is towards wide rims that offer advantages particularly with Plus-Size models. Thus 27.5+ tires harmonise best with an inner rim width of 40 mm. The tire gains more support due to the contour of the wheel rim and provides for a wider contact patch of the tread. This is especially important for e-MTBs. The advantages of a broad rim/tire combination are even more noticeable due to the additional weight and higher drive forces.

■ **Tubeless compatibility:** Wide tires on wide rims (provided the contour is good) enable easier tubeless fitting. Wide rims often have a flat, concave drop-center which means that only a small volume of air is needed to bring the tire to sit on the shoulder.

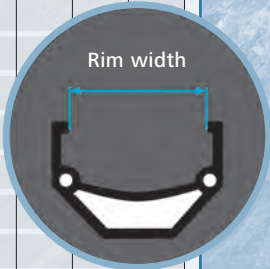
www.schwalbe.com/en/reifenmasse.html

Overview: Which tire fits which rim

Tire width	Rim width combinations in mm																				
(mm)	13C	15C	17C	19C	21C	23C	25C	27C	29C	30C	35C	40C	45C	50C	65C	70C	75C	80C	85C	90C	100C
18	X																				
20	X																				
23	X	X																			
25	X	X	X																		
28		X	X	X																	
32		X	X	X																	
35			X	X	X																
37			X	X	X	X															
40			X	X	X	X															
42			X	X	X	X	X														
44			X	X	X	X	X														
47			X	X	X	X	X	X													
50			X	X	X	X	X	X													
52			X	X	X	X	X	X	X												
54				X	X	X	X	X	X												
57				X	X	X	X	X	X												
60				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X										
62				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X										
65										X	X	X									
70										X	X	X	X	X							
75										X	X	X	X	X							
100															X	X	X	X			
110																X	X	X	X		
120																		X	X	X	X

Rim width

Possible tire width and rim width combinations according to ETRTO.





Handball temple, show stage, school sports hall: the Schwalbe Arena in the center of Gummersbach is used almost every day.

Schwalbe home games

Premier league in handball, table tennis and concerts. The Schwalbe Arena attracts many people from the region to Gummersbach's new center on an almost daily basis. This area located around 50 kilometers east of Cologne in Germany is Schwalbe's home turf.

The Schwalbe Arena is more than just a sports hall. It forms the heart of a completely re-designed former industrial site in the center of the regional town, with a population of 50,000. In the last ten years, Gummersbach's new center – a new railway station, a campus of Cologne University of Applied Sciences, a shopping mall with 70 shops – and the Schwalbe Arena have sprung up where steam generators were formerly produced.

In Germany, Gummersbach is known mainly for handball and when VfL Gummersbach is playing the 4,100 seater hall is sold out. As the main sponsor and namesake, Schwalbe's presence is evident all over the arena as well as on the team kit. Frank Bohle says, "A positive presence with a strong regional focus – these reasons were the deciding factor in our commitment. The reputation of the VfL as one of the most successful club teams in the world, the TV presence and the prestigious venue create a perfect platform for ensuring the Schwalbe brand becomes even more well-known. And of course, it also has some of our heart and soul in it too," Frank Bohle explains.

Table tennis club TTC Schwalbe Bergneustadt also plays in the premier league. Ralf Bohle GmbH has been involved with this club since 1948. Ralf Bohle, father of CEO Frank Bohle, was on the Management Board for almost 50 years – the same length of time that he was CEO at Schwalbe. The tire manufacturer is the club's main sponsor and name-



Photos (2): Klaus Stange / www.avttention.de

Closely connected since 1948: Schwalbe and TTC Schwalbe. Here: German International Benedikt Duda

sake, and around 15 of its 130 members work in the company. They include Heinz Duda, club sports manager and system administrator at Schwalbe. His family and the families of his siblings are all involved in TTC Schwalbe. His son Benedikt (23) not only plays in the 1st team but also in the German national team. Heinz Duda says happily, "Since our promotion four years ago, we have established ourselves in the German national league."

When neither handball or table tennis are being played, the venue belongs to school-children. Children and young people from five schools come to the Schwalbe Arena for school sports. The hall is therefore available to a wide section of the public.



Photo: Philipp Ising

Number one sport in Gummersbach: handball. Schwalbe is the main sponsor of the VfL Gummersbach.

Today it's a temple to handball, tomorrow a sports and multi-purpose hall, and the day after it's a show stage, with Didi Weithöner responsible since summer 2015 for ensuring that everything runs to plan. Although he has worked within the industry for many years, the venue and event manager says that for many months all he's done is "go knocking on doors". Now, however, sold-out concerts are evidence of his success. Both performers and visitors feel comfortable and are happy to come back. "Our aim is to jump on the bandwagon for concerts and comedy, making sure that it stops in Gummersbach on the way from Dortmund to Cologne."



Couple on tour: Jimmy Purchill and Pia Leong, here in South America.

Dorothee Fleck rode through West Africa to Cape Town and is currently returning through East Africa, here in Malawi. Right: Thick-skinned camping neighbours.



The Marathon travellers

Whether in the Bolivian highlands, in Mali or the Himalayas – even in the most inhospitable locations, there is always someone travelling by bicycle. Some 60 adventurers are touring around the world on Marathon tires. Schwalbe supports them with tires and in return receives valuable feedback on the Marathon Mondial, Marathon and Marathon Plus Tour.

At the beginning of 2016 we reported here on Dorothee Fleck. The 52-year old was planning to ride from Laar (Germany) through West Africa down to Cape Town and, if she enjoyed it, she would ride back from there through East Africa. Well, she did it and she's still doing it. She headed through Spain to Morocco and then via Mali, Nigeria, the Congo and Zambia until she hit Cape Town. On going to press, she was taking a break on Lake Malawi and preparing for her return journey through Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt.

In Dorothee's words, "Almost everything in Africa is unlike anything I've ever known before, every country, every tribe is different. But what almost all of them share is the Ubuntu philosophy – a special public spirit that extends far beyond hospitality. I've always been offered a place to camp. When I wasn't feeling well, they tenderly looked after me even when they had virtually nothing themselves. Once, a herd of 15 elephants roamed around my tent. Thankfully I was picked up by a ranger in a pickup truck and brought to

safety. In West Africa there is rarely electricity or water outside the big cities. I found the West African countries more arduous than all the other countries I've been to in the past. There were no tourist spots where I could occasionally rest up so I just had to keep going day after day. But the many magical moments made it worthwhile and I'm really excited to see what's in store for me on the return journey through East Africa." (womenscyclingguide.com/africa)

Film makers Jimmy Purchill and Pia Leong have been videoing their travels since setting out from Germany en route to India in 2012. "Travelling by bicycle is a completely different way of getting to know a country. It's like travelling back in time. You experience a world that hasn't yet been trampled to death by tourists and where people are still happy to receive a foreign person," says Jimmy Purchill.

In 2016, the pair rode from Patagonia to Cusco in Peru. Among their innumerable impressions, one part of the route was especially memorable, "It led us two weeks through the Eduardo Avaroa National Reserve in Bolivia, a high plateau at an altitude of around 4,000 meters with a landscape that was other-worldly. You ride in the shadow of countless volcanoes and geysers whose smoke columns shoot high into the air, past colourful salt lakes – one dark green, the next one sky blue and the most beautiful of all, the Laguna Colorada, with dark red water, populated by thousands of flamingos. I don't know whether anything can beat this. The route was as difficult as it was beautiful. The extreme wind destroyed our tent poles and we had to sleep outside in temperatures of minus 20 C." (www.robohorse.tv/)

Schwalbe Race Support for connoisseurs

This Diamante Azul, "blue diamond" car, brings coffee for cyclists to the most beautiful corners of Mallorca. "It's a well-known fact that cyclists love coffee so we were prompted to serve it to them where they could enjoy the best view," says Jan Eric Schwarzer. The former professional cyclist from Germany runs the MA-13 cycling hotel in Sineu, in the heart of Mallorca, and offers tours all over the island. Somewhere in the middle of nowhere, he surprises his guests with the "blue diamond" and serves them with first class coffee from a professional espresso machine imported from Milan. The Renault R4 from 1985 brings back memories for many people of their childhood, their first car or holidays in the south." In addition to coffee and fond memories, the coffee-car also provides Race Support with spares from Schwalbe. (ma-13.net)

