



RIM-WEAR INDICATORS: NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF CEN TC 333

As a Chairman of TC 333 I must express my concern over the introduction of a German regulation based on a recently-introduced DIN standard requiring bicycles with light-alloy wheel-rims greater in diameter than 500mm to have a means of indicating the limit of safe-wear.

The impression has been given that the subject has been ignored by both CEN and ISO, but I can confirm that, based on German comments, the subject was discussed by an ISO working group and suitable clauses were inserted into the ISO draft mountain-bicycles standard. Also, importantly, the ISO wording has been offered to CEN/TC 333/WG1 on two occasions, the first time being on 25th October 1999 (document CEN/TC 333/WG1 N 14r). However, WG1 has not discussed this important matter. Clearly, the subject has not been ignored by experts of ISO and CEN, and the changes to the DIN standard and the introduction of the regulation are premature.

No one is denying that there is a safety problem associated with worn aluminium rims despite a lack of statistics, and the rest of Europe's cycles manufacturers are actively considering means of improving safety in this respect. Unfortunately, satisfactory solutions are not easy to develop. Some high performance rims are too thin for material to be removed to permit holes or slots to appear, and with some other rims there is a fear that the introduction of indicators will possibly lead to fatigue failures of the rim, thus causing the very failure that the indicators are intended to prevent. It is probable that designs weakened by modifications will need to be subjected to fatigue tests, particularly after they have become worn, before the designs can become accepted.

In conclusion, I am of the opinion that the German regulation should not become effective until the CEN experts have had chance to discuss the problem thoroughly.

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