

High performance on the green

Golf balls with increased flight distance thanks to new LANXESS Nd-BR rubber grade Buna CB21

Leverkusen – As the first commercial application for Buna CB21 neodymium polybutadiene rubber (Nd-BR) from specialty chemicals group LANXESS, the KIRA STAR golf ball is truly a revolution in golfers' sports gear. Its outstanding market success is due in no small part to the properties of this newly developed high-performance rubber grade. Making use of Buna CB21's ultra-high resilience, the KIRA STAR is well equipped to achieve greater flight distances even when hit at low head speeds and with a low impact. As a consequence, the golf balls made by Japanese sporting goods manufacturer Kasco Corporation have sold about 3.5 times more than originally forecast since they hit the market a few months ago.

Buna CB21 is an Nd-BR that is characterized by ultra-high resilience, which efficiently converts the impact energy into kinetic energy and thus flying distance. Most golf balls use a three-piece structure to achieve bounce. But KIRA STAR golf balls get just as much bounce using a two-piece structure: this is because their core is made of Buna CB21, which offers high resilience without sacrificing the ball's impact feel, spin or strength. Kasco adopts the two-piece structure to keep production costs down and offer golfers quality products at reasonable prices. The simple structure also gives full play to the properties of Buna CB21: the ball is designed to take advantage of the characteristics of LANXESS's ultra-high-resilience Nd-BR. That translates into a greater flight distance and a superior impact feel. Furthermore, Kasco's KIRA STAR golf balls employ a cover material that reacts with ultraviolet light to offer greater brightness, making them easy to see from a distance.

The use of Buna CB21 in the KIRA STAR golf ball came about only after extensive joint studies. To ensure maximum process efficiency during production as well as the creation of a superior golf ball,

LANXESS AG

Contact: Udo Erbstößer
Corporate Communications
51369 Leverkusen
Germany

Phone: +49 214 30-54529
Fax: +49 214 30-44865
udo.erbstoesser@lanxess.com

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LANXESS was involved right from the beginning of product development. The KIRA STAR marks the world's first use of Buna CB21 in a golf ball.

"The time-to-market from our first discussions with Kasco to the commercialization of the new ball by the sporting goods manufacturer was very short. This is a prime example of our goal of bringing new and improved products to our global customers more quickly," explained Thomas Gross, head of Technical Marketing and Product Development in LANXESS's Performance Butadiene Rubbers business unit. "We have proven that we can bring our technology-driven products to all our customers worldwide. Based on this success, we are convinced that Nd-BR will also effectively penetrate the tire market because the same property that enables a golf ball to fly a longer distance can enable the production of more energy-efficient tires," Gross added.

LANXESS is a leading specialty chemicals company with sales of EUR 6.58 billion in 2008 and currently around 14,600 employees in 23 countries. The company is represented at 43 production sites worldwide. The core business of LANXESS is the development, manufacturing and marketing of plastics, rubber, intermediates and specialty chemicals.

Kasco is a comprehensive golf products manufacturer possessing world-class expertise. Founded in 1959, the company first entered the golf market by offering sports gloves. Under a corporate philosophy stressing product planning, R&D, and manufacturing, the company went on to earn a reputation for developing and producing fine golf products. In 1986, the company invented the dual-core and three-piece ball, a world first and a product that set the standard for all subsequent golf balls.

With products like its KIRA golf balls and best-selling POWER TORNADO clubs, Kasco continues to make golf fun for men and women of all ages.

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Forward-Looking Statements.

This news release contains forward-looking statements based on current assumptions and forecasts made by LANXESS AG management. Various known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors could lead to material differences between the actual future results, financial situation, development or performance of the company and the estimates given here. The company assumes no liability whatsoever to update these forward-looking statements or to conform them to future events or developments.

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Contact: Udo Erbstößer
Corporate Communications
51369 Leverkusen
Germany

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udo.erbstoesser@lanxess.com

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News Release

Information for editors

You can find further information concerning LANXESS chemistry in our WebMagazine at <http://webmagazin.lanxess.com>.

All LANXESS news releases and accompanying photo, video and audio material can be found at <http://press.lanxess.com>.

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