



# Pirelli Night Dragons

## OUR DYNA SWITCHBACK SCORES SOME ITALIAN LOVE...

### WORDS & PICS DOC

**P**irelli describe their Night Dragon tyres as follows: "Where performance meets the road: a specific tyre for high-performance Harley-Davidson motorcycles. Better adherence, road holding and look than standard tyres for Custom/Cruiser motorcycles. Designed for motorcyclists that need tyres with high performance on the straight and inclining, but with excellent grip and a higher mileage. Excellent performance and great fun to ride with a good balance between reliability and

life of the tyre. Optimised for the new V-Twin engines with more power and higher torque. EPT technology of sporting derivation to optimise the area of contact in order to ensure great stability at high speeds and lightning acceleration."

Well, allowing for a slight awkwardness in what I presume is the translation from Italian to English, I get most of the picture. And with a bit of a look around the Pirelli website I find that EPT – Enhanced Patch Technology – means optimisation of the profile, structure and tread pattern, with the effect of adding eight percent more contact area and thus more power being transmitted to the ground.

Now these tyres were fitted to wife Jane's Switchback toward the end of June, meaning that as I write this they've been on the bike for almost four months. So they've been ridden through the depths of a wet and cold August and some very blustery spring weather, on both slippery wet roads and dry ones.

And although it is Jane's bike and she rides it frequently, on the days she doesn't ride it to work I often jump on it, as these Switchbacks are great bikes to ride. So we've together clocked up several thousand kilometres and have both found these tyres perform superbly.

Pirelli state that the contact patch is the key element in delivering maximum product performance which they have



achieved via both a new dimension and a new shape that allows the use of more durable compounds with increased levels of grip and a larger contact patch of around eight to 10 per cent, which is quite significant.

They also say that the new structure strikes the ideal balance between stiffness and flexibility and supports the bike at every lean angle with opti-

mised pressure distribution on the contact patch. Their innovative tread design is claimed to provide a concentration of grooves exactly where they are needed and that it strikes the ideal balance between style and performance and that with this pattern a uniform and quick warm up is achieved while maintaining stability and traction.

The groove pattern in the





front tyre is designed to cut the water layer, clearing the road surface for improved rear tread adhesion while the calibrated grooves between the rear centre section and the edges of the rear effectively disperse the residual water, while the new structure keeps the tread grooves open in dynamic conditions.

Well there's a lot of technical info they present that makes these tyres sound like the greatest thing since sliced bread, but how do they perform in the real world? Exceptionally well is the answer. We both found these tyres inspire confidence in fast corners, tracking very true and with plenty of grip and feel. Sure, we don't ride quite at superbike speed but with over a hundred ponies at the back wheel, and a propensity to twist the wick pretty vigorously, this Switchback gets along at speeds where you don't want to see a



The new rubber complements the look of the Switchback. Handling is enhanced in all areas.

cop car coming the other way.

Following Jane (my usual position) in the rain a couple of times I observed that these tyres do indeed disperse water very effectively, as claimed. We are yet to determine the overall mileage that these tyres will achieve but at this stage we can highly recommend the Night Dragons.

The front tyre on the Switch-

back is a 130/70-18 and the rear a 160/70-17 and the Pirelli website lists a range of sizes varying from 16 to 21in for the front and 15 to 18 at the rear which is very comprehensive.

You'll find more about these and other Pirelli products at [www.pirelli.com](http://www.pirelli.com). Pirelli tyres are available through Link International ([linkint.com.au](http://linkint.com.au)) or your local motorcycle shop. **HD**