Air-free bicycle tyres on track for arrival in 2019…

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Wot, no air for your bike tyres (and, possibly in the near future, tyres for other vehicles too...)?

Kim Henson reports.

In Tokyo the Bridgestone Corporation has announced that, together with the Bridgestone Cycle Co, Ltd, the company has developed a next-generation bicycle tyre in an effort to realise practical application of their “Air Free Concept”, a technology for creating tyres that do not need to be inflated with air. The companies will advance feasibility studies, seeking to make this new tyre available for sale by 2019.

The “Air Free Concept” (i.e. non-pneumatic) is a technology , first mooted by the firm in

2013, that eliminates the need for tyres to be inflated with air to support the weight, using a unique structure of spokes stretching along the inner sides of tyres. In addition, the resins that are used in the spokes and rubbers help realise more efficient use of resources. Further practical advantages of such tyres include doing away with the worry of punctures, and less maintenance in terms of maintaining air pressure, etc.

Bridgestone Corporation and Bridgestone Cycle adapted the “Air Free Concept” to develop bicycle tyres without punctures. The high flexibility for design granted by resin has also enabled proposals of next-generation bicycles which have never been seen before.

The Bridgestone Group aims to propose new ways of cycling utilising this concept, while also adapting this technology to be used in various other types of tyres.

About Bridgestone Corporation:

Bridgestone Corporation, headquartered in Tokyo, is the world’s largest tyre and rubber company. In addition to tyres for use in a wide variety of applications, it also manufactures a broad range of diversified products, which include industrial rubber and chemical products and sporting goods. Its products are sold in over 150 nations and territories around the world.