

Tire Test Results

Testing the New Michelin Pilot Sport A/S Plus

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August 28, 2008

Tires tested:
[Bridgestone Potenza RE960AS Pole Position \(Ultra High Performance All-Season 225/45R17\)](#)

- What We Liked: Good road manners and stable handling in dry and wet conditions
- What We'd Improve: A small increase in ultimate traction
- Conclusion: An excellent Ultra High Performance All-Season tire
- Latest Test Rank: 2nd (August 2008)
- Previous Test Rank: 1st (May 2008), 3rd (January 2008), 4th (September 2007), 3rd (April 2006)

[Goodyear Eagle F1 All Season \(Ultra High Performance All-Season 225/45R17\)](#)

- What We Liked: Excellent overall dry and wet grip
- What We'd Improve: A modest improvement in ride comfort and more precise steering feel
- Conclusion: A sporty tire for performance drivers
- Latest Test Rank: 3rd (August 2008)
- Previous Test Rank: 4th (May 2008), 1st (January '08), 2nd (September '07)

[Michelin Pilot Sport A/S Plus \(Ultra High Performance All-Season 225/45R17\)](#)

- What We Liked: Well-mannered road qualities, good handling feel
- What We'd Improve: A slight improvement in wet performance at the limit
- Conclusion: Plus really does mean better than before
- Latest Test Rank: 1st (August 2008)
- Previous Test Rank: Not previously tested

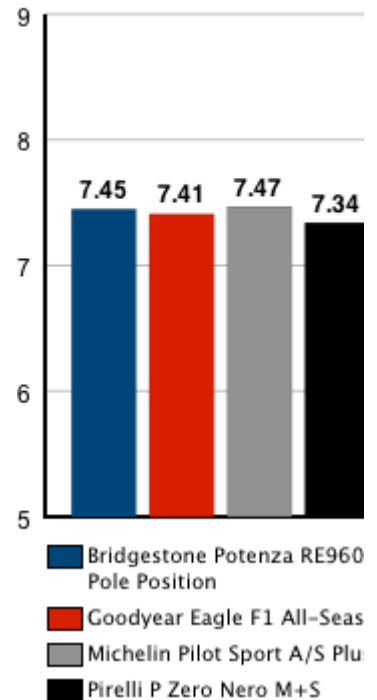
[Pirelli P Zero Nero M+S \(Ultra High Performance All-Season 225/45R17\)](#)

- What We Liked: Plush ride quality (for an Ultra High Performance All-Season tire)
- What We'd Improve: A big increase in wet traction
- Conclusion: A comfortable tire for drivers who don't emphasize wet traction
- Latest Test Rank: 4th (August 2008)
- Previous Test Rank: 4th (January 2008), 1st (September 2007) 1st (June 2004), 1st (June 2003)

Vehicles used:
 2008 BMW E90 328i Coupe

By now, most driving enthusiasts know that tires are more than just round and black. They are not simply injection molded rubber donuts like the old, novelty tire ashtrays. Modern radial tires have dozens of components hidden below their familiar matte black rubber exterior. Tire engineers use a mix of traditional and exotic materials along with sophisticated manufacturing techniques that allow them great flexibility in how to meet their design challenge as they

Combined Road & Track Rating
 (Higher number is better)



develop new products.

Michelin showcased their leadership position in design and manufacturing technology with the original Pilot Sport A/S Ultra High Performance All-Season tire that became an immediate success. Performance driving enthusiasts and drivers of sport sedans and coupes who needed a tire that offered good summertime handling with reasonable winter traction found the answer in the original Pilot Sport A/S. This tire was among the first products from Michelin manufactured using their highly automated C3M manufacturing technology which afforded Michelin engineers some non-traditional internal construction methods, as well as precision placement of multiple zone tread compounds across the face of the tread pattern to optimize traction and tire performance in all seasons.

Lessons learned from the original Pilot Sport A/S combined with other engineering advances allowed Michelin to update the original, simply called the Pilot Sport A/S Plus. Sharing only the tread pattern and basic sidewall styling as the original, the new Pilot Sport A/S Plus features a completely revised internal construction and fine-tuned placement of improved tread compounds designed to elevate overall performance and tread wear. Old and new may look much the same on the outside, but the real changes are invisible.

To find out how well the Michelin Pilot Sport A/S Plus has raised the bar, the Tire Rack team conducted a Real World Road Ride and Performance Track Drive, comparing the Pilot Sport A/S Plus to three other popular tires in the Ultra High Performance All-Season category, Bridgestone's Potenza RE960AS Pole Position, Goodyear Eagle F1 All Season and Pirelli P Zero Nero M+S. Our evaluation used 2008 BMW E90 328i coupes with new, full tread depth 225/45R17 tires mounted on 17x8.0" wheels.

What We Learned on the Road

Our 6.6-mile loop of expressway, state highway and county roads provides a great variety of road conditions that include city and highway speeds, smooth and coarse concrete, as well as new and patched asphalt. This route allows our team to experience noise comfort, ride quality and everyday handling, just as you would during your drive to school or work.

For overall drivability, the Michelin Pilot Sport Plus showed a slight advantage over the others thanks to its responsive steering. The Bridgestone Potenza RE960AS Pole Position was close behind feeling nimble and precise. The Goodyear Eagle F1 All Season displayed sporty handling, too, but felt less precise at higher steering angles. The Pirelli P Zero Nero M&S delivered a nice, light steering feel but was not quite as responsive as the other three tires in the test.

The P Zero Nero M&S did pay back for its softer handling with the best ride quality of the group, doing a good job softening the harshness of sharp impacts and bumps. The Pilot Sport A/S Plus and Potenza RE960AS Pole Position both also did a good job absorbing the rough stuff. The Eagle F1 All Season felt somewhat firm over the medium and large impacts along our route.

Our team also found the P Zero Nero M&S to lead the group for minimal tread noise, producing minimal road noise across the variety of surfaces along our route. The Potenza RE960AS Pole Position produced a nondescript white noise at all speeds that did a good job falling to the background, mostly unnoticed. The Pilot Sport A/S Plus also produced only modest noise levels; although a distinct tone could be heard in the background at lower speeds. The Eagle F1 All Season rounded out our group, producing a noticeable growl at all speeds.

What We Learned on the Test Track

Our 1/3-mile per lap test track course includes 90-degree street corners, lane changes and simulated expressway ramps. Run in both dry and wet conditions, the test track allows our team to experience the traction, responsiveness, handling and drivability normally only encountered during abrupt emergency avoidance maneuvers or competition events.

All of these tires were fun to drive on our dry handling track. The Goodyear Eagle F1 All Season was aided by its sheer level of grip, able to post the quickest overall lap time and highest cornering g forces despite its somewhat sluggish steering feel. The more nimble Michelin Pilot Sport A/S Plus was able to post the quickest slalom sector and a virtual tie in

overall lap time a scant 0.03 second behind the Goodyear. The Pirelli P Zero Nero M&S seemed well-balanced at the limit but felt as if it would benefit from an increase in overall traction. The Bridgestone Potenza RE960AS Pole Position rounded out the group with very progressive feel as the grip limit approached.

In the wet, the Eagle F1 All Season again led the group by a small margin, feeling predictable and sure-footed. The Potenza RE960AS Pole Position was right behind, feeling very stable and easy to control at the limit. The Pilot Sport A/S Plus was nearly as fast around the course but felt somewhat more edgy at the limit. The P Zero Nero M&S struggled to match the pace of the other three tires in the test, lapping the course a full 1.3 seconds behind the others.

Product Details

Bridgestone Potenza RE960AS Pole Position (Ultra High Performance All-Season): The Potenza RE960AS Pole Position with UNI-T AQ II Technology is the Ultra High Performance All-Season member of Bridgestone's Potenza family of performance tires for the drivers of sports cars, sports coupes and performance sedans. The Potenza RE960AS Pole Position is designed to provide year-round driving flexibility by offering predictable handling, traction and control on dry and wet roads, as well as in light snow. [Read more.](#)

Goodyear Eagle F1 All Season (Ultra High Performance All-Season): The Eagle F1 All Season featuring Carbon Fiber Technology is Goodyear's Ultra High Performance All-Season tire designed to give sports car, sporty coupe and performance sedan drivers piece of mind in virtually any weather condition. It was developed to combine crisp responsiveness and confident handling with year-round traction, including in light snow. [Read more.](#)

Michelin Pilot Sport A/S Plus (Ultra High Performance All-Season): The Pilot Sport A/S Plus is the Ultra High Performance All-Season tire member of Michelin's Pilot family of low profile, high-speed tires that represents the evolution of the Pilot Sport A/S. Developed for the drivers of high-end sports cars, sporty coupes and performance sedans, the Pilot Sport A/S Plus is designed to combine enhanced all-weather performance, wet grip and treadwear along with year-round traction, including in light snow. [Read more.](#)

Pirelli P Zero Nero M+S (Ultra High Performance All-Season): The P Zero Nero (ne' ro - Italian for black) M+S Ultra High Performance All Season tire was designed specifically for the North American market to provide year-round traction and handling for cars with sporty dispositions. The P Zero Nero M+S is built using the MIRS technology manufacturing process, Pirelli's most advanced tire design and production system. The P Zero Nero M+S is Pirelli's Ultra High Performance choice for drivers who want to drive their car through America's various weather conditions, including occasional light snow. [Read more.](#)

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