

PAUL BRYANT

Bryan, one of the 36-strong team, finishing carbon wheels at the Dymag factory



# DYMAG RACING WHEELS

The guys who created glorious three-spokers for Sheene and Lawson are back and they're



One of the biggest names in wheels is spinning again

**M**ost British motorcyclists know the name Dymag. The Wiltshire firm were founded in the 1970s and sprang to prominence with their distinctive, three-spoke magnesium wheels which graced the bikes of racing greats such as Eddie Lawson and Barry Sheene before the brand went on to pioneer carbon-fibre in the 1990s.

And although the original concern went into receivership in 2009, Dymag are now back, bigger than ever and targeting expansion through car and bike original equipment (or OE) production in

addition to their road, race and heritage business.

Bought from the receiver in 2009 by Chris Shelley, who ran the company between 1993 and 1997, Dymag resumed production with a skeleton staff in 2011, working out of a solitary unit on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Chippenham.

"I just didn't want to see Dymag disappear," says Chris.

"All the old team were doing different things. I approached four of them to see if they were interested and three came back: the carbon guy, the design guy and the production guy. And that was the

most important part of getting it all up and running again."

Since then an ambitious plan of doing not just bike wheels in magnesium, alloy and carbon for road, racing and heritage machines, but also targeting the car market with advanced carbon wheels has seen the firm grow substantially.

Dymag have now spread to six further units across the same industrial park and now have 36 staff.

They already supply OE wheels to more than one supercar manufacturer and a relocation with further expansion is due next year.

# WHEELS

## growing fast

Dymag produce around 1000 motorcycle wheels a year (sales are up by 40%), mostly carbon or alloy (although around 100 magnesium wheels are also still made annually, primarily for the heritage market). With carbon banned in BSB and WSB, race output is primarily alloy, with Dymag's UP7X seven spoke-design a common sight across UK paddocks.

The future, though, is carbon. "We were on our own in carbon for 15 years," says Chris, who has a pair of carbon Dymags on his own Triumph Tiger 1050.

"It's probably the largest

performance improvement you can make on a bike." And with Dymag's CA5 model weighing in at just 4.5kg, almost half that of an OE wheel, he has a point. In one test, he says, when they swapped OE wheels for carbon, their test bike was two seconds a lap faster at Castle Combe.

As for the expansion? "We either grow or die," says Chris.

"The future and all our investment is in carbon-fibre. The ambition is to move into OE in cars and bikes by gearing up to have a highly repeatable business. The hope is to double the size of our business by this time next year."



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Chris Shelley brought the operation back to life after buying it out of receivership

Dymag make wheels in magnesium, carbon and aluminium



Dymag currently make 1000 bike wheels a year



## DYMAG MOMENTS



### IN THE BEGINNING

Dymag were founded by Max Boxstrom in 1975 and became famous for the world's first three-spoke, die-cast magnesium wheels.

### MOVE INTO CARBON



Dymag made the first carbon wheel for motorcycles in 1995 with an early adopter being Russell Benney's Phase One endurance team. The main advantage, they said, was not just speed, but in reducing rider fatigue.

### CAR EXPANSION



Dymag launched their first car carbon wheels in 2004. The revived company are now a world-leader in carbon fibre automotive wheels and are already an OE supplier to some supercar companies.

### RACING REVIVAL



Dymag now supply racers in BSB, WSB and the TT with their bespoke alloy wheels. These are from Bradley Ray's Buildbase GSX-R fresh from Brands Hatch and in for re-conditioning.

## THE INSIDE STORY



### 1 Design time

Dymag's design team is led by chief engineer Mike Wilson with three design engineers. Here design engineer Stuart Adam works on the hub design for a bespoke CA5 carbon wheel.



### 2 Raw carbon

Tyler Lynch cuts some of the UK-supplied raw carbon for a wheel. A kit of parts then goes to the laying out area.



### 3 Laying out

Bike carbon wheels are laid out by hand in a mould in two halves, with ten layers of carbon, Kevlar and resin.



### 4 Carbon future

Dymag's carbon auto wheels are made with a high-tech injection process, here demonstrated by James Chapman, which the firm are currently in the process of bringing to their bikes wheels.



### 5 Trimming

Carbon wheels are 'deflashed', trimmed and polished by Bryan. The finish is pure carbon.



### 6 Final assembly

Simon puts the finishing touches to a wheel for a Triumph Daytona 1200. Classics are a big part of the business.