

# VITOUR'S REDEMPTION?

Has the Vitour Tempesta P1 Earned Its Place Among 200tw Benchmarks?

Words by Andy Hollis • Photos as credited



TEST MULE

Triple Threat  
Mazda MX-5

Timothy Harper photo

**W**as it too good to be true? A little more than a year ago, our initial test of the Vitour Tempesta P1 rocked our amateur motorsports world. Here was a new tire that was clearly faster than everything else out there, yet it was made by a company unknown in our circles and shepherded by a man with a history of pushing rules limits.

In our test, the P1 was lightning quick—but only for a single push lap before falling off. It also grained heavily, suggesting a short lifespan.

Yet it was marked 200tw, putting it in the Extreme Performance Summer tire category popular for autocross and track use. Was this tire really deserving of that rating? Would rulesmakers allow it? If so, could Vitour manufacture enough tires to satisfy the entire field of competitors?

To make matters more exciting, Vitour just barely squeaked in under the gun to meet SCCA's January 1 rules deadline for offering sufficient sizes and being listed in the TGP Tire Guide. So while the P1 technically met the objective requirements of the rulebook, the SCCA opted to take the conservative approach of excluding the tire from national competition while gathering more information. Other sanctioning bodies soon followed suit.

This proved to be fortuitous, as other irregularities soon surfaced. Tires were sold with manufacturing date codes in the future, a NHTSA violation. Consumer information stickers typically affixed to all production tires were cut in half or missing, removing the “not for highway use” liability remarks that would have made them non-compliant per the rules. One size was even marked with the Mud and Snow (M+S) rating, though the tire was clearly not suited for those conditions.

Questions were also raised about legitimacy of the importation process. The sole U.S. distributor had no business license, and it wasn't charging sales tax for online orders when shipping to states that require collection. There was also concern that import duties were being skirted through clever use of the loophole for competition-only tires.

Fast-forward a year, and all of that appears to be settled, primarily through the efforts of one man, Dallas Reed. A veteran of the import business—he's been wholesaling electronics from Asia for over a decade—Reed is also a motorsports competitor who saw a promising product being mishandled. He made it his mission to right that ship to the benefit of the community through less expensive, longer-lasting tires that were also among the fastest.

Reed set up his own distributorship and has worked tirelessly to get product into competitors' hands in venues and classes where they are allowed. He's also worked closely with the manufacturer to investigate and solve the many irregularities mentioned earlier. Relationships with sanctioning bodies were formed to lobby for approvals. Throughout, he has been thoroughly transparent in the dissemination of information, a clear break from the obfuscation tactics of the original importer.

Speaking of that original importer, Americas Vitour Tire, it has been sent packing by Vitour HQ, drawing the final curtain on a rocky first year. It will receive no new product and are prohibited from using Vitour brands and marks going forward.

Rules makers have recognized this effort with a complete turnaround for 2025—the P1 has been removed from the exclusion list for both SCCA Solo and Time Trials competition. Likewise, other sanctioning bodies like Gridlife and the Ultimate Street Car Association are also now allowing the tire.

Over this past year, Vitour has doubled the size offerings beyond the minimums initially produced, and even more are on the way. A total of 40 will be on offer early in 2025, with a plan for 67 by year's end. That's far more than any other tire in the category.

This includes 245/40R17, our preferred fitment for the Triple Threat Miata we use for the bulk of our testing. Was the heavy wear and “one and done” performance we saw last year due to the odd 225/40R15 test size—one of only two initial sizes? Or perhaps the tire itself has been tweaked by the manufacturer since then? There was even a suggestion that the early tires were not stored properly by the previous U.S. distributor. Time to check back in on the Vitour P1.

We assembled several of the quickest tires in the category as comparables and mounted them all on 17x9-inch Kogeki wheels from Flyin' Miata. Each was given an initial heat cycle with a highway drive to and from the track, bookending six laps at increasing intensity. In addition to scrubbing off the mold release, this process conditions the rubber, making it more durable and consistent. For some tires, it will also make them quicker.

Test day dawned cold at Harris Hill Raceway in Austin, Texas, with temperatures near freezing. As this weather is anathema to a 200tw tire, we waited until the blazing sun worked its magic to begin our work. Test tires were kept warm in our motor home until temps stabilized in the low 60s. We then began with an easy session on the Nankangs to clean the track and dial in our driving. After a quick break to let them cool back down, we got down to business.



## TIRE SPECS

Tire	Size	Treadwear	Tread width	Tread depth	Weight	Price
Nankang Sportnex CR-S V2	245/40R17	200	8.7 in.	7/32 in.	25 lbs.	\$253
Yokohama Advan A052	245/40R17	200	8.9 in.	7/32 in.	22 lbs.	\$273
Vitour Tempesta P1	245/40R17	200	8.7 in.	7/32 in.	26 lbs.	\$263
Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS	245/40R17	200	8.4 in.	7/32 in.	23 lbs.	\$256

### Nankang Sportnex CR-S V2

**Fastest Lap:** 1:25.61

As one of the quickest, most consistent and durable tires in the category, the CR-S V2 has become a favorite for track day enthusiasts and time attack competitors. Its heat tolerance is legendary, standing up to abuse even on a hot day without slowing.

The downside is the need for some initial energy to activate the compound, so it's not a great choice for autocross. Further, Nankang has suffered importation documentation challenges throughout 2024, making it unavailable for a time in many popular sizes. That situation promises to be rectified for 2025, and some new sizes are expected.

Since it wasn't stone cold, the CR-S V2 turned on with just a hard out lap. It did gain a bit more pace by lap two and then stabilized. We love the feel of this tire, encouraging you to push hard down to the apex and giving just the right amount of audible feedback as you near the limit. Recovery from excessive asks is progressive with a minimum of time loss.

### Yokohama Advan A052

**Fastest Lap:** 1:25.48

On the other end of the temperature spectrum is the A052. It needs very little energy to develop full grip, but it heat soaks quickly when worked hard. This is ideal for the short-duration runs seen in autocross. This also makes it a great intermediate wet tire, as constant dousing with water keeps it in the ideal temperature window. Those traits can be modified by shaving or wearing to lower tread depths so the tire becomes more consistent—at the expense of more prep to activate.

At full tread, the A052 is tricky to maximize. The limit of grip is high but vague, and excursions over it generate excess heat that then slows the tire prematurely. Get it right, though, and it's a screamer. We explored a bit on lap one and then put it all together on lap two before the tire got hot and complained audibly. Still, this cooler day was kinder to the A052 than summer-time use where drop-off is more dramatic.

### Vitour Tempesta P1

**Fastest Lap:** 1:24.79

On our out lap, we were struck by the immediacy of the P1's loaded steering response, which took a bit of getting used to. Grip also came in fairly quickly, though we didn't fully trust it on our first timed lap.

The first turn has a 100 mph, flat-out, blind corner entry right at the limit—assuming the tires can handle it. We gave up a couple tenths right there but connected all the dots on the second pass. For the third lap, we were again timid on that one entry, but the rest of the lap overlaid nicely with the flyer. So that's three strong laps in a row, a far cry from the single first-lap flyers we saw last year. Bravo, Vitour.

**VITOUR**<sup>®</sup>  
PERFORMANCE TIRES

Tempesta P1  
ENGINEERED FOR EVERY LAP

FOR  
IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE



A tire that sets records,  
outlasts rivals, and exceeds  
expectations.

Experience superior wear and heat  
tolerance for unmatched reliability.

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## Nankang Sportnex CR-S V2 (retest)

**Fastest Lap:** 1:25.66

To bracket our test and verify that conditions hadn't changed, we reran the first tire—and got the same results as before. Not surprising, as the weather was mild and super consistent. Plus, we were essentially alone that day on track, so there no was no surface evolution from additional traffic.

## Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS

**Fastest Lap:** 1:25.43

We had one more ace up our sleeve for this day. Alongside the Yokohama Advan A052 and Nankang Sportnex CR-S V2, the third leg of the Holy Trinity of 200tw tires is the Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS.

With heat characteristics landing squarely in between the other two, the RE-71RS has found a home both hunting apex curbs and dodging cones. It needs just a little heat to turn on and tolerates it well for multiple quick laps. Our test set was left over from a previous test and had been worn to about <sup>6</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inch, so this wouldn't be a perfect comparison. Still, data is data, so we threw them on. The lap times they then turned this day were consistent with those exhibited when full tread, giving us confidence in their veracity.

The RE-71RS has a fairly direct feel, with cornering loads building in linear fashion. It's especially good at combined loading events, trail braking easily and putting power down early on corner exit. Breakaway is progressive with quick recovery. It's a tire that inspires confidence.

### Conclusions

The Vitour P1 again delivered pace well above the current top dogs in same-day testing, but this time it did so for multiple laps. Further, we saw none of the severe graining we noticed last year with our first set. What a difference a year makes.

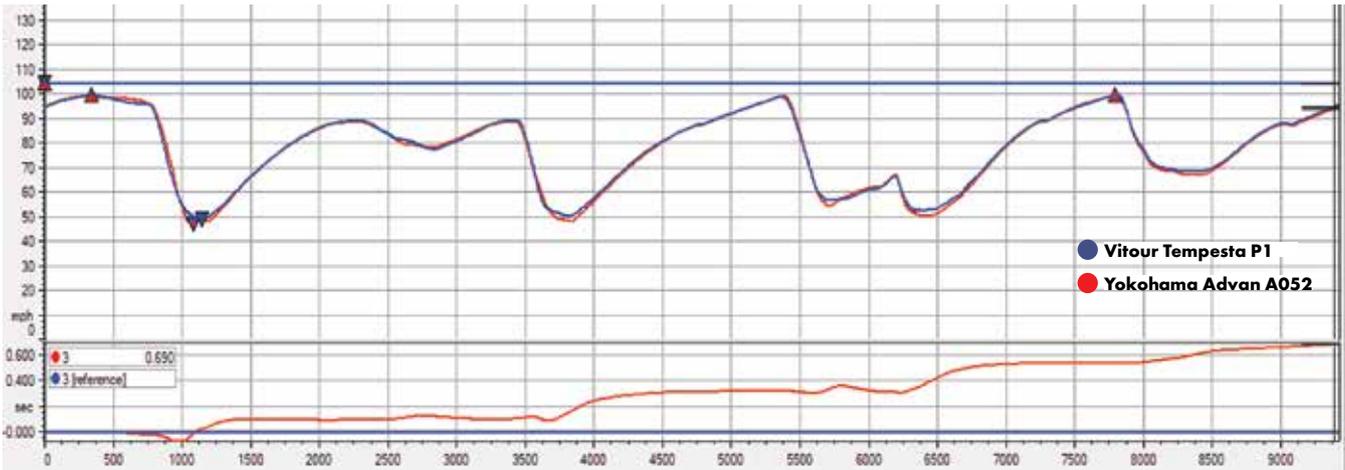
But does this make it an overdog for competition use? Maybe. It's certainly not the wrong answer.

Before we go and put the Vitours on all of our competition vehicles, we need to do some long-term testing to see what happens at lower tread depths. We've run 24s at Harris Hill before on all of those other tires, but only when tread depth is reduced. Will the P1 go faster still with wear? Or will it stay consistent with full-depth pace? Watch this space for more answers.

## TRACK RESULTS

Tire	Lap times				
	1	2	3	4	5
Nankang Sportnex CR-S V2	1:26.00	1:25.61	1:25.72	1:26.19	1:25.98
Yokohama Advan A052	1:25.84	1:25.48	1:25.82	1:25.97	1:26.00
Vitour Tempesta P1	1:25.00	1:24.79	1:24.91	1:25.16	1:25.20
Nankang Sportnex CR-S V2 (retest)	1:25.97	1:25.66	1:26.07	1:26.05	1:25.92
Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS	1:25.56	1:25.75	1:25.43	1:25.77	1:25.84

**FAST LAP: VITOUR TEMPESTA P1 vs. YOKOHAMA ADVAN A052**



What is this sorcery? Data analysis reveals where the Vitour P1 pace advantage lies over the Yokohama A052: slow corner carving and subsequent exit power-up. Slow corners are preceded by heavy braking, generating enormous energy—the A052’s weak spot.

Conversely, the Vitour P1 shakes it off immediately and grip stays high for the duration of the turn. This allows power to be applied early, carrying an advantage down the whole straight. Look at the time delta trace on the bottom as it bumps up with each instance. The speed trace at the top shows the actual pace differential.

**THE P1’S ANATOMY**

Vitour’s first foray into grip tires was the Wraith, designed for the Chinese market. Much like the Goodyear Eagle F1 SuperCar 3R, it featured a tread pattern with a low-void outer half, <sup>5</sup>/<sub>32</sub>-inch tread depth and a 100tw rating.

To meet U.S. market requirements, those same molds were modified, adding <sup>2</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inch to the depth and updating the treadwear rating to 200tw, reflecting the 30% additional rubber. To avoid the heat challenges often created by deeper tread, the outer longitudinal groove was made shallower, giving more support to avoid squirm. The tread compound—dubbed P-01R—remained unchanged. This new version was named the Tempesta P1.



Courtesy Vitour