

## Golf Balls Using LANXESS' Polybutadiene Rubber Dramatically Exceed Sales Forecasts

Kasco's KIRA STAR Offers Soft Impact Feel and Greater Distance Thanks to High Resilience of Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21

**Tokyo** – Golf balls using Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21 neodymium polybutadiene rubber (NdBR) from LANXESS have dramatically exceeded sales expectations. Made by sporting goods manufacturer Kasco Corporation (head office: Sanuki, Kagawa, Japan; CEO: Yoshihiko Takahashi), KIRA STAR golf balls have sold about 3.5 times more than the original projection. Making use of the ultra high resilience property of Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21, the KIRA STAR is favored by golfers for achieving greater flight distances even when hit at low head speeds and low impact.

Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21 is an NdBR that is characterized by ultra high resilience, which efficiently converts the impact energy into flying distance. Most golf balls use a three-piece structure to achieve bounce. But KIRA STAR golf balls get just as much bounce using a two-piece structure: this is because their core is made of Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21, which offers high resilience without sacrificing the ball's impact feel, spin, or strength. Kasco adopts the two-piece structure to keep production costs down and offers golfers quality products at reasonable prices. The KIRA STAR's simple structure also gives full play to the properties of Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21: the ball is designed to take full advantage of the characteristics of LANXESS' ultra high resilience NdBR.

The use of Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21 in the KIRA STAR golf ball came about only after extensive joint studies. To ensure maximum process efficiency during production as well as the creation of a superior golf ball, LANXESS was involved with the KIRA STAR right from the product development stage. The KIRA STAR marks the world's first use of Buna<sup>®</sup> CB21 in a golf ball.

“The time-to-market starting with our first discussions with Kasco and the commercialization of the new ball by Kasco was very short. This is a

LANXESS K.K.  
Corporate Communications  
Kumi Sano  
1-6-5 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 100-8215 Japan

Tel: 03-5293-8005  
Fax: 03-5219-9773  
kumi.sano@lanxess.com  
<http://www.lanxess.co.jp>

Page 1 of 3

prime example for our goal to bring new and improved products to our global customers at faster speed,” explained Thomas Gross, Head of Technical Marketing and Product Development of Performance Butadiene Rubbers business unit. “We have proven that we can bring our technology driven products to all our customers worldwide. Based on this success, we are convinced that NdBR will continue its penetration of the tire market in the Asia-Pacific because the same property that enables a golf ball to fly a longer distance can enable the production of tires to be more energy efficient,” Gross added.

Luke Hui, Marketing Director for the Asia Pacific region of Performance Butadiene Rubbers business unit emphasized, “It is very exciting to see the latest version of LANXESS’ NdBR being successfully launched in the golf ball industry. It indeed encourages us to put in more efforts to bring new products with enhanced performance into the market. Together with our achievements on NdBR in tire and the HIPS industry in the Asia-Pacific, we are confident that LANXESS’ NdBR brings the superior quality demanded by various industries and creates outstanding performance for our Asian customers. “

Kasco’s KIRA STAR golf balls employ a cover material that reacts with ultraviolet light to offer greater brightness, making them easy to see from a distance. They offer high resilience, superior impact feel, and greater distance. Since hitting the market, they have exceeded all sales expectations. On February 19, Kasco will further meet golfers’ needs by releasing the orange KIRA STAR golf balls.



KIRA STAR golf balls in yellow and soon-to-be-released orange

LANXESS K.K.  
Corporate Communications  
Kumi Sano  
1-6-5 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 100-8215 Japan

Tel: 03-5293-8005  
Fax: 03-5219-9773  
kumi.sano@lanxess.com  
<http://www.lanxess.co.jp>

LANXESS is a leading specialty chemicals company with sales of EUR 6.58 billion in 2008 and currently 14,600 employees in 23 countries. The company is represented at 46 production sites worldwide. The core business of LANXESS is the development, manufacturing and marketing of plastics, rubber, intermediates and specialty chemicals.

Kasco is a comprehensive golf products manufacturer possessing world-class expertise. Founded in 1959, the company first entered the golf market by offering sports gloves. Under a corporate philosophy stressing product planning, R&D, and manufacturing, the company went on to earn a reputation for developing and producing fine golf products. In 1986, the company invented the dual-core and three-piece ball, a world first and a product that set the standard for all subsequent golf balls. With products like its KIRA golf balls and best-selling POWER TORNADO clubs, Kasco continues to make golf fun for men and women of all ages.

Tokyo, January 20, 2010  
(2010-J00001JE)

LANXESS K.K.  
Corporate Communications  
Kumi Sano  
1-6-5 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 100-8215 Japan

Tel: 03-5293-8005  
Fax: 03-5219-9773  
kumi.sano@lanxess.com  
<http://www.lanxess.co.jp>

### **Forward-Looking Statements**

This news release may contain forward-looking statements based on current assumptions and forecasts made by LANXESS AG management. Various known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors could lead to material differences between the actual future results, financial situation, development or performance of the company and the estimates given here. The company assumes no liability whatsoever to update these forward-looking statements or to conform them to future events or developments.

Page 3 of 3

### **Information for editors**

Our news releases can be found under the "News" button at <http://www.lanxess.co.jp>.

You can find further information concerning LANXESS chemistry in our WebMagazine at <http://webmagazine.lanxess.com>.

All LANXESS news releases and accompanying photo, video and audio material can be found at <http://press.lanxess.com>.