

“KEEPING PACE” - #87

(Page 1)



BRIDGESTONE™ TIRE TREAD:

The above photographs show a Bridgestone™ automobile tire which blew out while the driver was traveling at 65 mph on an interstate highway. Fortunately, no injuries occurred. The insured driver blamed the tread for coming off the tire to cause the accident. However, the photograph on the left shows two parallel cuts across the grain of the cords.

The photograph on the right shows a 3/8" thick piece of metal I found along the edge of the road by searching the roadway at the accident location. The thickness and length of this metal piece matched the width and length of the parallel cuts in the cords of the tire.

Thus, I determined that this piece of metal was kicked up by the left front tire and thrown into the left rear tire, where it cut the tread and cords of the tire to cause the blowout. The accident was not caused by a tire defect.

(Continued on Page 2):

“KEEPING PACE” - #87

(Page 2)



FLAT TIRE NOT CAUSE:

The photograph shows a flat tire on a vehicle near Pikeville, Kentucky. The driver claimed that this tire blew out to cause an accident as she made a right turn and hit a bridge. But I could see no holes or cuts in this tire. Also, when I repositioned this tire on its rim and pumped it up, it held air. Thus, I concluded that the tire had simply been knocked off its rim during the ensuing accident.

I have investigated accidents in which the tire was deflated like this during the ensuing accident about ten times in my career. In each case, I proved there was nothing wrong with the tire, because once it was placed back on a rim, it held air.

Sincerely,

Frederick F. Franklin, P.E.
Forensic Engineer