

# HUNT 5AM Limitless Ti\_UD Wheelset

## White Paper

Development process for the fastest all-round road racing wheels in the world.

Patrick Brown MEng, Senior Development Engineer. Robert Fields CEng, Head of Engineering. John Marchment CEng, MIMMM, Materials Engineer.

Other contributors from the HUNT Engineering Team included: Peter Marchment MSc, Co-Founder. Ollie Mant, MEng, Development Engineer

HUNT Bike Wheels (TheRiderFirm.cc), West Sussex, United Kingdom

Wind tunnel operation and raw data collection by Ernst Pfeiffer GST Immenstaad, Germany, and Silverstone Sports Engineering Hub, UK

Outdoor aerodynamic testing with Aerosensor and Dr Barnaby Garrood PhD

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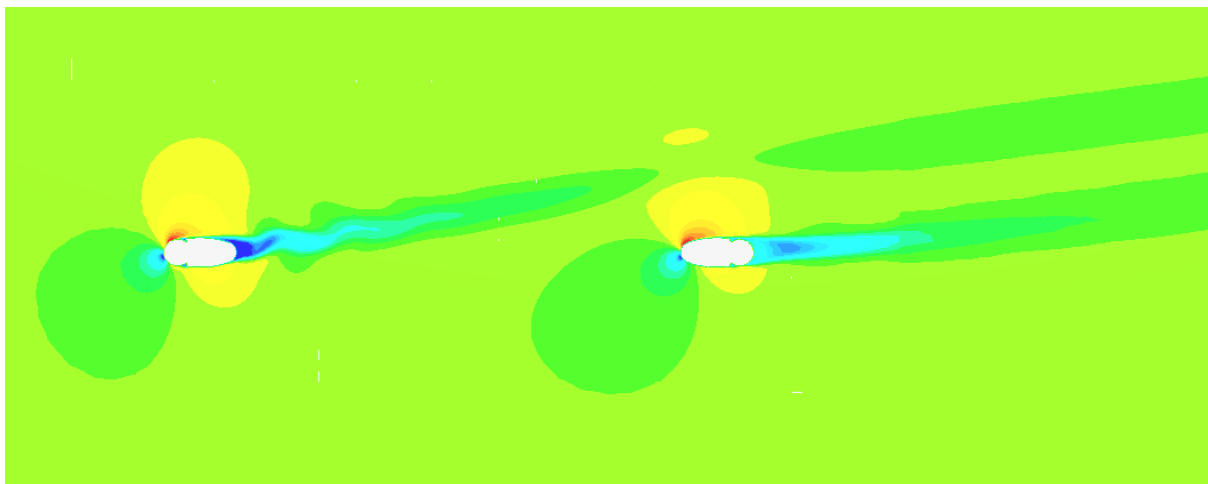
## Introduction

The purpose of this project was to create the fastest wheelset in the world for all round UCI road races. We defined fastest as a combination of aerodynamic drag, wheelset weight, as well as being the most stable wheelset at its depth. The wheelset is primarily designed around 30mm tyres, but must still offer exceptional performance with 28mm tyres.

## HUNT’s Five Key Stages of Aerodynamic Development

For this project we went through 5 key stages of aerodynamic development, including 6 wind tunnel trips and 132 different CFD simulation runs (totalling 80,000 Core hours of computation).

### Stage 1 – Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD)



*Figure 1- Post processing visualisation of air speed around a 34mm wide profile with a 7.5 degree yaw angle*

CFD is a simulation tool that allows us to quickly run through a range of profiles without investment in physical prototypes. Using this method we have achieved good correlation with wind tunnel results of wheel-only testing. However, this is a simplified RANS model (Reynolds-Averaged Navier-Stokes) without spokes. This does not have

the capability to model turbulent transition flows, which is becoming significant at the speeds we are starting to test at.

## Stage 2 – Wind Tunnel: Experimentation and single wheel testing

This is where we use existing profiles or 3D printed prototype wheels not fitted to a bike to allow us to gather data with less noise and complexity, aiding us to make decisions to improve the final design of the wheelset in a simplified test environment.

## Stage 3.1 – Wind Tunnel: Full bike testing with 3D printed prototypes

This is where we use our internal 3D printing capabilities to test the best performing prototypes from the simulation in a real bike with a range of real tyres fitted. The Formlabs 3L SLA printer that we use can print with a layer thickness of 0.05mm allowing us to make very accurate models that can be built with the correct number of spokes and can withstand a tyre inflated to normal pressures. This allows a range of rim profiles to be tested without tooling investment. These 3D printed prototypes have been tested alongside their carbon counterparts and have been found to perform to a level where the difference lies within wind tunnel uncertainty and thus the 3D printed rims are very useful for early shape development purposes.



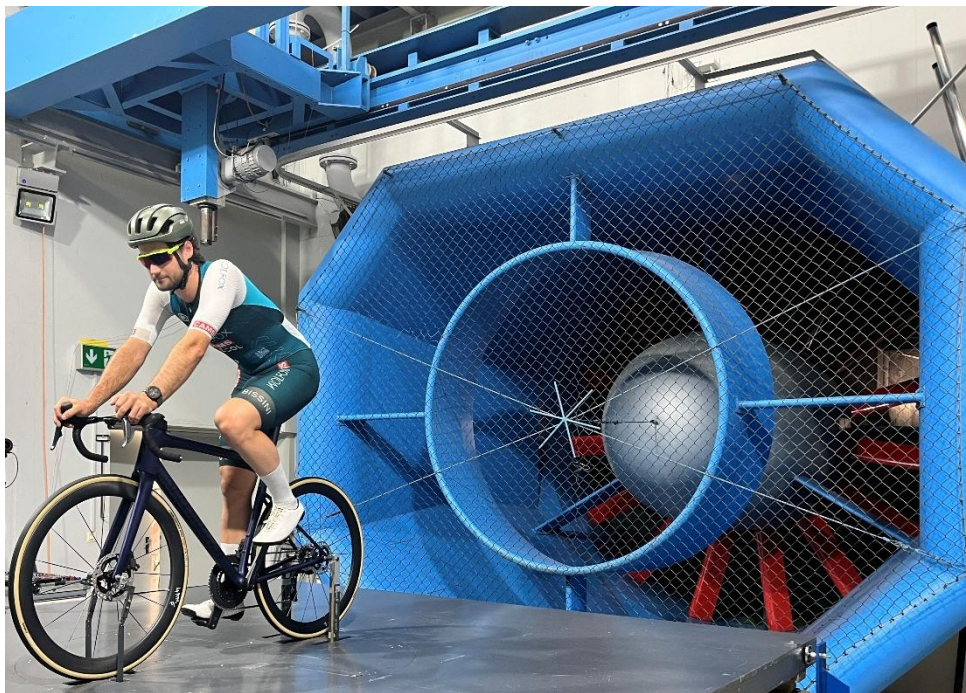
Figure 2 - 3D printed prototype being fitted to test bike at GST tunnel

### Stage 3.2 – Wind Tunnel: Full bike testing with first-off mould final specification wheels

This is where we validate the performance of our final carbon wheelset against a range of other high-performance wheelsets in the controlled, repeatable and simplified environment of the wind tunnel. This takes into consideration the interaction of the rotating wheels and bike frame, but not interaction with a pedalling rider.

### Stage 4 - Wind Tunnel: Full bike testing with a pedalling rider on the bike in full appropriate riding clothing and helmet

This testing allows us to consider the turbulence caused by the pedalling rider as well as the bike frame and wheels, this is particularly important when looking at the aerodynamic performance of the rear wheel.



*Figure 3 - Rider on wind tunnel testing*

### Stage 5 – Outdoor: Real world testing

We have spent a year working with an Aero Sensor system to enable the capture of real-world data which most closely resembles the wheelset's performance in competition. The downside of this is that with extra complexity more noise is added into the results, and this can only be countered with multiple baseline tests and test repeats. This then limits the amount of testing that is possible in one day due to rider fatigue. We also must consider that once the rider is no longer able to hold their repeatable riding position any further, the testing is meaningless.

A systems engineering approach was taken for the development of the 5AM Limitless wheelset, where every aspect of the wheel was looked at to reduce the weight of the wheel system. This system engineering approach led us to use a new spoke technology from Vonoa with spokes weighing as little as 1.7g per spoke, as well as a highly weight-optimised version of our 48 tooth ratchet hub. A high modulus T40 carbon fibre in the rims, was also utilised, with co-moulded carbon spoke hole inserts providing extra strength around the spoke interaction areas of the rim 15 spoke front wheel and 18 spoke count rear wheel. Each HUNT Ti\_UD Carbon spoke by Vonoa has a breaking strength of 450 kgf (kilo grams force) breaking strain, whereas leading stainless steel aero spokes fail at around 290-300 kgf.

## CFD

Over 50 iterations of a front rim were tested virtually to select the profiles to be taken forward to wind tunnel testing.

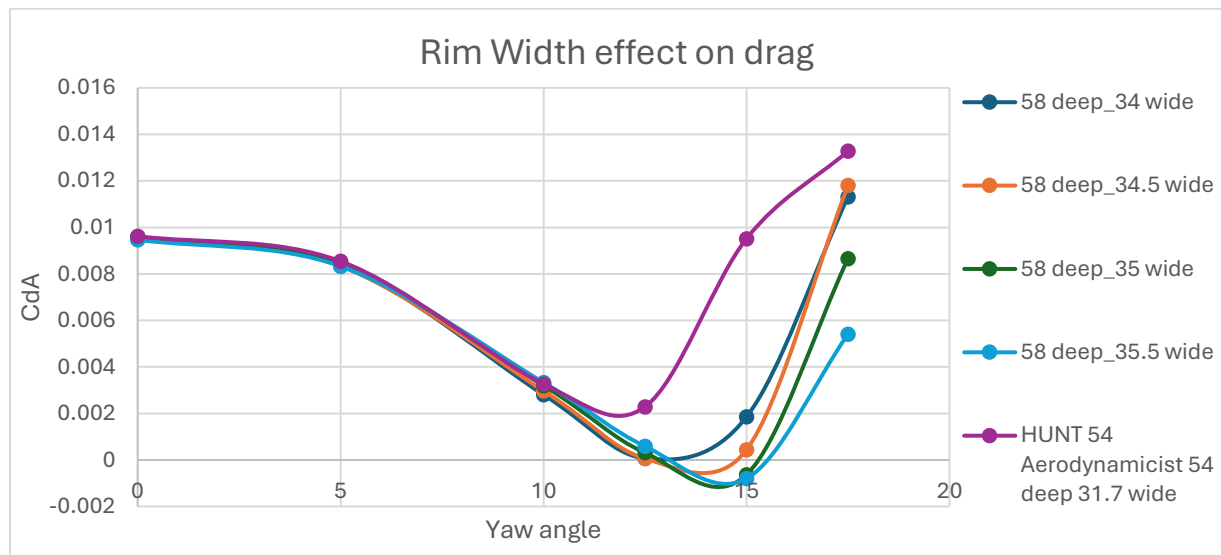


Figure 4-Effect of width on drag 0-20 degrees

Figure 4 is an example of the differences seen in the simulation where the new 58mm profiles, through a range of widths, can perform better at higher yaw angles (angle of wind that the profile is experiencing). You can see clear separation between the performance of the HUNT 54 Aerodynamicist (31.7mm wide) to the potential new shapes, which are made possible using HUNT LIMITLESS Technology. (CdA is the coefficient of drag or how aerodynamically efficient an objects shape is, times it's frontal area, which then gives the total aerodynamic drag.)

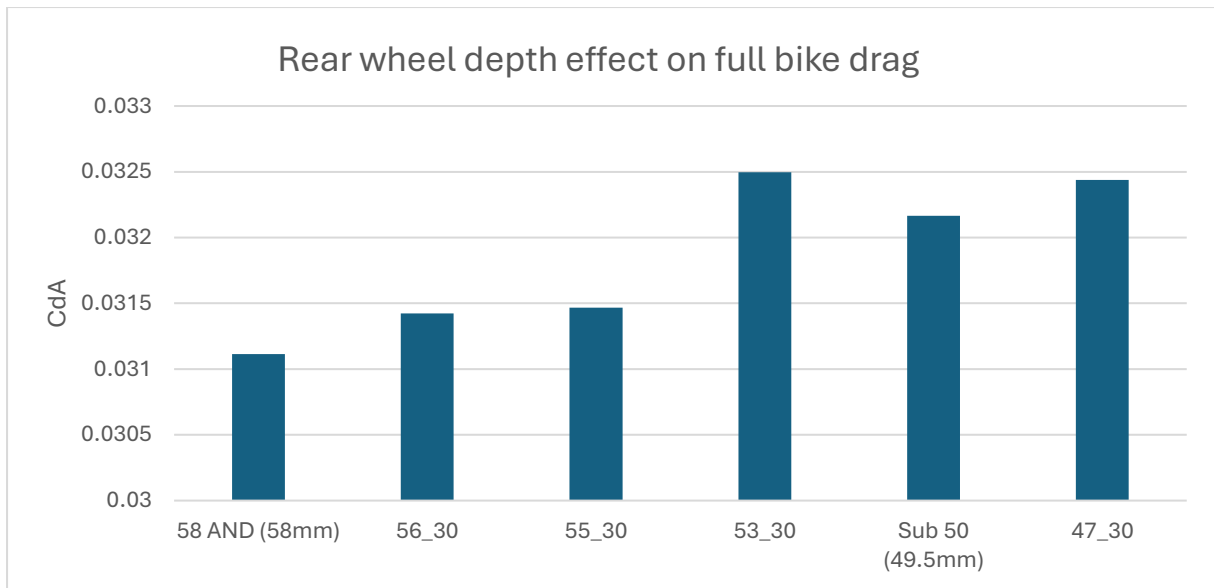


Figure 5 - effect of rear rim depth on wheel and bike drag

Figure 5 shows how the rear wheel depth effects the system drag, all the profiles are 30mm wide to control this factor and the pattern is clear, with slightly shallower wheels being less aerodynamically efficient, as would be expected. However, the differences are small with all the rear profiles being within 0.95% of each other, this difference would be within the uncertainty of the simulation, or due to unaccounted for bike-specific interactions.

## Plastic Prototype testing and experimentation in the tunnel

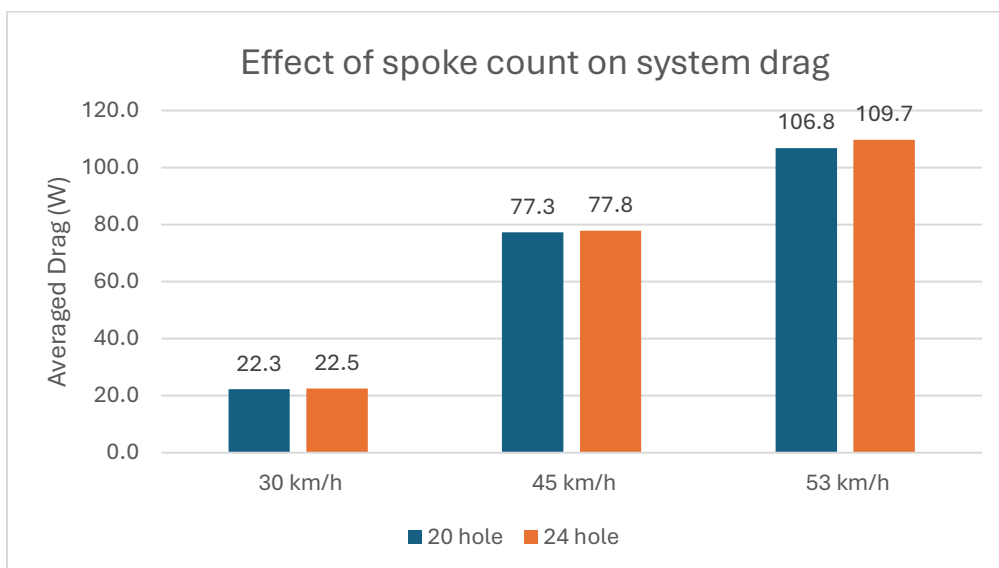


Figure 6 - effect of front spoke count on wheelset drag

We tested two HUNT 60 limitless wheels with identical rims, built with 20 or 24 holes and spokes. (HUNT Sprint Hubs with Steel Pillar Wing 20 spokes). Each wheel was tested with a wind speed matching that of the wheel speed in a bike. (with 53Km/h being the highest wheel speed that was achievable at the GST Wind tunnel)

At all three speeds the lower spoke count had a lower drag, this difference grew as the speed increased, as we theorised. The theory is that the spokes at the top of the wheelset are moving through the air at twice bike speed and since drag increases by a square of speed, the result should be that a small amount of additional drag from a spoke can become significant. This is especially so when you consider that at 45Km/H each spoke is pushing through the fork at approximately 90 km/h, 350 times a minute or 21,000 times in an hour. This means that a slight reduction in spoke count can lead to a meaningful reduction in drag.

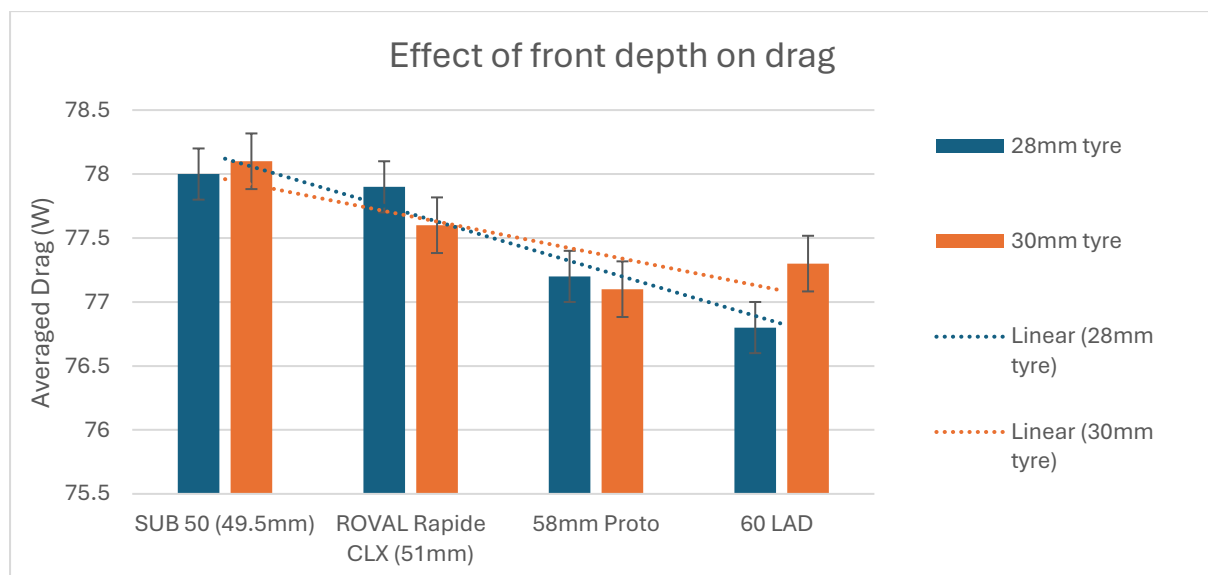


Figure 7 - Effect of front wheel depth on bike drag

Figure 7 shows all the front wheels that were tested, with a 28mm and 30mm tyre and a HUNT Sub 50 as the rear wheel. All front wheels are 34-35 mm wide externally and 21-23mm wide internally. As there are some small variations in width and shape some rims perform better with certain tyre widths, such as the 60 Limitless with the 28mm tyre. On average there is about a 1-watt difference between the 50 and 60mm deep wheelsets or 0.1 of a watt per mm of drag reduction per mm of extra depth between optimised rim shapes.

Averaged drag is calculated using the Mavic wind averaged drag weighting, where the importance of each is weighted by how often it is seen in real life, further details on this are in the appendix.

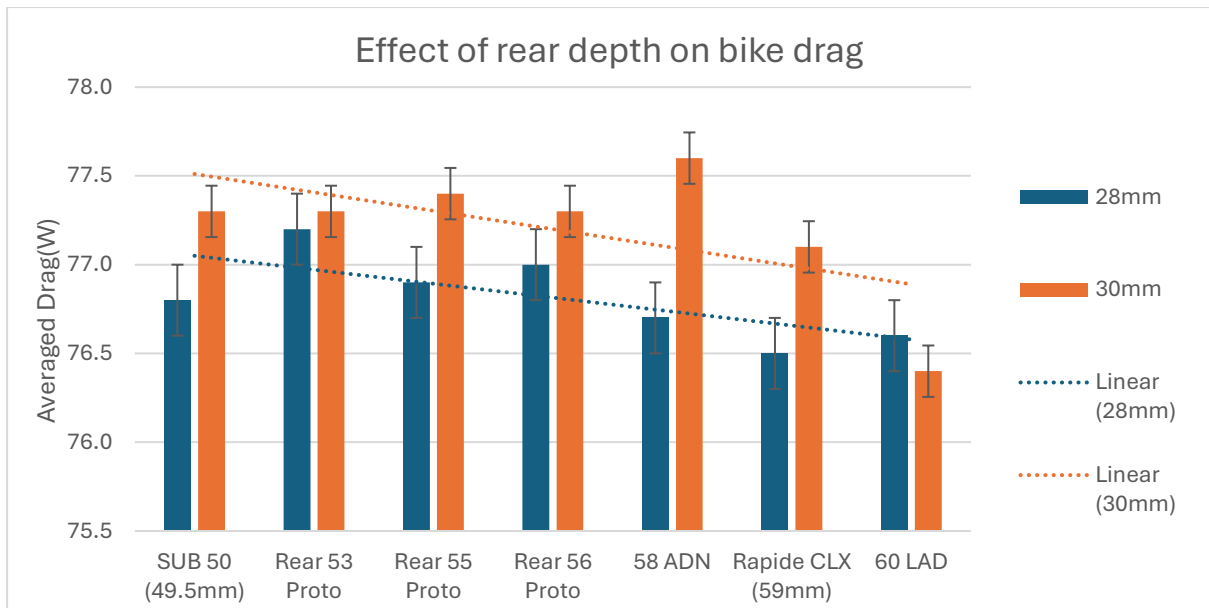


Figure 8-Effect of rear depth on bike drag

Figure 8 shows a range of rear wheels that are all 23mm wide internally apart from the Roval Rapid CLX and 60 Limitless which are both 21 mm wide. We see here that deeper wheels are on average more aerodynamic, but this time the difference between the 50mm rim and the 60mm rim is only about 0.4 watts, or 0.04 watts per mm of rim depth. This is also possibly exaggerated due to the slightly narrower internal width of the two deepest wheels.

Front wheel	Rear wheel	Drag (W)	Test Configuration
HUNT Sub 50	HUNT Sub 50	350.8	SL8 + Rider
HUNT Sub 50	HUNT TT disc	349.3	SL8 + Rider
HUNT Sub 50	HUNT Sub 50	78.4	SL8 No rider
HUNT Sub 50	HUNT TT disc	72.0	SL8 No rider

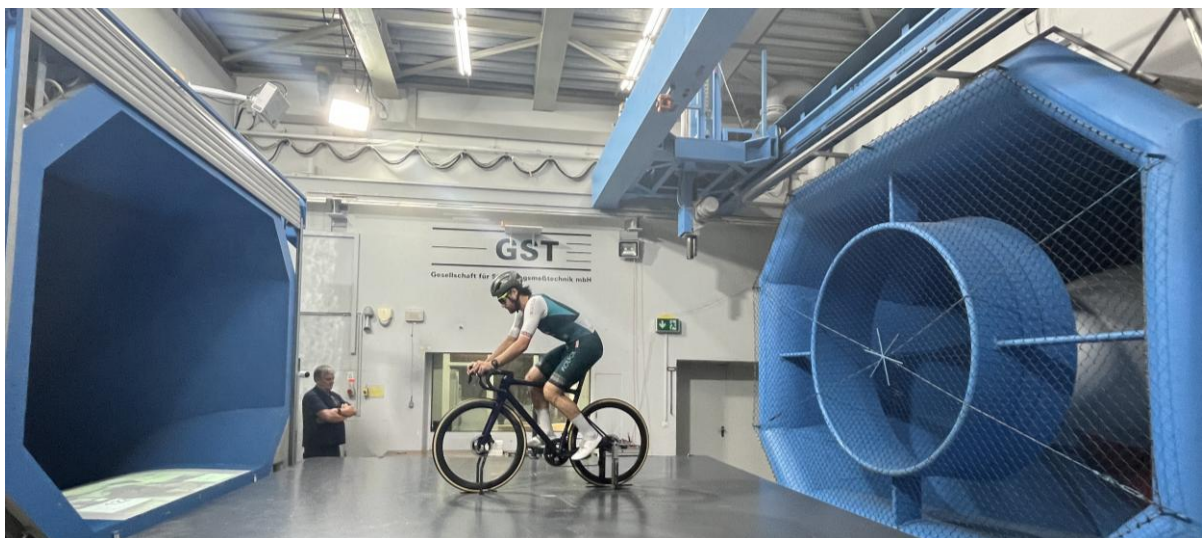
Table 1 - Rear wheel drag with and without rider

Table 1 is the outcome of a test to validate if the differences seen in bike only testing showing that deeper rear wheels are more aerodynamic are maintained when a pedalling rider is present on the bike. After initial experimentation we managed to achieve a repeatability with the rider in an aero hoods position of 2-3 watts.



*Figure 9 - Smoke visualisation of the drag introduced by a rider's leg*

To make the test effective when considering the 2-3 watt repeatability, we chose to test a 50mm deep spoked rear wheel (HUNT Sub 50 rear) and a solid disc rear wheel (HUNT TT Disc). The disc rear wheel is clearly faster than the Sub 50 rear when tested bike alone and with no rider, showing a 6.4 watt difference. However, once a pedalling rider is present this difference is significantly reduced to 1.5 watts. Even when considering the 2-3 watt repeatability, it does seem likely that the difference has closed significantly and that the benefit seen by the solid disc rear wheel are minimised when a rider is present and pedalling on the bike.



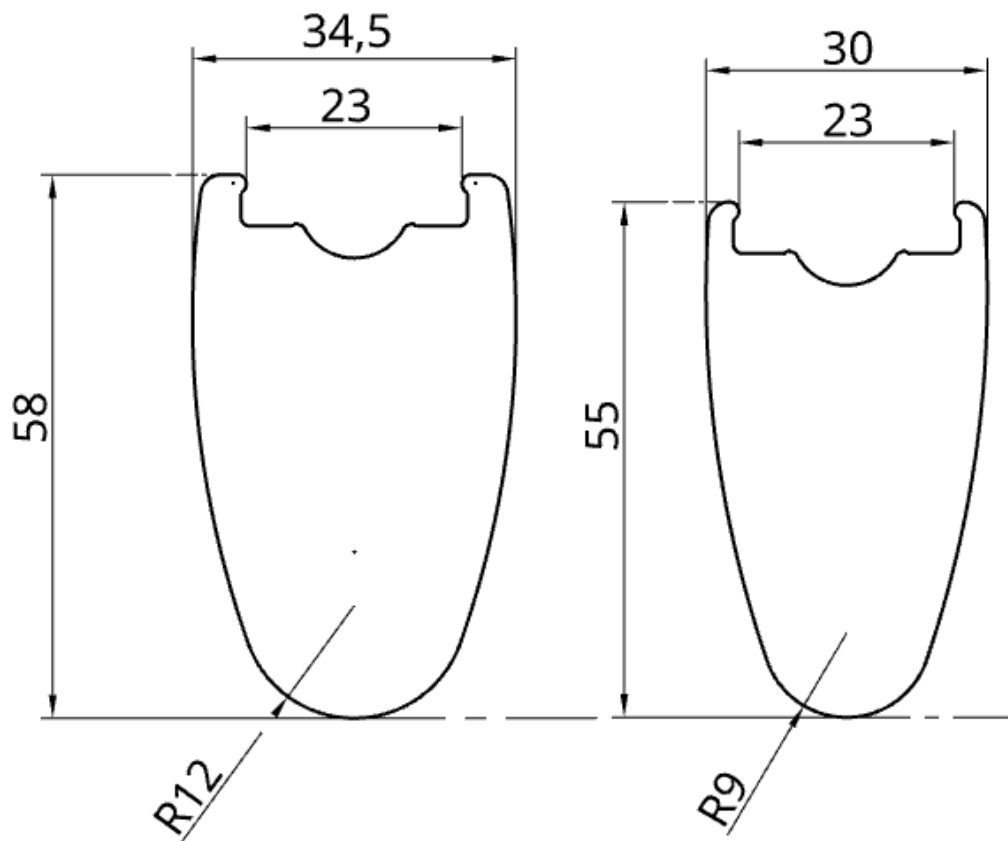
*Figure 10- Rider on test set up at GST*

This experimentation led us to the aero maximised front wheel concept, as we understood that weight can be saved across the total wheelset system by reducing the rear wheel depth with a negligible aerodynamic penalty. We repeatedly saw that when there are a pair of legs spinning at 90-100 rpm creating turbulence across the bike frame

and rear wheel, a few more mm of extra rear wheel depth cannot be seen to give an aerodynamic improvement.

## Carbon Prototype wind tunnel testing

1<sup>st</sup> Wind tunnel - GST June 2025



*Figure 11-5AM Final rim shapes selected*

The final rim profiles chosen were a 58mm deep front rim with 34.5mm external width and a 30mm wide 55mm deep rear rim, this gives a 40 gram saving for the rear rim when compared to the front rim.

These rims were then combined with the new 1.7 gram titanium mandrel UD Carbon fibre spokes and built into 15 spoke front wheels and 18 spoke rear wheels. As can be seen in the testing results, this reduction in spoke count has led to a significant reduction in total wheel system drag.

All Carbon Prototypes were run at 45km/h with the exact same tyres being used in both sizes for all the comparative testing. As tyres are a handmade, moulded product, they have some small shape variances that can give large impacts on the wheelset drag. We

have seen drag differ by up to 2 watts between two tyres of the same brand, model and size, where possible we remove this uncertainty.

49mm-60mm Testing with 30mm Schwalbe Pro One					
Wheelset	Front depth (mm)	Rear depth (mm)	Power watts (Mavic WAD)	Wattage Delta	Weight (g)
HUNT 5AM Ti_UD	58	55	75.06	0.00	1212
HUNT 60 Limitless	60	60	76.83	1.77	1669
Roval Rapide CLX II	51	60	77.02	1.96	1520
HUNT 54_58 Aerodynamicist Steel spoke	54.5	59	77.18	2.12	1468
Enve SES 4.5	50	56	77.48	2.42	1452
DT Swiss Dicut DB ARC 62	62	62	78.86	3.80	1676
ZIPP 404 Firecrest	58	58	78.98	3.92	1450
Shimano Dura-Ace R9270 C60	60	60	79.42	4.35	1659
ZIPP 454 NSW Disc Brake	58	58	79.70	4.64	1428

Table 2-49-60mm depth testing with a 30mm Schwalbe Pro One

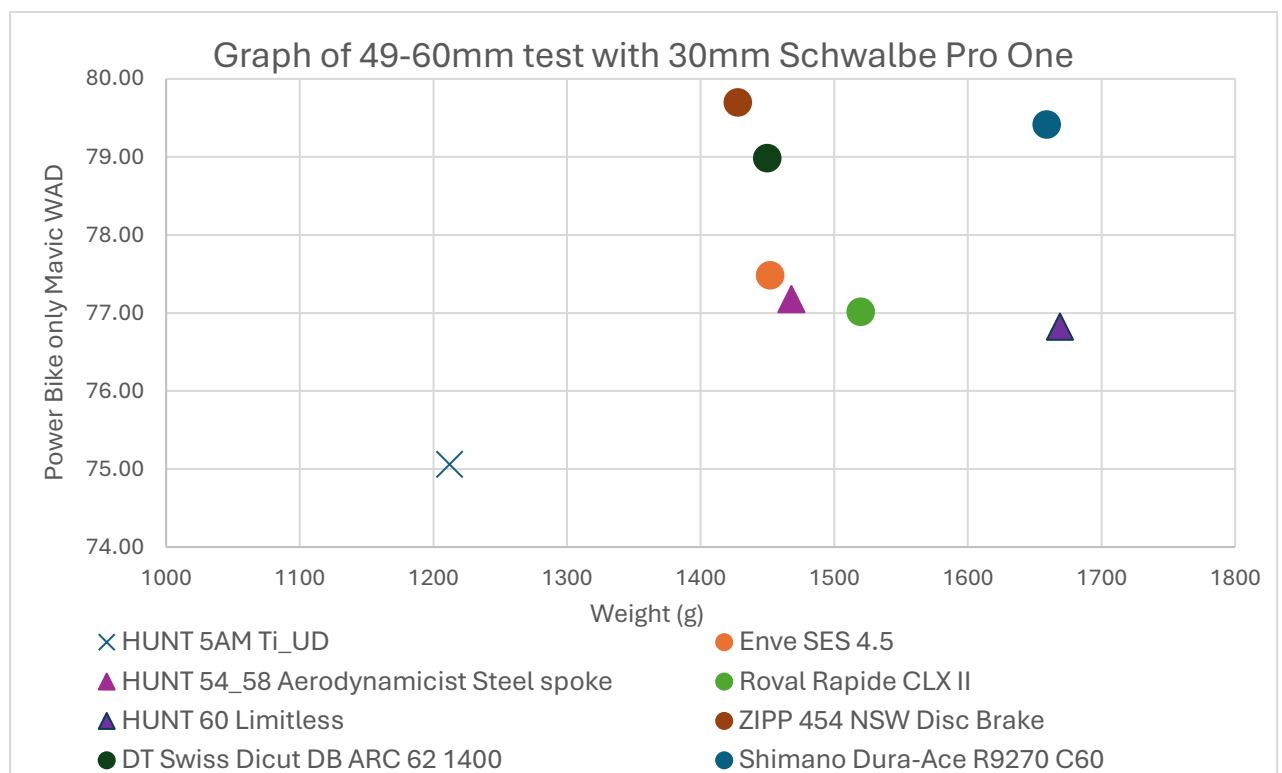


Figure 12 - Weight Vs Averaged drag with Mavic WAD

With a 30mm tyre the HUNT 5AM Ti UD are in a league of their own, being the most aerodynamic wheelset on test while also being the lightest. The next best performers are the Enve 4.5 and HUNT 54\_58 Aerodynamicist wheels.

49mm-60mm Testing with 28mm Vittoria Corsa Pro					
Wheelset	Front depth (mm)	Rear depth (mm)	Power watts (Mavic WAD)	Wattage Delta	Weight (g)
HUNT 5AM Ti_UD	58	55	73.22	0.00	1212
Enve SES 4.5	50	56	74.92	1.70	1452
HUNT 54_58 Aerodynamicist Steel spoke	54.5	59	75.25	2.03	1468
Roval Rapide CLX II	51	60	75.34	2.12	1520
HUNT 60 Limitless	60	60	75.47	2.26	1669
ZIPP 454 NSW Disc Brake	58	58	76.26	3.05	1428
DT Swiss Dicut DB ARC 62 1400	62	62	76.28	3.06	1676
ZIPP 404 Firecrest	58	58	76.30	3.09	1450
Shimano Dura-Ace R9270 C60	60	60	76.98	3.76	1659

Table 3-49-60mm depth testing with a 28mm Vittoria Corsa Pro

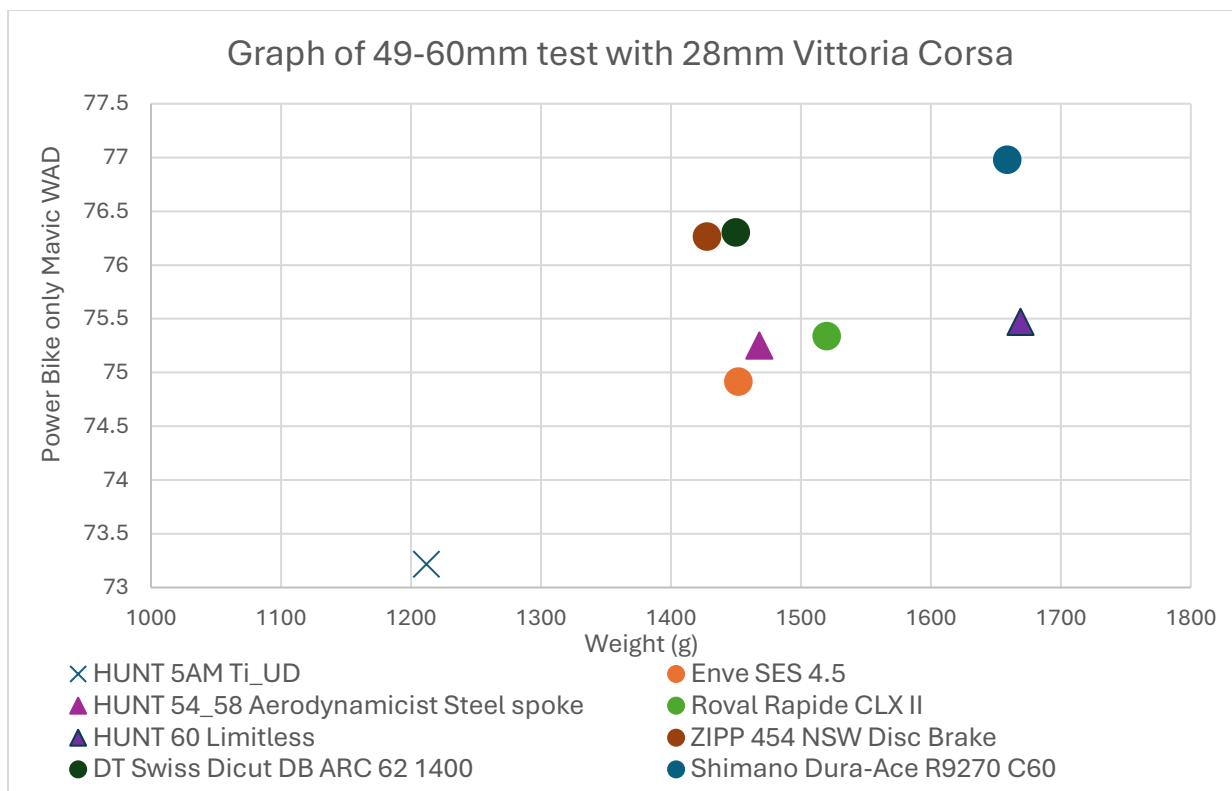


Figure 13 - Weight Vs Averaged drag with Mavic WAD

The HUNT 5AM TI-UD is also the fastest with the 28mm tyre with a 1.7 watt margin to the Enve 4.5 which is the second most aerodynamic, while the 5AM is 230g lighter. When compared to the Zipp 454 NSW the difference is 3 watts, which is 4% of the total bike and wheel drag. The HUNT 5AM TI-UD is 216g lighter than the Zipp 454 NSW, a product that has been proven at the very highest level in cycling.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Wind tunnel – Silverstone Sports Engineering Hub January 2026



Figure 14 - Test wheels at SSE Tunnel

The first GST wind tunnel was completed shortly before other wheel brands refreshed their range of wheels, with Roval, Scope and Enve releasing new or updated versions of their 50+mm deep products. As such we felt it was appropriate to complete another test against these new products.

This test was carried out using the 30mm Schwalbe pro one tyre at 45 km/h, a more detailed method can be found in the appendix.

Wheelset	Mavic WAD (Watts Drag)	Front Depth (mm)	Rear depth (mm)	Delta (Watts Drag)	weight (g)
HUNT 5AM Limitless Ti-UD	97.94	58	55	<b>0</b>	1212
Roval Rapide Sprint	99.69	63	58	<b>1.74</b>	1395
Scope Artech 6	99.93	65	65	<b>1.99</b>	1244
Roval Rapide CLX iii	99.96	51	48	<b>2.02</b>	1305
Reserve 57/64 Turbulent Aero	100.96	57	64	<b>3.02</b>	1554
DT Swiss 55 ARC DICUT DB	100.99	55	55	<b>3.04</b>	1479
Enve 4.5 pro	102.29	49.8	55.2	<b>4.35</b>	1295
Roval Rapide CL ii	103.75	51	60	<b>5.8</b>	1590
DT 470 (alloy OE wheelset – control comparison specced Tarmac SL8 base spec)	119.88	23	23	<b>21.93</b>	1850

Table 4 - Full bike testing with 30mm Schwalbe Pro One



Figure 15-SL8 Test bike in the SSE tunnel with 5AM Ti\_UD wheels fitted

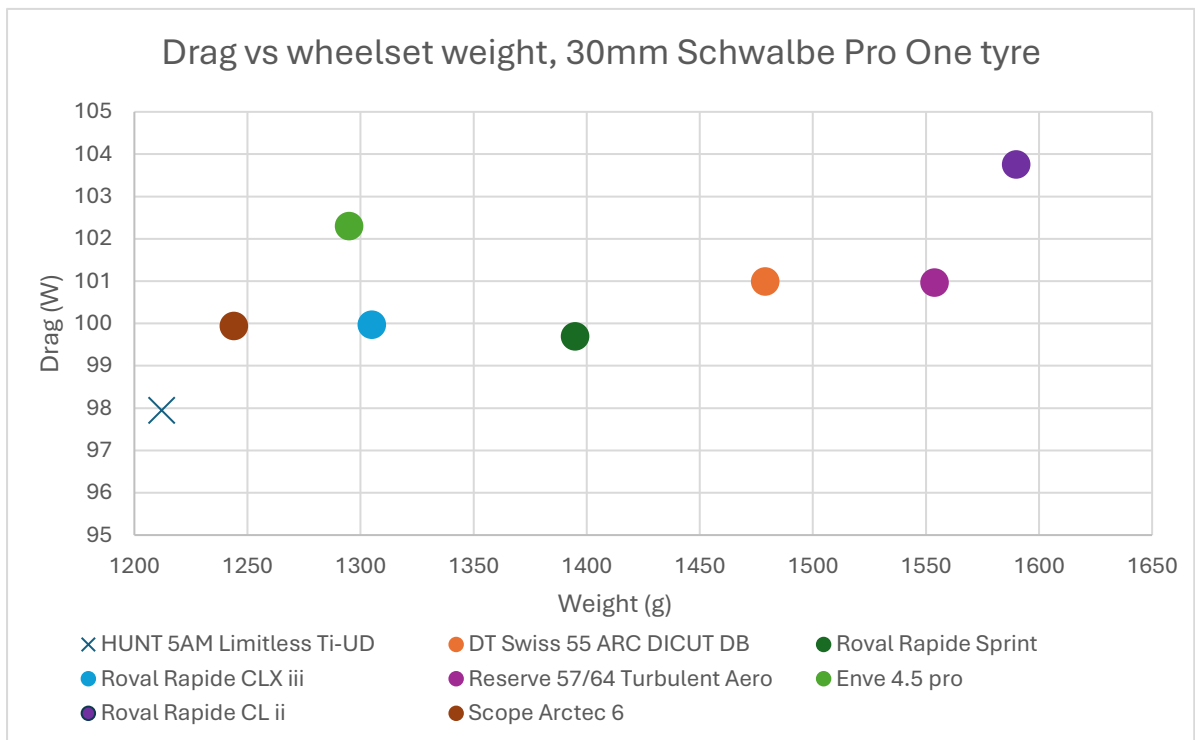


Figure 16 - Drag vs Wheelset weight, with 30mm Schwalbe Pro One tyre

With the Schwalbe 30mm tyre the HUNT 5AM TI\_UD is still the lightest and most aerodynamic of the group on test. The total magnitude of measured drag for bike and wheels is about 25% higher at the SSE tunnel vs the prior GST testing, this is likely due to the larger and wider stanchions used to support the bike in the SSE tunnel. However, the magnitude of the deltas between the wheelsets in each different tunnel are comparable.

All the deep carbon wheels show a large improvement over the DT Swiss 470 DB, which is an alloy rim OEM spec wheel (not pictured on the graph to better display the rest of the data). The Roval Rapide CL II is the wheel fitted to this bike by the bike manufacturer (Specialized SL8 Pro 2024) and are a notable step behind the rest of the deep carbon wheels, in fact they are the heaviest and least aerodynamic carbon wheelset on test.

The closest wheel to the HUNT 5AM TI\_UD is the Scope Artech 6, which is heavier as well as being 7mm deeper on the front wheel. This extra depth will have an impact on the stability of the rim in crosswinds; this is shown in the steering moment graph (Figure 17) where the Scope Artech 6 has a higher peak steering moment at any wind yaw angle. This will mean that a greater steering input force is required with the Scope Artech 6 vs the HUNT 5AM TI\_UD when riding in any given wind condition.

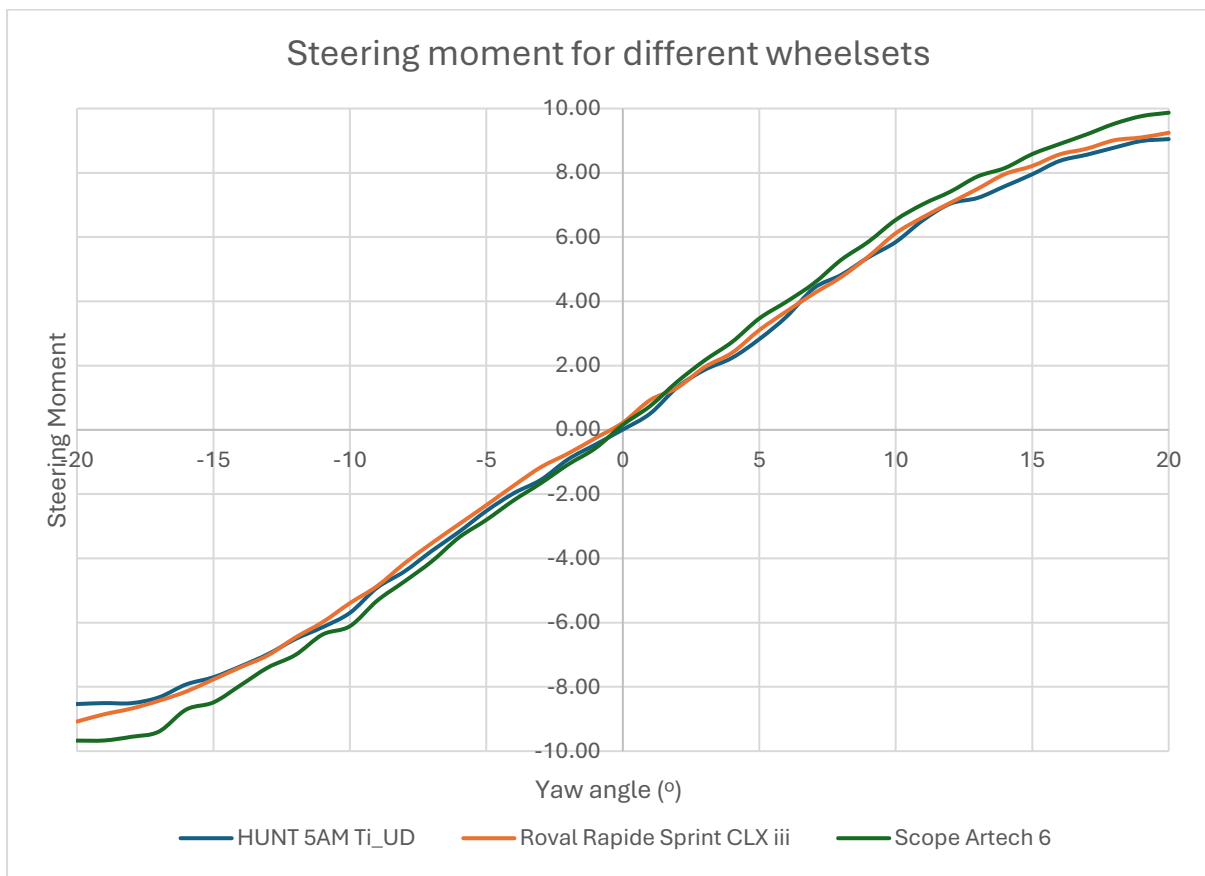


Figure 17- Calculated steering moment Vs Yaw, Test as wheel only with a 30mm Schwalbe Pro One tyre

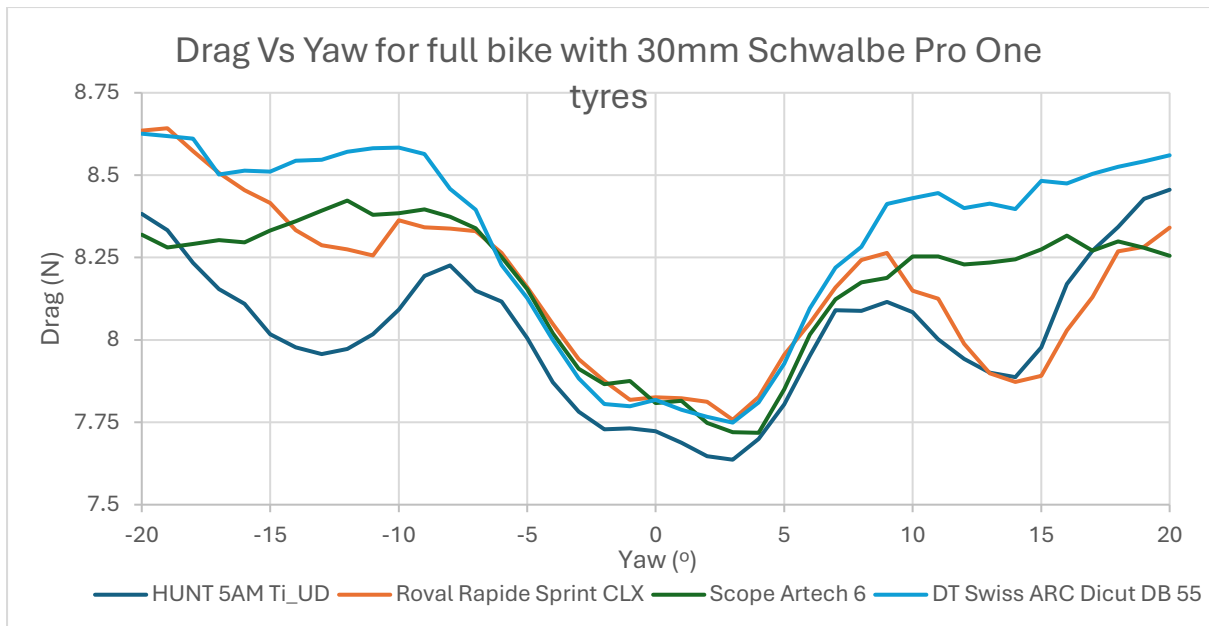


Figure 18-Drag across a -20 to 20 degrees yaw, with a 30mm Schwalbe Pro One

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Wind tunnel – Silverstone Sports Engineering Hub January 2026

A second test was run at the Silverstone Sports Engineering Hub comprising of the Scope Artech 6, Roval Rapide Sprint and the HUNT 5AM Limitless Ti\_UD. These wheelsets were tested using 28mm Vittoria Corsa Pro tyres, however this test was conducted at 50kph instead of the 45kph used in all the previous wind tunnel tests.

Wheelset	Mavic WAD (Watts Drag)	Front Depth (mm)	Rear Depth (mm)	Delta (Watts Drag)	Weight (g)
Scope Artech 6	129.10	65	65	0	1244
HUNT 5AM Limitless Ti_UD	129.71	58	55	0.60	1212
Roval Rapide Sprint	130.34	63	58	1.23	1395

Table 5- Full bike testing at 50kph with 28mm Vittoria Corsa Pro tyres

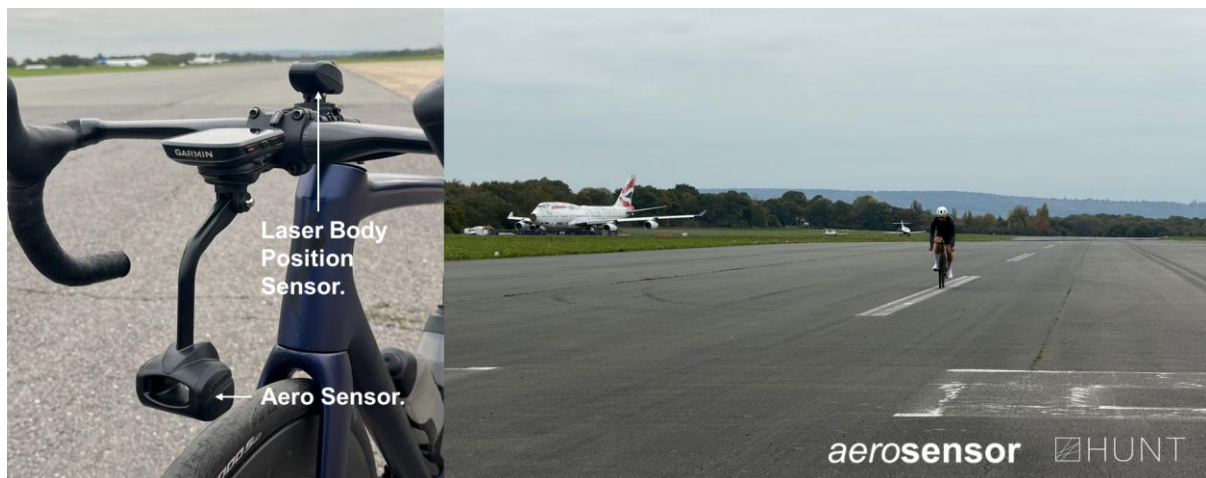
In this test the Scope Artech 6 gained some performance, and overtook the HUNT 5AM Limitless TI\_UD, with the Roval Rapide Sprint clearly behind both. The increased performance of the Scope Artech 6, over the previous 30mm tyre testing, suggests that the Scope Artech 6 has been optimised around a 28mm tyre, and also shows a large performance reduction when this wheelset is tested with 30mm tyres as shown in figure 18 graph.

# Outdoor testing

## Outdoor test 1

The final validation testing that we completed was outside full bike and rider testing using an Aerosensor aerometer system, we have been developing this capability over the past year with the support of Aerosensor founder Dr Barnaby Garrood.

With this equipment we have been able to repeat three runs of the baseline test within +/- 1% at a target speed of about 41kph (320-335 watts was required for this speed), this then gives a margin of uncertainty of +/- 3 watts. More information about the test setup can be found in the appendix.



*Figure 19- Aerosensor fitted, and test location at Dunsfold Airfield*

All the wheels were tested with 30mm GP5000 STR tyres and using 60ml of sealant. Unlike with our wind tunnel testing protocol, the exact same tyres cannot be used for every test as it would just take too long to change tyres and sealant between every run. This extra time would also increase the chances that the environmental conditions could change over the course of a test period.

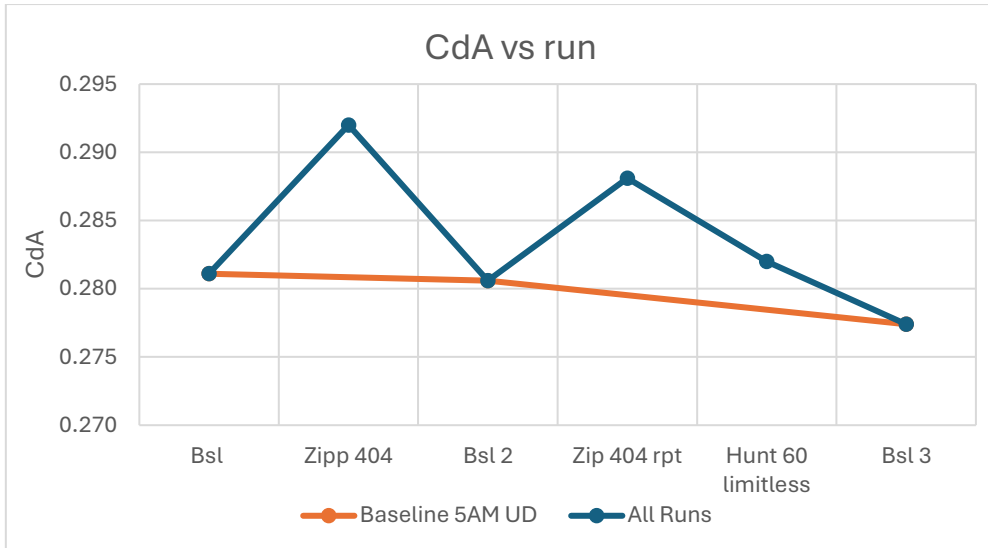


Figure 20- CdA for each run with Baseline trend

	CdA	dCdA	Watts@40kph	% difference
Baseline HUNT 5AM TI_UD average (F58/55R mm deep)	0.280		0	
Zipp 404 Firecrest average (58mm deep)	0.290	0.010	8.5	3.7%
HUNT 60 Limitless	0.282	0.002	1.9	0.8%

Table 6- Outdoor testing, with 30mm Continental GP5000 STR

The first test we did on the Dunsfold Aerodrome runway allowed us to get repeatable results with a clear difference being shown between both the HUNT 60 limitless and the 5AM Ti-UD, with all three of the 5AM Ti\_UD runs being faster than the run of the 60 limitless and 8.5 watts faster than the Zipp 404 Firecrest.



Figure 21 - Testing on Dunsfold runway

## Outdoor test 2

	<b>CdA</b>	<b>dCdA</b>	<b>Watts@40kph</b>	<b>% difference</b>
Baseline HUNT 5AM Ti_UD (F58/55R mm deep)	0.339		0	
Scope Artech 6 (65mm deep)	0.346	0.007	5.9	2.1%

*Table 7- Outdoor test 2 with 30mm Continental GP5000 STR tyres*

A second test was run with the same set up, but in much colder weather meaning the test rider had to be in full winter kit rather than a skin suit, this accounts for the 0.059 change in CdA between the baselines on the two different test days. In this case we see the 5AM Ti-UD to be 2.1% faster as a percentage of total system drag. This is just under a 6 watt saving compared to the 2 watts seen in the wind tunnel using the same bike. The cause for this bigger performance difference could be due to the fact it was a very still night for the second test and the 5AM Ti\_UD offers exceptional low yaw performance.

Also worth noting that in the SSE wind tunnel a tare run is taken with the wind turned off, but with the bike wheels spinning. This is done every time before a wind on measurement is taken, resulting in some of the aerodynamic forces required to drive the wheels through the air not being accounted for during the wind on run as they are removed with the tare.

The outside testing confirms this, showing that the reduced spoke count of the 5AM Ti-UD will have an even greater aerodynamic advantage to the competition in the real world.

## Conclusion

The Goal of this project was to develop the fastest all-round road racing wheelset on the market. From the data presented in this paper it is clear this goal has been met.

In all but one wind tunnel test the HUNT 5AM Ti\_UD wheels are the most aerodynamically efficient when compared to a large range of competition, showing a clear drag advantage at all wind angles from -20 to +20 degrees. They are also the lightest wheels tested, especially impressive when considering that many of the competitors wheelsets have shallower rims.

The HUNT 5AM Ti\_UD wheels also show class leading stability, demonstrated by a lower side force at every wind angle vs the tested competition. They also demonstrate a smoother transition from laminar to turbulent airflow, and at higher yaw angles than the competition. This has then also been observed in real world rider testing, where the stable handling of these wheels has been subjectively confirmed vs the competition.

These results were then confirmed in a real-world scenario using the Aerosensor system, showing that the exceptional wind tunnel performance has translated to a clear measurable advantage in the real world. Combined with thousands of hours of real-world rider testing now completed, including race wins on multiple continents, we are confident that combination of low drag and weight means that these wheels will excel on all road racing courses.

# Appendix

## Wind tunnel set up

The wind tunnel has been an extremely useful tool in measuring the performance of a wheelset in a controlled environment and therefore an integral part of the development process.

Two Tunnels were used over the course of this project:

- The GST WindKanal in Immenstaad Germany
- The SSE (Silverstone Sport Engineering hub)

We transferred our test methodology from GST to SSE, as the dynamic sweep is the most efficient and accurate way to collect drag data for a bike only in our opinion,

Both wind tunnel tests:



*Figure 22 – Cannondale System 6 used for the 2023 wind tunnel testing.*

Bike: Specialized SL8 Pro 2024

Tyres used: Schwalbe Pro One 30, Vittoria Corsa Pro 28mm

Tyre Pressures: 50 Psi

Wind and Roller Speed: 45 kph

Yaw Angles: -20° to 20° dynamic sweep

## Outdoor test set up

Outdoor testing:

Sensor: Aerosensor aerometer (with Aerodrome lap trigger and Aerobody laser position sensor)

Bike: Specialized SL8 Pro 2024

Tyres: Schwalbe Continental GP5000 STR 30mm

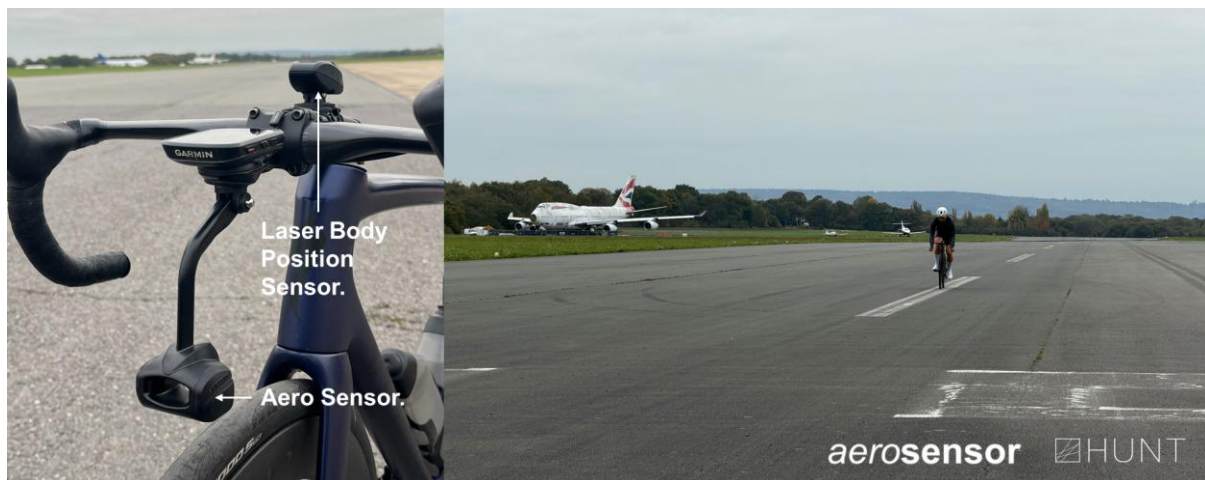
Tyre Pressures: 50 Psi

Target Speed: 41 kph

Power meter: Fevaro Assioma Pro RS-2

Protocol: Out and back 3x over a 600m to 1000m course with an aerosensor aerodrome trip sensor to accurately start and stop test runs.

Location: Dunsfold aerodrome runway (Top Gear test track!)



*Figure 23 - Aerosensor fitted, and test location at Dunsfold Airfield*

The Aerosensor system measures wind speed with their aerometer and accounts for any gusts or variations in conditions over the test period. Fevaro Assioma Pro RS-2 power meter pedals were used to collect the power measurements and are calibrated before every run. Total system weight and tyre circumference are measured before every run and twinned with a wheel magnet speed sensor; this allows us to very accurately measure the speed of the bike and the distance travelled.

An aerodrome trip strip is laid down at either end of the test course, this starts and stops the run when the rider crosses each line, allowing perfect lap triggering for every lap. All of this data is then collected on a Garmin 840 head unit.

The rider is instructed to hold the same position and the handlebars are marked with tape so that the hands can be placed in the same position every run. A laser body position sensor is also mounted on the stem with measurements taken for the head and chest position of the rider to a 0.1mm accuracy, these measurements are visible during the run so that that rider can maintain position.

All of this means that the inputs are very tightly controlled, meaning that we can solve the virtual elevation equation (otherwise known as the Chung method) which is done within the Aerosensor portal, giving a CdA value for every run.

## Mavic Wind averaged drag

When assessing the aerodynamic performance of a wheelset, it is necessary to consider the performance of the wheel in a variety of different ‘yaw angles’ – i.e. the effective angle of wind the rider is experiencing as they ride. Because the rider is moving forwards this will be affected by the rider’s speed, the wind angle and the wind speed.

The time spent at any given yaw angle will be different, depending on the conditions and route. In order to give a consistent method for combining these yaw angles into a single wind averaged drag (WAD) value Mavic has developed and published a ‘ponderation law’.

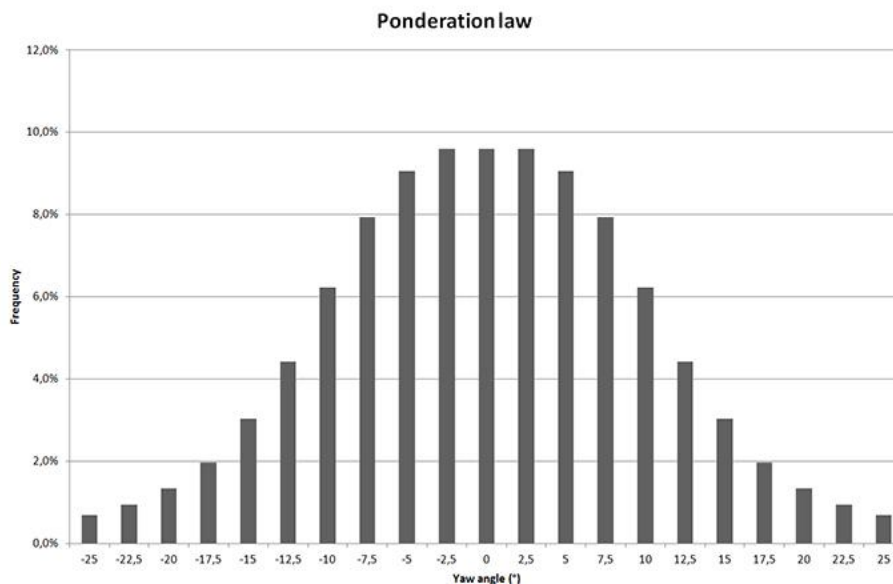


Figure 24- Mavic chart showing their assessment of time spent by riders experiencing different yaw angles.

The GST and Silverstone wind tunnel is able to take measurements between  $-20^{\circ}$  and  $+20^{\circ}$ , so the values above and below  $20^{\circ}$  have been removed from the weighting.