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The Voice of the Racing Marketplace

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"Coiled steel rings have 240,000 psi strength; they are very much geared toward nitrous, turbocharged or supercharged applications," explained Verne Schumann, Schumann's, Blue Grass, Iowa. The company recently released two products: 1.2 mm coiled steel plasma Moly and 1.2 mm coiled steel gas nitrided.

"There are more and more engines that are being turbocharged, supercharged and nitrous combinations. The piston technology is strong enough," he noted, adding that today's racing pistons are being designed to withstand the extra pressure from these power-boosting applications. "But if the piston

"Specialized rings are becoming very popular."

ring breaks up in the groove it'll destroy the best piston, and so the coil steel technology in piston rings is playing catch up to the piston industry. And the tow will be very compatible in 2003-2004. It's a situation where the piston technology actually got ahead of the ring technology in the last six or seven years."

For extreme applications, Hi-Tech has experimented with nitrided steel rings. "A nitrided steel top ring lasts longer in high-heat applications," said Falkenrath, "like sport compacts with nitrous and turbocharging. We'll have them this summer for the sport compact market, between 75 and 96 mm. Most of our shelf stock will be 1 mm in thickness, but we can custom-manufacture them down to 0.7 mm. A few months after that we'll have them for a four-inch-bore Chevy.

"Then on the oil ring we use a soft-nitrided spacer, and instead of 1070 steel on the rails we use a high-chrome alloy and nitride that."

Total Seal offers TNT top rings, "that expand on our iron ring technology for nitrous, turbocharged, and blower applications. Yet it is easy on the cylinder walls," said Jones.

Federal Mogul sells its extreme-duty rings under the "Hellfire" name. "Our