



ASICS TAKES HUMAN-CENTRIC DESIGN TO NEXT LEVEL AT ASICS' INNOVATION SUMMIT 2021 - LAUNCHES TWO NEW SHOES, OPTIMIZED FOR THE MOST POPULAR RUNNING STYLES

- ASICS hosted virtual reality reveal of two new high-performance running shoes, specially designed to support a runner's individual style - already proven to reduce step count over the course of a marathon
- METASPEED™ Sky and METASPEED™ Edge were among the new innovations unveiled at ASICS' annual innovation showcase, with guests taken on a virtual journey through the past, present and future of its commitment to human-centric design
- Every aspect of the virtual reality world was specially constructed to respond to changes in the user's biodata in real-time to create a unique, interactive experience completely tailored to them

ASICS recently announced not one but two high-performance running shoes that take the power of human-centric design to the next level.

In an industry first, METASPEED™ Sky and METASPEED™ Edge have each been scientifically designed with a distinct type of running style in mind. The new racing shoes help elite athletes to reach the top of their game, because they don't have to adjust their running style to fit the shoe anymore; instead, ASICS is giving them high-performance shoes that support their running style.

The shoes were unveiled at ASICS' Innovation Summit 2021 – the brand's annual showcase of the very pinnacle of new performance sportswear. This year ASICS hosted its first ever, fully personalized experience, taking guests on an interactive virtual reality journey through the past, present and future of the ASICS story and its longstanding commitment to human-centric design. The experience culminated in the grand reveal of its ground-breaking METASPEED™ innovation - the latest era-defining moment in this journey.

METASPEED™: Taking human-centric design to the next level

METASPEED™ Sky and METASPEED™ Edge see ASICS set the standard for human-centric design in 2021.

The unique design story behind the two new shoes centers on a crucial insight by scientists at the ASICS Institute of Sport Science (ISS). They recognized that the type of shoes powering the world's fastest were only favoring one type of runner - STRIDE runners - those with a long-loping gait with large periods spent airborne who increase their speed by extending their stride length.

ASICS research however showed that these shoes do not fully support elite athletes who prefer the second major running style – CADENCE, which features smaller steps made while hovering over the ground with minimal up and down motion. Crucially, these

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runners increase their speed by both extending their stride length and increasing the number of steps they take per minute.

The sports scientists at the ISS were able to measure that athletes perform better when running in shoes that are optimized for their running style. Addressing the challenge, ASICS has created the METASPEED™ Sky for STRIDE runners and METASPEED™ Edge for those with a CADENCE style - both specially optimized and proven to improve runner performance for each of the two major running styles¹.

The launch of METASPEED™ Sky and METASPEED™ Edge means that runners will no longer have to adjust their running style to suit the shoe they're wearing. With initial tests from ASICS already showing the METASPEED™ innovation could help reduce the number of steps for a runner to finish a marathon by over 1.2%², it will give all elite runners the opportunity to reach peak performance.

Kenichi Harano, Executive Officer and Senior General Manager at the ASICS Institute of Sport Science said: *"The METASPEED™ journey began with the simple insight that athletes run faster in shoes that are specially tailored for them. From here - we got to work. Following a lengthy, meticulous research and development process, METASPEED™ Sky and METASPEED™ Edge were born. Optimized for the two most prevalent running styles in elite runners, they are both at the very pinnacle of running innovation. Our initial tests are already showing them to have an impact on the times of the elite runners we've been working with. That's why we're so excited to be unveiling them to the world today."*

Innovation Summit: YOUR LAB, your way

The shoes were announced at ASICS' first ever fully personalized Innovation Summit. The experience centers on the creation of a virtual reality world, where every aspect - from the breeze in the trees, to the waves in the water - respond directly to the user's biodata for a completely tailored experience.

In addition to a **LAUNCH** area where guests are able to get up close and personal with METASPEED™ and the story behind its creation, other key elements of the experience include:

1. **BRAND LEGACY AREA** – A virtual walkthrough that exhibits the defining milestones of ASICS' commitment to personalized products and innovation throughout history. It begins with the unique design story behind the brand's first ever basketball shoe, created in 1951 using suction cups, and goes right through to the modern day, showcasing how ASICS' continued focus on human-centric design helped Sara Hall to her incredible second-place finish at the 2020 London Marathon.
2. **TODAY AND TOMORROW** – An opportunity for guests to get hands-on with the latest AI tech that is revolutionizing the present and shaping the future of sports performance. This includes:

¹ Research conducted by the ASICS Institute of Sport Science in Jan. 2021. Please see Notes To Editors for more information.

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- ② **Scutoid Stress Test area** – Educating guests on how ASICS is looking to utilize the revolutionary structure and flexible combinations of scutoid technology to provide unparalleled personalised cushioning systems based on individual needs in its future products.
- ② **AI Running Coach** – A behind-the-scenes look at how ASICS is working in collaboration with CASIO to develop innovative new smart devices that employ AI as a way of enabling great individualized coaching, giving real-time tips and feedback, personalised to a runner's own goals.
- ② **Own Last** – A VR trial of a ground-breaking new ASICS innovation that will enable runners to scan their feet using a smartphone to create custom-made running shoes, 3D printed to their exact measurements, opening up a whole new world of human-centric design in the future.

President & Chief Operating Officer of ASICS, Yasuhito Hirota said: *“At ASICS we are driven by our founding principle: we want to help everyone achieve a sound mind in a sound body through sport. At the heart of this philosophy is an unwavering belief in the power of human-centric design to create products that deliver the perfect balance of peak performance and protection for every kind of athlete. With the pandemic placing huge restrictions on competitive sport across the globe, this longstanding obsession of ours has become supercharged for 2021. This year's Innovation Summit and launch of METASPEED™ stands as a symbol of our continued commitment to help elite athletes achieve their potential, while cementing ASICS' status as a pioneer of innovation in the running sector.”*

Rajat Khurana, Managing Director, ASICS India and South Asia said: *“The world as we know it, has changed in the last few years and technology has become a nerve centre for both people to connect and products to perform. Our brand is hugely committed to bringing about change in lives of consumers through the transformative power of sports. Innovation is the core essence of driving this change, demonstrated adequately in our performance category products which not only help the runners leverage their inner potential but also enhance their individual style and potential on the field. Our futuristic approach to design helps us build products which weave scientific insight into its solutions and then gives the superior edge to our range. We hope to continue shaping the future of performance and sports in the coming years by being committed to this vision.”*

The METASPEED™ Sky will be available globally via the ASICS website and selected specialty retail stores from March 31, 2021. The METASPEED™ Edge will be available from June 4, 2021. Both shoes will retail for INR, 21,999/-

ASICS is also inviting people around the world to experience the new shoes up close and personal like never before – in a virtual innovation lab, complete with a diagnostic tool to understand the type of runner they are. This is available as a web experience at www.asics.com/innovationsummit

ABOUT THE PRODUCTS

METASPEED™ Sky

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The METASPEED™ Sky racing shoe is designed to help runners go faster by extending their stride length considerably. Stride-type runners take a longer stride once they start increasing their speed. Thanks to an energetic midsole foam and a propulsive carbon plate, runners wearing these shoes will be able to conserve more energy while maintaining their pace at the later stages of the race.

METASPEED™ Edge

The METASPEED™ Edge racing shoe is designed to help cadence-type runners go faster by extending their stride length while allowing them to control cadence more easily. Cadence-type runners increase both cadence and stride as they run faster. Runners wearing these shoes will experience a fast underfoot feel, thanks to the energetic midsole foam and a propulsive carbon plate. These components allow them to elongate their stride and conserve more energy while controlling their pace.

To find out more about the products, please visit [asics.com](https://www.asics.com).

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