

Wearing the trousers with Twaron

Since 1891, Cone Denim has been a leading supplier of denim fabrics to top clothing brands. Being a market leader for 125 years is no small achievement – it has required adapting to market trends and much innovation. Because of this, they have been developing a new performance denim that integrates Teijin Aramid’s Twaron fiber. The innovative partnership between Teijin and Cone has already brought success, as this new performance line has been made commercially available to skaters looking for abrasion-resistant denim.

From steam power to aramid technology

Cone Denim was founded by Moses and Caesar Cone in 1891, at a time when mills were still powered by steam. Cone’s White Oak mill, now the US’s longest active denim mill, was set up by the two brothers in 1905 in Greensboro, North Carolina. Since then, Cone Denim has established itself in denim history as the developer of long-chain indigo dyeing, denim sanforization and Cone’s vintage-look Deeptone Denim. Now in 2016, Cone Denim continues to innovate, as the use of aramid technology shows. The company has grown to serve a global client base, and has manufacturing plants in the United States, Mexico and China.



Cone Denim: Evolution as a way of life

“Because of our long history, we aim to convey a strong sense of tradition and authenticity with our denim fabrics,” says Allen Little, Director of Product Development at Cone Denim. “At the same time, product development and innovation are at the heart of our business strategy. We always have our finger on the pulse of the fabric world, and we try to tap into creative new ideas when we think they could add value to our customers. One area in which we’ve been investing is our performance fabric line. We need our denim to be stronger, lighter and more durable, particularly for applications involving challenging conditions, such as active wear. Specifically, we wanted to create a performance denim fabric for skateboarders, as there was demand for a higher abrasion resistance in this market.”

An aramid solution with Teijin

The product development team at Cone Denim got in touch with Teijin Aramid, with a view to developing a new performance denim fabric that integrated Twaron. “From the start, the people at Teijin Aramid were very helpful, and willingly offered their technical expertise to drive this project along,” says Allen. “And, of course, their flagship product, Twaron, is great. Because it is so strong, we only have to use a small percentage in our blend to improve performance significantly. We use this para-aramid fiber in the outward-facing side of the fabric, and we create the warp by Integrating Twaron in a proprietary blend of fibers. The result is a denim fabric that has outstanding abrasion resistance, and can be rubbed and scraped all day long! Our performance line with Twaron became commercially available in 2015, and the first results are very promising.”



Cut from the same cloth

The Twaron-integrated fabric has only been one of the many success stories in recent years of Cone Denim. In 2012, the denim manufacturing company launched Cone® 3D, Cone’s R&D incubator. Breakthrough initiatives include identifying new fibers and raw materials, incorporating distinctive fiber blends and fabric constructions, and engineering unique process technologies — all supported by sustainable practices. “We expect to continue growing sustainably in the next few years,” says Allen. “The global denim market is growing, and we are well-placed to take advantage of the opportunities that come our way. We hope that Teijin Aramid can play a part in our future, especially as their vision and ambition is aligned with ours. We are, as they say, cut from the same cloth!”