

# Cooling of an Injection Mold

## Introduction

Cooling is an important process in the production of injection molded plastics. First of all, the cooling time may well represent more than half of the production cycle time. Second, a homogeneous cooling process is desired to avoid defects in the manufactured parts. If plastic materials in the injection molding die are cooled down uniformly and slowly, residual stresses can be avoided, and thereby the risk of warps and cracks in the end product can be minimized.

As a consequence, the positioning and properties of the cooling channels become important aspects when designing the mold.

The simulation of heat transfer in molds of relatively complex geometries requires a 3D representation. Simulation of 3D flow and heat transfer inside the cooling channels are computationally expensive. An efficient short-cut alternative is to model the flow and heat transfer in the cooling channels with 1D pipe flow equations, and still model the surrounding mold and product in 3D.

This example shows how you can use the **Nonisothermal Pipe Flow** interface together with the **Heat Transfer in Solids** interface to model a mold cooling process. The equations describing the cooling channels are fully coupled to the heat transfer equations of the mold and the polyurethane part using **Pipe Wall Heat Transfer** multiphysics coupling.



Figure 1: The steering wheel of a car, made from polyurethane.

## MODEL GEOMETRY AND PROCESS CONDITIONS

The polyurethane material used for a steering wheel is produced by several different molds. The part considered in this model is the top half of the wheel grip, shown in gray in Figure 2.

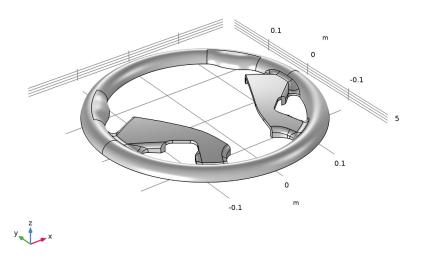
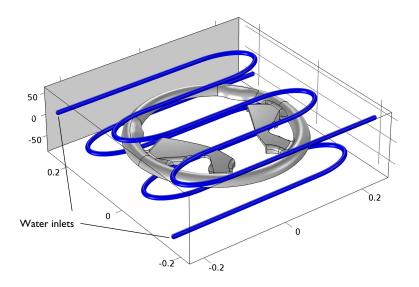


Figure 2: Polyurethane parts for a steering wheel. The top half of the grip is modeled in this example.

The mold consists of a 50-by-50-by-15 cm steel block. Two cooling channels, 1 cm in diameter, are machined into the block as illustrated in Figure 3.



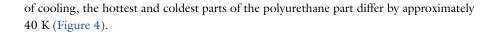
#### Figure 3: Mold block and cooling channels.

The after injection of the polyurethane, the average temperature of the mold a the plastic material is 473 K. Water at room temperature is used as cooling fluid and flows through the channels at a rate of 10 liters/min. The model simulates a 10 min cooling process.

For numerical stability reasons, the model is set up with an initial water temperature of 473 K, which is ramped down to 288 K during the first few seconds.

# Results and Discussion

The mold and polyurethane part, initially at 473 K, are cooled for 10 minutes by water at room temperature. Figures below show sample results when flow rate of the cooling water is 10 liters/minute and the surface roughness of the channels is 46  $\mu$ m. After two minutes



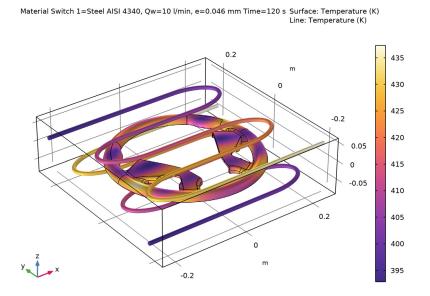
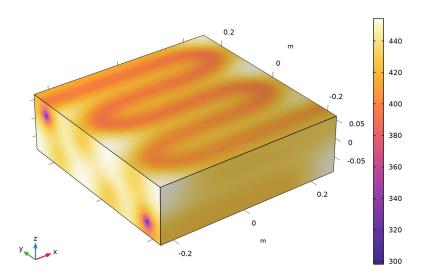


Figure 4: Temperature distribution in the polyurethane part and the cooling channels after 2

minutes of cooling.

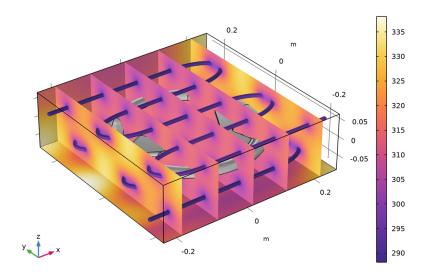
Figure 5 shows the temperature distribution in the steel mold after 2 minutes. The temperature footprint of the cooling channels is clearly visible.



Material Switch 1=Steel AISI 4340, Qw=10 l/min, e=0.046 mm Time=120 s Temperature (K)

Figure 5: Temperature distribution in the steel mold block after 2 minutes of cooling.

After 10 minutes of cooling, the temperature in the mold block is more uniform, with a temperature at the center of approximately 333 K (Figure 6). Still, the faces with cooling channel inlets and outlets are more than 20 K hotter.



Material Switch 1=Steel AISI 4340, Qw=10 I/min, e=0.046 mm Time=600 s Temperature (K)

Figure 6: Temperature distribution in the steel mold block after 10 minutes of cooling.

To evaluate the influence of factors affecting the cooling time, use Material and Parametric sweeps. Figure 7 shows the average temperature of the polyurethane part as function of

the cooling time for the several flow rates of the cooling water, the surface roughness of the cooling channels, and the mold materials.

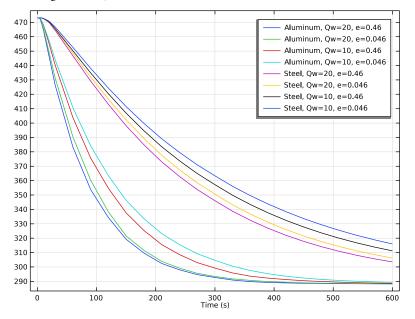


Figure 7: Average temperature of the polyurethane part as function of time and cooling conditions.

## **Application Library path:** Pipe\_Flow\_Module/Heat\_Transfer/mold\_cooling

# Modeling Instructions

From the File menu, choose New.

## NEW

In the New window, click 🔗 Model Wizard.

## MODEL WIZARD

I In the Model Wizard window, click 间 3D.

2 In the Select Physics tree, select Fluid Flow>Nonisothermal Flow> Nonisothermal Pipe Flow (nipfl).

- 3 Click Add.
- 4 In the Select Physics tree, select Heat Transfer>Heat Transfer in Solids (ht).
- 5 Click Add.
- 6 Click 🔿 Study.
- 7 In the Select Study tree, select General Studies>Time Dependent.
- 8 Click **M** Done.

## GLOBAL DEFINITIONS

Parameters 1

- I In the Model Builder window, under Global Definitions click Parameters I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Parameters, locate the Parameters section.
- **3** In the table, enter the following settings:

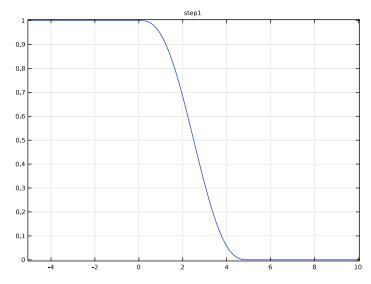
Name	Expression	Value	Description
T_init_mold	473.15[K]	473.15 K	Initial temperature, mold
T_coolant	288.15[K]	288.15 K	Steady-state inlet temperature, coolant
Qw	10[l/min]	1.6667E-4 m <sup>3</sup> /s	Coolant flow rate
е	0.046[mm]	4.6E-5 m	Surface roughness

## Step I (step I)

Create a smooth step function to decrease the coolant temperature at the beginning of the process.

- I In the Home toolbar, click f(x) Functions and choose Global>Step.
- 2 In the Settings window for Step, locate the Parameters section.
- 3 In the Location text field, type 2.5.
- 4 In the From text field, type 1.
- **5** In the **To** text field, type **0**.
- 6 Click to expand the **Smoothing** section. In the **Size of transition zone** text field, type 5. Optionally, you can inspect the shape of the step function:

7 Click 💽 Plot.



## Variables I

I In the Home toolbar, click a= Variables and choose Global Variables.

2 In the Settings window for Variables, locate the Variables section.

**3** In the table, enter the following settings:

Name	Expression	Unit	Description
T_inlet	T_coolant+(T_init_mold- T_coolant)*step1(t[1/s])	к	Ramped inlet temperature, coolant

## GEOMETRY I

Import I (imp1)

First, import the steering wheel part from a CAD design file.

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🔚 Import.
- 2 In the Settings window for Import, locate the Import section.
- 3 Click **Browse**.
- **4** Browse to the model's Application Libraries folder and double-click the file mold\_cooling\_top.mphbin.
- 5 Click া Import.

- **6** Locate the **Selections of Resulting Entities** section. Find the **Cumulative selection** subsection. Click **New**.
- 7 In the New Cumulative Selection dialog box, type Wheel in the Name text field.
- 8 Click OK.

Second, draw the mold and cooling channels. To simplify this step, insert a prepared geometry sequence from file. After insertion you can study each geometry step in the sequence.

- 9 Click the **Zoom Extents** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.
- 10 In the Geometry toolbar, click Insert Sequence and choose Insert Sequence.
- II Browse to the model's Application Libraries folder and double-click the file mold\_cooling\_geom\_sequence.mph.
- 12 In the Geometry toolbar, click 🟢 Build All.
- **I3** Click the **F Zoom Extents** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.
- **I4** Click the **Transparency** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.

## Work Plane I (wp1)

Create the selections to simplify the model specification.

- I In the Model Builder window, click Work Plane I (wpl).
- 2 In the Settings window for Work Plane, locate the Selections of Resulting Entities section.
- 3 Find the Cumulative selection subsection. Click New.
- **4** In the **New Cumulative Selection** dialog box, type **Cooling** channels in the **Name** text field.
- 5 Click OK.

## MATERIALS

The next step is to specify material properties for the model. First, select water from the built-in materials database.

## ADD MATERIAL

- I In the Home toolbar, click 🙀 Add Material to open the Add Material window.
- 2 Go to the Add Material window.
- 3 In the tree, select Built-in>Water, liquid.
- 4 Click Add to Component in the window toolbar.

## MATERIALS

Water, liquid (mat1)

- I In the Settings window for Material, locate the Geometric Entity Selection section.
- 2 From the Geometric entity level list, choose Edge.
- 3 From the Selection list, choose Cooling channels.

## Material Switch 1 (sw1)

Define the mold materials to switch between during a solver sweep.

- I In the Materials toolbar, click 🚦 More Materials and choose Local>Material Switch.
- **2** Select Domain 1 only.

## ADD MATERIAL

- I Go to the Add Material window.
- 2 In the tree, select Built-in>Aluminum.
- 3 Right-click and choose Add to Material Switch I (swI).
- 4 In the tree, select Built-in>Steel AISI 4340.
- 5 Right-click and choose Add to Material Switch I (swI).
- 6 In the Materials toolbar, click 🙀 Add Material to close the Add Material window.

## MATERIALS

#### Polyurethane

Next, create a material with the properties of polyurethane.

- I In the Model Builder window, under Component I (compl) right-click Materials and choose Blank Material.
- 2 In the Settings window for Material, type Polyurethane in the Label text field.
- 3 Locate the Geometric Entity Selection section. From the Selection list, choose Wheel.
- 4 Locate the Material Contents section. In the table, enter the following settings:

Property	Variable	Value	Unit	Property group
Thermal conductivity	k_iso ; kii = k_iso, kij = 0	0.32	W/(m·K)	Basic
Density	rho	1250	kg/m³	Basic
Heat capacity at constant pressure	Ср	1540	J/(kg·K)	Basic

#### NONISOTHERMAL PIPE FLOW (NIPFL)

- I In the Model Builder window, under Component I (compl) click Nonisothermal Pipe Flow (nipfl).
- 2 In the Settings window for Nonisothermal Pipe Flow, locate the Edge Selection section.
- 3 From the Selection list, choose Cooling channels.

## Pipe Properties 1

- I In the Model Builder window, under Component I (compl)> Nonisothermal Pipe Flow (nipfl) click Pipe Properties I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Pipe Properties, locate the Pipe Shape section.
- 3 From the list, choose Circular.
- 4 In the  $d_i$  text field, type 1[cm].
- 5 Locate the Flow Resistance section. From the Surface roughness list, choose User defined.
- 6 In the Surface roughness text field, type e.

#### Initial Values 1

- I In the Model Builder window, click Initial Values I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Initial Values, locate the Initial Values section.
- **3** In the u text field, type 0.1.
- **4** In the *T* text field, type T\_init\_mold.

#### Temperature 1

- I In the Model Builder window, click Temperature I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Temperature, locate the Temperature section.
- **3** In the *T<sub>in</sub>* text field, type **T\_inlet**.

#### Inlet 1

- I In the Physics toolbar, click 🗁 Points and choose Inlet.
- 2 Select Points 3 and 4 only.
- 3 In the Settings window for Inlet, locate the Inlet Specification section.
- 4 From the Specification list, choose Volumetric flow rate.
- **5** In the  $q_{v,0}$  text field, type Qw.

#### Heat Outflow I

- I In the Physics toolbar, click 📄 Points and choose Heat Outflow.
- 2 Select Points 269 and 270 only.

#### Wall Heat Transfer 1

- I In the Physics toolbar, click 📄 Edges and choose Wall Heat Transfer.
- 2 In the Settings window for Wall Heat Transfer, locate the Edge Selection section.
- **3** From the Selection list, choose Cooling channels.

Internal Film Resistance 1

In the Physics toolbar, click 📃 Attributes and choose Internal Film Resistance.

## HEAT TRANSFER IN SOLIDS (HT)

#### Initial Values 1

- I In the Model Builder window, under Component I (compl)>Heat Transfer in Solids (ht) click Initial Values I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Initial Values, locate the Initial Values section.
- **3** In the *T*2 text field, type T\_init\_mold.

#### Heat Flux 1

- I In the Physics toolbar, click 🔚 Boundaries and choose Heat Flux.
- 2 In the Settings window for Heat Flux, locate the Boundary Selection section.
- 3 From the Selection list, choose All boundaries.
- 4 Locate the Heat Flux section. From the Flux type list, choose Convective heat flux.
- **5** In the *h* text field, type **2**.

## MULTIPHYSICS

Pipe Wall Heat Transfer 1 (pwhtc1)

In the Physics toolbar, click An Multiphysics Couplings and choose Edge> Pipe Wall Heat Transfer.

#### MESH I

#### Edge 1

- I In the Mesh toolbar, click  $\bigwedge$  Boundary and choose Edge.
- 2 In the Settings window for Edge, locate the Edge Selection section.
- **3** From the Selection list, choose Cooling channels.

## Size I

- I Right-click Edge I and choose Size.
- 2 In the Settings window for Size, locate the Element Size section.

## 3 From the Predefined list, choose Extra fine.

Free Tetrahedral I

I In the Mesh toolbar, click 🗄 Free Tetrahedral.

Even with a maximum element size of 0.003 m, the mesh contains some collapsed elements, resulting in solver errors. Trial and error gives that lowering the curvature factor somewhat will create a mesh with good quality.

Size

- I In the Model Builder window, click Size.
- 2 In the Settings window for Size, locate the Element Size section.
- **3** Click the **Custom** button.
- 4 Locate the **Element Size Parameters** section. In the **Minimum element size** text field, type 0.003.
- 5 In the Curvature factor text field, type 0.55.
- 6 In the Model Builder window, right-click Mesh I and choose Build All.

## STUDY I

Step 1: Time Dependent

- I In the Model Builder window, under Study I click Step I: Time Dependent.
- 2 In the Settings window for Time Dependent, locate the Study Settings section.
- 3 In the **Output times** text field, type range(0,2,28) range(30,30,600).

## DEFINITIONS

To evaluate the average temperature of the polyurethane part for different conditions and mold materials (Figure 7), perform parametric and material sweeps. To avoid accumulating a lot of data while solving, keep only last solution and save the average wheel temperature in a table. For this purpose, add a global probe to the model.

Domain Probe I (dom I)

- I In the Definitions toolbar, click probes and choose Domain Probe.
- 2 In the Settings window for Domain Probe, locate the Source Selection section.
- 3 From the Selection list, choose Wheel.
- 4 Click Replace Expression in the upper-right corner of the Expression section. From the menu, choose Component I (compl)>Heat Transfer in Solids>Temperature>T2 Temperature K.
- **5** Locate the **Expression** section.

6 Select the **Description** check box. In the associated text field, type Average wheel temperature.

## STUDY I

- I In the Model Builder window, click Study I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Study, locate the Study Settings section.
- **3** Clear the **Generate default plots** check box.

## Parametric Sweep

- I In the Study toolbar, click **Parametric Sweep**.
- 2 In the Settings window for Parametric Sweep, locate the Study Settings section.
- 3 From the Sweep type list, choose All combinations.
- 4 Click + Add.
- 5 Click + Add.
- 6 In the table, enter the following settings:

Parameter name	Parameter value list	Parameter unit
Qw (Coolant flow rate)	20 10	l/min
e (Surface roughness)	0.46 0.046	mm

- 7 Locate the Output While Solving section. Select the Accumulated probe table check box.
- 8 Locate the Study Settings section. Find the Memory settings for jobs subsection. From the Keep solutions list, choose Only last.

## Material Sweep

- I In the Study toolbar, click 🚦 Material Sweep.
- 2 In the Settings window for Material Sweep, locate the Study Settings section.
- 3 Click + Add.

#### Solution 1 (soll)

- I In the Study toolbar, click **Show Default Solver**.
- 2 In the Model Builder window, expand the Solution I (soll) node.

Since the problem involves only heat conduction, you can solved it more efficiently by relaxing nonlinear setting.

3 In the Model Builder window, expand the Study I>Solver Configurations> Solution I (solI)>Time-Dependent Solver I node, then click Fully Coupled I.

- **4** In the **Settings** window for **Fully Coupled**, click to expand the **Method and Termination** section.
- 5 In the Damping factor text field, type 1.
- 6 From the Jacobian update list, choose Minimal.
- 7 In the Study toolbar, click **=** Compute.

## RESULTS

In the Home toolbar, click 💻 Add Predefined Plot.

## ADD PREDEFINED PLOT

- I Go to the Add Predefined Plot window.
- 2 In the tree, select Study I/Solution I (soll)>Heat Transfer in Solids>Temperature (ht).
- 3 Click Add Plot in the window toolbar.

## RESULTS

## Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature

- I In the **Settings** window for **3D Plot Group**, type Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature in the **Label** text field.
- 2 Locate the Data section. From the Dataset list, choose Study I/ Parametric Solutions I (sol2).
- 3 From the Time (s) list, choose 120.

## Selection I

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature node.
- 2 Right-click Surface and choose Selection.
- 3 In the Settings window for Selection, locate the Selection section.
- 4 From the Selection list, choose Wheel.
- 5 In the Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.
- 6 Click the Transparency button in the Graphics toolbar.
- 7 In the Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.

#### Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature

In the Model Builder window, under Results click Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature.

Line I

I In the Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature toolbar, click 🔲 Line.

- 2 In the Settings window for Line, locate the Coloring and Style section.
- **3** From the Line type list, choose Tube.
- **4** In the **Tube radius expression** text field, type **0.5**\*nipf1.dh.
- **5** Clear the **Rounded end caps** check box.
- 6 Click to expand the Inherit Style section. Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Scale list, choose Logarithmic.
- 7 Locate the Inherit Style section. From the Plot list, choose Surface.
- 8 Clear the Color and data range check box.
- 9 In the Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.
- **IO** Locate the **Coloring and Style** section.
- II Select the Radius scale factor check box. In the associated text field, type 1.
- **12** In the Wheel and Cooling Channels Temperature toolbar, click **O** Plot.

#### Mold Temperature

- I In the Model Builder window, right-click Results and choose Add Predefined Plot>Study I/ Parametric Solutions I (sol2)>Heat Transfer in Solids>Temperature (ht).
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, type Mold Temperature in the Label text field.
- 3 Locate the Data section. From the Time (s) list, choose 120.
- **4** In the **Mold Temperature** toolbar, click **I** Plot.
- 5 Click to expand the Title section. From the Title type list, choose Manual.
- 6 In the Title text area, type Temperature (K).
- 7 In the Mold Temperature toolbar, click 💽 Plot.

## Temperature (pwhtcl)

- I Right-click Results and choose Add Predefined Plot>Study I/ Parametric Solutions I (sol2)>Pipe Wall Heat Transfer I>Temperature (pwhtcI).
- 2 In the Settings window for 3D Plot Group, click to expand the Title section.
- **3** From the **Title type** list, choose **Manual**.
- 4 In the Title text area, type Temperature (K).

#### Surface 1

- I Right-click Temperature (pwhtcl) and choose Surface.
- 2 In the Settings window for Surface, locate the Expression section.
- **3** In the **Expression** text field, type **1**.

- 4 Locate the Coloring and Style section. From the Coloring list, choose Uniform.
- 5 From the Color list, choose Gray.

#### Selection I

- I Right-click Surface I and choose Selection.
- 2 In the Settings window for Selection, locate the Selection section.
- 3 From the Selection list, choose Wheel.
- 4 In the Temperature (pwhtcl) toolbar, click 💽 Plot.

#### Surface 2

- I In the Model Builder window, right-click Temperature (pwhtcl) and choose Surface.
- 2 In the Settings window for Surface, locate the Expression section.
- **3** In the **Expression** text field, type T2.
- 4 Click to expand the Inherit Style section. From the Plot list, choose Slice 1.

## Selection 1

- I Right-click Surface 2 and choose Selection.
- **2** Select Boundaries 3 and 5 only.
- 3 In the Temperature (pwhtcl) toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.

Evaluate the average temperature of the polyurethane part for different conditions and mold materials(Figure 7).

Accumulated Probe Table 1

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Results>Tables node, then click Accumulated Probe Table I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Presentation format list, choose Filled.
- 4 Click 🚺 Update.

#### Accumulated Probe Table 1.1

- I Right-click Accumulated Probe Table I and choose Duplicate.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table, locate the Data section.
- 3 Find the Filled table structure subsection. From the Parameter value list, choose2: matsw.compl.swl=l, Qw=l0.

## Accumulated Probe Table 1.2

I Right-click Accumulated Probe Table I and choose Duplicate.

- 2 In the Settings window for Table, locate the Data section.
- 3 Find the Filled table structure subsection. From the Parameter value list, choose3: matsw.compl.swl=2, Qw=20.

Accumulated Probe Table 1.3

- I Right-click Accumulated Probe Table I and choose Duplicate.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table, locate the Data section.
- 3 Find the Filled table structure subsection. From the Parameter value list, choose4: matsw.compl.swl=2, Qw=10.

Probe Table Graph I

- I In the Model Builder window, expand the Results>Probe Plot Group I node, then click Probe Table Graph I.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table Graph, locate the Data section.
- **3** From the Table list, choose Accumulated Probe Table I.
- 4 From the Plot columns list, choose All excluding x-axis.
- 5 Click to expand the Legends section. From the Legends list, choose Manual.
- 6 In the table, enter the following settings:

#### Legends

Aluminum, Qw=20, e=0.46

Aluminum, Qw=20, e=0.046

7 In the Probe Plot Group I toolbar, click 🗿 Plot.

Probe Table Graph 1.1

- I Right-click Probe Table Graph I and choose Duplicate.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table Graph, locate the Data section.
- 3 From the Table list, choose Accumulated Probe Table 1.1.
- 4 Locate the Legends section. In the table, enter the following settings:

#### Legends

Aluminum, Qw=10, e=0.46

Aluminum, Qw=10, e=0.046

Probe Table Graph 1.2

- I Right-click Probe Table Graph I and choose Duplicate.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table Graph, locate the Data section.

- **3** From the Table list, choose Accumulated Probe Table 1.2.
- **4** Locate the **Legends** section. In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends		
Steel,	Qw=20,	e=0.46
Steel,	Qw=20,	e=0.046

Probe Table Graph 1.2.1

- I Right-click Probe Table Graph I.2 and choose Duplicate.
- 2 In the Settings window for Table Graph, locate the Data section.
- **3** From the Table list, choose Accumulated Probe Table 1.3.
- **4** Locate the **Legends** section. In the table, enter the following settings:

#### Legends

Steel, Qw=10, e=0.46

Steel, Qw=10, e=0.046

Average wheel temperature

- I In the Model Builder window, under Results click Probe Plot Group I.
- 2 In the Settings window for ID Plot Group, type Average wheel temperature in the Label text field.