

Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Sterling Doc - 02 Apr 2011 14:32

Guys, it has become clear that Toyos will not be available in any significant quantity this year. The current shipment to Phil's Tire is held up in California, as well. I talked with John Lindsey this morning, and have been given the green light to change the tire rule for the class, for this year.

My goals with this, are to keep the RA-1 competitive, but allow an adequate supply of tires through the end of the year, without having to hunt them down across the country. As R-888's, and NT-01's are also made in Sendai, they alone do not meet our needs.

My proposal is to reference the Performance Touring rules, and allow any tire in the same "7 points" performance category as the RA-1, with a maximum width of 225mm. Here is the relevant section quoted from the PT rules:

DOT-approved R-compound tires with a UTQG treadwear rating of 50 to 130 (ex. Kumho V700, Michelin Pilot Sport Cup, Nitto NT01, Pirelli PZero Corsa, Toyo R888, Toyo RA-1, Yokahama A048, etc) +7

This would include the NT-01, though remaining stocks of that tire are low, and it is made in the same Sendai plant. While the V700's are not available in a 15" size, the Victoracers are.

This should alleviate any supply issues, and keep the current RA-1's competitive.

Allowing Hoosier/Hankook/BFG tires would make RA-1's instantly non-competitive, and is not a good option, IMO. On the other end of things, allowing street tires gets very messy (hard to define, and very broad scope).

One issue is that other than remaining NT-01s, none of these tires are very cheap - somewhere around \$180/tire or more. I do see that the Tire Rack has Michelin Pilot Sport Cups at \$130/tire, but only in a 205/55/16" size. Allowing 16" rims, still limited to a 225mm tire width, may be an option as it would open up more tires (many are not available in a 15" size), but that would need to be thought through some more.

This would be a one year exception, with plans to return to the RA-1's next year, providing they become available again.

I want to wrap this up within the next 48 hours, and the choice is ours, so give me your thoughts!

This has been cross posted to the NASA forums.

Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by norman#99 - 06 Apr 2011 09:05

GRM's write up on the R1R does make it sound like it has the normal characteristics of a street tire, (heat up in long sweepers making it lose grip) I wonder if shaving would help with the heating up issue? It would be nice to test them.

To those making the choice for us, I hope that lap times will not play into the decision, ONLY, longevity, cost and safety. Lap times has NOTHING to do with good fun close racing as long as we are all on the same tire and (close power to weight ratio) With a 40 car field and close racing through out the field, 2-4 seconds a lap faster or slower makes NO difference as long as it's the same for all of us.

I would be surprised if Michael Maduske is very far off on his 7-10 heat cycles for the sm6 before they are gone or not competitive with a new set, especially for those of you that drive mostly in a drift or "sideways" It will be good to hear from Greg Fordahl on his experience with, heat cycling out.

At approx. \$700 a set, with 15 heat cycles, that calculates to \$46.66 per session or heat cycles, not including mount balance etc...which is the same for any tire. So if somebody asks you to take them for a ride, ask them for \$50 and you might break even!

One more thing and I am done, the stickier the tire, the more brakes you will use and basically more wear on suspension etc...So the cost goes up for other parts as well. Our newest cars are 23 years old now and need all of the help they can get to not heat up and or break!

Thanks again,

norm

Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Big Dog - 06 Apr 2011 09:11

Several years ago, SCCA Spec-944, in Arizona, was using a Goodyear tire as the preferred tire in their series (just before they went to Toyo's as a spec tire). I do not recall what tire it was but assume it was American made.

Norm, do you recall what tire it was? I called Doug Nelson to find out. He is going to try to find the Goodyear supplier that he used and call regarding them. I will keep everyone posted.

If Goodyear has tires, Doug said that they would last better than Hoosiers but not quite as well as Toyo's, of course. The secret was to heat cycle the tires and let them sit for a minimum of 24 hours, or better for a week or so. Without that, they would wear out quickly.

Jim Foxx

Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by cgktexas - 06 Apr 2011 09:17

norman#99 wrote:

GRM's write up on the R1R does make it sound like it has the normal characteristics of a street tire, (heat up in long sweepers making it lose grip) I wonder if shaving would help with the heating up issue? It would be nice to test them.

The tires GRM tested were shaved to 3/32

Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by cbuzzetti - 06 Apr 2011 09:22

Something to consider with the R1R test is that it sounds as if they were testing at an autocross.

If this is true then these tires may not be any good for road racing.

This looks like a tire that Speed World Challenge used a few years ago.

If this is the case we want to stay away from those they were terrible. (personal experience)

Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Sterling Doc - 06 Apr 2011 09:34

Guys, thanks for the research, and hard work on following through on things. All good info, and continues to show issues with any option. My heart is with the +7 option, but there are practical issues with that option as well, and considerations that are over my head in this matter. I have passed on the opinions here, and my own, with as much research as possible, to the national office. Things are more complex than when we started into this, and even involve other classes affected by this issue.

The National Office is following this thread, and your opinions are being heard, and considered among many issues. In the end, whatever comes down is a short term solution to an unforeseen, and bad problem, without a clean solution. Individual regions can stick with the RA-1 so long as they are able, as none of the considerations I've heard takes them off the table. I am told a decision, and explanation, will come before the week is out, from the National Office.

Thanks again for all the constructive input here, there's a lot of well placed passion for the class seen.
