

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 "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, Yokohama 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.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Big Dog - 08 Apr 2011 08:05

Gentlemen,

I am a shit stirrer from way back in Kansas and can stir it with the best. However, in this situation, stirring things up will not help any of us. While I am not happy with our tire problem either, it is NO ones fault and there is nothing any of us can do about it.

I will support whatever decision is made about tires because that is the best thing for our class. I don't have to like it but I do feel the need to support our leadership regardless because there are NO great, or even good, solutions and I see no reason to tear our class apart.

I believe we should all continue trying to assist with the tire issue, even after a quick solution is made, to try to make things better. Even if we do not have a solution that we like, support the decision and keep going in the best way possible. Our leadership, and NASA leadership deserves our support. We will come out the other side of this but we may not see that for some time.

Jim Foxx

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Weston - 08 Apr 2011 08:27

Hoosier is well respected for a reason, and I would certainly prefer to do business with them over Toyo, but they still aren't the right choice for this class. We need a low-priced long-lasting spec tire, otherwise checkbook racing screws up this class even more than it already has. The RA-1's stopped fitting that purpose a while ago because of the monopolistic pricing, but the answer is not to just give up and let anything fly.

The +7 tire idea had merit... it may not be perfect, but it's better than making this a de facto Hoosier class. If NASA can't figure that out and give Eric and other directors the control that they should have, then they deserve to lose this class and have their business fall apart. The thrill of being a racer sometimes makes us forget that we're the paying customers here and shouldn't have to put up with this crap, but there is still a breaking point that is being reached here.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by cgktexas - 08 Apr 2011 09:10

+1000

Big Dog wrote:

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Jim Foxx

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by joepaluch - 08 Apr 2011 09:29

norman#99 wrote:

... Might be a good idea to put track records on hold till the dust settles too.

Yes in Az, but a new track record will be set at INDE in few weeks. That will count if run you on RA-1 225/50 R15. Anything else included RA-1 in other similar sizes will not count as a track record. I don't want to pollute Az track records with some possibly unattainable numbers, but if run fast on the regular tires it should still count.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Robbie - 08 Apr 2011 09:29

[edited]

A solution is in place. Talk with your regions to decide how you want to race this year. I know in RMR we are set. The only question is how Nationals is going to be handled and my hope is that NASA has learned from their past mistakes with the R888/RA1 issue and will make a firm commitment to a tire rule and stick with it well before Nationals so that racers aren't left out in the cold. I know I'm set for the season and only care about having some fun, close racing with the rest of the RMR folks!