

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 joepaluch - 04 Apr 2011 05:57

Jim,

Remember that some guys have RA-1's on hand. Enough to last the season or most of it. I know some Az guys that have enough and it would not be right to allow a tire that is clearly faster such as the Hoosier.

We do need to allow alternates, but the challenge is to keep them close enough in performance to allow RA-1 guys to still be competitive. I drove your 13 car at PIR on hoosiers and it would simply drive around any RA-1 shod car with ease.

So I believe Eric is 100% correct in use the +7 rule from Performance Touring. The tires are not all exactly equal, but given the constraints it the best I believe we can do. Opening up the size allowance a bit is smart too as it allows for more options. The 16" wheels should never be an advantage with 45 or 50 sidewall, but just another option in case we get in bind. Heck these days we can get cookier cutters for 50-75 per wheel. That is much cheaper than a tire costs so getting 16x7" might not be the cheapest, but a last resort if we run short on 15" sizes.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by joepaluch - 04 Apr 2011 06:00

Also.

The plan would be to go back to the RA-1 once supply is restored. Not sure how we do a phase out of the non-RA1 tires when RA-1 supply returns, but we will figure that when we get there.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Sterling Doc - 04 Apr 2011 06:43

I am with Joe here. While some are in desperate need of options, many guys heeded the warnings, and stocked up on RA-1's why they could. It would cause riots to now ask those guys to buy another set of tires to be legal to race. Also, it makes the transition back to the RA-1 easier, as well. I've done some research on the tires available in the +7 category, and there does seem to be a general consensus that theres not much between them.

It looks like we will go with this proposal barring some compelling other idea. Speak today, or hold your peace...

We will work on the specifics of wording. Expect a formal announcement soon.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Bottoz - 04 Apr 2011 06:47

LOL @ "No New Rules"

I'll be running my current RA-1s until they run out. Then, more than likely NT-01s with the rest of my racing friends.

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Re: Spec Tire Rule Change Proposal

Posted by Sterling Doc - 04 Apr 2011 06:53

LOL @ "No New Rules"

I'll be running my current RA-1s until they run out. Then, more than likely NT-01s with the rest of my racing friends.

Desperate times...

I'm glad the guys with Nittos can be back in tent this year without issue. Keep in mind, though, that long term, we will be a 1 tire class again.

Also, the NT-01 will likely be gone by the time you need them, so keep your options open!

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