

2011 spec tires

Posted by many944s - 17 Mar 2011 13:55

Ok, I don't mean to be a buzz-kill but with less than 30 days til the race season begins here in the mid-west and great lakes regions, there needs to be some sort of decision made on tires for the season. With the issue in Japan I don't think there is any way to procure the needed amount of tires for all of our drivers for even the first couple weekends of racing! With everything I have read it seems that it will be quite a while before production continues at TOYO, not to mention how long it will take to get those tires here to the states!

Is there any way to choose an "alternate" tire? Whether it is for the entire season, or just a portion? As a build & support shop this is becoming a serious issue. From a 944-spec shop that rebuilds transmissions we really don't want to see a "full slick" tire be adopted as there just aren't that many available ring and pinion sets available! Running full slicks WILL kill these transmissions.

the 944-spec class isn't the only class that's going to deal with the TOYO shortage, so this may become a much larger issue! Are there any other tire suppliers that can provide a similar tire? At this point, contingency may not even be an issue! Sure, you may get a \$500 TOYO-buck certificate, but how much good does that do if you can't buy the tires before the cert expires??

Not trying to stir the pot, but this is an issue that is not going to resolve itself anytime soon.

-Nick Miller

Bennington Motorsports

=====

Re: 2011 spec tires

Posted by joepaluch - 18 Mar 2011 05:41

rlofgren wrote:

are you having trouble finding tire shops with ra-1s in stock now? I just got some from toyos only in AZ only to get my toyo bucks cashed in. I have a full set shaved i'm not sure when i even need. any offers?

That is my point Rick, thanks!

Nick,

I can understand the worry being a shop needing to support your guys. As for using last years tires to start a new season... Well that is not an issue because don't we all do that. I never distinguish between "last years" tires and this years tires. I simply record all my heat cycles and run them till they cycle out. I end up running most tires for no more than 1 calendar year, but that year often spans 2 seasons.

As Rick clearly stated the key issue short term is how many tires are in the USA. It may take 2-3 months for a production stop on the RA-1 to actually impact us here. Frankly I don't know. I don't know what the season long implication for RA-1 supply will be. However lets not get in a panic yet. Like I said earlier we need to know the current supply of tires in the USA and any intransist from Japan. There may well be a shortage, but I can't say when that will hit.

Toyo is the spec tire producer for not just our class as well so I bet there other classes who go through tires faster than us in same or worse position. So I suggest letting John Lindsey work the issue. My thinking is that we have some supply of tires in the US today. Enough to last a few months. Then their could be supply shortage that will impact all toyo spec classes at different times. John is probably right now working on solution for all the NASA spec toyo classes.

So consider short term needs right now and tell all your guys to make sure you keep your tires for as long as possible. If they can get an extra heat cycle or two great do it. Otherwise sit tight and buy only the tires you need.

=====

Re: 2011 spec tires

Posted by Sterling Doc - 18 Mar 2011 15:09

Update from John Lindsey - makes it clear where we are at now:

Eric-

After spending some time on the phone today, I have good news and bad news.

The good news is that anything on a truck should be OK to be delivered so it sounds like Tires Direct will get theirs. Phil's Tire also has 100 tires coming in two weeks and they are confirmed to be in the country

and on a truck now. I also found 16 tires at Bob Woodman and 8 tires at Toyos Only.

The bad news is that there are not any left in the warehouses and Toyo has zero data on when they might get more as their distribution network is shot and the Sendai factory is screwed.

So we will have tires for the short term, soon.

We will need options for later this year.

Options are being considered. Stay tuned. My advice is to get RA-1's while you can.

=====

Re: 2011 spec tires

Posted by xsboost90 - 19 Mar 2011 18:00

yeah ive tried ordering tires from a couple different places now and no one had them- national back order they said.

=====

Re: 2011 spec tires

Posted by Sterling Doc - 23 Mar 2011 14:30

Phils Tires has tires in transit from the port, and is taking orders. for out size RA-1's. I ordered a set today.

=====

Re: 2011 spec tires

Posted by jaje - 24 Mar 2011 05:05

There is always the stock of 225/50/15 R888s that Toyo still sells. I think Toyo's requirement was to use their tires so that is an option. We can also run the 205 sized tires as Eric and several others tested them and since SM has a lot greater demand there might be a bigger supply of those also. It gives us Toyo tires but might require redoing alignments, etc. Just food for thought.

=====