

# the ENTIRE TIRE TRUTH

By: Eric Rendleman Performance

## Editor's Note:

*This month, CRI welcomes Eric Rendleman (Eric Rendleman Performance) as the newest member of our Tech Staff. Throughout our travels, particularly north of the Bible Belt, our readers have asked for help particularly with the Burris brand of tires. Eric brings a vault full of knowledge to the table, and it is our intention to work with him and maybe occasionally a guest columnist to produce a column that will cover the spectrum of tires, regardless of brand, and assist our readers with their racing program.*

My name is Eric Rendleman, owner of Eric Rendleman Performance, a full time tire specialty shop. I have many years of experience working specifically with kart racing tires. Over the years I have had opportunities to work with every brand of tire currently available, quite extensively. In these tech articles we will cut through the rumors and get down to the facts about what the real deal is with all the tire issues that are currently on everybody's mind. Hopefully you will enjoy what we cover, and learn from what information is provided.

This month, we start with some basic information about Burris tires. Burris tires are unique compared to other brands for a number of reasons;

First, Burris tires are the only popular brand currently made in the USA. While this does contribute to a slightly higher retail price versus some of the other available brands, Burris tires do have some of the best tire wear characteristics versus the competition. The rubber that Burris uses to make their tires does not seem to wear down as quickly, or be nearly as affected by heat cycles as some of the other brands. In some areas, racers can get by with one set of tire for a full season. In other areas, they do go through more tires to stay optimal, but still less tires overall compared to other options. If you over prep a Burris tire, the prep will normally wear out of the tire just by letting the tire sit for a period of time.

The thing that probably makes the Burris tires the most unique is the wide variety of compounds that are available. At the current time, Burris offers six compounds, not including their treaded tires. These compounds include the SS-11, SS22, B33A, SS-33A, B44A, and B55A. The way they are listed ranges from

softest to hardest. Each compound has its own, unique set of circumstances they are run in. While it is sometimes complicated to figure out the optimum compound for the track you are running, it is often easier than having to soften tires down to make them work for the track conditions.

This month we are going to provide a general breakdown and what each compound works best for. These are only general guidelines, and might need to be modified slightly based on your exact track conditions.

The SS-11 compound is Burris' softest compound that will punch in the high 30's on the durometer when new. This tire works best on wet race tracks. Clues to determine when this tire would be good choice; Walking on the race track and leaving foot prints, or karts leaving tire marks in the surface moisture, the SS-11 would be a good choice. Finally, if you can take a screw driver or knife and stick it easily into the dirt up to the handle, it is another good indication that the track is soft enough to run the SS-11. When the track starts to dry out, it is normally time to look to the next harder compound.

The SS-22 is next harder compound. It normally punches in the low to mid 40's range on most durometers. It should be used when the track is not super wet, but hasn't dried out completely either. This condition is referred to as a damp track. The track will normally not have much bite when you are running this tire, but it is not wet enough to run the SS-11. When you walk out on a track and can feel some moisture in the surface, but the track is not firm, you should try this compound. As track moisture dissipates, we need to look at the next compound in the Burris line-up.

The SS-33A is what you could call the backbone of the Burris tire lineup. In most areas where Burris tires are popular, this is the compound that racers will have the most of in their trailer. There's enough information available on the SS-33A for



more than one column to be written just about it (something you might keep your eyes open for in upcoming issues of CRI). This compound is very versatile because it has a wider range of operating conditions compared to the other compounds. If your track contains light moisture, this is your tire. A dry slick track also commands this tire. You can tell a dry slick track because it will

normally take some rubber down on the surface, but the rubber almost has a shine to it. This means the track is hard enough to take rubber, but the rubber being laid down is more of a slick film, instead of anything with bite or abrasion. For most Burris tire racers, this will be the universal choice over the most race days, and over the broadest range of applications. It is soft enough to get bite on slick tracks, but hard enough to hold up to tracks that start to build a fair amount of bite as well.

You might notice that we skipped over the B33A, even though it was previously listed as softer than the SS-33A. We did this because the B33A and B44A can almost be grouped together. Where the SS-33A is the backbone of the Burris lineup, these compounds are the ones that are less run versus all the others. The B33A is just slightly softer than the SS-33A, while the B44A is just slightly harder. Greatly because they are only minor different than the popular SS-33A, these tires are not nearly as popular, and some racers don't use them at all. Even though they are less popular, does not mean they cannot be effective under the correct conditions. The B33A is perfect if you run a track where an SS-22 is just slightly too soft, but the SS-33A doesn't quite make the desired grip. The B33A is an excellent choice for racers who would rather change compounds than work with tire prep to make an SS-33A softer. Again, the same applies with the B44A. If the SS-33A seems like it just isn't quite hard enough, but you don't want to prep a B55A down, then the B44A is a great choice. For anybody who has ever run a SS-33A and feels like it is just slightly on the soft side, try the B44A. You might be pleasantly surprised with this less popular tire.

This leaves the B55A, the hardest tire is the Burris lineup. This tire is generally reserved for racing on hard tracks with good bite. In many series where kart count is good, and the tracks get hard and fast, this compound is by far the best choice in the Burris lineup. It has the strength and durability to run on a hard track. It also responds better to chemical treatment than some of the other compounds. On pretty much any track in the Southeastern region that runs a Burris tire, the B55A is the tire of choice because of the bite that the red clay produces. In other areas, it is often run mainly on tracks that use calcium on the track surface, or as described above, tracks that produce above average bite. Extremely hot weather is also another time these tires work well because of their ability to work in a higher temperature operating range. Finally, this is by far Burris' best compound to run on asphalt tracks. Again, this tire will produce far better wear characteristics on asphalt versus what many other brands. In upcoming issues, we'll continue looking at the Burris tire lineup. We'll look into prepping the various compounds, cutting, and various other things such as air pressure, rim widths, and more. Until then – Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Fast.



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