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## [Geax Gato 2.3" 29"er Tires: First Impressions](#)

May 31st, 2011 by Guitar Ted

The Geax Gato tires are mounted up and being ridden now. You can check out the technical aspects of this 2.3"er here in my [Out Of The Box](#) post. Now, after several trail rides, I can give you my first impressions on this trail tire.



As stated on [Geax's site](#) and posted in my [Out Of The Box](#) article, the Gato is a great tire on "wet and loose terrain". So, with that in mind I had a look at some trails with not quite "wet" conditions, but they were plenty moist, and definitely got these into loose terrain that included loam, sand, gravelly rocks, loose, broken weathered limestone, and plenty of downed twigs and branches. Pretty much a potpourri of loose stuff. Not to mention roots, embedded weathered limestone, and your garden variety black earth.

I only wish I had hit the trails closer to a rain event, but perhaps those really wet roots and rocks will present themselves later. 😊



Again- The Gatos were mounted to my Salsa Cycles Gordo/Hope Pro II wheels tubeless. I had pressures ranging from 30psi/2.07 Bar to 19psi/1.31 Bar. The tires were first ridden on pavement to assess rolling resistance. I found that they did about as well as the recently ridden [Bontrager 29-4's](#) in this regard. Easy to ride without feeling too much vibration or drag. Of course, at the 30psi I did this test on, the Gato was only hitting the pavement with its central rows of knobs, effectively making the tire ride narrower than it really was. The 29-4, it should be noted, has a flatter profile, and was hitting the pavement with a much wider footprint.

This same effect translated over to the trails, where after passing through some single track, it was noted that only the central knobs were making contact with the trail at most points. I lowered the pressures, and lowered them even more, until I was hovering around the 20psi mark, where I felt that the Gato started to come alive, and not respond as a ping-pong ball off every trail obstacle. Another point to make here is that the Gato, even on the wider Salsa rim, still presents a rounded crown to the trail, and with its "Mohawk Tread" pattern, likes to ride on the central knob pattern, even at lower pressures, although the casing does start to track much better. I am thinking I could go even lower, say into the mid-teens psi, given the correct conditions.



That said, I was pleased with the Gato's performance once I got the pressures down into the lower range I specified above. The tire had better climbing grip, and the casing felt like it was "working" more to cushion the ride and yet it retained its rolling prowess. It lessened the tendency for the rounded casing to want to rebound off of cambered trail obstacles, and cornering seemed to be

improved. Only the loose branches and twigs, or laterally strung out roots would seem to be able to kick out the tires sideways. Interestingly, the looser the terrain got, the better the Gato felt. For instance, loose gravel with a hard base seemed to be taken with aplomb in corners at the requisite high degree of lean angle needed to get those side knobs to bite.

So, for now it would seem that the TNT AM Casing is stiffer than Geax's normal TNT casing, since I had to lower the pressures beyond what I am accustomed to with tires like the Geax Sagauo TNT, and the AKA TNT tires which I have ridden extensively in the past. The Gato seems to work better when that casing can flex, and when the tire can get some of the side knobs involved in making traction for the rider. If all goes as planned, I hope to put the Gato into some really loose, and severe terrain in the next week or two. Stay tuned for a Mid-Term Report coming up.

*Geax submitted these tires for test and review at no charge to Twenty Nine Inches. we are not being paid, nor bribed for these reviews and we will strive to offer our honest views and opinions throughout.*

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1. [1 TurkeyMtn troubadour](#) on [May 31st, 2011 at 11:27 pm](#)

I just received a OneNiner to run singlespeed and used these tires both front and back on the Stan's NoTubes Arch rims. So far so good but I am 250 lbs. And run them at 30 psi fro ant 32 rear for my first ride. The trails were technical rock climbs and rocky single track. Since the bike was new it all felt different. At my weight do you think I should rUn lower pressures? I am going to try a higher pressure in the +air at 140 psi and -air @130 to stay stiffer on my low speed compression. The fork is the RebaXX Team 2010 model.

2. [2 Guitar Ted](#) on [May 31st, 2011 at 11:45 pm](#)

@TurkeyMtnTroubadour: I'd try going lower with the pressures, if you have the TNT version. I think you will eventually appreciate the performance more so than at 30psi. Our European contributor also mentioned in his report that he was able to run "ridiculously low pressures" with his set.

I'd also try bumping up those shock pressures at your weight as well. I'm a bit lighter than you and run 150 pos/140 neg at a minimum on my Rebas.

3. [3 maheoway](#) on [Jun 1st, 2011 at 10:56 am](#)

Will you be comparing the Gato and 29-4 on the El Paso terrain? Bronsons? TMT seems to have mounted his on Stan's, no problema.

4. [4 Oderus](#) on [Jun 1st, 2011 at 11:28 am](#)

@Turkey, I would run them way lower. I'm heavier than you and I run my Reba at 160+/150-. I run the Geax AKA (TNT) at 18psi in the front and 23 in the back.

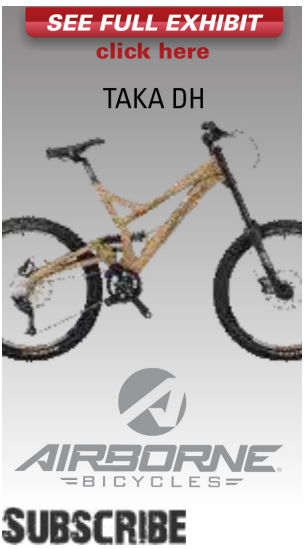
5. [5 Guitar Ted](#) on [Jun 1st, 2011 at 1:51 pm](#)


@maheoway: Probably will bring the 29-4's if there is room in the truck, otherwise just the Gato. I don't have the Bronsons, Grannygear does, but from what I hear, they wouldn't be too good on those rocks in El Paso. 😊

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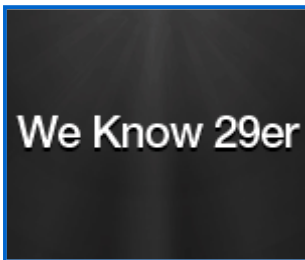
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