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[Geax Saguario 29"er Tires: SoCal Review](#)

July 13th, 2011 by Guitar Ted

Geax Saguario 29"er Tires: SoCal Review: by Grannygear

Included in the box along with the [Geax AKAs I already reviewed](#) was a pair of Saguaros in the 2.2" TNT version. When I saw those, I recalled that they have been mentioned by many riders in on-line forums as a very good desert/dry conditions tire. That, combined with the 2.2" size, immediately seemed like a great set of tires to run on Project Long Legs, the Specialized 130mm travel FSR. I took some time to see how they mounted on the UST Havens and a Stan's rim (no go there) and weighed them [[See post here](#)].



So, when I did finally mount them up on the Haven wheels on the FSR, I was a bit disappointed. The tread pattern and overall shape was less than the aggressive tire I had in mind and they had a bit of a separation from the row of side knobs to the center tread section. I have never liked the steering performance of a tire with that kind of tread gap. I always seem to find myself in that 'no mans land' of the 'in between' on hard pack and that feels vague and odd. But, on they went anyway, mounting up on the UST Havens with a very solid interface and a loud **bang**.

I measured them at 2.23" wide on the 26mm wide (external) Havens, tubeless of course, and that has held true over time. The TNT casing sure gives the impression of being a durable sidewall. There is a slight weight penalty in the process over other non-TNT folding Geax versions, but in many parts of the globe, the terrain is a sidewall killer so a bit of weight in the right place is well worth it.



Out onto the street, pedaling towards the first ride, I was struck by how smooth and quiet the Saguaros rolled. Whisper quiet. Nice! But would that mean I would be searching for traction later on? Now with many, many hours of riding, some of it on steeper and quite rocky trails, and all of it spread across the dry and loose So Cal summer dirt, the Saguaros have completely surprised me by how good they are. Are they the perfect tire for the FSR? Not quite, but I will get to that.

First of all, they still knock me out on how smoothly they roll. That is really appreciated on long climbs over hard surfaces. Although I will put up with a more aggressive tire on the bigger travel FSR, the fast rolling Geax tires help keep me on target with the bigger/badder but still XC nature of the build. They offer a surprising amount of traction for braking, climbing and turning, only falling down a bit when it gets really loose and gnarly. They are much better on off camber or in ruts than the AKAs and there is enough of a side knob to hang in there for the most part.

Oddly enough, I never noticed any ill effects from the separated side knob row...no vague feeling on turn ins or corners, so I am not sure what is happening there, but I like it. They seem to be wearing well, not showing much feathering or chunking.

Now, are they perfect? No. If I could tweak one thing, it would be to add *juuust* a bit of aggressiveness to the side knobs. I still get the occasional side slip on ruts and it would help lock them down a bit on looser corners (In my opinion at least...since I am arm chair designing here) but really, that is my only complaint. I have no idea about mud or wet roots, etc, but I see the Saguaros as a dry conditions tire as the name suggests (Saguaro is a cactus common in some North American deserts). I think they would make a good tire for a hard tail/rigid as well as the stiffer casing seems to do well with lower pressures. I kept them above 25psi on the FSR just so I would not hammer the rims too hard on rocks, but they did not feel squirmy at all down that low. If they are on the correct rim, they have a very solid bead interface and it takes some thumb effort to de-bead them when you are removing the tire. That is gold, right there. In any case, the decent volume, stable casing, and fast rolling, lively ride seems like a great combo for a dry conditions single speed tire as well, but I have not tried that yet.



It seems that some riders, per the comments on earlier posts in our Tubeless Re-do articles, that they are getting mounted on Stan's rims. OK. I suppose it is not impossible, but it sure would not be easy and getting them off would be some work and I would think you would need a stiff, strong, and thin set of tire levers to do it ([like these alloy-levers](#)). But, it seems it is being done.

I figured the Saguaros would get a quick run on the FSR and then be replaced for something more gnarly. They are still there and I am still happy. Hit that side knob with just a tiny bit of 'gnar' (without introducing any steering issues) and I could be moved to tears of joy.

Note: Geax submitted these tires for test/review at no charge. We are not paid, nor bribed for this review. We strive to give our honest opinions and thoughts throughout this post.

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1. [1 captain bob](#) on [Jul 13th, 2011 at 10:09 pm](#)

my favorite tire to date,,,,,, i like the front mounted backwardsw myself. As for the tight fit.....the tires stretch after a few days. I have mounted and remounted the barro race tnt and aka tnt a few times now and they are not tight any longer. so, if the saguaros are the same you won't have trouble on the trail or anywhere else remounting them. And, that's by hand. I have the tnt's on arch's right now. The barro race's were mounted to dusters with the rimstrip and the worked well after a few days too. glad you like the saguaros. thanks for the report.

2. [2 Yourdaguy](#) on [Jul 14th, 2011 at 12:25 am](#)

I have the folding version but my review is that like you I would like a little more side grip so I moved it to the rear. In the rear it rolls well and is quiet as stated, but the climbing traction is only mediocre in my opinion. My other current rears that I like better (because they can climb) are the Exiwolf and the Ignitor which are both slightly wider and narrower. The Exiwolf also rides much better (absorbs impacts) better and is my current favorite (folding) rear. I have only the experience of around 10 tires on the rear not the many you have, but the Exiwolf if better than the folding version of this tire in every way except a small weight penalty, quietness on pavement, and maybe rolling resistance; although that one is close. The Exiwolf has better cornering, better transition in corners, better traction on climbs, is better in mud, and better impact absorption My 2 cents.

3. [3 grannygear](#) on [Jul 14th, 2011 at 11:51 am](#)

Great comments. I will have to try one after a bit on a Stans rim and see if it is an easier fit. It was a battle I did not want to wage at first try.

I have an Exiwolf, but it is on my bikepacking scoot on a Stan's Flow and I have not ridden that lately. I have had good results with the climbing on the Saguario, but I do climb seated on the FSR for the most part and we do not have a lot of short, techy climbs here. I will have to play on that Exiwolf more. However, I would not trade off the UST bead on the TNT Geax for a marginal increase in traction. I am done with tubeless stuff that is a gamble, and I consider a non-tubeless rated WTB tire on the UST Haven to be a bit of a gamble... less so on a Stan's rim. Now, when the new tubeless rated WTB stuff is out, that will be killer.

grannygear

4. [4 Oliver](#) on [Jul 14th, 2011 at 1:13 pm](#)

Like you, I am in SD and have had a great experience with there tires. On my 09 Stumpjumper FSR, I run the Saguario in the normal position up front, and I have the rear reversed for more climbing traction, and have found that it works well.

On my single speed and geared hard tail, I run the Saguario up front, with the AKA in the rear, and like this combo as well.

I have switched from a Maxxis Ikon upfront, and a crossmark in the rear on my SS and Geared HT, and have been real happy with the switch.

5. [5 yourdaguy](#) on [Jul 14th, 2011 at 10:02 pm](#)

Well all my wheels are Stans except for my one Shimano set that I hate so they get commuter duty. I am not buying new wheels so all my ratings are based on folding tires. I have considered reversing the Saguario on the rear but wondered if I would lose much speed. I generally climb steep stuff standing since I mostly ride SS and when I do ride geared, I just generally go ahead and stand rather than shifting down a bunch. I guess my upper body (fingers) are weaker than my lower body.

6. [6 oliver](#) on [Jul 15th, 2011 at 2:08 am](#)

Yourdaguy,

I have not noticed a loss in speed, give it a try. I think you will be happy with the outcome.

7. [7 JeroenK](#) on [Jul 15th, 2011 at 4:40 am](#)

Can anyone bust the myth of reduced speed due to tire tread direction?!? Please?

Very little rolling resistance is due to the tread pattern. Most of it is in the deformation of the casing. That is very counter intuitive sometimes, such as in this test (the first graph), where, on road surface, the semi-knob RR has a bit less rolling resistance compared to the semi-slick FF. <http://www.mtbonline.co.za/info/mtb-tyre-rolling-resistance.htm>

Really, do yourself a favour and start caring about what really influences riding speed, such as tire pressure or the extra weight around your waist 😊 .

Depending on tire type, tread pattern direction does have a noticable influence on cornering, climbing and braking grip.

8. [8 c_g](#) on [Jul 15th, 2011 at 8:40 am](#)

I have lodgged countless miles on the Saguario and the AKA here in cetnral european trails (incl. Alps) and can see where GG is seeing the great rolling of the Saguario and the very good dry condition performance.

For our often humid and changing trail conditions though I find the a very benevolent tire while the AKA is better particularly traction and cornering control as it is more of a biting tire.

Great to see this 29er classic being revisited and reviewed again ... thanks GG!

9. [9 Ian](#) on [Jul 15th, 2011 at 10:13 pm](#)

Just got myself a TNT Saguario for the front of my '09 GF Rig, and I absolutely love it. I previously had the rear 29-3 tire up front (it came with 2 of those) and then an ExiWolf, so I don't have much to compare it to. I can say, however, that for our conditions here in West Michigan, it rolls so nice and grabs like crazy through the corners. I have it on there in the reversed direction, but I still think it's blazing fast. Also, I have a couple of friends who have Saguaros that have put over 1000 miles on the set, and the tires still have plenty of tread. Have to love that...

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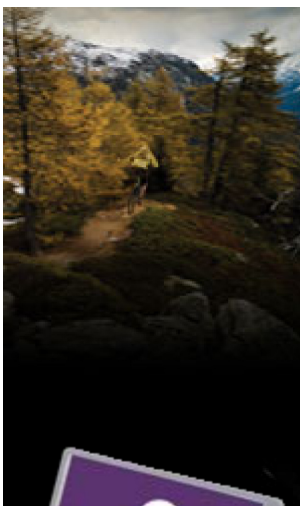
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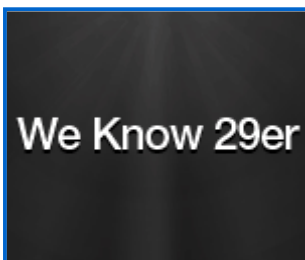
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