



Have a Happy
and Safe
Memorial Day.
Please
remember all
men and women
who have died
in military
service to the
United States.

Bicycle Tires & Truck Tires...A Lot of Similarities

In the recent May issue of my monthly *Bicycle* magazine there was a most interesting article that caught my attention. This was the first time I could recall a story about bike tires. The title was "Treat Yourself to a Floatier, More Comfortable Ride with a Set of 28 mm Tires".

In the bicycle world, the industry standard for road bikes is for tires to have a width of 25 mm or slightly under an inch. Just a few years ago 23 mm was the standard width, but now the new trend is 28 mm wide tires. This new wider size is similar in concept to the commercial widebase 445/50R22.5 tire.

According to the opening line of the article, "Tires & tire pressure are the easiest and least expensive way to change the way your bike rides". These wider bicycle tires are much better at absorbing road shock and provide more traction. Serious bikers hit the road for several hours and comfort is very important. When you talk to truckers who are running widebase tires on their tractor and trailer, their first comment is that the ride is just so much better with the wider tires. Widebase tires are not affected by road rutting like dual tires which is the primary reason why drivers like the way the vehicle drives with these wider tires.

takes more effort to pedal a bike with lower tire pressure (tire rolling resistance is higher at the lower pressure). It is exactly the same for truck tires, running lower tire pressures will increase the rolling resistance which leads to a decrease in fuel economy.

Another negative to riding on 28 mm bike tires is that they are heavier and less aerodynamic. People that race bikes prefer the lightest weight bicycle which allows them to pedal at high mph. Again, lighter is good for improved rolling resistance. In the case of widebase tires, one tire is replacing two duals. Plus there is only one wheel compared to two dual wheels. There is a big weight savings for fleets who run widebase tires & aluminum wheels of up to 1,000 pounds per vehicle. This leads to improved fuel economy.

Lowering tire pressure in bike tires makes them more difficult to pedal. Some people prefer low tire pressure because the comfort factor is so much greater. With widebase tires, running tires with low pressure will lead to a significant tire heat buildup which is really bad news for truck tires. Heat is a tires worst enemy and will lead to reduced mileage, reduced retreadability, and early tire removals. Generating too much heat is not ever an issue for bicycle tires.



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Widebase and the new wider bicycle tires have more rubber on the road. This longer tire footprint is good for traction and tends to absorb road shock better versus the narrower tires.

The same *Bicycle* article explains that lowering your bicycle tire pressure will also help ride comfort since the tire footprint is longer (more rubber on the road at the lower pressure). The negative is that it

Q&A PSI ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

Q. One of my trucks was put out of service after a highway inspection because of a flat tire. What is the definition of a flat tire?

A. The official definition used by CVSA, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Admin for a flat tire is 50% or less of the max tire pressure molded onto the tire sidewall.