

UTV TREAD EVALUATION

BAJACROSS XD TIRES

Mounted on SS212 platinum wheels

By the staff of Dirt Wheels

□ To offer a tire with the name Baja in it, you better have the goods to back it up. If you haven't heard, Baja, Mexico, is home to some of the most down right treacherous trails around. The popular Baja 1000 is also dubbed one of the hardest off-road events in the world, and that's just to finish it. Tread concerns are a big reason for that. For a personal challenge, ITP developed their BajaCross tire to specifically compete and finish in Baja. Designed from the ground up as a durable, hardpacked and loose dirt performer, the BajaCross took the checkered flag in the UTV category at last year's Baja 1000. Now, the same BajaCross tires are available for your UTV.



ITP's BajaCross treads mounted on SS212 platinum wheels look as good as any UTV combo we have seen. Check out www.rockymountainatv.com for good deals on both.

← Starting at \$115, the BajaCross tires are costly, but their tough eight-ply carcass should last a while!

The 26x9-12 tires handled very well in every type of terrain we drove them through. They are extremely durable, and when filled to the suggested 10 pounds of air pressure, tracked over everything. Air pressure is very important, as overfilling will cause the narrow front tires to push through corners, and under pressure soft tires will get sliced.

There is a reason these treads made it though Baja's toughest event: On rocky terrain, the tires don't get chewed up quickly like softer compound rubber does, and they provide great traction in the soft stuff. They even provide a good footprint through sand without airing down. Airing down would have improved sand times, but you're not likely going to do this out on the trail. These tires would be sufficient for dune trips.

BUY IT?

About the only thing we didn't love about the BajaCross tires and SS212 platinum wheels are the prices. Pricing for the treads start around \$115 each on www.rockymountainatv.com for a 25x8R-12, and hit upwards of \$170 for the larger sizes. The SS212 wheels ran from \$89 to \$195 on the same website. We found close to the same prices at our local Riders Choice shop as well.

The BajaCross tires are available in 25x8R-12, 25x10R-12, 26x10R-14, 26x11R-14, 26x9R-12 and 26x11R-12 sizes. Visit www.itptires.com, www.rockymountainatv.com, or head to your local dealership. □



BAJA TOUGH

We installed a set of ITP's BajaCross 26-inch tires on their 12-inch SS212 platinum wheels, and bolted them onto our Project Kawasaki Teryx 750.

The BajaCross is made using an eight-ply construction that makes its carcass very resistant to punctures. They also give great sidewall stiffness for less tire warp and wobble. The BajaCross tires are a claimed 25 percent stronger than ITP's next toughest tire, and is also the longest lasting. The overlapping center tread pattern and stepped side lugs provide a smooth ride on hardpack surfaces, and the big side knobs provide good bite in desert terrain or hardpacked trails. The BajaCross also features a

raised lip near the bead that protects the SS wheels from being damaged by rocks.

Once the new treads were bolted up, we fired up our Teryx and hammered it around our 60-mile Bajaresque test loop. A loop which consists of loose dirt, sand, whoops, tight and technical trails, hill climbs and descents, as well as rocky creek beds.

After two loops around our course to critique the BajaCross, the tough eight-ply treads didn't come close to a flat, and after a quick wash, the tires looked brand new. We even went against racing protocol and deliberately skipped across every sharp obstacle in our path.