



## ITP Mud Lite XTR

**W**hat do consumers expect out of after-market tires? Multi-terrain traction, a smooth ride, light weight, a self cleaning lug design, shock absorbs ion over rocky terrain, mud riding, trail riding, hard pack and sandy conditions have been mastered, but with individual applications only. Manufacturing a single tire to fit everyone's personal needs is next to impossible, it just can't be done. Mud tires wouldn't work very well for lawn or turf applications and vice versa. This is why tire manufacturers design tread patterns for different levels of aggressiveness. The most popular and



Is the new Mud Lite XTR capable of handling this nasty tread clogging swamp bottom?

widely used is the aggressive trail design. These tires work well in mud, sand and snow while still offering a reasonably smooth ride on hard pack trails. Some brands would be more beneficial in the mud department rather than the trail department, people have been making that sacrifice for years, but they don't have to anymore. The new Mud Lite XTR will be the mentor for all others. We have labeled it as the perfect all purpose trail tire. For this test we ventured our way to a real trail system filled with rocks, ruts, logs, roots, mud, water, and what ever else anyone could ever encounter in a real world situation

exists on this trail. We set out with the mind set of destroying this new tire to find its limitations and weak points. The only problem we had is that we could not cause a failure. The sticks, sharp rocks, and boulders were no match for the new XTRs. They were resistant to punctures, tears, or cuts, and the well designed rims did an excellent job protecting against bead leaks. Oversized tires are heavier than the standard issue, and do rob a little power, but it is so worth it when you need to count on something to get the job done. The new Mud Lite XTRs will do just that!



**TOP** The side bite tread worked excellent. Slippery logs, ruts, and rocks were no problem.

**LEFT** The radial grip improved the handling characteristics of the test vehicle.

**BOTTOM** Climbing obstacles was a breeze.



## Traction

We did some of this 12 hour test at one of our own private test sites to enhance some of the obstacles above and beyond every day encounters. One was the log pile, now not many people go out and climb log piles for fun, but there probably are a few, so we did it. To put all odds against the new XTRs, we found logs that have been aged by nature for a while so they were nice and slippery, almost too slippery to walk on. The new skins from ITP didn't even spin on the logs, with a good boost of the throttle, instead of spinning, the logs were actually ejected out the rear. They took us all the way to the top without interruption. After that we were attempting to get a photo of a power slide around a corner but the radial design of these new tires grip so well we had to put our Sportsman into low gear just to get the tires to spin fast enough to kick the rear end out for the curve. This section of the trail was pretty hard packed, but even in the loose gravel they still took hold of what ever was there. On the trail we climbed over water and mud covered rocks with no problem. Even in the ruts we were amazed, with very little throttle and steering effort, these new radial tires would climb out of any rut we could find. For comparison purposes we tried some of these same maneuvers with another popular aggressive tire of equal size with incomparable results. The other tire just didn't stack up in the grip department. These new Mud Lite XTRs worked flawlessly, they even climbed us over a mud and water covered 14 inch steel culvert without one little slip, even in two wheel drive. None of the other quads along for this test could do that.



Notice the slick surface conditions of our test site.

## Ride

The nice thing about radial tires versus bias ply is that they are far more flexible to uneven surfaces. The trails we were on were full of rocks, ruts, and pot holes. The XTRs were very forgiving in this aspect. Instead of bouncing or beating the tar out of the suspension, they would actually take and absorb most of the impact virtually eliminating the boing factor. At the end of the test we threw on a set of bias ply aftermarket tires to the same test vehicle so the vari-

ables were limited to just the tires. It only took a mile or so of abuse to see that the Mud Lite XTRs simply outperformed everything else we brought along. It would be safe to say that the radial design of the XTRs gives the suspension a huge break by absorbing most of the small bumps. We would drive over 6"-7" rocks at 40 m.p.h. and barely feel them at all. Ride, comfort and controllability were highly rated at all speeds on any terrain.

## Mudability

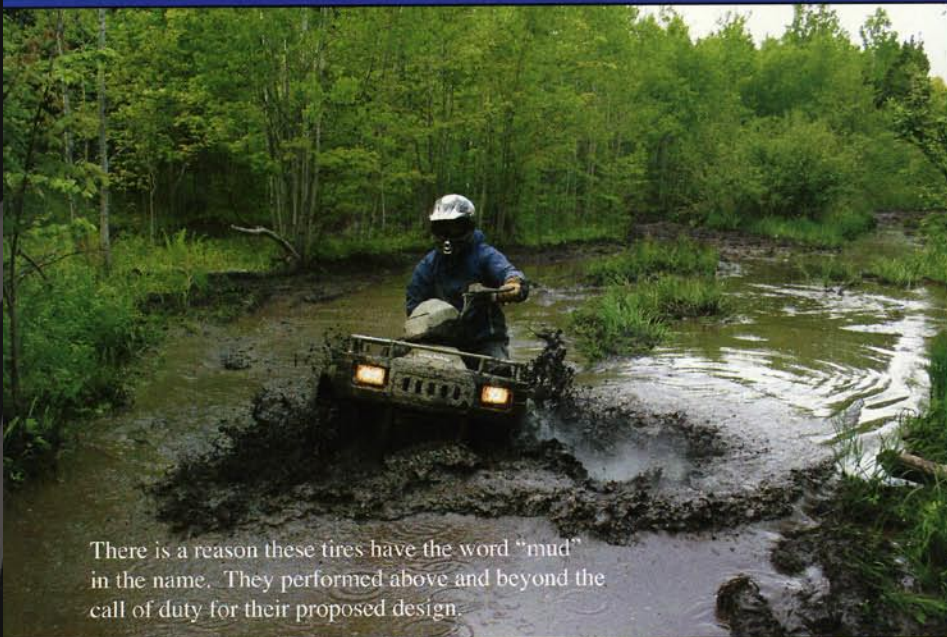
What about the mud? What benefit does a radial tire have in mud? Well, first of all, radial tires offer more flotation. With a flexible tire, ground pressure is distributed more evenly, even in very soft conditions, allowing the lugs to pull with a better, and more evenly distributed contact patch. It's kind of like taking a sponge and pressing it onto a rock and sliding it across a bed of soft sand. The sponge cups itself over the rock so it doesn't slip or roll out from underneath it. Trying the same experiment with something hard

like a board will have very different results. In order to get enough grip between the rock and the board you would have to press pretty hard resulting in the rock getting pushed deeper into the sand. The same philosophy applies with the sponge and radial tires. Radial tires offer more flotation. (And that they did!) We could not get stuck bad enough where we couldn't push the heavy Sportsman out by hand. Even with thick gooey waist deep muck, these tires performed extremely well in the mud given their moderately ag-

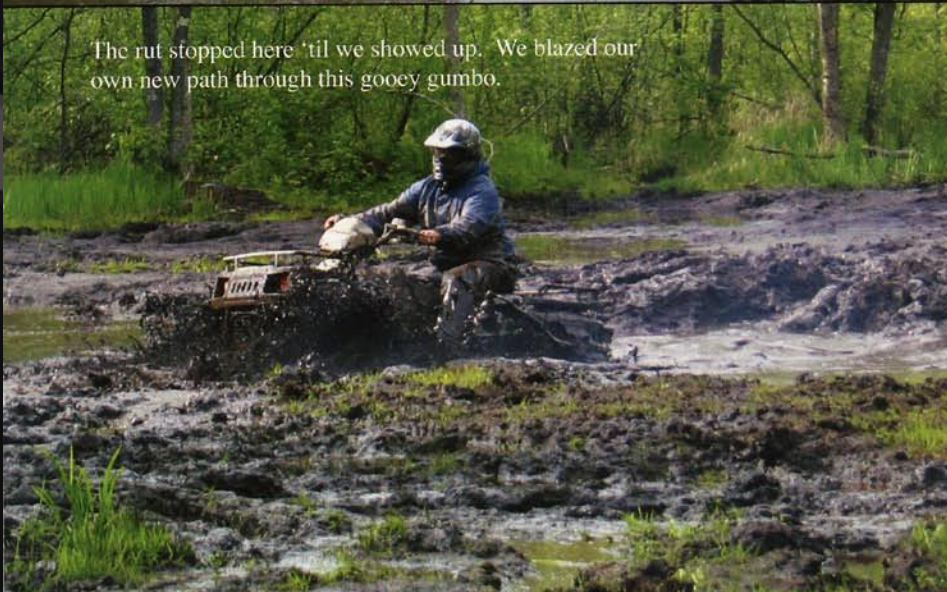
gressive mud lug design. There are other bias ply tires on the market that will out perform the Mud Lite XTRs in the mud, you know, the ones with 2 to 2.5 inches of tread depth and ride like steel gears with every other tooth missing. With every gain in a given situation there is a sacrifice made in another. The Mud Lite XTRs have put a very good balance to all of the major and minor factors associated with ATV tire performance.

## 14" Wheels

Before this test some of us were concerned that the lower profile tire associated with a 14 inch rim may actually bottom out against the wheel while driving over small to medium sized rocks at moderate to high speeds, but we didn't experience anything like that at all. It's like the tire would absorb every bump, rock, or rut to a certain point and then transfer the rest of the abrupt impact to the suspension. The 5 psi inflation worked perfectly, the tires stayed soft and flexible enough for superb traction while offering an unusually comfortable ride. They also virtually eliminated the tire roll during aggressive cornering. The only gripe we had with this combination was that the lug nuts were kind of hard to grab to get started on the stud thread, at least on the Polaris model. The lug nuts were recessed about one inch inside the outside surface of the wheel. It was also a challenge finding a socket with a thin enough side wall to fit inside the lug nut hole to tighten the wheel down, but once installed it was well worth the short 15 minutes of installation time. We think maybe being every other aspect of



There is a reason these tires have the word "mud" in the name. They performed above and beyond the call of duty for their proposed design.



The rut stopped here 'til we showed up. We blazed our own new path through this gooey gumbo.



ITP's new Mud Lite XTR was so impressive and enjoyable that we had to find something to complain about, but the lug nut holes could be another 20 or 30 thousandths larger in diameter.

### Conclusion

ITP has developed an exceptional ATV tire with the Mud Lite XTR. Traction was optimal on any slick surface we encountered and would

also work very well in snow and icy conditions with its radial design. The new C-Series 14" wheel gives a new and tricked out appearance to just ordinary quads. This combination is now available in a 12" wheel as well. ITP's Mud Lite XTR is by far the best tire to date we have ever tested as a combination of aggressive trail and mud applications. They perform extremely well in all the grueling conditions mother nature could present it with. Long term durability is without a doubt unquestionable, even after 100+ miles of some of the nastiest terrain on the planet the XTRs still had some of the injection whiskers, or whatever those little things are called on them, even on the rear tires. Take the new Mud Lite XTRs for a run, you won't be disappointed. ITP can be reached at (909)390-1905, or visit their web site, [www.itptires.com](http://www.itptires.com). The 27" tire and 14" wheel combination that we tested retails out at around \$900.00.

Tire to tire, Mud Lite XTR is at the top of our list for the best all around aggressive trail tire!

