

BOAR WHEEL REVIEW

by Heidi Thomas

Joel Hawkins with Boar Wheel called me this spring, to find out if I would like to try a new set of heavy-duty tires & wheels. Wow, "Yes!" I replied. I was on the road hauling a horse at the time. Joel asked me what size /bolt pattern on the trailer I would like to put them on. I didn't know off hand, but he decided to send a set of the most common lug nut pattern & size. He said the tires & wheels would arrive at our ranch pre-mounted. As promised, they were delivered & ready to go off of the truck. I opted to put them on the old tried and true 4-horse gooseneck that I use most often. Lucky me! It was due for a new set of tires anyhow, and I just hadn't checked that off my list yet. To tell you the truth, it doesn't get the attention it deserves, and usually gets hand-me downs off other rigs. Meaning, it had been running on light truck tires. What I did find out in my research is that ideally, I should have been using specialty tires all along.

First observation- I noticed is how sleek and attractive the wheels are. Clean & simple in their design, including a liquid silver powder coat, and overall, they look heavy duty. The wheels are thicker steel than the set I removed from the trailer, they are also taller. The old wheel rims were 16"; the Boar wheels are 19.5", which turned out to be another advantage for me. The increased height of the trailer, giving it better clearance over the bed of my pick-up, which it desperately needed.

Even with the increased dimension, the newer heavy-duty set was a direct swap out for the old set. The lugs fit perfectly, and the job of changing them out was completed in just a few minutes. Joel asked me to have my tire dealer give him a call to confirm the best torque and then we ready to hit the road.

Second observation- I noticed that those tires are heavy duty, literally, they are heavy! Not unmanageable, just noticeably heavier than I am used to. The reason being is the commercial grade tire. Besides the obvious reason (bigger size), I did a little research and became more educated.

With a tow vehicle, traction and comfort are the focus of the tire design, whereas stability should be most important on a trailer. Traction allows a vehicle to accelerate, turn corners and brake, with comfort being supported by the flexibility in the tire sidewalls. The same flexibility on the trailer tires actually has a negative effect. Flexibility is the primary cause of sway, especially on trailers with a high center of gravity or those that carry heavy loads, like when hauling livestock, or living quarters. I learned that commercial grade tires have the advantage in stability on your tow vehicle, and I found additional advantages as well.

How often do you have a flat, or have to change a tire while hauling to rodeos? I would bet that it is more often than you would like. Because the commercial tires use a different grade of rubber than the traditional light truck tire they are expected to go 70,000-80,000 miles. They can even be retreaded to complete an original tire core life of 200,000 miles. That is 2-3 times longer than the life of your average light truck tire. Commercial tires also can handle a higher load range, and higher PSI. This means you defeat the two main causes of tire failure, overloading and under inflation.



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So all that being said, how did they perform for me? Excellent- the first trip I took with them was from Walla Walla to Spokane, with a load of furniture and boxes. All dead weight and loaded to the hilt- packed in tight and clear to the roof. While I did not weigh it, I know it was heavy, and contained some items subject to breaking in transit. The trailer handled smoothly the whole trip, on the highway & across town, turned well and stopped well at all speeds. Having them freshly put on I kept an eye on them the whole way. They were visibly true when checking my mirrors and I did notice a decrease in sway from the trailer's original set-up. The entire load arrived intact, so my guess was it rode smooth, too. Upon arriving home, I had the torque checked again, to ensure that all was secure and the tire dealer gave it a thumbs up.

Additional tips over the summer have been used to haul horses. They have always liked to ride in this trailer, but I am sure they can appreciate the benefits of reduced sway. I have hauled it on the highway, two lane roads, gravel roads, hills and corners. On every trip the wheels & tires have performed well. I have added comfort that the load is safe, secure, and that I have a dramatically decreased possibility of tire failure.

I can also say that my next trailer will benefit from the added advantage that Boar Wheels provides.

