

Lagondaforum: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by Rich5ltr at Apr 29, 2016 9:15 pm

I want to replace the Excelsior tyres on my 16/80 because I don't know how old they are and I'd rather start with fresh tyres. I've been strongly recommended to consider Blockleys so does anyone have these on their car? I know the company owner is prominent in the VSCC and they are popular with Jaguar chaps so what about on our early 30s Lagondas?

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by Bill LG45 at Apr 30, 2016 11:30 am

Hi there

Positive : My pal runs a WO Bentley on Blockleys and uses the car a lot. Whilst the car drives well and he is happy with them they do wear out quickly... which he grumbles about and I remind him he can afford a WO he can afford a set of tyres!

Joking aside they are a reasonable price I guess so the higher wear rate is acceptable.

Negative: I drove a prewar MG with Blockleys and did not like the handling at all ... it was unstable going into bends especially on a rough surface unless you really geared down hard and accelerated hard through the bend.

If the tyres are narrow you only get a few blocks of tread which may explain why they were not nice on the road where rough surfaces are to be encountered.

I did not get the opportunity to check the car over thoroughly so there may have been something else wrong...

Another friend uses his Alvis speed 20 a lot and drives it pretty hard and having raced quite a lot with the VSCC he sticks with the original Dunlop Fort or as close as you can get which is a Dunlop B5, though sadly they are out of stock in most sizes at the moment and will not be replenished until Dunlop make some more...who knows when.

I bought Dunlops for my LG45.

When selecting tyres do consider the load rating and stiffness of sidewall as some of the cheapies have weak sidewalls and low load capacity . This makes the tyre deform badly under cornering which will wreck the handling!

You do get what you pay for where tyres are concerned.

Hope this helps

Bill

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by Rich5ltr at Apr 30, 2016 12:40 pm

Thanks Bill, that's most useful. I had considered Dunlops but as you say they are out of stock at all the usual suppliers. So currently leaning towards trying the Blockleys.

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by Colin M34 at Apr 30, 2016 1:43 pm

Hi Rich,

I had Excelsiors on my 16/80 and was not overly impressed by them and have upgraded to Michelins. The car is not currently in the road so I can't report if they are any different.

Michelins are certainly expensive and it might be worth asking Vintage tyres at the Beaulieu spring start for a deal for all 5.

Colin

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by Rangiemick at Apr 30, 2016 1:53 pm

Richard, My M45 arrived with 600x19 Lesters. The somewhat domed tread profile of these tyres meant that there was fairly limited tread actually on

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the road. The car's steering was light. These Lester tyres had a pattern like a 1950s tyre and were very quiet. I replaced the Lesters with Blockley tyres. It turned out that 600x19 Blockleys have a much smaller outer diameter than the Lesters that have the same claimed size. To maintain high gearing for long distance touring, I went for 650x19 Blockleys. They are a much bigger tyre than the 600x19s of the same brand and cost a fair bit more than 600x19s. These big Blockleys are wide, with a flat tread profile and lots of rubber on the road. Thus, the M45 now has very heavy steering and a reduced turning circle. There is more road noise too. I assume this is because of the much bolder tread pattern on the Blockleys. Despite these issues, I like the Blockleys. They look just right. More importantly, they feel secure. In the pouring rain, I like to know that I have serious tyres. Through the process, I have learned to make sure the size you order is what you really want. The difference between Blockley 600x19 and Blockley 650x19 is very significant. More surprisingly, 600x19 Blockleys are nothing like 600x19 Lesters in profile and, therefore, outer diameter. Best of luck with your decision and your car's new boots.

Michael

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by Rich5ltr at Apr 30, 2016 4:27 pm

Thanks for your words Michael. Of course my car, being a 16/80 is on 18" wheels rather than 19" and the Excelsiors are marked as 525/550 x 18 so I would guess I would go for the 550 x 18 Blockley.

p.s. Has anyone seen the new tread pattern they are offering called the Ital (hopefully not named after the somewhat dodgy BL car of the 70s)

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by h14 at Apr 30, 2016 5:08 pm

Another consideration might be Excelsior Stahl Sport RADIAL tyres; yes, radial, but in imperial sizes. I bought a set of these for my 1951 Riley and have been pretty impressed with them...tread pattern looks right on the car, they look just like crossplies, but have the handling and wear characteristics you'd expect of a radial tyre. I will certainly consider these for my LG6 & V12.

My LG6 is currently on Michelin DR 6.50 x 18 tyres. As Michael experienced, there can be a huge difference in the rolling radius of the same size tyres produced by different manufacturers. These Michelins for example have one of the highest rolling radii amongst 6.50 x 18 tyres. The Michelins do have quite a rounded profile, and as they seem to work better at higher pressures, I'm not so sure about them as the contact footprint must be smaller than ideal.

Laurence

Re: Thoughts on Blockley tyres?

Written by bill at Apr 30, 2016 5:37 pm

I have Blockleys on 2 prewar cars and have found them to be very good.

The only downside is that you can get some road noise on certain surfaces but I believe that Blockleys may have cured that now.

I think you will find that the rubber is comparatively soft compared to other makes. However this means that they are good in the rain or on a wet road - which is a useful safety factor with an old car.
