



ROUND TWO: FACE OFF AGAINST THE CURRENT CONTENDERS

Of course, these results raise the question: Where does that full-second advantage put the new Nankang compared to the other 200tw top dogs? Glad you asked, especially since that top-dog list has recently been expanded to include the Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS alongside the vaunted Yokohama Advan A052. Time to order some more tires, rinse and repeat.

With fall weather finally settling in, test day for round two was rather brisk. Overnight lows in the mid-40s kept the track surface cool even as the ambient temps rose to the mid-60s during testing. We took tire temps with a probe to see how each warmed up during the test. Test tires were kept stored inside our heated motorhome until mounted and run.

Nankang Sportnex CR-S (revised)

best lap: 1:26.22
size: 245/40R17
weight: 25 lbs.
\$245

Track: We were anxious to spend some more time with this tire, and it again delivered the goods. With the cooler temps, the out lap is a bit dicey, but by lap two it was mostly on point.

Looking closely at the data for the two quickest laps reveals that about two-tenths were left on the

table by combining the best elements. Could it go even faster?

lap times: 1:27.20, 1:26.24, 1:26.59, 1:26.42, 1:26.46, 1:26.32, 1:26.22
tire temps: 70-133°F
ambient temps: 54-56°F

Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS

best lap: 1:26.09
size: 245/40R17
weight: 23 lbs.
\$237.19

Highway: This tire displays a sharp steering response and runs at smaller slip angles. This gives it a more direct feel, with cornering loads building in a more linear fashion. While not particularly noisy for a 200tw tire, it does convey road irregularities more harshly than the others.

Track: The RE-71RS comes up to temp fairly quickly and is quite consistent over a session. It's especially

good at combined loading events, trail-braking easily and putting power down early on corner exit.

Looking at the data, the quickest lap had all the best segments of any of the laps.

lap times: 1:26.29, 1:26.59, 1:26.09, 1:26.57, 1:26.42, 1:26.39
tire temps: 71-143°F
ambient temps: 57-59°F

Yokohama Advan A052

best lap: 1:26.05
size: 245/40R17
weight: 22 lbs.
\$271.25

Highway: The A052 delivers a soft feel, much like the CR-S. It does respond a bit quicker, but not as quickly as the RE-71RS.

Track: The A052 works best cold, delivering its quickest times on the first two laps. However, heat builds rapidly with heavy loading, and grip falls off substantially. The tire then becomes rather challenging to drive at the limit. Laps three and four both included

missteps as a result. Lap five is indicative of the heat-soaked level of grip.

Looking at the data for the two best laps reveals no more than a tenth would be gained in a theoretical best.

lap times: 1:26.05, 1:26.09, 1:27.92, 1:27.51, 1:26.97
tire temps: 71-141°F
ambient temps: 61-62°F

Nankang Sportnex CR-S (revised) retest

best lap: 1:25.72

Track: Bracketing our test by rerunning the revised CR-S, we found a bit more pace. Further, the residual elevated core temps of the tires and the higher ambient temps allowed for more immediate compound activation compared to the earlier session.

Looking at the data, the two 1:25.7 laps are very similar—no more than a tenth would be gained by combining the best elements. This speaks well for the tire's consistency and drivability.

Compared to the earlier morning laps on this tire,

most of the time delta comes mid-corner in Turn 5—nearby construction leaves this turn dirty every morning, so the gains here likely came from additional track evolution and cleanup. The localized improvement begins with the RE-71RS session and stabilizes thereafter. Given that, this final session is more indicative of the revised Nankang's pace than the first one.

lap times: 1:26.65, 1:26.03, 1:25.78, 1:26.15, 1:25.72, 1:26.23, 1:26.30
tire temps: 95-143°F
ambient temps: 62-63°F

A NEW FRONT-RUNNER IN THE 200TW TIRE WARS?

The stopwatch says that the revised Nankang is fast—as fast as anything else in the 200tw class. What else?

As the launch date for the revised tire approached, Nankang dropped a bombshell on us: an expanded sizing lineup. The company is so confident in the tire that it has invested in new molds to double the range with 21 new sizes.

These new sizes include the 255/35R20 and 315/30R21 for the Porsche 992 GT3, the 275/35R19 and 285/30R20 for the new BMW G-series, and other larger sizes like 335/30R18 and 325/30R19. The range starts with three 15-inch sizes, too: 195/50R15, 205/50R15 and 225/45R15.

With Nankang's latest offering, 2023 looks to be a great year for motorsports tires at the grassroots level. The market offers something for everyone in terms of pace, consistency, durability and sizing.

LONG-TERM TESTING

After completing our primary testing with the Nankangs, we continued to run one set over the next several months while doing some coil-over development. This would give us a read on durability and allow for back-to-back testing of worn tires versus another set we kept in reserve at full tread.

That day came in late December with balmy weather and a clean track—although some traffic hurt our consistency. But we did record enough clean laps to measure outright max pace: 1:25.59 for the full-tread tires and 1:24.91 for the worn ones.

This result mirrors what we reported in the last issue of GRM for the Bridgestone RE-71RS: the same 0.7-second improvement over the same 106 laps of use. And it does that with superior durability rivaling that of the Falken RT660.

	Starting tread depth	Tread depth after 106 laps	Tread used after 106 laps
Falken Azenis RT660	8/32 in.	5.5/32 in.	31%
Bridgestone Potenza RE-71RS	7/32 in.	3.5/32 in.	50%
Nankang Sportnex CR-S	7/32 in.	4.5/32 in.	36%