

AZENIS ST115

Tyre Tested : 215 / 45 ZR 17



Comments

Almost brilliant, nearly matching the race-like results of the Azenis I. An excellent result nonetheless.

Conclusions

This certainly is the tyre to have if you cannot accept the compromises made in the Azenis I. While the first Azenis produced massive grip, the ST115 handles far better though it cannot match the outright grip of its namesake. Better yet, the tread pattern manages to disperse water enough to make this very acceptable in heavy rain. It also has a ZR rating which increases its desirability. Taking a different approach unlike the latest "Sport" offerings from its competitors, by sacrificing a bit of dry grip to get better wet performance and a bit of comfort for delightful handling is pretty close to a win-win situation. A favorite, seriously recommended. Level A Plus. D=8.5, W=8, C=5.5

SILENT ✓

SPORT ✓

APPEARANCE

This is a radical departure from the usual Falken Azenis which had rather wild looking tread patterns. It is more like a sporty Digneo with wider continuous channels. Falken has done this in order to reduce noise levels. The tread compound is very soft and has a sticky feel. Generally the lateral grooves are arranged in a V-pattern for good water drainage. The sidewalls are moderately flexible and not as stiff as the original Azenis.

DRY PERFORMANCE

Right away the ST115 showed its stuff but the mandatory scrub-in period was still observed. Performance began to settle down after 300 kms. While the steering feel may not be as positive as the very best, it does have a sharp, incisive feel to it. Once turned into a corner it digs in and grips like a leech. The level of adhesion may not match the original Azenis but it is still very satisfying nonetheless. In view of the improved capabilities of the latest offerings this would force a revised Dry rating of 9/10 for the original Azenis and the ST115 to have 8.5. The best part is it hardly protests vocally, perhaps a muted squeal occasionally when pressing on deliberately hard.

With such a high grip compound it is a given that traction for take off is immense. Likewise the grip during braking. Again not quite as high as the Azenis but they are excellent figures on their own. One must almost stand on the brake pedal in order to get the ABS to take over all the four wheels.

Handling must be considered outstanding, better than the original Azenis. The ST115's handling and grip characteristics match the new test vehicle the Accord Euro R extremely well. The front tyres have sufficient grip to hold off understeer to the point where the rears start drifting to counter understeer. Abruptly lifting off brings a moderate degree of oversteer, predictably and fairly progressively, all without much squealing. Superb, entertaining stuff.

Scrub-in-Period : 300 km
Steering : 8/10 sharp, positive, and incisive.
Lateral Grip : 8/10 excellent.
Handling : 8.5/10 adjustability and predictability, excellent.
Longitudinal Grip : 9/10, superb.

WET PERFORMANCE

This time there is no aquaplaning weakness in wet conditions unlike the original Azenis. To be fair, without heavy rain the original Azenis were also good. The new Azenis ST115 feels very progressive and reassuring even in streaming conditions. The soft compound clings on to the road extremely well through the water. It does not break away suddenly onto understeer. The tenacious grip releases progressively and works well with the rears to reduce understeer.

Even during braking, where the ST115 fared better than the cornering, values were excellent. Consequently traction during heavy starts was just as good, hardly breaking into uncontrollable wheelspin for any lengthy period of time.

Most importantly the ST115s positively encouraged hard charging despite the wet conditions, never threatening to breakaway suddenly. Driven with some respect for the lowered wet limits, the ST115s were very impressive indeed.

Steering : 7/10 remains informative, positive.
Lateral Grip : 7/10 some reduction but a good result.
Handling : 8/10, the balance is brilliant.
Longitudinal Grip : 8/10 capable of very hard stops.

COMFORT & NOISE

Here is where Falken hoped to raised the stakes and they certainly have improved the comfort and noise levels especially when compared to the original Azenis. Noise levels are very low for a ultra performance tyre but Falken decided not to sacrifice outright handling just for the sake of comfort. Consequently the ride quality of the ST115s will not match the likes of the latest comfort-performance tyres but there is no mistaking the sharp handling it offers in return.

Ride Comfort : 5.5/10 better though not best
Noise : 67 dBA @ 70km/h coasting (Accord Euro R approx 71 dBA in Integra Type R)

MEASURED PERFORMANCE

Dry Cornering : 0.98g
Wet Cornering : 1.00g
Dry Braking : 0.77g
Wet Braking : 0.83g

Noise-Cut Sports Compound

Vacuum Capsules provide high stiffness on base tread to keep high level handling stability.

Silent



Silent & Sports

Vacuum Capsules provide high stiffness on base tread.

