

Surly Knard 41 tyres £34.99



Quite possibly the perfect tyres for gravel bikes, not bad for traditional cyclo-cross and fun, lots of fun

Weight 493g Contact www.ison-distribution.com by [VecchioJo](#) April 13, 2015

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Surly Knard tyre

Fatter tyres for road bikes have gained acceptance and are pretty much the norm now, the same thing's happened to mountainbike tyres, and now, finally, cyclo-cross is getting a bit of chubby action with tyres such as this Surly Knard.

This has been nudged forward by more and more cyclo-cross bikes being used for anything but cyclo-cross, in the traditional sense of racing around for an hour on a Sunday, and ridden instead for commuting, mixing it up between tarmac and dirt, and just heading off into the horizon. It's something that's spawned a new genre of bikes labeled for Pro-Commuting, Adventure, Gravel, All Road or whatever a manufacturer cares to calls their bike that sits somewhere between a cyclo-cross bike and a rugged tourer. The sort of riding where a more general type of tyre is required, less specific to slithering round in grassy mud, unencumbered by a tyre size rule, and more of a do-it-all tread.

The Knard 41 fits into this new role perfectly. With a 700x41mm carcass the Knard is significantly beefier than the normal mid-30's width cyclo-cross tyre, and should offer both more comfort, grip and all-round versatility.

Despite a stated weight of 465g individual tyres seem to vary quite considerably from this, the test pair came in at 477g and 509g each, so if weight bothers you then be that annoying person in the bike shop with the scales. That aside they're not a noticeably heavy tyre for such a big hoop of CX rubber and rotating them up to speed isn't perceptibly any draggier than a standard cyclo-cross tyre. They could even be described as chirpy for their girth.

Tread pattern isn't particularly sophisticated, comprised mostly of simply patterned aggressive square blocks with only the edge knobs being rectangular to allow for lean and grip in the corners. There's not much wrong with square knobs though. It's a tread that happily copes with just about anything you care to rumble it across, be that tarmac, dirt, gravel, grit, sand, grass and even mud. It's not going to excel in any specific terrain because it's not designed to, but if your route from A to B crosses a variety of terrains, counties or countries then the Surly tyre will roll merrily along and nary put a foot wrong. The Knard can get a little bit out of its depth when the going gets proper cyclo-cross muddy, but the tread clears pretty well despite all the knobs and the extra footprint of a 41mm tyre over a normal slim CX tread means it can find grip well out the reach of thinner tyres and you can survive much more slop than you thought possible.

A lot of more traditional cyclo-cross bikes might struggle to fit a 41mm tyre in the rear triangle, but if you can't find room for the Knard out the back there's nothing wrong with mounting one just on the front, there should easily be room inside your 'cross fork. Even just leveraging the Knard onto the front wheel can make a big difference to the ride feel of your bike; with an appreciable increase in comfort - you could almost call it suspension - and adding more confidence and control off-road too. But you might need to compensate with some extra air in the rear tyre, for while the fatter Knard will happily float over and soak up lumps and bumps the skinnier rear tyre still has to deal with them, and at a faster harder-hitting speed that the chunkier more forgiving Knard encourages, pinch punctures are inevitable.

If your CX/Gravel Grinder/Adventure/Bridleway Basher/All Road bicycle has room front and back then shoeing it with a pair of Knard 41s will allow the bike to live up to its marketing dreams. The volume and tread of the tyre will take you pretty much anywhere you'd care to go, and cope with the added weight of luggage should you wish to go along that pack trail. Obviously you'll have to take care over anything outrageously rocky, but they'll get you further than a lot of 700C off-road tyres.

And on top of all of this they're just a lot of fun. If you're used to tip-toeing about on a pair of emaciated cyclo-cross tyres then beefing up to a set of Knards will change where and how you ride. You can ride harder, faster and with a bigger grin on your face, especially if your penchant is to take your CX down inappropriate trails more suited to mountain bikes. Slipping a set of size 41s on will release quite the agro side to your usually delicate cross bike.

But they're not just for adventuring and mucking about, if you're dong a cyclo-cross race that's not hindered by a 33mm tyre size ruling you could do worse than try the Knard or two. Depending on the course that fatter tyre could be used to an advantage, allowing you to take faster, shorter and more aggressive lines over lumpier course features whilst others are mincing around them on their scrawny fragile tyres.

Verdict

Quite possibly the perfect tyres for gravel bikes, not bad for traditional cyclo-cross and fun, lots of fun

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road.cc test report

Make and model: Surly Knard 41 tyres

Size tested: 700cx41

Tell us what the product is for, and who it's aimed at. What do the manufacturers say about it? How does that compare to your own feelings about it?

This is a similar Knard tread Surly previously introduced on a 29 x 3in casing, made up of low, closely spaced knobs, an effective tread for going fast over varied terrain. Surly chose 41mm because it's meaty enough to conform to the ground surface, absorb irregularities and provide a decent sized contact patch. Both the 27 and 120tpi casings do a good job and feel lively, though the 120tpi is lighter, more supple, and features a folding bead.

A sized down version of a fat tyre for your CX bike indeed.

Tell us some more about the technical aspects of the product?

ETRTO: 700c x 41mm (622mm ETRTO, 41mm casing width) (Note: 23-30mm recommended rim size.)

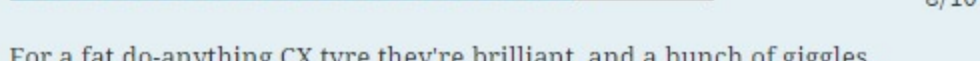
Casing: 120tpi with Kevlar bead (465g) 27tpi wire bead (650g)

Rate the product for quality of construction:



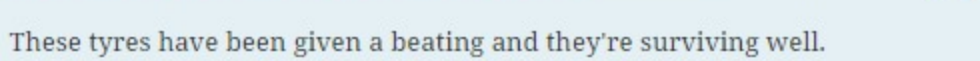
The 120tpi construction of the folding tyres make them light and supple, and despite oodles of use they're holding up well with little sign of wear.

Rate the product for performance:



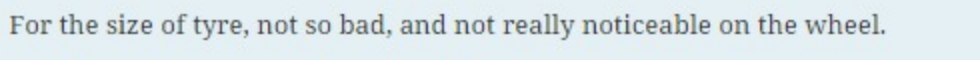
For a fat do-everything CX tyre they're brilliant, and a bunch of giggles.

Rate the product for durability:



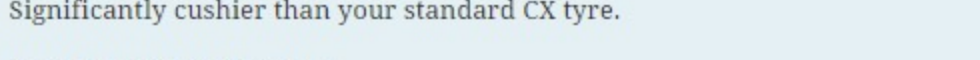
These tyres have been given a beating and they're surviving well.

Rate the product for weight, if applicable:



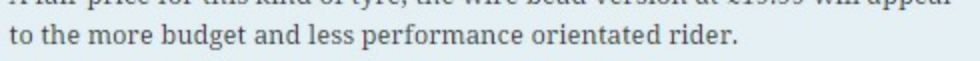
For the size of tyre, not so bad, and not really noticeable on the wheel.

Rate the product for comfort, if applicable:



Significantly cushier than your standard CX tyre.

Rate the product for value:



A fair price for this kind of tyre, the wire bead version at £19.99 will appeal to the more budget and less performance orientated rider.

Tell us how the product performed overall when used for its designed purpose

Very versatile, fun and fit-and-forget fat cyclo-cross or adventureeverything tyre.

Tell us what you particularly liked about the product

Comfort, grip, 'ride everything' ability, fun.

Tell us what you particularly disliked about the product

Won't fit in the back of some bikes.

Did you enjoy using the product? Yes, muchly.

Would you consider buying the product? Yes. I also want my next CX bike to have the capacity to fit these front and back.

Would you recommend the product to a friend? Yes.

Overall rating: 9/10

About the tester

Age: 47 **Height:** 180cm **Weight:** 73kg

I usually ride: It varies as to the season. **My best bike is:** The one I'm on at the time

I've been riding for: Over 20 years **I ride:** Most days **I would class myself as:** Experienced

I regularly do the following types of riding: road racing, cyclo cross, general fitness riding, fixed/singlespeed, mtb, Fun