

## Ground Industries AK Street Review

Contributed by BrianForest  
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By Todd Bradford

Ground Industries new AK STREET doesn't just look different it is very different from your standard longboard. At forty and a half inches long and with a 15 inch wheel base this behemoth of a board is not for the faint of heart. When I first looked at the board I was impressed by the size and by shape. With it's dropped down center and large wheel base this board looks like it was made to rip up the asphalt.

One of the first differences you'll notice is in the trucks. The AK STREET comes with the new revolutionary Ground Industries Street Bionic trucks with T3 technology. Now you may be asking, "what is this T3 technology?" Well let me tell you. Instead of your traditional truck with round bushings laid horizontally the T3 quick fit system is a square bushing laid vertically. T3 stand for 3 Tasks that these bushing can do:

Task 1-Adjustability-with six different choices you can go from hardcore bombing to soulful carving and everything in between with just a switch of the bushings

Task 2-progressive resistance- The Ground Industries website explained this better than I could so here it is straight from them. "As you lean further and further into a turn the T3 responds with more and more resistance, similar to speed sensitive steering. This creates a stable platform, gives a solid feel in the turns, and promotes unparalleled rebound. Furthermore, it brings the flex of the deck into play. In a turn the lateral G-forces build up and cause the deck to flex more, effectively increasing the mounting angle of the trucks which creates a tighter turn.

Task 3-shock absorption and vibration- This is kinda self explanatory, but for those of you who need things spelled out... These will help absorb the shocks of riding and lessen the vibrations.

Basically these trucks give you a very smooth ride. It's very stable going fast and responds to carving like a dream. You don't get any of the jerkiness that you can get from traditional trucks when you're trying to carve while bombing a hill. I feel like these are a "HUGE" advancement for trucks. If they're able to come out with some smaller versions of these trucks and wheels I would love to retrofit some of my other boards with these.

The wheels are also quite impressive. The Balistik Bazookaz wheels at 130mm are the biggest wheels I own, and let me tell you, sometimes it's nice to just run things down and not worry about crap in the road. Bazookaz are interchangeable Urethane slicks that ride on the GI Multihub which is compatible with any 12mm axle.

Unfortunately there is always a downside; fortunately it's rather small with these trucks. The first issue is the size. I realize that this is a big board and you need a set of big trucks for it, but you really have to be careful when you're pushing with this board. Many a times have I lost control while pushing because my foot smacked against the truck in the back. Not really something you can change, but I want you to be aware of it. This board is not made for the flatlands, although you can push it when you need to. Just don't take it when you need to do some serious pushing. The second issue is the nonstandard size bearings. Again, probably not something that can be changed, but it would be nice to be able to get replacement bearings at your local longboard shop and not have to order them special from somewhere. Same thing for the wheels (special sized bearings mean you have special sized wheels) it would be nice to have a choice of different type of wheels to match your riding and style. For example, different types of durometers, sizes, colors, whatever.

After you get passed the trucks you'll come to board itself. This board is made of 9ply Canadian maple. I'm about 250 pounds and this held me with ease. Very solid feel, yet flexible enough that you don't feel like you riding a plank of wood. While riding I could feel the board respond to my moves underneath me. My little brother is maybe a hundred pounds and he loved the way it rode also. It was as responsive to him as it was to me. My wife is pregnant again and was unable to ride this time, but she was impressed by the look of it and said that she can't wait to ride it in five months when the baby is due. Once again there is a minor downside to the board, and this is just my personal taste, but the picture on the bottom is freakin ugly. If I wanted pictures of ugly skanky girls on my boards I'd buy some regular skateboards. Fortunately Longboarding isn't about looks and being "cool" (even though we know we're the coolest thing on four wheels) so this really isn't a big deal.

For me the ride on this board was unbelievable. I never thought something so big and seemingly unwieldy would handle so smooth and responsive. It looks like a Hummer yet handles like a Porsche. Hmm... maybe the Porummer or

Humsche would be a better name, but I digress. I first rode this in a parking garage downtown. I was able to easily ride between the columns at high speed and still take the sharp turn at the end. Usually I'm a little apprehensive about the seams in the concrete (I've taken a few falls from going over them too slow) but this just flowed over them like they didn't exist. The dropped deck gives you a feeling of stability that let you push it a little more than usual. The only issue I had was a sort of slipping feeling when taking a tight turn at high speed. It felt like the back would give ever so slightly. Usually not a problem, but every once in a while it freaked me out when I felt it was going slide when I wasn't expecting it to. I'm sure some variety in the wheel choices would help with that issue. Out on the road this board was in its element. Whether your bombing hills or just doing some soul carving, this board excels in both. I didn't notice the wheel slippage on asphalt, probably because of the road surface, but I was a little apprehensive at first. After a while I lost the apprehension and just enjoyed the ride.

Overall I think Ground Industries has put in the time and knowledge into making a great product. It shows that these guys know their business. From the top to the bottom and front to back the craftsmanship shows. It seems that Ground Industries is mainly into Mountainboarding, which is great because there needs to be more innovation in that area as well. If this is an example of products to come for street riding, then I feel like they will be a name to reckon with in the near future. All I can say is keep them coming.

**PROS:** Stability, Comfort, Speed, Carving, Bounce back in turns, Adjustable trucks (T3), feeling of invincibility. **GREAT RIDE!**

**CONS:** feeling of "sliding" at end of carve, Hit wheels while pushing, Ugly graphics, non-standard bearings.