Tail Wheel tires for the Seabee

There have been a few questions about the tail wheels on our Seabees. Below is an explanation of these options.

The original Type Certificate calls for a 10.00 SC tire. These look like cartoon tires and with the prominence of concrete or blacktop runways they last just about as long as a cartoon tire. At least that has been my experience. If you do any beaching at all I think you will find the 10.00 SC tire a bit lacking in support on soft ground. The channel tread tire is much better for beaching and lasts quite a bit longer than the SC tire. You may get a little static from your IA during an annual if you don’t have the SC tire installed (at least I did!).

Here is the original Type Certificate information:

200. Tail wheel assy. 10.00, Type I, with 4-ply rating tire
   (a) Goodyear PD-173
   (b) Bendix 146413
   (c) Bendix 146414
   (d) Firestone BO-200-F

(a) through (d) above are the wheel assemblies. The tire is the 10.00, Type I. These SC tires may be a little hard to find so replacements were definitely in the Seabee’s future. There is an FAA Advisory Circular addressing part replacement for our “old” Seabees. It is available here:


The first thing to do is determine your hub diameter. The original Seabee had 3” tail wheel hubs. Later there was an after market modification to increase the hub size to 4”. This modification incorporated adapter rings that fit over the existing hub. I would guess that most, if not all, Seabees have 4” hubs now.

Here are some options for the 4” hubs:

This is the SToA (Specialty Tire of America) tire from Desser Tire Co. 
10 x 3.5-4, 4 ply tire. About $70.
The SToA tire installed on a Seabee

Three of the 4” tires available
(Left to right:  StoA 10 x 350 x 4 (Desser Tire Co.)
10.00 SC (smooth contour) and the old and famous
10.5 x 4 channel tread)

These tires are getting a little pricey. At last check the StoA tire was the best deal at $70, the 10.00 SC tire is $265 (8 ply), Channel tread (8 ply) tire $297! But you get what you pay for.
Another option is Grove Aircraft. They make a tail wheel assembly that is sealed and will fit our Seabees. You can see it here: https://www.groveaircraft.com/4inch.html. You may still have to buy a tire for their wheels.

Check the Seabee Club website for tire installation “Tips and Tricks”. Thanks to member Bruce Hinds for the above information.