



MASTERPIECE IN METAL

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FAST FORWARD

**OLD BLENDS WITH NEW TO BUILD
ONE AMAZING FORD**



Racers are a surprisingly sentimental bunch. While the focus is usually on constantly pursuing the latest technologies and designs, many drivers still remember their early racecars with as much fondness as a first love. Forced to choose between just one, most would opt for the nostalgia and warm memories brought back by their original racer over an insanely capable modern-day version. For many the feel, sight and sounds of an old racecar stir emotions that are simply hard to put into words.

Among this group is long-time racer and current Trick Truck driver Steve Olliges. As the owner of the Team

Ford dealership in Las Vegas, Nevada, it is not surprising that Olliges remembers the old Blue Oval race trucks with fondness. "My first truck I ever bought when I was 16 was a 1979 Ford F-100. In the late '70s, the Mint 400 in Las Vegas was like a national holiday. It was just understood you were not going to school that day and everyone was at Tech inspection. Just going down there and watching guys like Ivan Stewart who drove the '78-'79 style Ford, Walker's blue one and, of course, Scoop Vessels' big black Ford with the yellow on it.... they were just beautiful trucks. Ford was known to have the toughest trucks with the I-beams and how strong the frames were. If you were anybody back then you had a Ford Class 8," recalls Steve.

While Olliges already has a beautiful Geiser-built Trick Truck that he campaigns in the Best In The Desert series, he wanted to build something different.

"Instead of building a no-expense-spared A-arm Ford Raptor racer, I wanted to pay homage to the sport and be retro in the way I, and a lot of people I know, remember the sport," he explains.

Mark Newhan, who built the truck, was also fully on board with the idea. "We initially talked about Scoop Vessels' black Ford with the gold horse heads on the side as inspiration. We were well into it when the untimely death of Scoop made the build take on new meaning."

Of course, Olliges had no desire to bounce around in the desert with four shocks per wheel and limited wheel travel. Following the same path of restomodded hot rods, he decided to take advantage of the latest high-end parts while still keeping a retro flavor. Notes Steve, "If you had to build a state-of-the-art Class 8 in 1979 with today's technology, what would it have looked like? That is, to me, what this truck is."

The results of the build are absolutely jaw-dropping, with the truck flawlessly combining the past with the present. Take a look over the following pages and you will see why it was an easy choice as this month's Masterpiece in Metal.

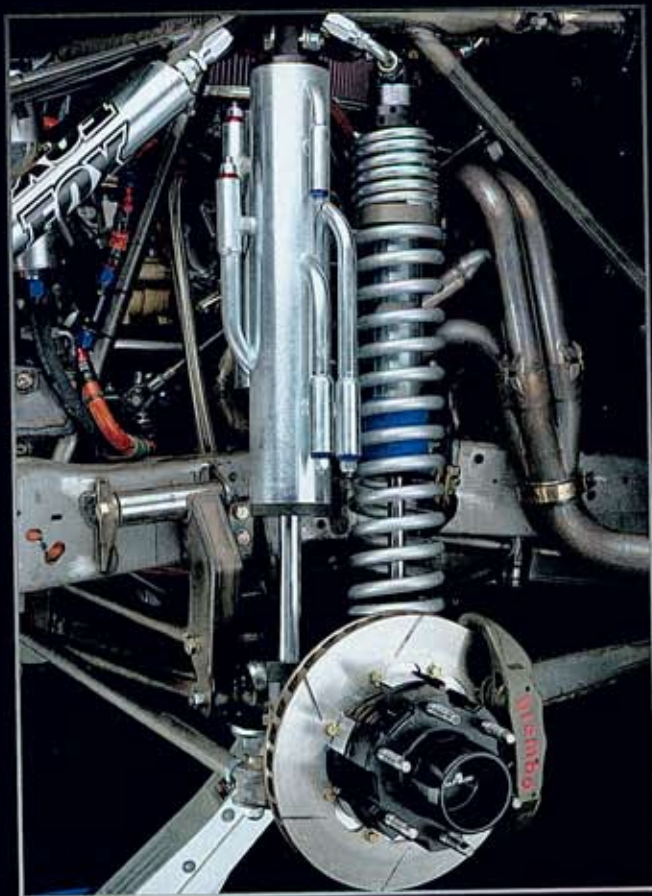


**ABOVE:**

The beautiful body consists of a 1979 Ford F-100 cab with fiberglass doors. Since finding fiberglass to keep the original body lines but still accommodate the massively increased track width was an impossible task, Mark Newhan designed a new front clip that was built by Fat Boy Fiberglass. For the rear, Steve Rowe bed sides by Trailer Products were grafted into position and the whole truck was painted by Fat Boy Fiberglass. Older eyes will notice the retro BFGoodrich logos to complement the 39-inch Baja T/As on 17x8 Trailready beadlocks.

RIGHT:

In the early days of desert racing, Ford's I-beam front suspension reigned supreme for its absolute strength and ease of getting large amounts of wheel travel. Mark Newhan improved upon the original Ford design by building his own extremely stout beams from 4130 chromoly. BMS then built billet 4130 ends to incorporate the latest ProAm Trophy-Truck spindles and hubs. More stopping power than a 1979 Ford F-100 could ever dream of comes from Brembo six-piston calipers clamping down on Coleman Machine 14-inch rotors. The whole setup yields 21 inches of wheel travel controlled by Fox 3.0 coilovers and 4.3 bypass shocks.



**LEFT:**

Under the hood rests a Ford small-block 438 cubic inch V8 built by Total Performance of Santee, California. Its foundation is a Dart Iron Eagle block topped with Dart heads and filled with a Callies Pro Magnum crank, Mahle pistons and rings, Oliver rods and a custom-ground camshaft. Feeding it is a Carb Shop-built Holley 850-cfm carburetor that sucks air through a ProAm air cleaner assembly. With 12:1 compression fired off via an MSD ignition, the V8 produces a healthy 685 horsepower and 600 lb-ft of torque. Not visible in the photo is the Rancho DriveTrain Engineering Trophy-Truck three-speed automatic transmission with a close-ratio second and third gear.

BELOW:

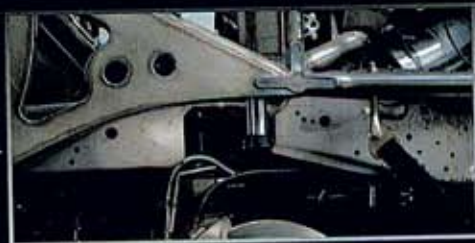
Absorbing rough terrain with ease in the rear is a three-link suspension built by Newhan. It uses Dirt Tech 60-inch trailing arms along with a custom upper wishbone to produce a substantial 34 inches of wheel travel. Fox 3.0 coilovers along with 4.3 bypass shocks with five tubes were sourced to control all the movement effectively. Also visible is the Dirt Tech Pro axle housing that is filled with a spool and GearWorks 5.43 ring and pinion along with 36-spline 300M Trophy-Truck axles from ProAm. Hubs from ProAm complete the rear along with an identical brake package consisting of Brembo six-piston callipers and Coleman Machine rotors.





ABOVE:

One downside of I-beams is that they produced large amounts of bump steer with the factory-style steering. To combat this, designers turned to intricate "swing set" steering systems like the one built by Newhan pictured here. While it might seem overly complicated, it greatly improves steering control and strength along with being critical for larger wheel travel numbers. For even better feel and reliability, Newhan selected a Lee Manufacturing 9:1 ratio steering box with a ram assist. A steering box from Lee completes the system.



LEFT:

Inside the "office" are Agana Metal Products-built aluminum panels and dash that house a Lowrance 10-inch HD GPS on the co-driver's side while the driver views a Stack digital cluster by Autometer. Both can easily glance over the Stack LED NASCAR gauges by Autometer that change color depending upon the status of what they are monitoring. The host of switches in the center were wired into place by Robby and Joe Totten of Racewire. All occupants are safely secured via MasterCraft 3G seats and harnesses, while a Momo steering wheel and Winters shifter provide driver input. **DS**

BUILD SHEET
1979 FORD F-100 CLASS 8

POWERTRAIN

ENGINE:
438 cubic-inch Ford V8

BUILDER:
Total Performance

MAX HORSEPOWER:
685 hp

MAX TORQUE:
600 lb-ft

MODIFICATIONS:
Dart Iron Eagle heads, Dart block, Callies Pro Magnum crank, Mahle pistons and rings, Oliver rods, custom camshaft, 12:1 compression, MSD ignition

INDUCTION:
Carb Shop 850 cfm Holley carburetor and ProAm air filter

TRANSMISSION:
Rancho Drivetrain Engineering three-speed automatic

SUSPENSION

FRONT:
Newhan-built 4130 chromoly I-beams, BMS billet ends, ProAm spindles and hubs, Fox 3.0 coilovers and 4.3 bypass shocks, 21 inches of wheel travel

REAR:
Newhan-built custom three-link with Dirt Tech trailing arms, Fox 3.0 coilover and 4.3 bypass shocks, 34 inches of wheel travel

COOLING

Ron Davis radiators and coolers

PLUMBING

Mark Newhan

WIRING

Racewire

BRAKES

FRONT:
Six-piston Brembo calipers and 14-inch Coleman Machine rotors

REAR:
Six-piston Brembo calipers and 14-inch Coleman Machine rotors

WHEELS/TIRES

WHEELS:
17x8 Trailready beadlocks

TIRES:
39x13.50R17 BFGoodrich Baja T/As

EXTERIOR

BODYWORK:
1979 Ford F-100 cab with custom Fat Boy Fiberglass front clip designed by Mark Newhan and Trailer Products bedsides

PAINT:
Fat Boy Fiberglass

INTERIOR

MasterCraft 3G seats and harnesses, Momo steering wheel, Winters shifter, PCI Race Radios intercom and radio, Lowrance GPS unit, Stack cluster by Autometer, Stack LED gauges by Autometer

GENERAL

CHASSIS:
Mark Newhan-built 1979 Ford F-100

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 119 inches
Overall Length: 174 inches
Overall Height: 80 inches
Track Width: 88 inches
Overall Weight: 5,300 lbs



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- // TRAILREADY.COM
- // DIRT-TECH.COM
- // BREMBO.COM
- // BFGOODDRIGHTIRES.COM
- // FOXRACINGSHOX.COM
- // PROAMRACING.COM
- // RONDAVISRADIATORS.COM
- // MASTERCRAFTSAFETY.COM