



MASTERPIECE IN METAL

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BIG OLY

REDUX

A TROPHY-TRUCK
INTERPRETATION
OF THE ORIGINAL ICON



One of the cool aspects of motorsports is that passion can often completely override any form of common sense. On paper or to the outside world, most of what we do makes very little sense. Spending vast sums of money, time, blood, sweat and tears on building a beautiful racecar only to go out and begin the slow (or sometimes radically fast) process of destroying it would make any accountant pull their hair out. However, talk to a member of the *Dirt Sports Nation* and it is obvious that the desire to build something unique often outweighs what, to many, would be logical concerns.

Marshall Madruga and the story of the Big Oly Trophy-Truck are a perfect example of this. He will be the first to point out that he is not a Geiser or Jimco and does not produce racecars for a living. "I had never notched a tube in my life, cut a piece of chromoly or welded. I had never done anything like this," he confesses. Thankfully, others were eager to lend a hand to help out.

Nor is Madruga a man of substantial wealth with the ability simply to go out and make his dreams a reality with large amounts of money, and everyone knows that building a Trophy-Truck is a very cash-consuming process. "I am just a grown up flatbiller. I am just like everyone else out there who has a dream to build their

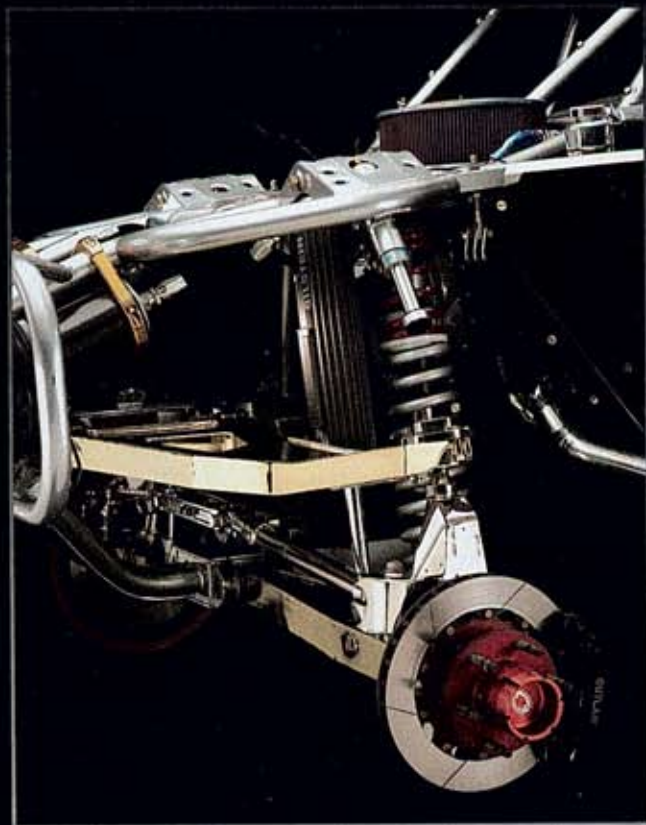
own truck. I don't have deep pockets. I just have my own little business and I liquidated an old Class 8, a '66 Corvair and some of my little boats. Everything I made I dumped into this Trophy-Truck," explains Madruga.

Despite all of this, Madruga and a small group of friends did not let any of these sizeable challenges get in the way of accomplishing what many said would be impossible for them; creating one very unique Big Oly Bronco-inspired Trophy-Truck. The creation pays perfect homage to one of the ultimate icons of our sport by creating a modern vision of the original. While that is enough to gain attention, perhaps equally as grabbing is the back story of Big Oly and Madruga which shows us that with lots of hard work, passion, determination and even some luck dreams can still come true. For all of those reasons and more, the Big Oly Trophy-Truck is this month's Masterpiece in Metal.

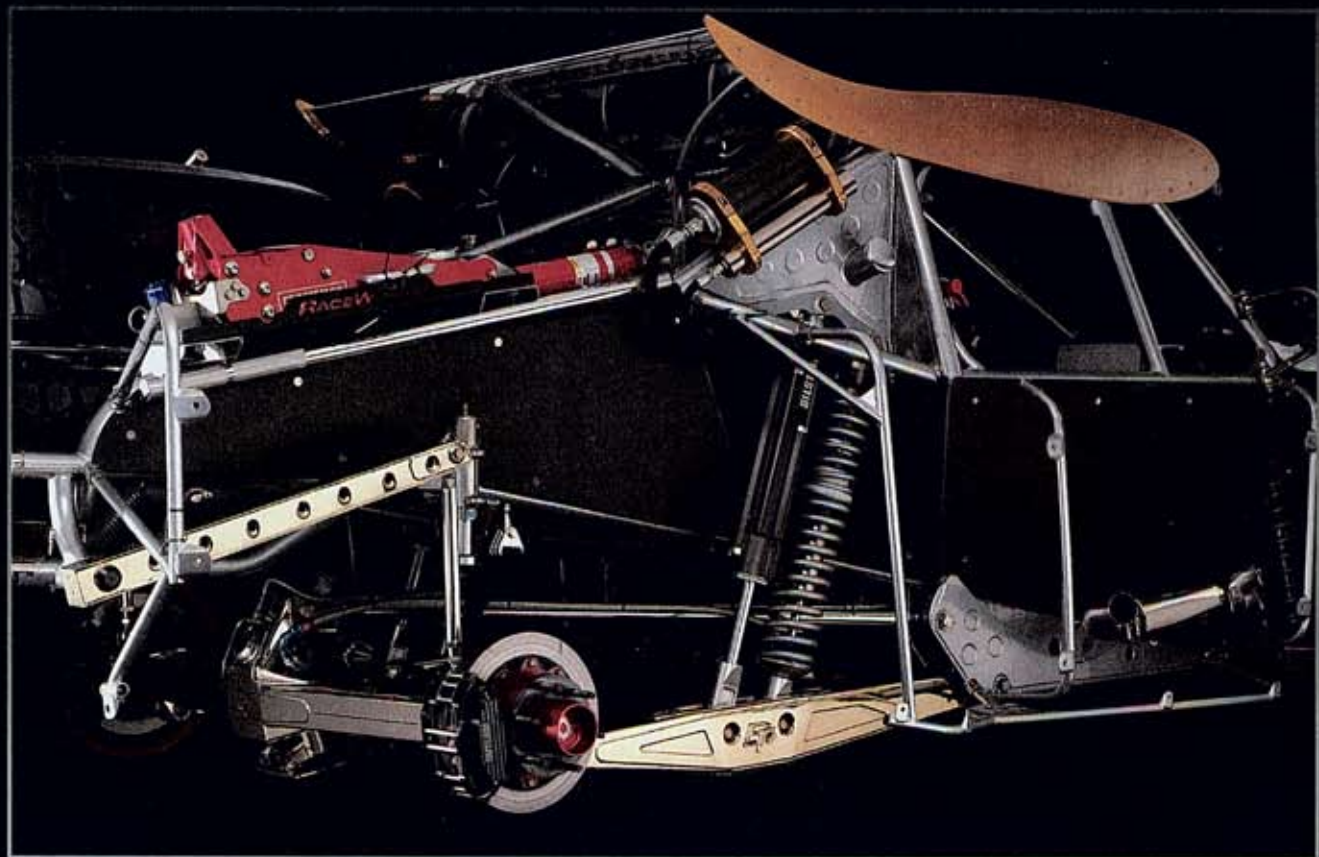


**ABOVE:**

Powering the Big Oly Trophy-Truck and tucked deep into the cockpit is a 438 cubic inch Ford V8 built by Troy Bowen at Ford Performance. Serious head work performed by Bowen along with 11:1 compression and lots of massaging helps the small block produce a substantial 723 horsepower along with 629 lb-ft of torque. A complete FAST fuel-injection system precisely mixes air and fuel while a K&N air filter element removes any dirt. Not visible but resting just behind the engine is a Powerglide three-speed automatic transmission built by Mike's Transmission that mates to a Gear Vendors overdrive unit.

**LEFT:**

The front suspension consists of beefy brass-coated dual A-arms built by Sandco Performance that mate to uprights also constructed by Sandco. Completing the assembly are Summers Brothers hubs and Outlaw four-piston calipers squeezing on 14-inch diameter rotors. Massive 14-inch-stroke Bilstein Black Hawk radial bypass shocks along with 3.0 Bilstein coilovers control the 24 inches of available wheel travel. Also visible are the headers that were custom built by Bassani Exhaust, along with the Howe 3.0 Trophy-Truck steering rack.



ABOVE:

In the rear, a Sandco Performance four-link suspension with Dirt Tech lower trailing arms yields 32 inches of wheel travel with another set of Bilstein Black Hawk bypass shocks and coilovers handling damping. Easy to spot is the gleam of the double nickel plated Dirt Tech rear housing that contains a Currie/Gear Works 10-inch 5.17 ring-and-pinion gear along with a Summers Brothers spool. Hubs and 40-spline axles (also from Summers Brothers) along with Outlaw four-piston calipers and 14-inch rotors complete the package. All of the extensive aluminum panel work visible throughout the truck was performed by Javier and Gaston Gardeazabal of Machine Bros Design House and Fabrication. Of course, any Big Oly fan will instantly recognize the replica upper wing that the helped to give so much character to the original racer.



ABOVE:

Keeping true to the character of Big Oly was important, so obviously no ordinary Trophy-Truck body would suffice. Marshal Madruga designed a new and larger version of the original and then turned to long-time fiberglass expert Perry McNeil of McNeil Racing to make the molds. McNeil was also responsible for skillfully laying down the familiar scheme of gold, white and black colors that first appeared on the icon. Finishing touches such as original Bronco taillights and 39-inch BFGoodrich Baja KRTs on custom-forged billet 17x9 American Racing beadlocks complete the look.



ABOVE:

To maintain the retro Big Oly theme, Madruga decided to shy away from the digital displays often seen in modern Trophy-Trucks and prunners. Instead, a battery of tried-and-true Autometer liquid-filled gauges relay information on just about every parameter possible housed in a dash built by Cutting Edge Fabrication. Also found in the dash are a Lowrance Baja 840c GPS unit, an Icom race radio and intercom, a Winters shifter, Momo steering wheel and a host of K4 switches that were wired by Paul "Kip" Dunne. Both occupants are safely secured via PRP seats and harnesses.

RIGHT:

Madruga's early work shaping surfboards helped him immensely when it came to building the body for the TT. Styling cues from the original Big Oly are everywhere on the modern version. Classic Bronco owners will instantly recognize the familiar front clip that is actually a stock fiberglass unit that was heavily modified and widened. Factory turn signals that function were grafted into position along with KC HiLITES HID lights. A rack of lights also can be attached just under the wing for more serious nighttime work. **DS**



**BUILD SHEET
BIG OLY TROPHY-TRUCK****POWERTRAIN**

ENGINE:
Ford 438 cubic inch V8

BUILDER:
Troy Bowen of Ford Performance

MAX HORSEPOWER:
723 hp at 6,800 rpm

MAX TORQUE:
629 lb-ft at 5,200 rpm

MODIFICATIONS:
11:1 compression, Petersen dry sump system, Bowen-modified heads, Bassani custom headers and exhaust

INDUCTION:
K&N air filter, FAST EFI system

TRANSMISSION:
Powerglide three-speed automatic built by Mike's Transmissions with Gear Vendors overdrive unit

SUSPENSION

FRONT:
Sandco Performance dual A-arms with 24 inches of wheel travel, 14-inch stroke Bilstein Black Hawk radial bypass shocks, Bilstein 14-inch stroke 3.0 coilovers, Summer Brothers hubs, Sandco Performance uprights

REAR:
Sandco Performance four-link suspension with Dirt Tech trailing arms and 32 inches of wheel travel, 18-inch stroke Bilstein Black Hawk radial bypass shocks, Bilstein 16-inch stroke 3.0 coilovers

COOLING

C&R radiator and coolers with Spal fans

PLUMBING

Marshall Madruga with Fragola products

WIRING

Paul "Kip" Dunne with K4 products

COATINGS

Guerilla Plating
Deco Metal Finishing
Powder One

BRAKES

FRONT:
Outlaw four-piston calipers and 14-inch rotors

REAR:
Outlaw four-piston calipers and 14-inch rotors

WHEELS/TIRES

WHEELS:
17x9 American Racing beadlocks

TIRES:
39x13.50R17 BFGoodrich Baja KRTs

EXTERIOR

BODYWORK:
Marshall Madruga designed Big Oly TT body built by Perry McNeil

PAINT:
Perry McNeil

INTERIOR

PRP seats and harnesses, Autometer gauges, Momo steering wheel, Icom race radio and intercom, Winters shifter, Lowrance GPS unit

GENERAL

CHASSIS:
Sandco Performance TT

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 131 inches
Overall Length: 216 inches
Overall Height: 72 inches
Track Width: 89 inches
Overall Weight: 5,950 lbs

**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION**

// BILSTEINUS.COM
// AMERICANRACING.COM
// RODENDSUPPLY.COM
// DIRT-TECH.COM
// MCNEILRACINGINC.COM
// PRPSEATS.COM
// AUTOMETER.COM