
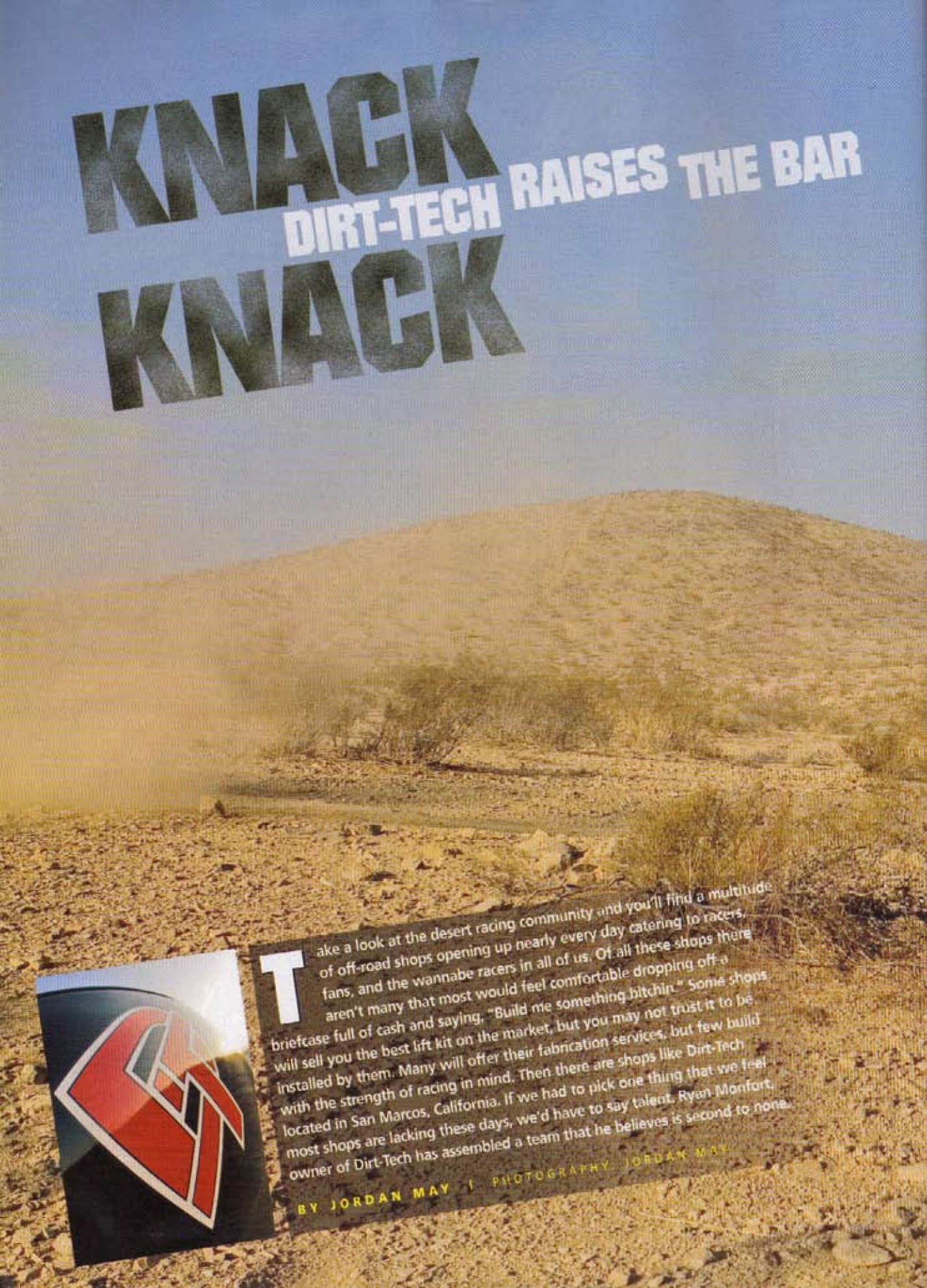


# KNACK DIRT-TECH RAISES THE BAR KNACK



**T**ake a look at the desert racing community and you'll find a multitude of off-road shops opening up nearly every day catering to racers, fans, and the wannabe racers in all of us. Of all these shops there aren't many that most would feel comfortable dropping off a briefcase full of cash and saying, "Build me something bitchin'." Some shops will sell you the best lift kit on the market, but you may not trust it to be installed by them. Many will offer their fabrication services, but few build with the strength of racing in mind. Then there are shops like Dirt-Tech located in San Marcos, California. If we had to pick one thing that we feel most shops are lacking these days, we'd have to say talent. Ryan Monfort, owner of Dirt-Tech has assembled a team that he believes is second to none.

BY JORDAN MAY | PHOTOGRAPHY: JORDAN MAY



# KNACK KNACK

Dirt-Tech builds and designs almost everything in house, utilizing a full line of equipment such as a Mitsubishi laser, CNC press brakes, CNC milling centers, and more. On top of building ground-up works of rolling art, the Dirt-Tech team also manufactures long-travel suspension systems, five different sizes of trailing arms (including custom sizes), three different-size axle housings



(including custom applications), as well as many other products. This amazing black '98 Ford F-150 is not only carrying all of Dirt-Tech's goods, but it's also Ryan's personal prerunner and it's bound to get torn from this magazine and stuck to readers' garage walls.

We busted out the fisheye lens for this feature so we could bring as much detail into the photographs as possible. The front suspension is Dirt-Tech's 20-inch long-travel suspension system. The upper control arms

are made of 4130 chrome-moly sheet that has been completely TIG-welded. The lower control arms are also constructed of the same 4130 chrome-moly, TIG-welded, and feature 1-inch uniball inner pivots and 1.5-inch uniball outer pivots that are also TIG-welded for superior strength. Although this suspension is not what we consider bolt-on, the control arms do mount to factory locations. There is custom fabrication involved when it comes to mounting your choice of shocks. For this truck, Ryan chose to run 12-inch-stroke, 2.5-inch-diameter Fox coilovers and 12-inch-stroke, 2.5-inch-diameter Fox triple-bypass shocks. This combination provides him with 20 inches of usable wheel travel, 10 inches of uptravel, and 10 inches



# KNACK KNACK

of downtravel. We breathed a sigh of relief when we watched Ryan actually cycle this travel for us. A great deal of long-travel kits out there claim big numbers, yet once they are installed actually produce far less. Not this one. Also found up front is a stout set of Wilwood 13-inch rotors and calipers for extreme stopping power and Desert Specialties hubs.



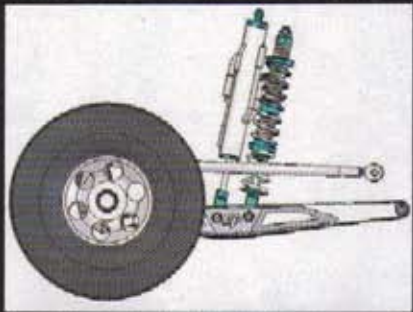
The rear end is Dirt-Tech's four-link suspension kit consisting of 4130 chrome-moly sheetmetal trailing arms that have been laser-cut and bent at their facility and also come completely TIG-welded. They feature Kartek 1-inch antiwobble uniball cups on the front and a 1.25-inch Heim on the rear. The upper links are made of 1.75-inch 4130 chrome-moly tube using 1.25-inch Heims on both ends. Talk about beefy. You want wheel travel? The rear end measures 32 inches of travel set up using Fox

3.0-inch-diameter triple-bypass shocks, Fox 2.5-inch-diameter coilovers, and Fox hydraulic bumpstops.

You're probably wondering why we aren't showing you the typical dash shot with 100 lightup switches, oversize gauges, and a massive GPS system. Well, this truck is not 100-percent complete, and it may stay that way because Ryan may have it up for sale soon enough, so save your pennies and give him a call. For now, you can see the cab section of the chassis, which consists of 2-inch 4130 chrome-moly tube with all seams TIG-welded all around. The dash is made of aluminum, but Dirt-Tech left plenty of room to cut out for a race shifter, gauges, GPS, radio, and more. The seats are from PRP with Crow padded five-point harnesses, and the steering wheel comes from MOMO with a quick-release mount. Located above the cab is a Baja Designs five-light bar system running 8-inch HID lights. Ryan will have



Dirt-Tech provided us with a few CAD drawings of its front suspension, four-link suspension, trailing arms viewpoint, and a few stability drawings. On top of the images we provided, these will help you get an even closer look at the details and experience put into designing these components.



# KNACK KNACK

zero problems running at night with this system powered on.

Take a good look at the craftsmanship of the rear axlehousing. It's something we would love to have on our wall (not to mention underneath any of our projects). The entire axlehousing is manufactured at Dirt-Tech, once again being laser-cut and CNC-bent in house, and it features 40-spline axles, full-floating Desert Specialties hubs, 13-inch Wilwood rotors, and Wilwood calipers. You can run several different combinations of gears and lockers in

this rearend, but Ryan chose to run a full spool to keep everything locked 100 percent of the time. The rearend is kept in control with a 35-spline, 1.25-inch sway-bar system. The wheelbase has been shortened to 130 inches, and the track width is 90 inches.

On top of the rear end is a Racer X 45-gallon fuel cell custom-mounted between a pair of fullsize spare tires. Ryan was able to get his hands on some APP forged wheels before the company unfortunately stopped making them. Wrapped around them is a set of the brand-new BFGoodrich T/A<sup>MUD</sup> mud-terrain tires. The new rubber allows

Ryan enough traction to keep all that wheel travel controlled when on the ground. Glassworks Unlimited was chosen to wrap the truck's new chassis in fiberglass, complementing the look and finish Ryan was looking for.

So why did we title this article "Knack Knack?" Well, the definition of knack is a readiness in performance, an aptitude or talent for doing something. Although normally these days when people hear someone yell "knack knack" they look overhead and expect to see a motorcycle soaring, we felt this word better describes the amount of talent put into Ryan's pre-runner. We gave it a double knack for good measure. **OR**

