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R&D Express

This truck was the test mule that would provide the blueprint for the new suspension, so Fabtech's R&D staff tore apart the stock suspension and studied every last detail. Once the crew was confident it could build a new suspension that would safely provide an altitude adjustment for the Blue Oval, it began fabricating new parts. New bracketry was constructed to locate the various suspension components, which included 8-inch lift front and rear leaf springs. To damp the progressive spring rate, new

"FABTECH'S ULTIMATE DUTY COLORFULLY SHOWCASES THE COMPANY'S PRODUCTS."

upper shock hoops were constructed to locate a pair of Fabtech dampers at each corner of the frontend. Because this truck was meant to punish the dirt, the R&D team fabricated a set of air bump cans that would position a pair of Fox bumpstops above the front axle tubes. The rear suspension also received the good stuff in the form of free-floating lower traction bars and four more Fabtech dampers. The free-floating design of the traction bars allows the rearend to pivot on the highway for a smooth ride but still lock the load onto the rear tires in the dirt for maximum traction and reduced wheel hop.

Fabtech obviously knows how to build and market its products, so the company didn't stop refining its truck with just a new suspension. To complement the increase in ride height, a set of 38-inch-tall Nitto Terra Grappler tires was installed onto 18-inch KMC XD wheels to fill the large void beneath the wheelwells. Also, the front and rear



▲ Fabtech's powercoated dual shock hoops are gusseted for strength and backed by hand-fabricated aluminum inner fenders. The new fenders were constructed after the stock ones were trashed and the new fiberglass frontend was installed.



SPECIFICATIONS

Owner	: Fabtech Motorsports Inc.
Vehicle	: '02 Ford F-250 Super Duty
Engine	: V-10 with a Gibson cat-back exhaust system
Suspension	: Fabtech 8-inch lift; floating traction bars; dual shock hoops
Body	: Fabtech fiberglass front fenders; fiberglass cowl-induction hood
Wheels	: 18x10-inch KMC XD 355-Series wheels
Tires	: 365/65R18 Nitto Terra Grappler

◀ These sweet-looking traction bars simultaneously give this Super Duty a smooth ride on the highway and generate killer traction in the dirt by allowing the rearend housing to float on smooth pavement. The bars transfer the load to the rear tires as soon as torque is applied and the tires try to spin in the dirt.



► Show and go is achieved with polished differential covers from Con-Ferr and a quad damper setup from Fabtech. The polished differential covers are a stylish departure from the stock, cast steel units, and the Fabtech shocks make damping the suspension in off-road situations a snap!



▲ The nasty combination of 38-inch Nitto Terra Grappler tires and 18x10-inch KMC rims has no problem churning up earth like a blender on drugs thanks to the Precision Gears 4.56 cogs that are stuffed into the front and rear differentials. Fabtech's dual-damper steering stabilizer was also called into play to make controlling the Ultimate Duty through the rough stuff easy.



differentials were upgraded to 4.56 ring-and-pinion gears from Precision Gear to keep the speedometer reading properly and the powerplant operating within its powerband. The new gears are protected and hidden from view by a set of polished differential covers by Con-Ferr.

The tough-truck theme continued with the installation of a new fiberglass front end. The new fenders were mounted on top of a new set of fabricated aluminum inner fender panels, which give the blue powerdercoated dual shock hoops a shiny backdrop. The stock hood was replaced with a fiberglass cowl-induction unit to give the front end a menacing new look. Once the body mods were completed, the Ultimate Duty was sent over to L&G Enterprises to receive its new personality in the form of a Thom Taylor-designed bright blue, orange, and white paintjob.

When Fabtech took delivery of its newly painted show truck, the customizing continued with a few more well-placed external accessories. The nose of the truck was outfitted with a Precision billet grille insert and PIAA high-output driving lights. To tame the extreme nature of this truck and create some sense of a utilitarian aura, Kodiak electric steps were installed along the cab, and the bed was coated with a Line-X spray-in bedliner to protect the sheetmetal.

Driving comfort is just as important as making a custom statement, so the confines of the cab were updated to not only draw attention but to make long trips enjoyable. To that end, a 4,500-watt audio and video entertainment system was installed by the professionals at Advanced Vehicle Specialties. The backbone of the system, a trio of 1,500-watt Coustic amplifiers, is stealthily hidden beneath the rear seat on a motorized amp rack. At the touch of a button, the rack slides forward, revealing the brute power supply of this loud audio system. A Visonic double-DIN head unit makes DVD entertainment a reality for passengers as they feast their peeps on several 7-inch LCD flat-screen monitors positioned within the headrests and dashboard. A pair of Coustic 10-inch subwoofers and two different sets of Coustic satellite speaker systems installed in the doors handle the high frequencies.

It's amazing what can be accomplished in three short months when you have the full resources of a company such as Fabtech and some of the industry's brightest minds behind a project like Ultimate Duty. Look for the results of everyone's hard work at a show near you — it won't be hard to find this awesome hauler. **OR**