

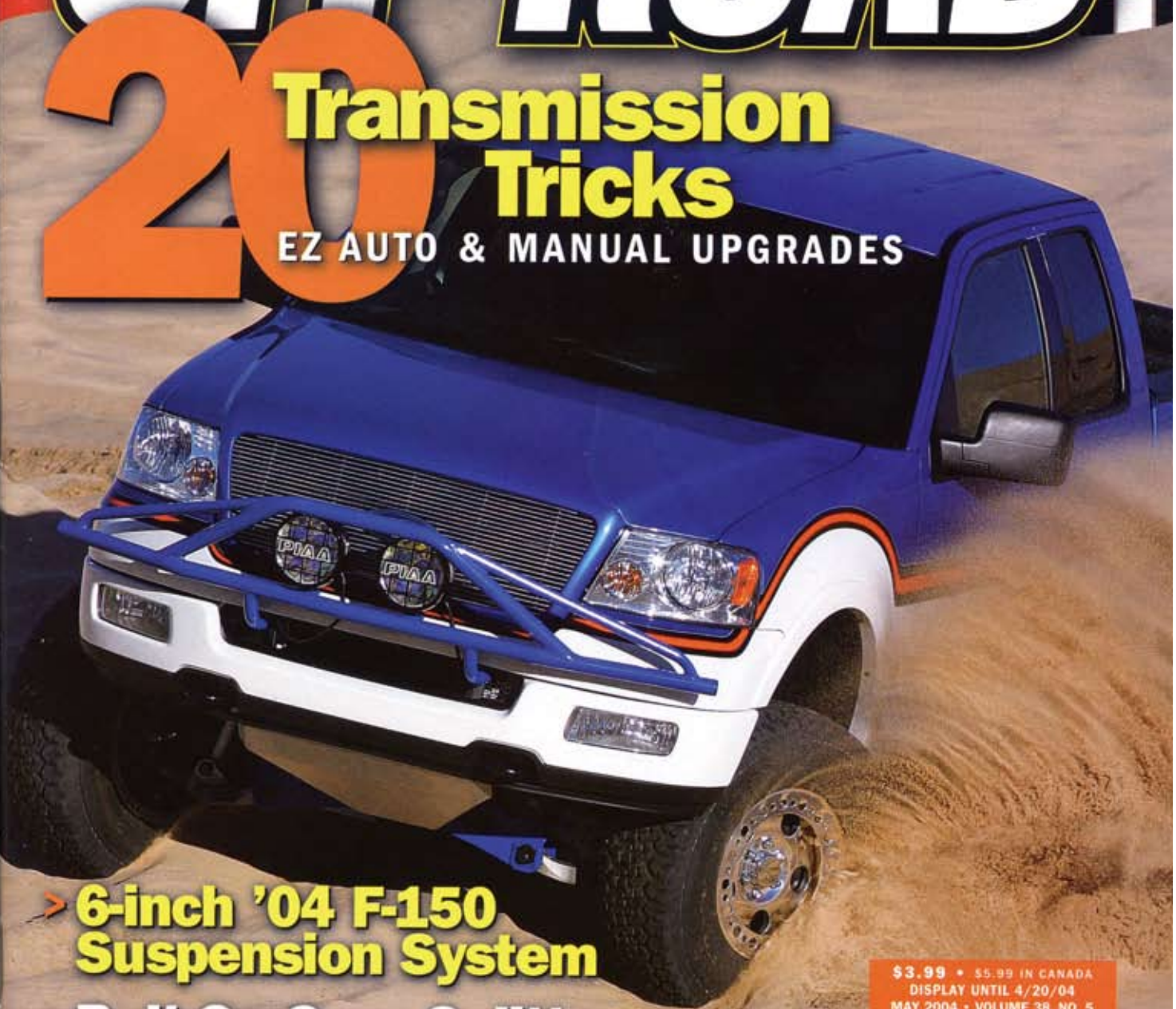
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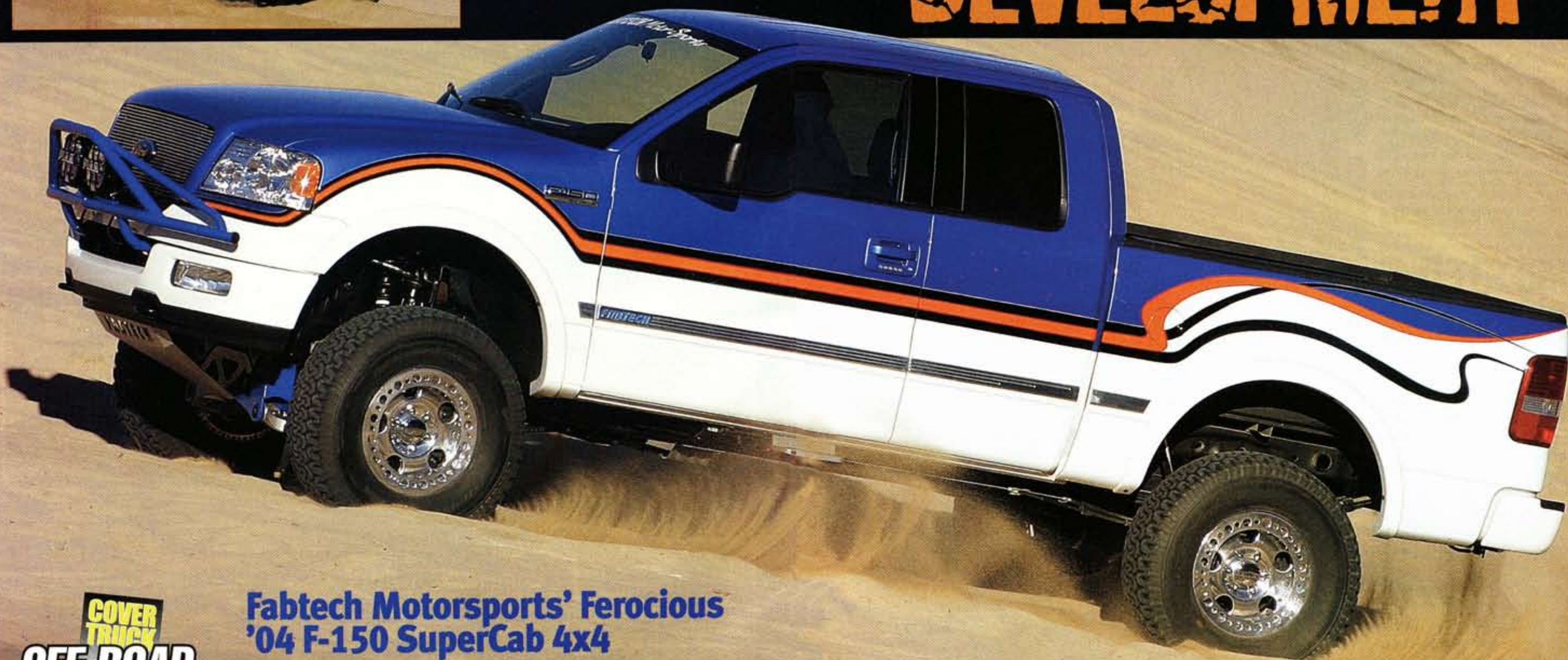
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ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT



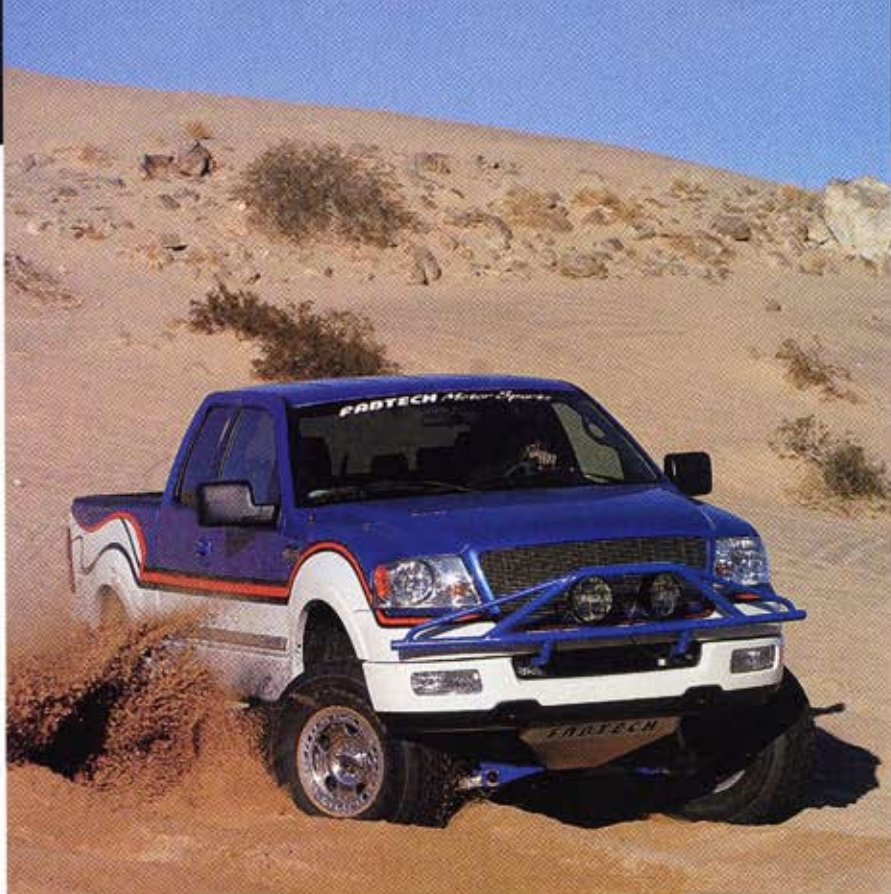
**COVER
TRUCK**
OFF-ROAD

Fabtech Motorsports' Ferocious '04 F-150 SuperCab 4x4

BY JAMES A. WEBER | Photography: Randall Jachmann

Y

OU COULD SAY THAT FABTECH MOTORSPORTS' LATEST MASTERPIECE WAS BUILT LONG BEFORE IT WAS EVEN BORN. BUILT THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FABTECH MOTORSPORTS AND FORD MOTOR COMPANY, THIS BRAND-NEW '04 FORD F-150 SUPERCAB 4x4 WAS DESIGNED AND BUILT UNDER A SOMEWHAT ARRESTED TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT CALLED THE UTILITARIAN ROLE OF THE VEHICLE'S R&D PHASE. IN THIS R&D PHASE, KEY COMPONENTS ARE CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF DESIGNERS AND ENGINEERS TO ENSURE THAT ONLY THE BEST MATERIALS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP ARE USED, AND THAT THE KEY VEHICLE SYSTEMS ARE FUNCTIONING AS PLANNED BY ALL INVOLVED.



ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

manufacturer will join creative forces with a high-end aftermarket manufacturer such as Fabtech Motorsports to create a marketing and promotional vehicle that will attend numerous trade shows and various other marketing venues throughout the country. The '04 F-150 that graces these pages was created to showcase the new F-150's off-road prowess and style. Judging from the pictures that expert cameraman Randall Jachmann captured, we can all agree that the team definitely hit its mark, and then some.

Since all '04 F-150s have a brand-new suspension system, the Fabtech team had to begin its suspension system fabrication from the ground up. To achieve a full 6 inches of lift and still retain the factory steering geometry and ride quality, Fabtech's engineers retained the OE front coils and fabricated a high-arched, 1/4-inch-thick, one-piece welded front crossmember structure. The front struts were replaced with extended units to compensate for the additional lift, while heavy-duty cast spindles that are 6 inches taller than the OE units complete the frontend system. To retain the factory alignment settings that are often lost when lifting a vehicle, the Fabtech spindles have the correct caster and camber adjustments already built in to them. The factory upper control arms were also able to be retained, which further adds to the retention of the alignment settings and the factory ride quality. The factory rack-and-pinion steering system did not require relocation due to the spindle and crossmember designs. For additional protection

As is customary prior to a new vehicle being released for sale to the general public, the

to the vehicle's underside, a 1/4-inch-thick steel front differential cover was bolted into place.

With the front system complete, the design team shifted its focus to the vehicle's rear suspension. To bring the rear up to par with the frontend, the Fabtech designers fabricated custom 4-inch blocks with integrated bumpstops. Responsible for absorbing any bumps in the road and ensuring that the factory ride quality was retained, one Fabtech Hydraulic Performance shock is situated at each corner of the rig.

The additional 6 inches of suspension lift allow the truck to float across the sand on massive 17x8-inch KMC XD 355-series two-piece wheels with integrated OMF bead locks, wrapped with 315/70R17 BFGoodrich All-Terrain T/As. Mounted directly behind each wheel and tire setup are a custom Stainless Steel Brake Systems grooved rotor and larger brake caliper.

For power, this ferocious F-150 depends on Ford's new-for-'04 5.4L Triton V-8, which puts out a whopping 300 hp in stock trim. To further boost the performance, a custom 3-inch Gibson after-cat exhaust system was installed along with an aFe air intake system. All together, these performance accessories add 18 percent more horsepower to the engine, not to mention that deep, low, and tuned exhaust sound.

The exterior of the Ford was dressed up following the exact renderings as created by legendary automotive stylist Thom Taylor of Laguna Niguel, California. L&G Enterprises of San Dimas, California, covered the top half of the F-150 with House of Color's Fabtech Blue paint and transitioned it back into the factory Ford Arctic White with its Tangerine Orange paint outlined in Outlaw Black. Once all the graphics were complete, the entire truck was covered from bumper to bumper with multiple layers of clearcoat, which explains the constant wet look



▲ Maintaining the smooth factory ride quality is a custom-fabricated, one-piece, high-arched, 1/4-inch-thick welded front crossmember structure. Extended-length Fabtech hydraulic front struts replace the OE units, while heavy-duty cast spindles that are 6 inches taller than the OE units complete the frontend lift system.



▲ A plethora of MTX audio equipment keeps this rig thumpin', especially when coming out of this 1,500-watt-powered, Pro-Series MTX aluminum 12-inch subwoofer housed in a custom-fabricated, black leather-covered enclosure that is positioned under the driver-side rear jump seat.



▲ Keeping comfort and detail to the highest standards, Fabtech used nothing but the best to dress up the interior. Black and gray Italian leather with Fabtech Blue leather piping covers the once-fabric factory seats. Note the matching leather-covered subwoofer box under the driver-side rear jump seat.



▲ Painted in Fabtech Blue and coated with multiple layers of clearcoat to protect it from the elements, Fabtech's prerunner-style lightbar with integrated aluminum skidplate houses a pair of PIAA 50-series driving lights, further adding to the style and functionality of the all-new '04 Ford F-150.



▲ Fabtech created lateral-impact struts to keep the front suspension's mounting locations from moving during off-road abuse.



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of the vehicle, not to mention the smoothness of the finish. As soon as the paint was dry, the Ford was back in Fabtech's shop to have the Precision billet aluminum grille fitted and the Kodiak Sidewinder steps installed. Moving toward the front, Fabtech installed one of its custom prerunner-style lightbars with an integrated aluminum skidplate and PIAA 50-series ION driving lamps. The truck bed was treated to a custom-mixed and -colored Line-X bedliner.

The cockpit of this dune-runner was also redesigned to be more spacious, user friendly, and comfortable straight from the factory. Once again, the Fabtech team only added to these qualities. For starters, the factory fabric interior was swapped out for a custom-stitched and -colored two-toned leather interior, complete with Fabtech Blue piping in the seats, all care of 714 Motorsports of Irvine, California.

Advanced Vehicle Specialties of Irvine, California, installed a complete audio/video system for the occupant's enjoyment. Fabtech's latest DVD release, *Wasteland Warriors*, can be viewed through the two Icon TV 9-inch flatscreen monitors that are mounted in the headrests. The MTX audio system literally sends shockwaves down its listener's spines as two MTX amplifiers power it: one 1,000-watt unit for the midranges and highs, and one 1,500-watt unit for the subwoofer. A Sony

MP3 head unit controls the entire system's vital functions. The 12-inch MTX Pro-Series subwoofer was mounted under the rear jump seat and covered in matching black leather for a seamless and invisible installation. Pro-Series MTX component speakers were fit into the factory locations to further add to the stealth install.

Remembering its intended purpose for being created, the F-150 will soon begin life on the tour circuit, along with the other Fabtech project vehicles for 2004. The rig will be transported throughout the year in Fabtech's own semitruck and tractor-trailer rig and will be stopping at all major off-road race venues, auto shows, and other like venues throughout the continental U.S. So, if you're ever running down the road and you see the Fabtech 18-wheeler come along side of you, remember that you know the answer to the question of what's inside. If that's not enough, then just drop back, get behind it, and follow it to its next show. You know you want to. **ON**

SPECIFICATIONS

Owner/hometown	: Fabtech Motorsports/Chino, California
Year/make/model	: '04 Ford SuperCab F-150 4WD
Suspension	: 6-inch Fabtech suspension system; 4-inch rear lift block with integrated bumpstops
Tires	: 315/70R17 BFGoodrich All-Terrain T/As
Wheels	: 17x8-inch KMC XD 355-series with OMF bead locks
Shocks	: 2.5-inch Fabtech Hydraulic Performance shocks (front and rear)
Engine	: 5.4L Triton V-8
Other modifications	: Gibson after-cat 3-inch exhaust system; aFe filter system; Precision billet grille; Kodiak Sidewinder steps; MTX audio system; Icon TV 9-inch headrest monitors; PIAA 50-series driving lights; Line-X custom bedliner; L&G Enterprises custom paint; Stainless Steel Brake Systems grooved rotors and caliper upgrade

► The additional 6 inches gained by the suspension lift allowed for the massive 17x8-inch KMC XD 355-series two-piece wheels with integrated OMF bead locks wrapped with 315/70R17 BFGoodrich All-Terrain T/As to be mounted to the rig. Directly behind each wheel and tire is a custom Stainless Steel Brake Systems grooved brake rotor and larger brake caliper.

