

KOH Coverage + Ian's Chassis Build + Fresh Tech!

CRAWL

Hardcore Offroad



THE NEW KING

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We're edgy.



Two of our favorite things: the Rock Bug and Moab slickrock. Trust us, they work very well together.

THE ROCK BUG

THE DIFFICULT BALANCE of strength and weight can be tricky. Tracy Jordan, along with Eddie Casanueva and Thomas Kingston of Spidertrax set out to conquer the issue. Very rarely does a competition rock buggy turn the comp scene upside down like this car has. When it was first announced, the internet and message boards were set afire; the buzz of something new, something cutting edge, pushing the boundaries of what is possible. The Rock Bug has lived up to the hype, and then some. Words & Photos: Tim Magee



A month after the photoshoot and only a few weeks before KOH, Tracy was busy prepping the car for the Hammers at the Spidertrax shop. A seemingly complete teardown was necessary after a season of W.E. Rock and year of hard wheeling.

After a year of driving, we set out to see exactly how things had fared during a season of W.E. Rock and the seriously burly trails that Tracy takes on. Over the course of the W.E. Rock comp season things kept getting better and better for Tracy, his brother Jason and the Rock Bug. They competed in the Pro Modified class for the W.E. Rock Western series, and ended with one 3rd, one 4th, and two 1st place finishes. Then for the Grand Nationals the choice was made to enter the Unlimited class, and they ended up with a win in that class as well; all with the tried and now proven Rock Bug.

For the CRAWL photo shoot, the buggy was in full rock crawling attire. The original build was set up for KOH. It had quadruple bypass Kings, a spare tire and mount, a larger fuel cell, light bar, the amber race light and side view mirrors for the race. In an effort to keep things light on the rocks, they removed or replaced all of these things with something better suited for competing in the crawling venue.

Like most buggies, the chassis started off with a pile of tubing. Eddie Casanueva put his tig welder to work on the .120", .095", and .065" 4130 chromoly tubing. Everything down to the plates used for the gussets and winch-mount is the magical 4130. To push things even further, almost every gusset or plate has holes drilled in it or has been dimple-died to save weight. The 4130 chromoly was an obvious choice, as it has an awesome strength-to-weight ratio and has been used and proven on race vehicles for years. The chassis was left raw, with only WD-40 applied by Tracy in all of the spare time he has (or doesn't ...) to keep things clean and rust free. This also provides him a chance to look over the entire car for anything that might be broken or in need of an adjustment before the next competition.

For races like KOH, the car is set up with about 19" of ground clearance, and the shocks are set at 6" of up-travel (bump) and 10" of down-travel (droop). Rock crawls require a lower center of gravity and less up-travel in the suspension. For this, things are set about 2" lower all the way around, with 17" ground clearance, 4" bump, and 10" droop. A triangulated 4-link suspension keeps the axles located, with the uppers triangulated at the axle. Again, 4130 was used, this time in the Spidertrax links and the super tech gun drilled suspension bolts. King air shocks handle all of the dampening duties, with quadruple bypass version on the car for KOH and 2.5" Kings for W.E. Rock.



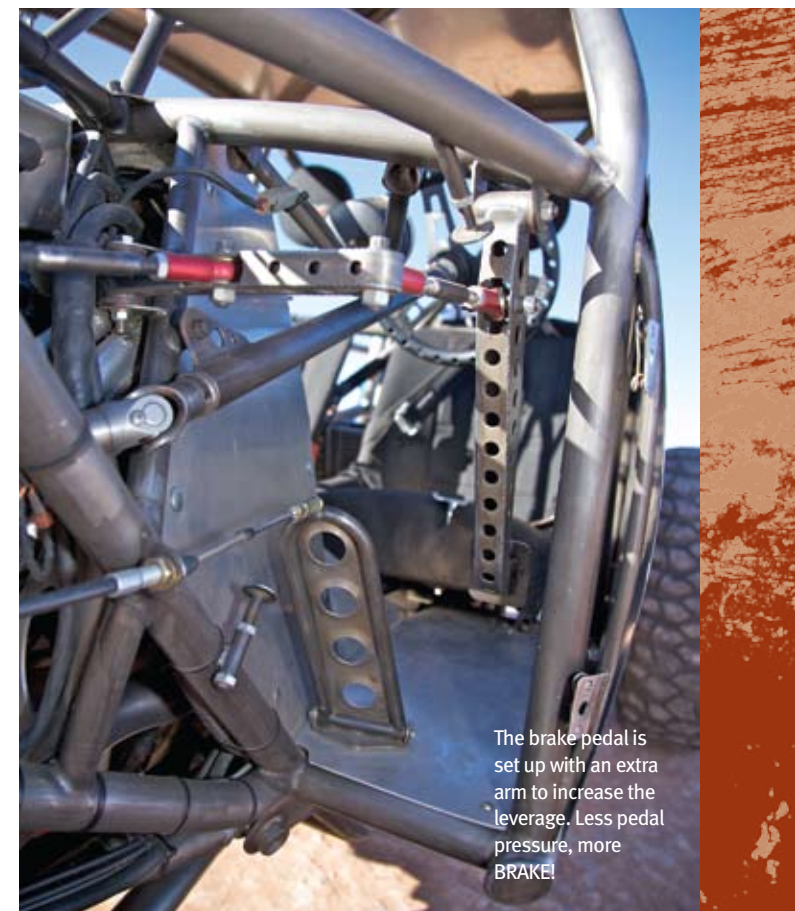
The winch mount on this cone dodger is just so damn sexy. Eddie at Spidertrax knows how to tig!



Everything a competition rock crawler could need, right at Tracy's fingertips. The simplicity of the interior of the Rock Bug is spot on.



4130 chromoly links, check. 4130 chromoly axle housings, check. 4130 chromoly chassis, check. 4130 chromoly gun drilled suspension bolts, CHECK!



The brake pedal is set up with an extra arm to increase the leverage. Less pedal pressure, more BRAKE!



The Rock Bug amidst the KOH transformation.



BFG Krawlers help keep the 50+ degrees of steering under control and pointed in the right direction, while the chromoly housings and 300M shafts ensure things stay together with all of that traction.

Powering the Rock Bug is a lightweight 300hp SCAT V4 motor. Putting one of these motors in a rock crawler had been on Mr. Jordan's mind for quite some time. For the Rock Bug, it was a perfect fit, figuratively and literally. The Scat V4 was originally developed for midget sprint cars to replace larger, heavier motors that were being run at the time. The powerful, lightweight ideology behind this motor transfers perfectly to the Rock Bug. Only about 13" long and fits, basically, under the dash. Looking at the car from the side, it's almost non-existent. It's sound is almost indescribable,

Thomas Kingston described it as "sultry", and we'd have to agree. The axles under the Rock Bug are of what wheeler's dreams are made. First off, have you seen the video of these 4130-chromoly Spidertrax Spider-9 housings getting heat-treated on Spidertrax's blog? The entire housing, trusses and all, go through a post weld heat treatment process. They come out of the oven fluorescent orange and over 2-1/2 times stronger than before the process. Running the Spidertrax Pro Series 60 knuckles allows Tracy to have about

50 degrees of steering, front AND rear! It seriously looks broken at full steer. On the shoot he was able to put the car in some very interesting places with the added maneuverability. Gun-drilled Spidertrax Ultimate 300M shafts throughout and CTM U-joints provide unsurpassed reliability. When running the car in the Pro Modified class at W.E. Rock events, a non-steering Spider-9 set up is set in the rear, weighing 170lbs less than the steering axle. Whether cone dodger or a go fast, it doesn't get much better than the Rock Bug's Spidertrax Spider-9 set-up.



Every little piece and bracket on the Bug has holes drilled in it (some via Tracy with a step bit) to save as much weight as possible. It's funny how something so simple can become art.



A four-link suspension keeps the Spider-9s in their place.



There is just something not right about having this much steering front and rear. When you hear that the Rock Bug can turn inside itself, believe it!

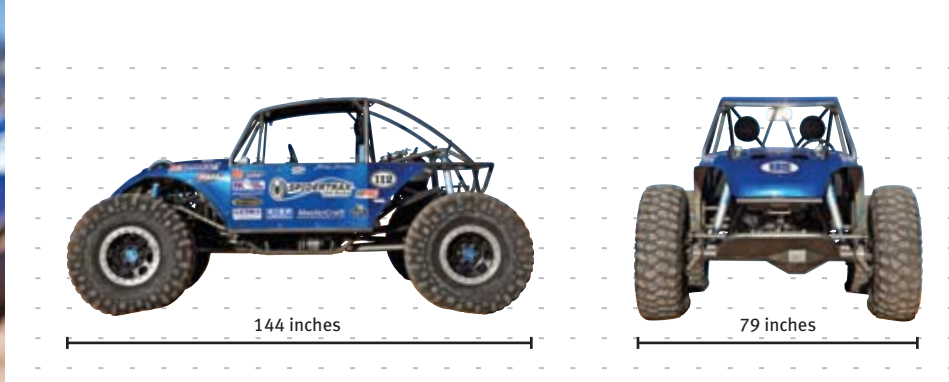
The premise was simple. Create a light-weight car, without compromising strength. With this car, they really started pushing the envelope when it comes to building a rock rig. Technology and materials were used that are commonplace in the world of trophy trucks and go fast cars, but for some reason have yet to consistently make their way into the rock crawling arena. They created a car that could compete, period. As we've often stated in the past, to obtain an outcome such as this, you need a great build platform. This masterpiece came from deep inside the maniacal engineering minds of Eddie and Tom at Spidertrax and one of the most accomplished rock crawling competitors of all time, Tracy Jordan. CRAWL can't wait to see what they come up with next. <C>



This big bog line was all Tracy's idea. The Bug didn't even flinch at crab walking the edge of a cliff face. If it were any other car or any other driver we would've advised against this one.

The day of the shoot was definitely an adventure. Included in said adventure; removing chunk of fender via front tire, finding out just what it takes to run the rock bug out of fuel, breaking winch via tug back to trailer. When it comes down to it, how could you ask for more?





Owner Tracy Jordan
Hometown Wittmann, AZ
Vehicle Type Rock Crawler
Builder Spidertrax

CHASSIS

Frame / Chassis Design	Spidertrax Rock Bug
Frame / Chassis Materials	Chromoly
Cage / Cage Material	Chromoly
Overall Wheelbase	104"
Overall Length	144"
Belly Pan Clearance	17"
Wheel Track Width	79"
Overall Weight	2330 pounds w/straight rear axle; 2510 w/rear steer

POWERTRAIN

Engine Make	Scat V4
Engine Displacement	203 ci
Engine TQ	300 ft/lb
Engine HP	300 hp
Engine Induction	Fast Fuel Injection
Engine Modifications	Custom Spidertrax Billet Aluminum Oil Pan
Batteries	Odyssey 925
Radiator / Fans	Ron Davis/Spal Fans
Air Intake	K&N Air Filter
Exhaust	Spidertrax custom headers
Transmission Make	California Performance C4
Transmission Adapters	Advance Adapters Shorty C4 kit
Transmission Cooling System	n/a
Torque Converter	California Performance 2500 9" billet
Transmission Shifter	n/a
Transfer Case(s)	Stak Dana 300
Fuel Containment	Custom fuel cell

BODY / INTERIOR

Body / Body Panels	VW Bug front clip
Body Modifications	yes
Skid plate / Material	1/8" chromoly
Hood / Grille	VW Bug front clip
Floors / Firewalls	Custom Aluminum Floors/Firewall
Dash / Gauges / Switches	All Custom Wiring by Gerald King @ Finish Line Racing

DRIVETRAIN

Front Suspension / Type / Materials	4 link, heat treated Spidertrax links
Front Sway Bar	n/a
Front Shocks	King 2.5 air shocks
Front Bump Stops	n/a
Front Axle Housing	Spider 9's with Ultimate 60 knuckles
Front Differential / Locker	Mega High 9/ Detroit Locker
Front Ring & Pinion / ratio	5.43:1
Front Differential Cover	n/a
Front Axle Shafts	Spidertrax Ultimate 300M shafts gun drilled
Front U-Joints	CTM
Front Drive Flanges / Hubs	Spidertrax custom hubs **soon to be available**
Front Brakes	Spidertrax 14 inch rotor/hat & Wilwood calipers
Front Steering Setup	PSC 2.5" double ended ram
Front Driveshaft	J.E. Reel 2 piece 1350
Rear Suspension / Type / Materials	4 link, heat treated Spidertrax links
Rear Sway bar	Spidertrax custom **soon to be available**
Rear Shocks	King 2.5 air shocks
Rear Bump Stops	n/a
Rear Axle Housing	Spider 9's with Ultimate 60 knuckles
Rear Differential / Locker	Mega High 9/ Detroit Locker
Rear Ring & Pinion / Ratio	5.43:1
Rear Differential Cover	n/a
Rear Axle Shafts	Spidertrax Ultimate 300M shafts gun drilled
Rear U-Joints	CTM
Rear Drive Flanges	Spidertrax
Rear Brakes	Spidertrax 14" rotor/hat & Wilwood calipers
Rear Driveshaft	J.E. Reel 1350
Rear Steering Setup	PSC 2.5" double ended ram
Tire Make / Size	37" or 39" BFGoodrich Krawlers
Wheel Make / Size / Bolt Pattern	Trailready HD 17" 6 lug

BODY / INTERIOR

Steering Column / Wheel	Custom
Pedal Assembly / Cutting Brakes	Wilwood
Seats / Harnesses	Mastercraft
Electronics	n/a
Lights Interior / Exterior	n/a
Safety - Fire Extinguisher	yes
Winches - Front / Rear	yes