

Raptor gets hooks in market

Part-race, part-street truck

By Ian Harwood, Canwest News Service November 29, 2008

Ford took the 2009 F150 and modified it to be part race truck and part street truck.

Ford showcased the 2010 F150 SVT Raptor at the Specialty Equipment Market Association show in Las Vegas this month.

It's an exciting truck and should turn a lot of heads, as well as sending potential buyers to dealerships to look at the whole range of the new F150.

Ford took the 2009 F150 and modified it to be part race truck and part street truck. Dual factory Fox racing shocks are on each corner of the rig. Factory fender flares cover the stock 315/70/17 tires.

There's a functional air vent on the front two fenders, a front bumper, hood and air dam providing fresh air to the engine. And speaking of engines, this truck is powered by a 5.4-litre Triton V8 that delivers 320 horsepower and 390 ft.-lb. of torque.

This [vehicle](#) also includes the latest [Ford](#) technologies, including Advance-Trac with Roll Stability control that uses a sensor to detect over steer and yaw by monitoring the vehicles speed, throttle position and steering wheel angle. When the system senses wheel slip or the loss of traction, it applies braking where needed to keep the truck tracking safely on its intended path.

There are two off-road settings to choose from. The first is a sport mode that shuts off the traction control allowing the vehicle to have more yaw movement, and the second is a full off-road mode that shuts off all electronic-stability programs and switches the ABS system to a special off-road setting.

The latter allows the wheels to lock more often in rough off-road conditions, and the rear differential is allowed to stay locked at higher speeds. Hill-descent control lets the driver control how slow he wants to go by pushing a button. There is an auxiliary switch board on the centre console that is pre-wired with four switches to use with aftermarket accessories.

I ran into a few very interesting new products at the show this year. The first was a fold-up trailer designed by Truxedo, the makers of fine truck tonneau covers, which easily stores in a small area of your garage. It is large enough to transport a 4x8 sheet of plywood.

Next is a combination of a plastic side bed cap with an aluminum checker-plate top built by Dee Zee.

TFP Products introduced a line of replacement door handles with built in LED lights that lit up and flashed when the turn signals were turned on.

A new twist on the traditional truck sidebars were introduced with full length bars with additional steps welded on to help with climbing in and out of the truck.

Warn industries introduced an air cooled 5,440-kilogram winch. This will defiantly cut down on motors heating up. They also showed a crane that can be mounted in the corner of the truck box and can be used in conjunction with their Pullzall winch.

MBRP has introduced an economical line of performance exhaust and also have created a line of [Jeep](#) JK accessories including a beefy roof-rack system, oversized spare-tire mount and a combination rock rail and 7.6-centimetre side bars. These items are new to market and hopefully in the next few weeks I should have pricing available for them.

The show is usually so big it takes up four buildings and three portable tents in the parking lot. This year due to the economic slow- down in the States there were far fewer exhibitors. The hall where the truck accessories were displayed was about half the size it normally is. I have never experienced walking down the isles without bumping somebody. I could take pictures without worrying about someone walking in front of the camera. That's a pleasant first!

When I entered the Performance Hall it was quite a different experience. There were crowds of people and it was hard to imagine this market segment was experiencing any set backs. However, a few of the exhibitors did comment to me that there were crowds at times but very few quality buyers. Most people were just there to look.

The hall was filled with everything you would want in an engine from superchargers all the way down to oil pumps, and of course they are the latest and greatest. With the high price of diesel in the U.S., the diesel truck market has dried up (U.S. lower states) and with tons of performance accessories out for these motors it is not a good thing. There are some dealers in Texas that are actually refusing diesel trucks as trade-ins.

If you have a diesel engine in your truck and you are looking for ways to improve your fuel consumption then Volant has a cold-air intake that just might be right for you. This company has some of the best fuel-economy numbers with their systems.

Power programmers have been out for a while but the latest models have the ability to turn your regular gas motor to one that can accept flex fuel. Performance exhaust systems are not new but with the economy the way it is manufactures like MBRP have found ways to cut costs without sacrificing quality which translates into better prices for the consumer.

Of course there is more to do in Vegas than just the show. Case in point was one of the after-show parties put on by Pilot automotive.

This party was held at the Hilton Hotel next to the convention centre. The penthouse suite which was home to Elvis Presley when he performed in Vegas, was \$17,500 US a night. It had a private rooftop pool with separate Jacuzzi baths.

Sadly, my expense account didn't run to even five minutes in the room.