

15 MUST-HAVE PARTS! THE CURE FOR THE COMMON TRUCK

SPORT TRUCK

PLUS:
WE HAVE ALL OF GALE
BANKS' TRUCKS INSIDE



DO IT YOURSELF!

- 4WD TO 2WD SWAP
- CADDY CLIP
- CUSTOM COLORADO
- LOW-TECH RENDERING
- LS2 BLOWER
- 4.3L PERFORMANCE



JAN '08 VOL 21 U.S.A. \$4.99 CANADA \$5.99

ON THE SCENE:
LUDI KRS SHOW • DROP ZONE • LAKEFRONT TOUR

THE TRUCKS

- 24 PRO FARM 2 PRO STREET**
Robert Wallace of Cleveland, North Carolina, spent a lot of time converting a beat-up ranch truck into a tire-blistering monster. The blown small-block has no problem frying the 42 total inches of tire. Thank goodness for VHT.
- 28 RISKY BUSINESS**
Phillip Cordova is a guy who likes to take chances. Instead of taking the easier route, building a truck with lots of parts available, he customized a Dodge Dakota.
- 32 ONE BAD TON**
T.C. Coleman promotes Slamfest and wouldn't be caught dead in a clapped-out bucket, so building a nice custom out of an F-350 was a necessity.
- 38 LOW-ROLLIN' TUCKOMA**
Eric Rankins is the lead fabricator at Ekstensive Metalworks in Houston, Texas, and decided to flex his fabricating muscle. He laid out his '06 Tacoma over 24-inch wheels in only six weeks.
- 42 KOLOR-ADO**
Larry Seabert hammered and welded on a first-generation S-10, turning it into the truck of his dreams and right into the pages of Sport Truck.
- 49 POWER BROKER**
Gale Banks of Banks Engineering has some pretty bad-ass vehicles in his garage. From trucks that scream down the Salt Flats to a fat-tire ride that rips the 1320, he has a truck for every occasion.

THE SCENE

- 108 MEET THE STAFF**
If you have no clue about who actually works on this fine collection of paper you are holding, this segment should clear up any confusion.
- 120 LAKE FRONTIN'**
Midnight Fantasies' Lake Front Tour was held at the Civic Center in Lake Charles, Louisiana. They gave away a 6-foot-tall trophy to the Best of Show truck and a 1,000 bucks to the bikini contest girls. Oh, and Popeye's Chicken was an official sponsor...mmmm, fried bird parts.

THE GARAGE

- 68 BUILDING THE DREAM**
Can't find a two-wheel-drive '67-'72 Blazer? Well, you are not alone. If you can find a 4x4, then we can show you how to convert it, thanks to the crew at Early Classic Enterprises.
- 74 DO-IT-YOURSELF RENDERING**
If you can print a picture and trace a line, you can do a rendering. Grab your colored pencils and ink pen, because it's time for the Sport Truck craft hour.
- 78 ESCALADE UPGRADE**
Bring up the style and class of your Silverado with a Cadillac front-clip swap. It's not a simple job, but it is well worth the effort.
- 86 BUILDER BLUEPRINTS**
We map out how to create a cooler Canyon in two pages or less. Just because the story is short doesn't mean it's not worth reading.
- 88 MAINTENANCE WITH A SHOT OF WHOOP ASS**
Got a truck with a 4.3L V-6? So do we, but it wasn't running very well. Check out how we spent the weekend, breathing new life into our little motor.
- 98 SUPERCHARGED SUPER SPORT**
What do you get when you mix a 6.0L LS2 and a supercharger inside the engine compartment of a TrailBlazer? You get one bad-ass grocery-getter.



ON THIS PAGE

Here you can see all of the staff, minus Kevin, pushing the Sidewinder truck into position. Kevin was lucky enough to be hoisted up in the air in a basket that was precariously swinging in the breeze. Needless to say, he wasn't feeling too safe, but he risked his life for you, the loyal reader. What a guy—you should all send him cookies.
Photography: Kevin Aguilar

- 124 XTREMELY LUDIKRS**
There were 5,000 people who showed up to the Rialto Municipal Airport in California to check out the 5th Annual Ludikrs Show. Trophies were awarded, bikinis were seen, and hot dogs were eaten—what did you do?
- 128 BACK IN THE ZONE**
Magical Minis put on the sixth installment of the Drop Zone show, held at Oregon State Fairgrounds. This is one of the last three-day runs left on the West Coast, and the wet T-shirt contest was a sight to behold.



TH
8
10
14
20
64

SPORT TRUCK • JANUARY '08 • VOL 21



Kevin,
tion. Kevin
he air in
ng in the
ng too safe,
reader. What
es.

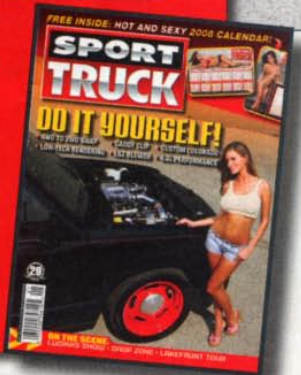


THE REGULARS

8	ON THE FLOOR	132	ROAD TRIPPIN'
10	FRONT PAGE	134	ON THE WEB
14	MAIL TRUCK	136	AD INDEX
20	HOMEGROWN HAULERS	138	PINUP
64	SPEED SHOP		

ON THE COVER

We brought out the sweet-as-pie Holly Weber to add some flair to the already bitchen cover trucks that Kevin shot. Gale Banks' little shop truck is flat-out wicked with a twin-turbo powerplant and its understated wheels. Check out the full story on page 49.





POWER BROKER

Gale Banks' fleet of sport trucks offers something for everyone

By Mike Finnegan • Photography: Kevin Aguilar & Galen Armenta

One of the benefits of working at *Sport Truck*, aside from fame and fortune, is the opportunity to meet interesting characters and pick their brains for information. We get to hobnob with the automotive elite on occasion and hear stories that you wouldn't believe about hot-rodding trucks. Most of the time, the stories we hear from individuals are pretty one-dimensional, mostly because many guys are into just one side

of sport trucks. Some are into speed or style, while others are into the off-road experience. And, of course, there's always that gas-versus-diesel dividing line that many truck builders subscribe to. But then there's Gale Banks of Banks Engineering. Here's a guy who's done it all and done it well, and he has the records to prove it. You'll find his name in the record books for building the fastest pickups on earth.

Recently, we visited Gale, not so much to regurgitate the legendary stories of obliterating speed records at the Bonneville Salt Flats or about the time he won a science fair by building his own robot complete with a working nervous system, but rather to climb in and around the awesome fleet of high-performance trucks he's amassed. The trucks are the fruits of his labor, building horsepower from nothing and finding a way to make it work in

a pickup. Some of the trucks you might have seen before, but we're sure a couple are new because at the time we photographed them they were unfinished projects that had to be pushed around for photography. Whether you are into drag racing, road racing, or gas- or diesel-powered street machines that have the ponies to decimate nearly any import or domestic car that steps to you, Gale's got something to drool over.



THE SHOP TRUCK

>> Gale's '90 454SS Chevy flies in the face of conventional gearhead wisdom for a couple of different reasons. It's not surprising to find turbochargers under the hood, because after all, Gale has made his name outfitting everything under the sun with hairdryer horsepower. The interesting thing here is that this truck no longer has big-block power. The Shop Truck is the platform for tweaking Bank's custom-built twin-turbo'd small-block, a potent engine capable of producing between 800 and 1,100 hp, depending on the boost level.

The engines are built in-house, starting with a Dart block, CNC-ported 23-degree cylinder heads, and a forged rotating assembly. With a 3-1/2-inch stroker crank and 4.125 pistons, the displacement tops 375 cubic inches. The valvetrain, like the rest of the engine, was carefully spec'd by the Banks race shop and consists of a solid roller camshaft from Comp Cams and Jesel shaft-mounted rocker arms. The induction system consists of another quality

Banks piece, a custom pressure chamber with shuttle valve and built-in billet aluminum throttle body. The system sits atop an ACCEL Pro Ram manifold, and a digital fuel-injection system takes care of the engine management.

The Shop Truck is used exclusively for developing the engine management programs for the turbo engine, and Banks is confident that in the future he can tune the engine to pass a smog inspection. He's also flirting with the idea of getting

CARB approval to make the engine street-legal in California. Eventually, you might be able to swap the twice-blown small-block into your own truck and have the smooth reliability of fuel injection and the monster power of turbochargers without worrying about getting rolled by the man. We'll keep you posted, if and when it becomes a reality.



The Shop Truck is all business. A Richmond six-speed manual tranny, complete with a Centerforce 12-inch billet steel flywheel and dual-friction clutch, transfers power to a 9-inch rear end. The truck hooks up with Cal Track bars and a Detroit Locker in the rear end, spinning 18-inch Wheel Vintiques rims and Toyo Proxes tires, all the while trying to twist the living daylights out of the driveline and trans. Gale has been through a few trannys after turning up the boost and mashing the go-pedal when traction wasn't limited.

The smooth "pseudo steelie" wheels are the just beginning of an old-school look that continues on with custom pinstriping and a faux shop sign on the door that proudly points toward the builder's roots. The body mods are subtle and sparse, which betrays Bank's no-nonsense approach to truck building. If it doesn't serve a purpose or enhance the styling, it doesn't need to be on the truck. For instance, the front turn signal



indicators were removed, and custom carbon-fiber ducts were crafted to seamlessly integrate into the stock grille. The ducts feed fresh air to the hungry turbo motor. To keep the truck legit, a smaller pair of turn signals was mounted inboard of the ducts.

The stock hood was retained, but nine louvers were strategically punched into its shell on each side of the body line. The rear end of the truck also received its fair share of attention. The stock bumper was ditched and replaced

with the requisite roll pan but with cutouts for two pair of exhaust tips. The license plate was recessed into the tailgate after the handle was relocated inside of the bed, which received a smooth tonneau cover.

At a glance, you'd swear the interior of the truck was stock, and for the most part, it is. But, beneath that factory cloth lies a pair of Cerullo bucket seats. The only other mods to the low-mileage wonder truck are a custom shifter and an Auto Meter monster tachometer.



GALE'S 502SS TRUCK

>> Of the two 454SS trucks Gale owns, we're betting this is the one that gets driven the most. It's likely the turbo truck hasn't a snowball's chance in hell of passing the ridiculous rules set by CARB that we must deal with in California, but the red truck is too legit to quit. This one retains its big-block roots, although a modern Gen VI 502-cid Rat motor now resides between the framersails, instead of the antiquated throttle body-injected 454.

Of course, the 502 isn't stock either. Banks added its Power Pack system, which includes durable Torque Tube exhaust manifolds and a Ram Air induction. The exhaust system is handbuilt, using rare parts leftover from Banks' American Turbocar Camaro/Firebird program. The engine is backed by a 4L80E electronic four-speed plus Overdrive

automatic transmission and the stock 12-bolt rear axle.

Also, 454SS trucks never came with this shade of red paint, and if you have eagle eyes, then you'll recognize that this truck's particular hue isn't even a GM color. Most of these trucks were painted black, and a precious few did come special-ordered in white. This truck's color was taken from the '02 Dodge Viper and looks fantastic over the clean body mods. The mods include deleted side trim, a Sir Michaels roll pan, a shaved cargo light, and a set of Street Scene power mirrors. Rounding out the mods are 17x8- and 17x9.5-inch Boyd Coddington Stingray wheels and BFGoodrich Radial T/A tires.





Taking the Banks' theory of "clean diesel" to the max, Harold Johnson from Banks gave the Duramax a once-over with a duster for the photoshoot.

SIDEWINDER DURAMAX TYPE-R

» Since Banks is a proponent of the "clean diesel" theory, which is to say that a diesel engine should be efficient and powerful without spewing soot into the air, he decided to field two different race trucks to prove the point. The first is the Sidewinder Type-R, which stands for Road Race, a sliver of the racing world that is usually dominated by sports cars. Gale wanted to build a race truck centered on a highly modified Duramax engine to exploit the inherent durability of the diesel engine and its awesome torque output with the Banks touch. Everything about the truck is custom and race-bred, but the technology and data acquired on the race track always makes its way onto the street via Banks Engineering. That means that what Banks has learned about hot-rodding the Duramax in the Type-R will eventually make its way into consumer-level products.

The heart of the Type-R is a modified Duramax block that Banks outfitted with a dry-sump oiling system with 16 quarts of capacity, which is necessary for high-rpm oil control. The block is stuffed with a custom-lightened and cryogenically stress-relieved crankshaft. The bore size is a secret and so is the displacement, but Banks did say the pistons

are forged, and the compression ratio is 14.5:1. The engine is further strengthened with shorter-than-stock roller lifters, and output is enhanced with a ported intake manifold and oversized valves in the heads, designed to increase flow.

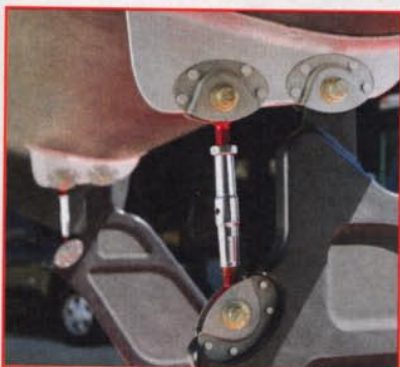
The turbo system relies not on stock GM spec parts, but Honeywell/Garrett turbos mounted on Banks manifolds and plumbed with custom stainless steel tubing. Banks wastegates keep the pressure on lock, and custom twin intercoolers cool the air from the hairdryers. To fuel the beast within, Bosch common-rail fuel injection is employed, drawing from a single CP3.4 fuel pump and controlled by a Bosch EDC16 ECU. All told, the Type-R engine produces 650 hp and 800 lb-ft of torque without covering trucks behind it in black smoke.

To harness the incredible torque, Banks had to abandon conventional gear-shifting devices and contract Weissmann to build the ultimate six-speed manual gearbox. The stick shift features beefed-up internals and an internal oil pump with external cooler to increase its longevity at wide-open throttle. The torque is

transferred to a Speedway Engineering Track-Nine Ford-style rear housing with floating hubs. The rear end also features an internal oil pump and external oil cooler, just like the tranny.

This truck handles like a sports car on steroids, thanks to a tubular chassis and coilover front and rear suspensions. Koni Mark II shocks and Eibach springs keep road surface imperfections in check, while a three-link locates the rearend and unequal-length A-arms locate the front hubs. Banks relies on high-end Wilwood brakes to bring the party to a halt in the corners. The Endmass STR system features 13-inch discs with enhanced cooling veins, and the body also features cooling ducts that funnel fresh air to all four corners of the suspension.

The body of the Type-R should look familiar because it is modeled after a GMC Sierra pickup. Banks designed the custom carbon-fiber body panels in-house. The company also crafted the aero wing and a full pan to seal off the bottom of the chassis from the ground and improve aerodynamics. At press time, Banks was gearing up to begin testing the Type-R for the upcoming road-racing season.



THE SIDEWINDER TYPE-D

>> The D-truck is a Don Ness Racecraft Pro Stock drag truck with an '01 Chevy S-10 body. Gale is building the truck in an effort to hopefully bring about a new diesel drag class to the NHRA. Currently, several of the western divisions have adopted the class, and at press time, the D-truck was under development.

The D-truck is obviously a different animal with a different purpose when compared to the R-truck. The heartbeat is virtually the same, though. The heavily modded Duramax is there, except the D-truck uses a sophisticated nitrous injection system to help boost low-rpm power during holeshots at the starting line. The N₂O also has a side benefit—it also helps clean up the exhaust. Like the R-truck, the D-truck is fully caged inside. Power is put to the pavement via a Liberty Racing clutchless five-speed transmission, a Bruno BRT torque converter, and Mark Williams axles, which are stuffed inside a Don Ness-fabricated rearend housing. Lamb provided the struts, springs, and rack-and-pinion steering system. The Type-D truck rolls on Weld Racing wheels and Mickey Thompson drag tires.



THE ORIGINAL SIDEWINDER

>> Banks isn't just in the business of making Duramax-powered trucks go fast, either. The original Sidewinder truck is the Cummins diesel Dodge Dakota rocket truck that set the FIA world record for speed on the Bonneville Salt Flats at 217.306 mph in 2002. That's quite an amazing feat, but what's more amazing is that the truck was driven to the track in Utah from California while towing its own support trailer and averaging a staggering 22 miles per gallon. The 15:1 compression, 5.9L Cummins diesel puts out 735 hp and 1,300 lb-ft of torque, and has run the quarter-mile in 12.16 seconds. The truck was also radared at more than 222 mph on the Salt Flats. Imagine cruising this thing to work every day. It still has the stock radio and air conditioning on board. ☺

