



LOVELL PUTS AMSOIL PRO-LIGHT IN 3rd AT THE 88TH PIKES PEAK HILL CLIMB

Having always lived in the shadow of Pikes Peak, the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb has always been part of my life. Not a big part though, I have never even been to the race. Having built a formidable racer for the TORC short course series though, this year was different. I never thought the V-8 powered AMSOIL Pro-Light would be competitive in the Pikes Peak Open class but I knew I needed seat time, especially after my pummeling in the opening rounds at Crandon.

We rushed back home to Colorado from Crandon, WI only to complete tech and make the drivers meeting with 2 minutes to spare. There are no breaks for latecomers here and a poor sole from Hungary was turned away after his car was stuck in customs during the practice days. Glad I wasn't late. The Pikes Peak Open class for the 88th running consisted of 9 vehicles including a modified Cobra, a dedicated hill climb car from New Zealand, a WRC rally car from Luxembourg, and a Honda Ridgeline outfitted for Baja. All you really need for the class is a body so I guess my Pro-Light was right at home.

At about 4:30 am I found myself at 12,700 ft waiting for the sun to rise. It felt like a weird mix between an expeditionary base camp and a pit. At 5:15 we started running and got 4 attempts in before the road opened and tourist traffic arrived. We repeated the early morning practice two more times on lower sections of the road before a much needed day of rest in preparations for the race on Sunday.

Race day conditions were perfect and my only worry was fading rear brakes that were exposed in practice. I had since built some cooling ducts and knew that the AMSOIL brake fluid was good to well over 500 degrees. All I had to do was keep my foot off the brakes.

I can't say too much about the run itself as I was really trying to concentrate. At one point I got to jerking the wheel around way too much and needed to slow my hands. I could feel tension in my body and several times told myself to relax and focus. On the narrow exposed turns it occurred to me that my tires were actively saving my life. With 4 miles left, I remember thinking, "I still have brakes! Go, go, go!" I was merciless on the motor but everything was holding. As I snaked through the alpine boulder field my mind drifted to the fact that most guys were at home watching sports on TV. Why was I compelled to do this? Oh that's right, to live life to its fullest. Stay focused Brad! I reached the pavement near the top and knew there wasn't much to hold me back now. I then rounded the last corner to see the checkered flag. Wow! I was still in one piece. A 3rd place trophy was just icing on the cake. My total time was 13:17 over 12.42 miles with an elevation gain of 4,720 ft and average speed of 56 mph.

The Pikes Peak International Hill Climb is an amazing race. It needs no hype as it is the second oldest race in the country and has been sustainable longer than most of us have been alive. It has big names and unknowns, record setters and adventure seekers. I was there for seat time in my new truck but fell in love with a phenomenal local race that I have neglected my whole life. It has the same airs of adventure that attract people to the Baja. I don't care if they pave it, I almost now welcome it. Either way, I can't wait to get back up the mountain next year.

Video of my run is here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMzvd1oQibo> I really want to thank everyone who, in 5 months, helped take this from an idea to a functioning truck sitting at 14,110 ft. You know who you are and I am grateful. The fast pace of the TRAXXAS TORC series continues with the next rounds of racing in Bark River, MI July 10 & 11. If you are in the neighborhood, be sure to stop by our AMSOIL trailer.