



Contact: Brad Lovell
Tel: 719-649-7494
Email: Brad@Lovellrockracing.com

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AMSOIL / TORCHMATE FORDS PUSH HARD IN MOAB

BY BRAD LOVELL

What a week. What a life. Racing can be the best job in the world and the worst. Our team came off a great high winning We-Rock in Tucson but literally as soon as we did, #232 developed an electrical phantom. It chugged and puffed into the trailer where I started surgery. After replacing some high dollar parts, and with the help of the fine folks at Campbell Enterprises in Phoenix, I was convinced I solved the problem. Off we went to the land of red rocks and the Mecca of our sport – Moab, UT.

Upon arrival we headed out to Area BFE to tear it up a bit and refine the truck. I was having a great time on the rocks and in the dirt until flames started shooting out of the tailpipes. Soon the engine petered out and my smile faded - the phantom was back. With only a day until the XRRR Moab race, I started to stress. With the support and encouragement of my wife, I tore into the truck and did my best to reason through the problem. As the deadline for tech came closer I began to accept my fate and mentally prepared to co-drive #32 with Roger. The solution is always found in the last place you look and for me, it was a shot in the dark. A couple taps on the computer as a last minute effort did the trick. The light went on and the 347 roared to life. The problem? A corroded connection in the computer. Roger pulled in from Colorado and we made tracks to tech. Never give up.

My initial reaction to the courses was that they were long and easy. Should I run high range or low range? Neither seemed to be a good fit. I ran against Rick Deremo all day and he is always fast. My runs were consistent and went well. It was the typical bone jarring, metal shearing punishment that XRRR is known for. My goal was to go fast enough to destroy the truck in 12 minutes but in the meantime, keep it on the wheels. Rocks were shattered, tires let off smoke, the rev limiter did its job, and I entered the finals in 2nd place. Deremo had a 30 second lead on me so I kept a cool head and hoped he would push hard enough to have problems. I made up 17 seconds in the first run but later got hung on some rocks and handed the Deremo the win. What can I say; the guy did a great job.

To our delight, XRRR has allowed Roger and I to spot for each other during the same race. I know Roger's expertise made me faster and I would like to think my coaching helped him a bit. Roger was plenty fast pinning #32 in the corners and smashing it through the rocks. The truck is much more stable with new Fabtech suspension and Roger got a lot of good experience completing King of the Hammers only a few weeks ago. The AMSOIL / Torchmate Ford (if you can't tell them apart his is the one without headlights) launched over the jumps and made tracks. Luck of the draw caused him to get hung up on some dug out rocks and cost about 30 seconds. Those 30 seconds put rival Joachim Schwiesow in the finals and gave me a full-time spotter for the last two runs. While final scoring is not yet available, Roger probably ended the day in 8th. A great run considering the company.

The marathon continues as we spend a couple extra days trail riding in Moab before heading to Primm, NV for the Terrible's Town 250. I'll take the right seat in the #7231 Torchmate Ranger under driver of record Bill Kunz. I guess I'm back on that high wave. What an awesome job.

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