



LOVELL RUNNER UP AT INAUGURAL ULTRA 4 STAMPEDE

King of the Hammers now has a sister, and she isn't pretty. The inaugural Ultra 4 Stampede race was held just east of Reno, NV on private land and is a 3 lap, 66 mile race. The brand new course features rough and rocky desert roads and 3 untamed canyons. There are no wide open sections of desert or rounded rock canyons, every rock is a tire killer and 3 laps easily makes the race as difficult as King of the Hammers.

The Lovell Brothers showed up with the #4432 AMSOIL Rock Ranger ready to take home the winner take all purse of \$10,000. After a day of pre-running, the field of 52 lined up for a 2-mile qualifying race. Getting a start at the front of the pack was crucial and the brothers threw down a fast time but would start 3rd after being bested by former KOH winners Shannon Campbell and Jason Scherer.

Race morning came with the typical routine of last minute tuning, prep, and double checks. The green flag flew and the challenge began. The team's tactic was simply to finish and keep moving at all costs. Rocks, silt, and dust flew. Boulders churned under the truck and Mother Nature battered the under-carriage. The AMSOIL Ford held and the brothers kept their focus.

Reno, NV is also the home of Torchmate CNC Cutting Systems and the Torchmate pit crew, along with Factory Ride, was out in full force supporting #4432. A fly-by visual inspection on lap #2 revealed no problems and the crew performed a blistering fast 40 second fueling and inspection on lap #3. By the third lap, #4432 was deep in lapped traffic and fought delays. Reports from the pit crew indicated the team was in second place and 18 minutes ahead of the next truck.

At the top of the second rock canyon, everything went wrong. The drive train started a horrific clanging and the rear axle lost all its lubrication. With the win now out of sight, the team returned to their initial objective – finish. The banging of steel continued but the team kept a strong pace and saved what was left of the truck for the silt and rock climbs near the finish line. In the end, the effort was good enough for a ticket to the podium as #4432 limped across the finish line in second place. Only 18 vehicles finished (35%).

"The brutality of this race redefines rock racing," commented Brad Lovell, "It joins KOH as the ultimate test for this type of truck. Once we lost fluid, I thought for sure the rear axle would fail but the coating of AMSOIL saved it from seizing. Torchmate was a great help and opened their shop for all competitors before the race. This was a well run, well promoted race and a confidence booster for me to get back up on the podium." Teammate Roger added his thoughts, "We ran the whole race without a single flat BFG and there were sharp rocks everywhere. Everyone we passed did a great job getting out of the way. There was a lot of talent and sportsmanship in this field."

After a season of rock racing, hillclimbing, desert, and TORC short course, the brother's next event will take them back to what they know the best as they defend the We-Rock National Rockcrawling Championship at Miller Motorsports Park in Salt Lake City, UT Oct. 2-3.