

FJC
Magazine

JULY 2010 • VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 3

**Off Road 101:
20 Minute Mounts**

FJ EVENTS:
Spring MudFling
Cruise Moab
Desert Rally
MORE!

TRAIL
GRAPPLER:
HYBRID M/T

Clazzio
Seat Covers
INSTALL

NITTO®

Expedition Wheeling: Ditch Bags

Contents

4 The BEST M/T Daily Driver?

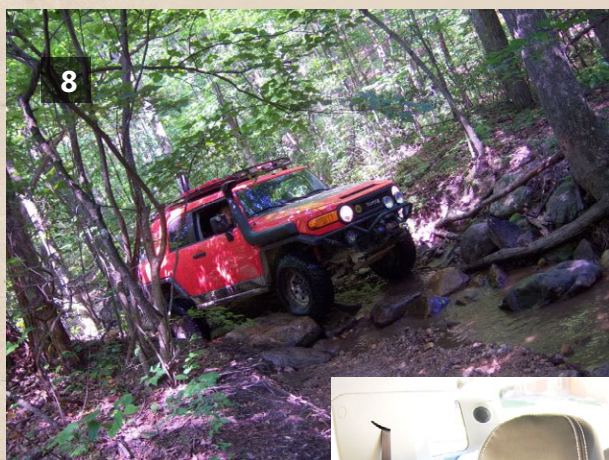
6 Cruise Moab 2010

8 Spring MudFling

10 Expedition Wheeling: Ditch Bags

14 Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge

20 The Rally is Reborn



On The Cover:
Our new Nitto Trail
Grappler's on the trail.
See page 4 for more
details.



Features

13 Off Road 101: 20 Minute Mounts

18 Clazzio Seat Cover Install

24 Dyna Beads for Balancing

25 Team Necessary: HOT FJ!

26 New Products

28 FJ Cruiser Groups & Clubs

29 Upcoming FJ Events



Disabled Explorers

Adapt Overcome Explore

Helping the disabled requires insurance, fuel, food and more. We keep our overhead low so that your dollars make a real difference.

We gladly accept gear, fuel, supplies or time as we can always use more help. Thanks from our entire team!

Donate now with..



Our goal is to create a resource for vehicle based back country access by the disabled. Our motto is Adapt, Overcome, Explore and we are working to live up to that motto in the following ways:

Adapt: Vehicle modifications, equipment reviews, recovery methods, driver training, and more.

Overcome: Feature stories of those who are out there already, from amputees to those with spinal cord injuries

Explore: Trail ride-along events to introduce the disabled to the outdoors, presenting at land meetings to fight against trail closure, adapted trail guides and more.

For those of you who are currently able bodied, we could use your help with many of our activities while providing you with a chance to learn how to wheel with the disabled. Our desire is not to change the trails that already exist, but to keep them open so that people with mobility impairment can enjoy the same wilderness access that the able bodied have.

To find out how we can help you, or how you can help us, go to our website (www.disabledexplorers.com), email us at info@disabledexplorers.com, or call 602-451-6079.

TRD Sparks.com



Custom Off-Road Accessories

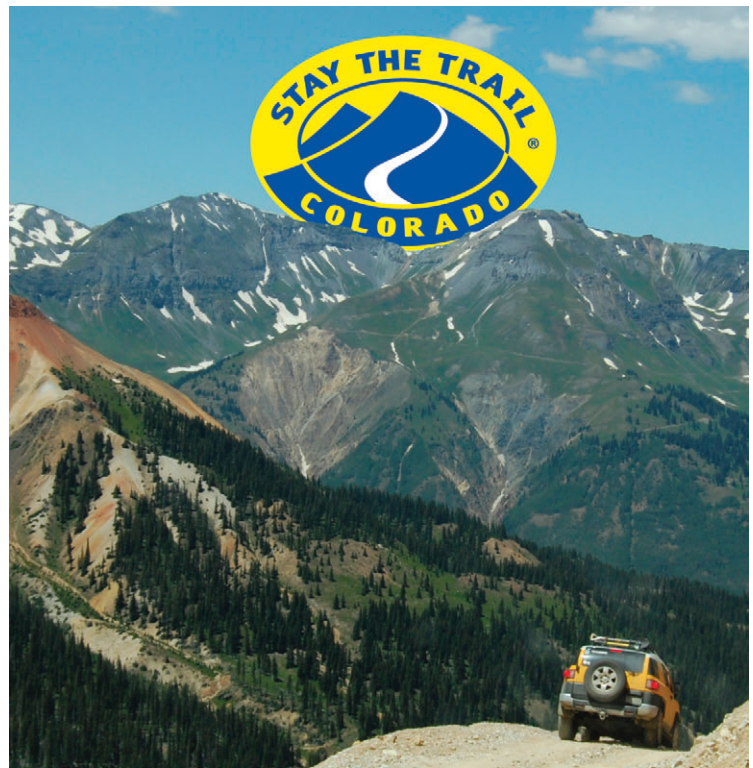
- Lifts, Wheels, Rails, Brush Guards & Racks
- Light Bars: Complete Kits & Parts
- Trail Teams Parts



- Excellent Service • Wholesale Pricing

- Fast Shipping, most parts in stock

Online Discount Catalog
www.TRDSparks.com



In Colorado, We Stay the Trail

www.staythetrail.org

FROM THE STAFF

It's already been an exciting year for us at FJC Magazine. Just before the April issue came out (on March 5th)

our baby boy Brenden was born. He's truly been a blessing to our family and we're very excited to show him the world. At just about 4 months as this is written, he's a little young for much off road driving. Still, he's been with us on a few easy trails, and he LOVES bouncing around in his BOB Stroller.

We're very excited that this issue of FJC Magazine has more event coverage than we've ever had. Our thanks go out to all the FJ enthusiasts that attend these events, and especially those that help us provide coverage. Brad, Doug, Josh, Eric, and Xavier have really come through for us in this issue. We look forward to working with you all in the future!

Another exciting event that happened just before press time was the release of the iPhone 4 and iOS 4. These two, combined with the iPad that came out a few months ago, will most definitely change our industry for ever. When we published the first issue of FJC Magazine in 2008, I told Angie that someday our publication would be read on all kinds of handheld devices, and here we are. It's been possible to read PDFs on the iPhone before now, but it wasn't pretty. The real gem with these new releases is the iBooks application. With built in PDF support, full text search, and bookmarking capabilities, and priced right (it's FREE), iBooks has solved our portable device problems.

If you haven't tried FJC Magazine on your iDevice yet, follow these simple steps to get it setup:

- Download (or update) to the latest iBooks app on your device
- Find & download the issue(s) you want to read at <http://www.fjc-mag.com>
- When the download is done, Safari will popup an 'add to iBooks' button. Click it & you're all set!

What's even better is that if you want to add your entire collection of FJC Magazine issues to the device at once, it's very easy to do in iTunes

on your computer. Here's a great tutorial to help you out with that.

The last thing I want to mention is our forthcoming iPad/iPhone application: Off Road Trail Maps. This effort has proven to be a little more time consuming than we initially thought, so while we're progressing it has been slow progress. To help enhance our effort (and provide a means to launch this application), we've started a Kickstarter project. Kickstarter is a system that allows projects to be funded by everyday people that really want to see it succeed. How it works is that you pledge a dollar amount to the project, and when it's 'Fully funded' your pledge will be honored.

If our project doesn't meet our goal of \$7,500 then your pledge is cancelled automatically. Depending on how much you pledge, we'll hook you up with rewards ranging from free map sets in the final application to T-shirts and a listing in the app as an Official Backer. You can pledge any amount over \$5, but the rewards start kicking in at \$10. Our time for pledges will expire at midnight on July 26th, the day after the FJ Summit. So if you're interested in seeing this app released sooner rather than later, please consider pledging.

Off-Road
TRAIL MAPS
KICKSTARTER
PROJECT



Until next time, Tread Lightly,
Stay the Trail, and HAVE FUN!

FJC
Magazine
GET A PRINTED COPY

For FJ Cruiser Owners & Enthusiasts
Colorado Springs, CO 80923

www.fjc-mag.com

EDITORIAL
Publisher
Shane Williams

Photographer / Editor in Chief
Angie Williams

CONTRIBUTORS
Lance Blair
<http://www.disabledexplorers.com>

Doug Dobrynski
<http://www.fjbruisers.org>

Eric A. Howald
<http://the-shiv.blogspot.com>

Xavier Caminada
<http://www.desertfj.com>

"TOYOTA", "FJ CRUISER" are registered trademarks of Toyota Motor Corporation. FJC Magazine is not affiliated with, endorsed, sponsored, or supported by Toyota Motor Corporation, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. or any of Toyota's affiliated companies. These terms are used for descriptive purposes only, and not to denote affiliation or connection with Toyota Motor Corporation.

All content in this magazine is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivative Works License. For details, visit: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/3.0/us>

Reviews, opinions, comments, and ratings of any product do not represent endorsement of said product by FJC Magazine, it's editors, or publishers.

Lifts ~ Shocks ~ Bumpers ~ Armor ~ Accessories ~ Roof Racks

TOYTECTM lifts

YOUR FJ CRUISER LIFT AND ACCESSORY SPECIALIST!!

FJ Cruiser
Tacoma
4Runner
Tundra
Sequoia
Land Cruiser

OLD
MAN
EMU



UL-FJ3K



FJ3-RSP



FJ4RBILK



FJ3-FRCC

DEALER INQUIRIES
WELCOME



For More Information or to Order Online Visit
www.TOYTECLIFTS.com ~ 303.255.4959

10650 Irma Drive #23 Northglenn, CO 80233



Ad Desgin by Angie Williams:
www.allproimages.us

Background Courtesy: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/31124107@N00/2118267647/>

NITTO[®] TRAIL GRAPPLER



Our search for the best off road tire for our daily driver finally came to an end in May. We decided (against the advice of everyone who voted on the poll, sorry about that) to go with the new Nitto Trail Grappler M/T tires. From what we've seen with these tires so far, they may be the best (but certainly not cheapest) M/T tire for daily driver FJ's. Since we have the 16" TRD rims, the only size available is the 285/70/16. Without breaking down all the specifics of tire sizes, overall this tire is almost the same size as our stock 265/75/16's: just a hair taller and quite a bit wider.

Tire installation is fairly straight forward, so we won't cover the specifics of our install. We brought all 5 new tires (which barely fit in the back of the FJ) to the install shop and they were mounted in a matter of minutes. We did decide to install a full set of DynaBeads that Innovative Balancing LLC offered to let us test out on the new tires. Our shop had never installed DynaBeads before, so we were all excited to see how they work. After installing the beads and tire on the first rim it balanced OK on the balancing machine,

so we finished up mounting the other four tires with the DynaBeads in short order. For our initial thoughts on the DynaBead product, see the full article on page 20.



Once the tires were all mounted and our FJ Cruiser was out of the shop, the first thing we noticed is that the tires fill the wheel wells significantly better. The larger width and slightly taller tires really round out the truck nicely. The blackwall design also matches the TRD paint

scheme well. These tires have a very aggressive tread pattern which is quite the contrast from our previous BFG All Terrain K/O set. It's easy to tell that these tires are meant for serious off road driving.

The ride from the shop to FJC Magazine world headquarters is about 20 minutes on various roads, so we were quickly able to get a feel for how these tires perform on several types of pavement. I've ridden in FJ's with mud terrains before and you can always tell when

SOURCE

Whether you're buying the Trail Grapplers or another off road tire, Discount Tire Direct will take great care of you!

DISCOUNT[®]
TIRE

M/T's are under you, the hum is quite noticeable. While the Trail Grapplers are louder than our previous A/T tires, they seem a bit quieter than others. When we had the FJ on the interstate a few days later, it wasn't difficult to talk over the hum at all.

One thing we did notice immediately is that these larger tires 'float' on the road a little more than our old A/T's. At speeds over 45mph we experience a 'drift' when adjusting the steering slightly right or left. It seems that the truck responds to the steering input about 1/4 second after we turn the wheel. Again, as a new driver to M/T's I think this is fairly normal and nothing to be worried about, just something that should be noted.

Since we installed our new rubber so late in the spring, we haven't yet had the opportunity to test them in snow. We should be able to report on snow and ice performance in the Jan 2011 issue. We have had a few decent rainstorms and after a few brake checks and puddle splashes we can report that they seem to handle the water very well. We'll also be looking forward to a rain storm on the highway to see if there are any hydroplaning

issues, but I'll be surprised if we see any of that. One other note is that on our TRD wheels and with 3" of lift we haven't seen any rubbing at all, which is always a question with 285 tires.

We know everyone REALLY wants to know how these tires perform on the trail. Honestly, we've only had them on for a little over a month so we don't have much trail data to report yet. We have been on a couple of easier trails and have had no issues at all, but we haven't really tested them yet. We'll be at the FJ Summit in a few weeks so these Trail Grapplers will be getting the full workout. Check our site, Facebook, and Twitter feeds for updates from the field during the FJ Summit. Of course we'll



have a full on-trail review coming in the October issue as well.
FJC

FJC
Magazine

STORE

Colorado Pass Stickers



Stickers include Shipping!

FJ Cruiser Posters



- *Printed on PHOTO Paper*
- *Several available*
- *& more on the way!*

CRUISE MOAB 2010



Editors Note:
We were not able to attend the Cruise Moab event this year due to our new addition to the family. Brad Pugmire from Ricochet Offroad Armor was kind enough to send a few pics over for us to run in this issue. For full Cruise Moab 2010 coverage, we invite you to check out the following links:

[Rising Sun Thread 1](#)

[Rising Sun Thread 2](#)

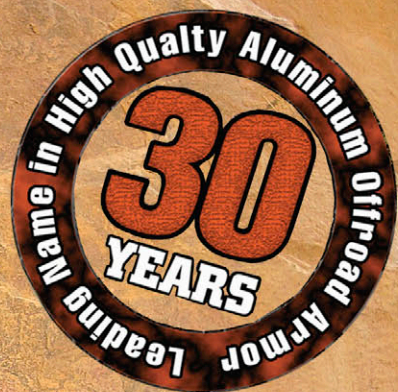
[IH8MUD Thread 1](#)

[IH8MUD Thread 2](#)



Ricochet

- Offroad Armor -



Complete Aluminum Armor Kit for the FJ Cruiser
Control Arms - Bash Plate - Engine - Transmission
Fuel tank - Transfer Case - Rear Bumper

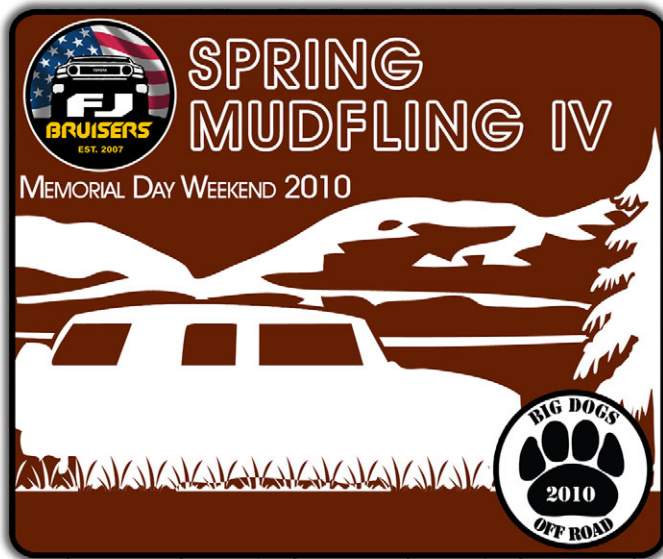


- Made from 1/4" 5052 H32 Brushed Aluminum**
- Everything mounts directly, no drilling or modifications necessary**
- Compatible with most after market bumpers**
- Custom anodize colors available**
- Also be sure to check out our extensive line of
ATV, UTV and Dirt Bike Armor**

ricochetoffroad.com

1-866-273-1197





By
Doug
Dobrynski

New Venue.
New Obstacles.
New Challenges.
No Rain?

It was my fourth time out with the Bruisers for their annual Memorial Day weekend Mudfling event. This is their main event of the year, and every previous Mudfling has had its share of rain somewhere during the event. This year was no exception. We encountered a few showers on the drive out to Gore, VA and the campground on Friday. Once we got to the campsite that afternoon though, the rain had stopped for the weekend.

Upon arriving at the campsite, we pitched our tent and made our way around the campground to greet everyone. There were a fair amount of FJ Cruisers and some relatives: FJ40s, FJ60s, FJ80s, 4 Runners, other Toyota family members, custom rock crawlers, Jeeps, and a four-wheel-steer rock crawling Suzuki. People arrived throughout the night from various locations and several hours drive away.

staging area to line up for the various trail runs of the day. My son and I ended up in a group led by John Hunt of Big Dogs. We departed and headed for the trail. John was riding shotgun in the lead FJ Cruiser. We encountered our first mini-obstacle right after a mud puddle, and the lead truck just couldn't make it up and through the obstacle. It quickly became apparent that a gremlin was plaguing that FJ Cruiser and it was only operating in two-wheel drive. We accompanied the handicapped rig back to the campsite and the driver joined us in our truck. John relocated to a Jeep in our group. We headed back out on the trails and were soon winding and twisting our way down narrow trails and new trails that had been recently planned for our arrival. The narrow

trails through the trees proved to be a difficult test for drivers and their depth perception. Maneuvering these obstacles took a lot of time and planning on the driver's part. We snaked our way through the trees and over stumps and came to a steep descent that pegged out the inclinometer in the FJ.

The previous day's rain provided us with a little mud here and there that made some of the trails a bit more challenging than if they had been dry. At one slight downhill rutted descent, the Jeep that was leading our group could not get out of the ruts to bypass a deep muddy water obstacle. After putting some logs and rocks in the way, he was able to climb out of the rut and take the bypass to avoid the sticky mess. The rest of us knew to stay out of the rut and proceeded down without incident. Later in the morning, we came to a steep, long hill climb. The Jeep that was leading our group proceeded up and then the rest of us tried. We were only able to get about a third of the way up following the



MUDFLING IV SPONSORS



The sun greeted us the next morning with clear skies and we headed over to registration to check in and then down to the

only able to get about a third of the way up following the



Jeep's line before we lost all traction. We tried and tried but simply couldn't conquer the obstacle. Finally, an FJ that had all the stability controls deactivated was able to make it up.

That evening back at the campsite, the Bruisers provided everyone with a dinner of hot dogs and burgers and a couple of event attendees provided various desserts. Most of the food was consumed while the Bruisers had their raffle of various gift certificates, FJ accessories, and other interesting items, including the now infamous "Fuzzy Duds."

Sunday we awoke once again to blue skies and the sun shining. We joined a group that was led by Eugene of Big Dogs and headed out on the trails and also to watch Woody and his Suzuki at

one of the various rock crawling locations at Big Dogs. A couple of other trail groups were there as well and we clamored from boulder to boulder as Woody worked the Suzuki up, down, around and in and out of the large rocks. When Woody finished, we gathered our group and proceeded up a trail to an overlook for lunch. The view was spectacular—we could see for miles. After enjoying lunch and the gorgeous view, we proceeded down to enjoy the rest of the day, testing the limits of our vehicles and enjoying a Memorial Day weekend that won't soon be forgotten.

FJC



GEAR UP!

With Affordable Off-Road Accessories

Accessorize your FJ Cruiser and STILL have enough left in your budget for a six pack after a great day of Trail Blazing!



BOOMERANG™

We offer top-quality spare tire covers with a slot for your back-up-camera and a heavy-duty vinyl band design especially for the the FJ Cruiser.

Check out these other accessories:

Grill Guards/Brush Guards, Light Bars, Chrome, Billet and Stainless Steel accessories plus much much, more for this awesome Toyota vehicle.



**PALADIN
AUTO**

480-982-AUTO

Visit us at www.PaladinAuto.com

EXPEDITION WHEELING: *DITCH BAGS*

Article & Photos By
Lance Blair

www.disabledexplorers.org

Pilots & boaters call them Ditch Bags, survivalist might call them Flee Bags,

transform into a river runner in a flash flood there really isn't a good reason

in reach.

-Three hours without shelter. Of course this implies extreme conditions like blizzards, heatwaves, or rainstorms of the century.

-Three days without water. Nothing fun about this one, and we are talking about being healthy to start with, even less time if you are working hard, injured or have any medical conditions.

-Three weeks without food. This really is why you can toss out the fishing lines, hunting knives and snare cord. If you're looking to go all Wildman of the Forest then close this magazine now and go sharpen a knife. In reality you are better off packing some emergency rations than a kit to fish or snare with.

Looking at the above time frames will help you realize that what you really need is some sort of shelter, water & filter/purifier, food and medical kit and most importantly a way to get found before that three week window comes around.



Many places get really cold and dark quick

and those of us who are all about being prepared call them Bug Out Bags. No matter what you call them the name is both the definition of why you need it and an explanation of what it is. Something very bad has happened and you have to ditch, flee or bug out from your vehicle and whatever is in your grab bag is all you have until help arrives.

Let's put on our pretending caps and imagine we are out alone in the wild and suffer a complete and total vehicle failure (Editor Note: This scenario is of course very hypothetical in an FJ Cruiser). This failure could range from water in your engine during a creek crossing, to a broken axle, to a slide down a shelf road that just lets us crawl out of the passenger side. No matter the reason we now have just a moment to grab our kit bag and get away from the vehicle.

Stay in Place

Short of your rig being at the bottom of a ravine and you somehow jumped to safety, or watching your FJ Cruiser

materials, signal and more, so why leave all that behind just because in the movies the Hero always walks to town?

Rule of 3's

So why do we need to have a bag full of goodies when there are plenty of TV episodes full of folks who rip down tree limbs, make spears and soon have a forest fortress constructed. Well it all comes down to the 3's:

-Three minutes without air. We will skip past that one since it will be the rare one of us that has a full SCUBA setup with-

to leave your vehicle, even if it just burned to the ground. Keep in mind that in almost all survival scenarios the vehicle is found first. Of course there might be a reason to leave, but it better be such a good one that even a small child would agree with you. The vehicle can be a source of shelter,

raw



Yes helicopters can come to the rescue

Don't Panic

Ah the Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy said it best, "Don't Panic", and these words are true in good times or bad. You want a ditch bag that is small enough to be within reach, light enough that you can carry it with one arm in case you are injured and that lets you get some comfort going quickly so you "Don't Panic". Personally mine includes my Spot Satellite Messenger, as this little device can call in 10 fellow 4x4 buddies or the helicopters, which goes a long way towards that comfy feeling. In addition I have my Adventure Medical Kits Pocket Survival Pack which is small yet includes a wealth of supplies from a signal mirror, to fire starter, to a little instruction sheet that I can read. Which brings up a great point: STOP. Sit, read, think and "Don't Panic". The moments you take to assess your kit, look at your surrounding resources and think might be what saves your life.

More of Less

Getting down to the nitty gritty of what should be in a bag, really it should be more of less, or in other words more of what you need and less of what was cool looking online or at the gun show.

You need water, so make sure you always have two 1L bottles in there. Two



Just a small sample of what can go in a back and yet keep it light enough to grab in an emergency



Don't count on finding a beacon like this very often, take a Spot instead

because one could bust and later they will be part of your filter setup. Nalgens are nice but anything will do.

You need shelter, and three to five of those 3mil contractor big black (or better orange) garbage bags can serve a world of uses. You can make a poncho, shade, water catch, and give others the same. You can rap yourself in one like a burrito, stuff it with leaves for insulation and so much more. Of course they aren't as nifty as some snap together, military surplus thing, but they are cheap and easy to use.

You need comfort, and this is where a tablet stove, stainless camping cup (com-

monly called a sierra cup), some tea or coffee packets and emergency rations will come in. No matter the conditions, the act of making a snack will remind you that all is not lost in the world.

You need to take care of injuries, so this is where a decent first aid kit will help. Bandages, some medications if you need them, a syringe for wound washing, tape (medical or duct) and elastic wrap is plenty.

You need to signal, and this is where getting the garbage bags in orange is nice. Choosing any bright color for your bag is good, so is wearing bright clothes. Really anything other than starting some big forest fire to call for help is a great start for signaling.

And the last thing might cause some folks some concern, but you need a good

TRD Sparks.com

Your #1 Source for
Genuine OEM Parts



Wholesale Pricing
Excellent Service
Fast Shipping



**From Front Grills to Rear Lights
We've Got Your Parts**

Best Prices for
Oil & Air Filters,
Brake Pads & Kits,
Transmission & Exhaust Parts



Online Discount Catalog
www.TRDSparks.com

large fixed blade knife and sharpening stone. Nothing crazy, just something that you can cut wood with, carve a bit or do other outdoors stuff with easily. I personally favor a Leatherman WAVE as I get two



A flashing blue light in the desert often means water or help

knives and a host of other items. But no matter what get something in that pack. And please stay away from hatchets, machetes, shovels and such and they are too big for a bag that's easily grabbed, too heavy to carry around and most importantly too easy to cause yourself injury with.

Practice Grass-hopper Practice

So now you have gone to the thrift store and found a nice small day-pack or duffel. You packed it with some of the above mentioned items and it is sitting in the middle of the floor of the backseat. You can easily reach it and it also has some Velcro straps to keep it in place in case of roll over but you can grab it quickly when fleeing from the rig.

Now what?

Well since everything in there is something you bought and could



Make use of what you can find to help conserve resources, then pack it out later

buy again, then get out there and practice with it.

Make a point to hit the trail on a Saturday. Set your alarm for some random time (wristwatch or cellphone alarm preferably) and when it goes off then that is where you pull over your rig, jump out and now pretend to be stranded. This is your campsite for the night. Make due with your kit. Sure it won't be completely comfortable but you will learn and you will survive. If this sounds too radical for you then at least pick a night to go camping and pick your spot to try your kit, but no matter what try it all and learn to use it. And please don't forget to change out the supplies in a timely matter, with the seasons is always a good rule but your climate and conditions will determine the best timing for some items.

You will notice I left out things like a map, compass, gps, laser pointer and all that. More often than not if you are skilled with these items then you will get more lost than found. Remember if you told folks where you were going and when you should be back then someone will start looking for you. And if you didn't do those simple things then honestly you might just be beyond the help of any magazine article.

Lance Blair is an overlanding enthusiast, expedition leader, and Tread Lightly trainer. He's also the founder of Disabled Explorers, a non-profit group dedicated to helping mobility impaired outdoor enthusiasts gain access to the backcountry. He's a regular contributor to FJCruiserForums.com, the Expedition Portal, and of course FJC Magazine. Lance can be contacted through the Disabled Explorers website. **FJC**

Helping the disabled requires insurance, fuel, food and more. We keep our overhead low so that your dollars make a real difference.

We gladly accept gear, fuel, supplies or time as we can always use more help. Thanks from our entire team!

Donate now with..

PayPalTM



OFF ROAD 101:

20 Minute Mounts

Since we started FJC Magazine, we've done a total of 10 articles for Off Road 101. These tips, tricks, and information have covered the gamut from tire options to trail armor, we've covered nearly everything a new FJ Cruiser owner would need to know.

That's why I find it amazing that in all that time, with all these articles, we've never talked about how to best

mount accessories to your roof rack. The reason we haven't is actually pretty simple, up until now we've mounted our axe & shovel (the most popular accessories for your rack) with bungee cords. I know, that's not very exciting. In the past we only mounted those items when we were going on trail runs. Also, the fact that most aftermarket mounts are rather expensive has kept us from making the jump on that mod. After owning our FJ for nearly 4 years we decided to get this simple mod done. I say simple because while this method of mounting your accessories isn't the sexiest, it's one of the least expensive. It literally only takes 20 minutes to finish once you have the supplies, and it works really well. If you have one of the other solutions and you're happy with it, that's great! If not, follow along as we build the 20 minute mounts. The first thing you need are supplies. We've seen Quick Fists used for shovel & axe mounts in dozens of different ways, but no matter how it's done the Quick Fist is one of the best mounts to use. They hold the item tight and are easy to remove when

needed. What's more, you don't have to worry about the weather affecting them so it's really a no brainer. We ordered our original size Quick Fist Clamps (QF1) from Sierra Expedi-

tions. At \$9.95 for two they have one of the best prices around. They were delivered quickly and without hassle.

The other parts you need for this project can all be found at Lowes for under \$20. That list includes:

- 4" X 5/8" Mending braces (or other suitable mounting plate) – 8 total
- M6-1.00 X 65mm bolts – 4 total

- M6-1.00 hex nuts – 1 package

For the install ALL you need is two wrenches and/or sockets that fit the bolts & nuts you purchased.

Our total cost for this project was about \$44. That's \$22 each plus 10 minutes of labor for two highly functional accessory mounts.

Ok, for the install there are 5 easy steps:

1. Assemble 1 Quick Fist, 2 plates, the bolt nut as shown in picture #1
2. Slide the assembly between two of the rack tubes (on the stock rack)
3. Tighten the assembly down. We tightened it enough to bend the plates in just a little, but don't over tighten.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 with the second mount
5. Install your accessory.

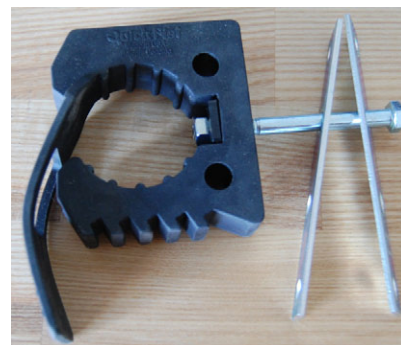
That entire process should take less than 20 minutes and you're all set. The only thing we may add in the future is painting the hardware black to match the roof, but we want to make sure this holds up OK before we worry about that. So far the mounts are holding up very well. We've had them on a couple of runs and the items haven't moved or shifted at all. The Quick Fists hold things together nicely so we don't expect any problems. If you do this mount, or have another great quick, easy, and inexpensive mount to show off please e-mail us at fjc@fjc-mag.com & let us know. If you include pics we'll add them to this article at www.fjc-mag.com.

FJC

SOURCE

Sierra Expeditions

<http://www.sierraexpeditions.com>



ABU DHABI DESERT CH



By Xavier Caminada
www.desertfj.com



Dubai 17th April 2010:

Organised by the Automobile and Touring Club of the UAE (ATCUAE), the event was the season-opening round of both the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup and the FIM Cross Country Rallies World Championship.

Entry to the 2010 Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge was open to cars and trucks complying with FIA T1, T2 and T4 technical regulations, as well as motorcyclists and quads running under FIM auspices.



This year, and to mark the 20th edition, the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge saw record level of competitors this with 44 entrants in the car category and more than 100 competitors in total.

The sunset start in the 'shadow' of the Grand Mosque flagged off a non-competitive liaison section that guided the drivers and bikers to the first overnight halt at Moreeb Hill, near Liwa, where the rally would be based for the next four days at a specially-prepared desert bivouac. Moreeb is part of the Empty Quarter, the world's largest uninterrupted sand mass.

Legs two, three and four featured demanding loop stages around Moreeb Hill, across somewhat challenging gatch tracks, winding desert trails and the region's notorious towering sand dunes, considered to be the highest dunes in the Empty Quarter. The fifth and final leg took place on Thursday, April 1, with teams tackling a desert section between Liwa to the event's finish in Abu Dhabi city.

TEAM X-RAID SEALED SUPERB VICTORY!

X-Raid took home the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge over-all, team and T1 titles for the third consecutive year, this time with

Russian Leonid Novitskiy at the wheel and German Andy Schulz by his side.

Team X-Raid's Tina Thorner navigated successfully for Qatari Nasser Al Attiyah in 2008 and Frenchman Guerlain Chechirit in 2009, while Andy Schulz co-drove for Novitskiy this year. While Novitskiy's eventual triumph in the cars category was predictable after he took a comfortable lead at the end of the first stage itself, the bikes saw fortunes fluctuating all through the final day today given that only minutes separated the top five.

Laurent Rosso played it safe for the second day running to ensure that his Team Fitech Nissan Patrol crossed the finish line to earn him a second place, while Emirati Abdul Bari Bin Sugat was pleased with his third place on the podium.

Bin Sugat's late charge in the Challenge saw him eventually driving past Yannick Comagnac on a final day that could have gone either way, but driver acumen and Nissan endurance ensured the Emirati stood with Novitskiy and Rosso on the podium.

TEAM FJ STILL ON THE LEARNING CURVE

The Challenge never fails to surprise

CHALLENGE 2010



and stretch race teams to their limits, this year's Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge one of the world's toughest desert races was no exception for Team FJ.

In September 2008 when the ex-Baja 500 class winning Toyota FJ cruiser was imported from the US into the UAE by David Mabbs, a veteran of desert racing, Team FJ was established as one of the Middle East's premier rally sports teams with its goals firmly set on showing the high budget factory race teams how to compete in the unforgiving desert terrain.

The car was originally built by Donahoe Racing (now Icon Vehicle Dynamics) in the United States at the request of Toyota North America to challenge for victory in the Score Stock Mini Series. In addition to victory in the Baja 500 it also finished second in class at the world famous Baja 1000 before making its way to the Middle East.

The Toyota FJ Cruiser which was developed throughout 2007, appears to be near standard to the untrained eye, save for a lift kit, but the development put into perfecting the suspension for all-terrain racing is the key to the cars success! The

front end has suspension arms built by Total Chaos Fabrication and features twin Icon Vehicle Dynamics 2.5-inch bypass dampers with remote reservoirs and coil-over springs. An additional Light Racing Jounce shock was also fitted to each corner to cushion heavy landings and harsh impacts. "In the desert, suspension is king," says Mabbs. "No matter how powerful the engine and how fast the driver, weak suspension will break within hours and we'd have no chance of competing with the works teams without attention to detail in this area".

Team FJ's preparations for the 2010 Challenge started in earnest in early February when they returned from the Saudi Arabian Hail Baja, a 1000km race in the north of the Kingdom. The car was fully serviced and race prepared after this grueling event and all logistics



put in place for the 6 days of completion in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, this also included the arrival of 4 mechanics from the United Kingdom as well as a press officer / photographer and all of the Team's supporters (12 in total) who make this event possible.

Following the technical and administration formalities, this year held in the grand settings of the Yas Marine Formula 1 race track, the team was ready for the opening stage of the event, a qualifying run where competitors get to set their fastest race times over a purpose built short desert race course. This year's stage was unique for the Middle East as it comprised a 'head to head' course where two competitors get to fight it out at the same time, crossing past each

other halfway through the stage. The Teams FJ is great on these stages as it's nimble and easy to control and despite being one of the last cars to start due to the official ranking format, the Team took 5th place overall.

Racing in the Abu Dhabi desert challenge consists 5 days of tough desert terrain which see's all of the 100

plus teams cover more than 2000km through the 'empty quarter region' of the emirate. The harsh and unforgiving landscape make this an ideal place for desert racing with the majority of the time being spent crossing the open desert landscape or high dune sections without tracks or well defined routes.



The first day consisted some 300km of competitive stage from the outskirts of the capital city through to the events main camp and service point in the oasis town of Liwa, the camp is set up at the base of the world's largest sand dune, Moreeb hill, and offers competitors and spectators an unprecedented feel of the enormity and power of the desert. The day got underway at approximately 10.30am and proceeded on fast flowing tracks interspersed with

tricky dune sections; these are often the worst as you can easily be caught out by terrain that looks so easy to pass thorough! Within the first 70km's the Team had passed 2 vehicles and was focused on a good first day of hunting, however as they say in racing nothing goes to plan! Unfortunately after about 100km

the FJ's gearbox just stuck in neutral and the crew had to spend almost 1 1/2 hours repairing the fault. Following this frustrating stop the car was back on its way, picking off some of those who had passed to finish up the day 18th overall.

Some might say that the events of day one were a warning sign that this year's event was not going to be a repeat of 2009 where the team took first in class and 5th overall, the following days certainly reflected that by pushing both the car, mechanics, driver and co-driver to the limits!

Day 2 saw the team back in action and they soon started to recover the places that had been lost on the previous day, by the first check point the team had passed 7 cars and had number 8 already in their sights. Day 2 however was once again to be slowed, this time by a drive shaft failure which cost the team nearly 2 hours at the day's only service point halfway through the stage. This also meant that the Team had to traverse over 30km of high dunes in 2 wheel drive, not an easy task in a

BudBuilt

-SKIDS-

STANDARD WEIGHT STEEL
LIGHT STEEL (EXPEDITION WEIGHT)
STAINLESS STEEL

-SLIDERS-

STANDARD .120" HREW TUBING
THICK .187" DOM TUBING
(LIFETIME WARRANTY)

NEW!! DIAMOND PLATE TOP STEPS →



CUSTOM PROTECTION:

FJ CRUISER!

TACOMA

TUNDRA

4RUNNER



Call Bud at 828-572-1202



car that weighs in excess of 2 tons. Despite this the team still made it back with the 7th fastest time of the day just showing how tough this event really is.

The overnight service periods at the Moreeb camp were now becoming a ritual of how to fully rebuild a race car, the mechanic were on average working over 10 hours a night to prepare the car for the following days torture, some nights they never slept at all and were found tightening the last bolts right up until the point where the car was driven off to the start line. Despite this valiant effort day 3 and to some extent day 4

were to get the better of the car and the team. On the 70km road section to the start of day 3 the front differential finally said enough and seized forcing the team to retire shortly after taking the start line, this was subsequently fixed only for the same to happen towards the closing section of day 4, the resulting time penalties put the team out of contention for a top 5 overall placing but on the up side they were still in the race and by no way defeated.

The final, and much awaited last stage of the event saw the teams leave Liwa and head back to Abu Dhabi through another 300km of desert stage, with the car fully

repaired the team had an excellent day, once we forget the fact that there was no clutch for most of it, and finished the stage with the 6th fastest time. Once back at Yas Marina the team gathered and pondered over the trials and challenges of the past week and all agreed that this has to be one of the greatest and toughest desert races in the world.

And that everyone can't wait until next year to do it all again!

So where do we go from here.... "We intend to replace the engine with a single turbo 4.5-litre diesel version and up-rated transmission". "Then, we will be back with a vengeance to prove that the Toyota FJ is capable of matching the factory teams" concludes Mabbs.

FJC

Final positions after Leg 5

- 01) Leonid Novitskiy (RUS) / Andy Schulz (GER), X-Raid (BMW)
- 02) Laurent Rosso (FRA) / Francois Borsotto (FRA), Fitech (NISSAN)
- 03) Abdul Bari-Bin Sugat (UAE) / Ali Mirza (UAE), Sugat (NISSAN)
- ...
- 12) David Mabbs (ENG) / Xavier Caminada (FRA), FJ (TOYOTA)



Adventure Insider

Join us on September 1st
when we launch *Adventure Insider Magazine*.

The inside scoop on outdoor
adventure

www.adventureinsider.com

Clazzio Seat Covers **INSTALL**



full color photos with captions that detail exactly how to do each step. The grammar is a little off sometimes, but it's very easy to see what needs to be done.

The most difficult part of the job is installing the covers on the front head rests. Since these covers fit so tightly on everything, getting them around the headrest is basically a two person job. You have to push in on the sides of the headrest to slip the cover on. It's a small price to pay though for such a great end result.

I mentioned these covers fit tight, and that may be an understatement. Since they are PVC & leather, there's very little stretch involved so they are manufactured to fairly tight tolerances. The covers are attached with straps, Velcro, and string

For this installment of our seat cover reviews, we contacted TRD Sparks about a set of Clazzio Seat Covers. The great thing about Clazzio covers is that they are very customizable. The outer material is made of a quality PVC product and is available in 4 colors. Next, the inner material can be PVC, Leather, or suede in many different colors. Finally you can choose a custom stitching color to complete your customization. Fully customized covers take a little longer to arrive since

they're made individually at the factory, but for a truly custom seat cover they're well worth the wait!



to cinch everything down. The result is a very OEM look. The instructions also include a method for 'massaging' the material to ensure everything fits as tight and smooth as possible.



The install took a little less than two hours, thanks in large part to the amazing instructions that came with the covers. Some manufacturers only provide 'generic' instructions for their covers,

but this Clazzio set from TRD Sparks comes complete with custom directions for the FJ Cruiser. They include

The look is also amazing. While the outer panels are PVC, they look very close to the leather in-

SOURCE

In addition to Clazzio Seat Covers for your FJ Cruiser, TRD Sparks offers great deals on Toyota OEM parts, TRD Parts, and many other FJ Cruiser Accessories.
www.trdsparks.com

ner panels. The white stitching really accents the seats and gives a custom look. Clazzio has taken every detail into account to make sure nothing interferes with the fit, and that really shows once everything is installed.



The final two details I want to touch on for these covers are the driver's seat and the rear 60 bench seat. First, since the driver's seat includes an adjustment knob & lever, those items have to be dealt with effectively.

they even include a black install tool so you're not pushing on your new covers with a screwdriver. Finally, the rear 60 bench seat is an issue with other seat covers because of the seatbelt running down the middle of it. Again, Clazzio has great instructions that detail how to remove the top plastic seatbelt cover, unzip the seat cover, and slide it around the seat. It takes a little work to get things aligned, but once you've got that figured out the covers zip up and look great.

Another aspect of the install that I'd like to mention involves the armrests. They've done a great job on these as well by including a zipper at the rear of the armrest so you can install the bolt & zip up the rear part of it. To save manufacturing time and keep the cost low, Clazzio doesn't ship front seat covers with holes pre-cut for the arm rests. This means you'll need to cut this hole yourself if you're installing armrests. It's really not difficult, just be careful to cut out a small area, you don't need much of a hole to install the armrests & you definitely don't want to cut too much.

So the install went fairly well, they look GREAT, and so far they're very functional. We'll be throwing everything we can at this set of covers over the next few months so we'll report back on how they hold up. We're expecting that they'll do very well despite our abuse. Check back in the October issue (and online) for more updates.

FJC

ly. The install instructions are very clear on how to remove each of these so you can install the cover correctly, and



Registration is now OPEN

**Visit
www.nmfjrally.com
to reserve your
spot today!**



SLAYING THE DIGITAL SHERPA

A weekend with the FJ Bruisers

We pass a white checkpoint sign less than half a mile from the starting line. For me, it's an omen that we're on the right track. For my cousin and driver, Doug Dobrynski, it's cause for uncertainty.

"They wouldn't put a sign that close to the start," he says.

"Yeah, they would," I reply more harsh-

stage in the game.

Truth be told, it's not only each other's skill we are questioning, it's who we have be-

come. This is the first time we've been alone together in nearly 12 years. Doug was the best man at my wedding in St. Louis, MO. Four days later, I moved to Oregon and he flew home to Virginia. In the interim he got married and had two kids, I had one. Last year, his mother lost a long-term battle with cancer and we weren't able to connect in the after-

math. Even our team name, "The Dude and the Journalist" (homages to The Big Lebowski and Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas),



ly than intended. "They don't expect us to be looking for one this early on. They're hoping we blow right by it."

Three minutes into the first ever FJ Bruiser Tri-State Rally and we've already had two reasons to doubt each other. At the starting line, I confused the area code and the zip code on the Green Ridge State Forest data sheet and now we can't agree on the validity of a checkpoint that's sitting in front of us as plain as day. There's brilliance at work in the set-up, but it's hard to see past the inhuman cruelty of making us question each other's judgment at such an early

seemed to indicate some of the distance between us. Since I accepted the invitation to be his navigator, I knew this rally would determine if we could navigate the time and miles that separated us for so long.

As I hop out of the Cruiser and try to figure out how to get up to the checkpoint sitting on the crest of a short, steep embankment, I swear I can hear the laughter back at the starting line.



Resurrecting the rally

For some, the victory of a Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe in the World Manufacturers Cup was the beginning of the rally's end.

That race ushered in the era of heavy metal and the European two-seat sports car – the car that made the rally an event – became a novelty," said Rick Franz, a founding member of the FJ Bruisers and former owner of several two-seat European sports coupes.

The rally is unique in several ways. It isn't run on a circuit, but in a point-to-point format in which participants and their co-drivers, or navigators, drive between set control points leaving at regular intervals from one or more start points. Rallies may be won by pure speed within the stages or alternatively by driving to a predetermined location within an ideal journey time for each stage.

As heavy metal solidified its status as the new "cool," the rally-type race was dealt a fatal blow with the onset of GPS navigation.

"Navigation became too easy and there were rumors of drivers hiding GPS devices in their cars. Slowly, no one was holding them anymore," Franz said. "Now, people who did want learn dead reckoning skills have to go out of their way to do so."

Navigation was something of a hobby for Franz, however, and he found other ways to pursue it from sailing to flying. Then he bought his Toyota FJ Cruiser and helped form the Bruiser club.

"The more I drove the Cruiser with the club running trails, the more I realized it would be a great truck for a rally," he said.

He floated the idea at one of the club's meetings and it wasn't long before they were in the planning stages. But the rally organizers wanted more than



a simple race. They wanted an event where everyone could learn something.

"Too many people are dependent on the digital Sherpas," said Josh Kollin, one of Franz's co-conspirators, in reference to GPS units. "Things like degrees and latitude and longitude are just numbers that we see on a device."

Franz, Kollin and others set to planning a 70-mile route through Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. To help with scoring, they enlisted the assistance of fellow Bruiser and design engineer Ryan Young, who had to develop a unique scoring system borrowing ideas from other rallies.

"Teams would receive a score based on how close they came to the target time that was determined during course setup and adjusted based on the performance of the group," Young said. "In addition to the time score, teams were also given points based on the number of checkpoint markers discovered and their participation in manned checkpoints with FJ trivia, marksmanship, and vehicle inspection challenges."

Franz and the others realized early in the planning that they would have to rely on an honor system when it came to drivers using "go to" features on GPS devices. But they weren't going to make it that easy anyway. To make things more inter-

esting competitors would have to calculate degree headings and distances with information found in the forest data sheet and FJ Cruiser owner's manual.

Everyone wanted a course that would challenge novice and experienced drivers, but it was difficult for the more experienced navigators, like Franz and Kollin, to let go of the finer points of the craft. Franz quickly realized how to gauge when they'd made something too complicated.

"I could always tell when we'd gone too far because one of our

guy's eyes would glaze over. He was my canary in the coal mine," Franz said.

WTH is a smidgeon?

On the second turn in the rally directions we get high centered with all four wheels firmly on the ground. It starts when I take a bad compass reading and send us west when we should be going north, but our course directions complicate matters further with the phrase "proceed north for a smidgeon less than a mile."

We decide that a smidgeon has to be more than .7 miles and less than a full mile, but that narrow window opens up many wrong possibilities. We manage to find a path at .7 miles and another one that shoots off and could - pos-



sibly - match the next turn, but a few hundred yards down that road and we realize there's no possible way to continue on it for the required 2.3 miles. Doug throws it in reverse and we begin heading back to the last checkpoint.

Cars are dispatched from the starting line in four-minute intervals and as we pull out onto the main road another FJ passes us headed in the wrong direction.

We head back to the checkpoint because it was the last time we knew we were on the right track. We figure out that we were going the wrong way and turn north, but still miss the essential turn that will put us on the course. In all, we burn more than 20 minutes and pass another lost FJ before realizing the small dirt road we mistook for a driveway is actually the course itself.

Still, we aren't completely certain, and by the time we find another checkpoint 45 long minutes have passed. Meanwhile, other teams are confronting problems of their own.

In car No. 01, driver Joe Maiellano and navigator Christos Rousseas hit a hurdle that has nothing to do with the course or directions.

"I would like to think that I normally have a pretty strong stomach. I've been out on rough seas with no problem so it took me by surprise, but as we were moving I kept trying to read the directions and kept feeling progressively worse," said Rousseas.

The wave of nausea soon reaches a breaking point and they have to pull over and wait for Rousseas to expel his morning coffee.

"I definitely thought we'd be competitive. We took it seriously - had all the tools, spent time with the compass, prepped the truck, watched Two Roads to Baja - but when Christos got sick, I thought we were done for as far as placing," said Maiellano.

After our long detour, Doug and I are finally getting our confidence back and we hit our first

time-speed-distance challenge. On these sections of the course, the driver must maintain a certain speed for a certain length of time overseen by the navigator on a stop watch. At the end of the given time, we should have reached our next turn, but again there's brilliance at work.

One minute and 15 seconds into the challenge, we come across a manned checkpoint and suffer from a momentary freak out as we try to decide what to do. I stop the clock as we pull off the road to a shooting range, Doug fires 10 shots at a target out of an AR-15, and I start up the clock again as we pull back on the course. It was a simple solution in retrospect, but I'm certain a video of the moments before we figured it out would go viral.

Back at the starting line Franz and Young are, indeed, laughing. Heartily.

"We watched three or four FJ's go by the starting point twice," Franz said.

At the rally meeting earlier that morning, Franz announced that vehicles would be running the course in opposite directions. Some would go left and some would go right. Many of us took that to

mean that cars would be alternating. To mix it up, Franz occasionally sends two vehicles on the same route in succession, which threw off teams that either miscalculated or weren't paying attention.

"I thought to myself, 'God almighty, I just want one car on each course to do it right so that I know the directions work,'" Franz said.

When watching the starting line lost its appeal, Franz had his cell phone which kept him busy as teams called in for help. He had seven calls total, but two teams called in twice. One team gets so lost it takes getting latitude and longitude to put them back on course.

"Another team got stuck doing a 9-mile loop. They called to ask about the directions once and then called an hour and a half later asking about the same turn," Franz said.

At his manned checkpoint, Kollin makes a habit of asking the teams if they're still talking to each other and a handful of drivers – including a few of the couples – reply only with cautionary shakes of the head.

Doug and I have fallen into a rhythm, I work out the directions a few turns ahead of where we are in the moment and keep a keen look out for checkpoints. Doug keeps his eye on the trail and odometer. We talk about the things we could do to make things inside the car run easier next time. We decide on a theme for the Cruiser in next year's rally (and cross our fingers that they'll plan one). As we pull up to the third manned checkpoint, we get great news. Despite getting lost early on, our time is still good. We show up within minutes of when we are expected. We bump knuckles as Doug exits the truck to take a vehicle inspection challenge.

As we climb back into the truck the questioner asks if we know which way we're going.

"Straight ahead?" Doug asks.

"Yep, straight ahead."

A half mile down the road, we start to question ourselves. According to the directions were supposed to turn to a heading of 150 degrees and travel to a particular lat/lon, but we forgot to check

ALUMINUM BUMPERS

ROOF RACKS & ACCESSORIES



Take what you need
WHEREVER
you want to go.

FORD - CHEVY - DODGE - TOYOTA

Voted in the Top 25 by Truck Trend Magazine at SEMA 2008

ALUMINESS PRODUCTS INC.

Use the code **FJCMAG** for \$50 off freight with your order

MAXIMUM PROTECTION

LIGHT WEIGHT

NO RUST

WINCH READY

SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE



p. 619-449-9930

f. 619-449-9932

www.aluminess.com

the heading as we turned away from the checkpoint. We are more certain of our route than at any point in the race thus far and that makes us question it all the more. We turn back, get a bearing on the turn and discover that we were right all along.

Maiellano and Rousseas in "Car Ramrod" suffers through moments of doubt during the rally as well.

"The hardest thing was trusting my navigator," Maiellano said. "He did a fabulous job, but I'm just naturally skeptical, and having to blindly rely on his instructions took some serious self discipline."

He and Rousseas get turned around after their third checkpoint.

"We went to a 24-degree heading instead of 240-degrees, due to my error, not Christos', and got pretty far off track in Pennsylvania farm country. We were able to navigate back to the last checkpoint, double-check our calculations – which is when we found where we messed up – and get back on track," Maiellano said. "There were definitely a few rising waves of panic, and the urge to push on despite knowing something wasn't right, but just like with completely trusting the navigator, I had to just take a deep breath and calmly talk it through."

We pull across the finish line 5 hours and 10 minutes after we left. Car Ramrod, which started several vehicles and minutes behind us, arrives about half an hour later.

The waiting

A few cars have beaten us back. Some broke off early and turned back to camp. Two made it back in rocket-like fashion, but as we all begin to share information my sense of how well we did begins to grow. Maiellano is feeling it, too.

"When we got back to base camp, saw how long it took everybody else to finish and started comparing the number of checkpoints we found, I started to feel more and more like we could pull out a trophy," Maiellano said.

Rousseas' hopes sprung from the number of checkpoints they found.

"Throughout that race I had this feeling that we were missing a lot of check-

points. When we finally made it back and realized how few people had done so I started to feel more confident," he said.

I thought for certain that Doug and I missed several checkpoints as well. My best guess was that we found between 19-21 checkpoints, but there is some confusion among the competitors as to how many checkpoints there were. As teams kept arriving the average number found seems to be about 10.

It's still two hours before the end of the race. I spend the time nursing a cigar and Coke, and listening to other teams swap tales of flounder and triumph while dinner cooks. When no one's looking, I talk to my aunt telling her how badly I want a trophy for Doug.

Once all the cars crossed the finish line, Young's real work begins. While he had supreme confidence in the original scoring formulas he had worked up, it all went out the window as teams handed in their checkpoint sheets which reported the number of checkpoints found and the time between each one.

"The original timed scoring method calculated a time for each 'stage' [between checkpoints]," Young said. "Because not all teams found the checkpoint signaling the end of each stage, [that] method was no longer a valid way of scoring all the teams equally."

The planning committee decided to look at overall time instead and weight it against the number of checkpoints each team found and how well each performed at the manned checkpoints.

It takes more than an hour to rehash the scoring formula and tabulate the results. With the fastest time, car No. 3, "Team Quacker," comprised of Tim and Joanna Areson takes third. Doug and I take second and we were the only team to find every checkpoint. Maiel-

lano and Rousseas win by a single point.



Trophies handed out, emotions at camp settle into a jubilant ebb. Stories and drinks are traded, someone pulls out a half pint of peach moonshine birthed from a still in operation since just after the civil war and a bit of history is imbibed as close as we can sit to a fire that barely beats back the frigid night air.

Little victories

"The wide range of skills and back-

grounds that the teams brought to the table made for an event that was just as fun for the planners to watch unfold as it was for the teams to navigate and drive," Young said in the weeks after the race. "I can't think of any other event where friends and spouses can drive around lost all day and still be smiling when they pull into camp."

Franz was delighted to see the passion of his youth take hold in a whole new generation of drivers.

"It was like having a party even though we were all off on our own for much of the day," he said.

For Doug and I, second place feels like first. And I'm convinced it was a parting gift from his mom: a reason to come back and do it again next year.

Despite winning, Maiellano is still troubled by one of the rally experiences. One of the checkpoint markers was set near an old cemetery in the forest and traipsing so close to it left him with more than a case of the heebie-jeebies.

"My TV's been getting terrible picture ever since. And the trees outside my window have appeared quite ominous of late," he said.

FJC



Since we upgraded our tires we wanted to move away from classic weights for tire balancing. The major benefit of using a dynamic balancing system such as Dyna Beads is that you should never have to have your tires

re-balanced again. This is especially helpful as your tire size increases since larger amounts of rubber (especially in very aggressive tires) can harbor more 'dense areas' that are more difficult to balance. Also, many very large tires cannot be balanced on a traditional machine, so a dynamic solution is vital.



Five bags of Dyna Beads for our Nitto Trail Grapplers

Innovative Balancing, LLC (the creators of Dyna Beads) offered to send us a set of beads for our five new Nitto Trail Grapplers for testing. At 285/70/16 our tires are on the edge of benefiting from dynamic balancing. You see, dynamic balancing doesn't work extremely well as the only solution for traditional street tires. Shorter, wider tires usually require some standard weights in addition to dynamic balancing products to adequately deal with lateral imbalance issues. It's only when you get into the larger, more aggressive tires that the option of using

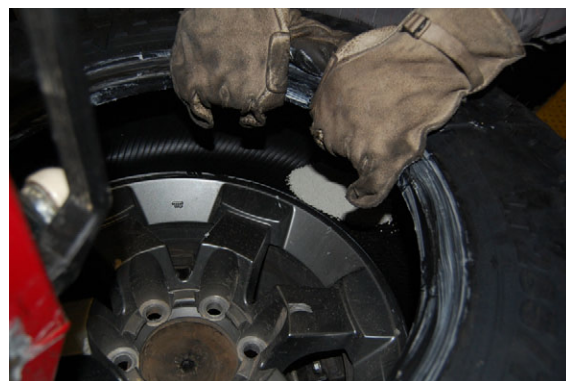
dynamic balancing alone is realistic. Still, we agreed to test them in this scenario to see if they'd be a good fit for our upgraded tires.

So far we've put about 1,500 miles on our new tires with the Dyna Beads and they've worked perfectly for us. We did notice that sometimes when we leave a trail the tires will shake a little once we hit the main road. This is caused by mud & dirt getting jammed on the inside of the wheel and in the tire tread, which causes the beads to adjust appropriately. When that mud and dirt starts to fly off at highway speeds the beads stay put, which causes some imbalance. The simple fix is to stop the FJ for about 5 seconds so the beads can 'reset'. Once this is done and we get back up to highway speeds, the balancing works perfectly.

We'll update this report as we put more miles on these tires, but so far we're very impressed with the beads. It should be noted once again that this product works best on larger, aggressive

tires. If you're running stock size, you may need additional standard weights to help with lateral imbalance issues.

FJC

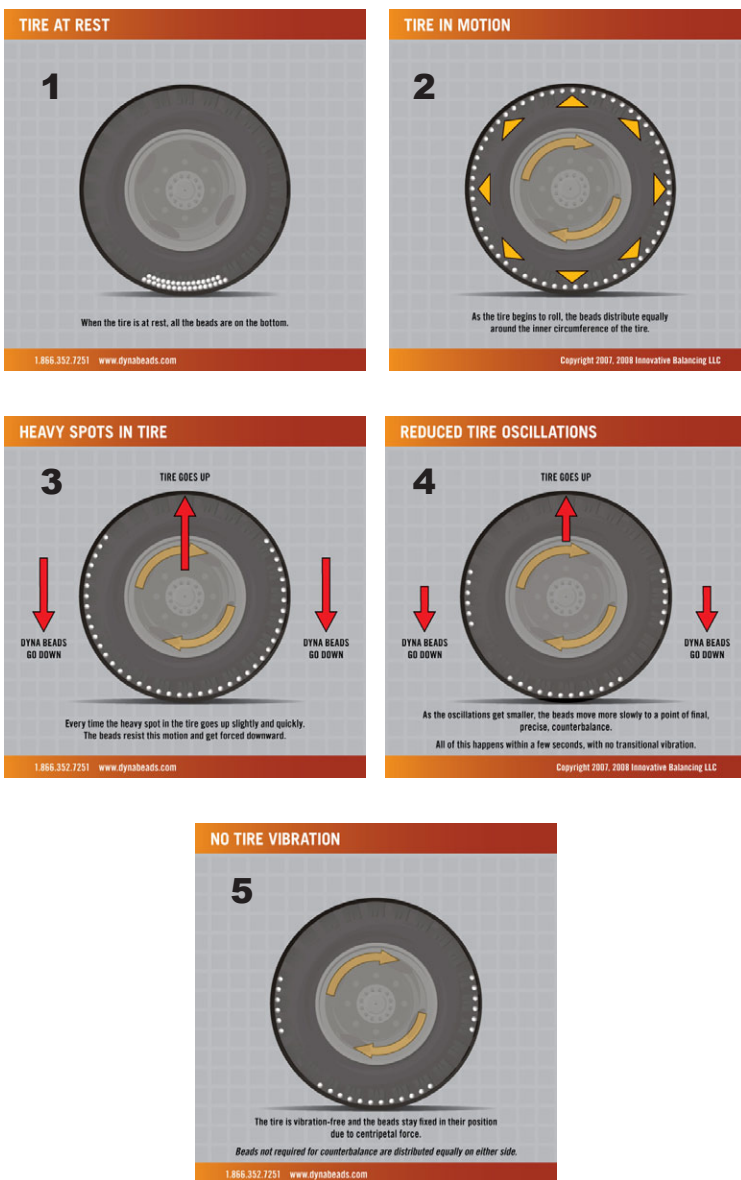


It's best to install Dyna Beads with new tires, but not required.

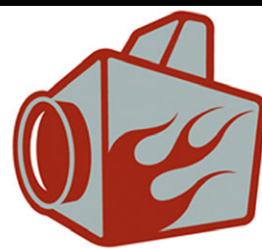
SOURCE

<http://www.innovativebalancing.com>

How Dyna Beads Work



Kevin Necessary sent us a few teaser shots of his team's new FJ Cruiser Race truck. Look for more details on this hot FJ in future issues of FJC Magazine.



NECESSARY



NEW PRODUCTS!

Our new products this month are a little bit different. Instead of choosing products that are FJ Cruiser specific, we've found a couple of really cool gadgets that we'll be testing out this summer. These devices can be used by anyone, and are excellent options for those looking for an outdoor HD Camcorder and/or a cell phone signal booster.

THE WILSON SLEEK

Wilson Electronics has been in the cell phone booster business for years. In fact, many expedition built FJ Cruisers include heavy duty systems with external high-gain antennas and large amplifiers. The problem with larger systems for occasional use is that they're expensive and complicated to install. Luckily Wilson has addressed both of those issues with the inexpensive and easy to use "Sleek".

This device is simply a cradle for your cell phone that effectively boosts your signal up to 20 times (according to Wilson). It does this by creating a 'cloud' around the cradle using a built-in amplifier that runs off of standard 12v plug. A small magnet mount external antenna then attaches to the cradle to provide an additional signal boost from outside the vehicle. The result is drastically increased signal strength for any cell phone that works in the 824-894 MHz or 1850-1990 MHz bands. Those frequencies cover most cell phones in the US, but you'll want to check with your carrier before making the purchase.



The great thing about this system is instead of costing \$300 or more, the Wilson Sleek can be found online for \$99. That's a great price point for those of us that spend some time in the woods, but don't really need a more heavy duty solution.

So does it work? We've only had the device for a few weeks, but so far it does seem to increase signal strength in weak areas. We've noticed that if there is absolutely NO signal, you're not likely to find one with the Sleek (at least not with the standard antenna). However, if you're in an area that has only 1 bar or has spotty service, you're likely to get enough signal to put a call through. We're looking forward to testing the Sleek in Ouray at the FJ Summit. We're hoping to find signal on the top of some of the passes where service is usually spotty.

SOURCE

<http://www.wilsonelectronics.com>



THE CONTOURHD FROM VHOLDR

We began making short movies of events and installs last year, so this season we wanted to step things up a notch. In addition to a point and shoot Canon camera that also does HD video, we wanted something that's a little more rugged that can be mounted to the FJ. We contacted VholdR and they sent us a ContourHD wearable camcorder to test out.

This camera is primarily meant to be worn on a helmet or goggles (great for skydiving, climbing, and snow sports). The great thing

about it is that its mounting system allows it to be mounted almost anywhere and we'll be mounting it to our Aluminess front bumper and/or WAAG XS Basket. The key features of the ContourHD include FULL 1080p video, a long battery life, and one button record. Also, the lens will allow us to capture more of the action since it's has a 135 degree field of view, which is just wide enough to get great footage without too much distortion.

So far we've only shot a few test videos with the ContourHD, but we're impressed with the image quality. Although it can shoot 1080p video, we'll be shooting everything in 720p so it's compatible with our other cameras. Look for us on the trail and make sure you smile for the camera!

FJ Cruiser
Roll-top Console Cover

PARADIMINT - brushed black aluminum door (pictured)

BORREGO - satin silver aluminum door

URBAN - ABS plastic door

Stainless Steel Locking Option Available on all models

Industrial Forming
805-658-3350

www.roll-topcover.com



SOURCE

<http://www.vholdr.com>



CLUBS & GROUPS

702 FJ Crew

<http://702fjcrew.net>

ATL FJ's

<http://www.atlfjc.com>

AZ FJ's

<http://www.azfj.org>

Aloha FJ's

<http://s6.invisionfree.com>

Colorado FJ's

<http://www.coloradofjs.com>

SoCAL FJ's

<http://www.socalfjcruisers.com>

UAE FJ Group

<http://www.uae-fj.com>

FJ Bruisers

<http://www.fjbruisers.org>

Sin City Wicked FJ's

<http://www.sincitywickedfjs.com>

FJ's Ontario

<http://www.fjcruisersontario.com>

FJ's Quebec

<http://www.fjcruiserquebec.com>

NWFJCC

<http://www.nwfjcc.com>

FJ Northeasters

<http://www.fjnortheasters.org>

NorCal FJ's

<http://norcalfjs.ning.com>

Dreaming of your next adventure?



We sure are.

The Toyota Land Cruiser Association is a club dedicated to bringing Toyota 4-Wheel Drive enthusiasts together. Visit us at www.tlca.org to learn more.



TLCA membership includes a subscription to **Toyota Trails** magazine, featuring in-depth tech and trail articles, event listings, TLCA merchandise and Land Cruiser classifieds.

Toyota Land Cruiser Association
P.O. Box 230, Verona, KY, 41092
(800) 655-3810 • www.tlca.org



FJCRUISER FORUMS.COM



FJ Cruiser Events

Coal Mine Cruiser Classic

Dates: July 8-10, 2010

Location: Rausch Creek Off-Road Park,
Joliett, PA

Contact: Gotham City Land Cruisers

Great Smoky Mountain Trail Ride

Dates: July 7-13, 2010,

Location: Golden Mountain ORV Park
Sparta, Tennessee

Contact: www.upstatecruisers.net/gsmtr

Black Hills Cruiser Classic

Dates: July 14-17, 2010

Location: Black Hills, South Dakota

Contact: Dakota Territory Cruisers

2010 FJ Summit

Dates: July 21-25 2010

Location: Ouray, Colorado

Contact: FJ Summit Website

Rising Sun Rally

Date: August 7, 2010

Location: Lakewood, CO

Contact: Rising Sun 4x4 Club

Tall Corn Cruiser Classic

Dates: August 27-29, 2010

Location: Hamilton, IA

Contact: Tall Corn Cruisers

2010 Thrill on the Hill

Dates: Sept 3-6 2010 (Labor Day Weekend)

Location: Cloudcroft, NM

Contact: Thrill on the Hill Website

Cruisin the Woods 2010

Dates: September 25, 2010

Location: Browns Camp, OR

Contact: Cascade Cruisers

SMORR Fall Crawl'N with TAC

Dates: September 24-26, 2010

Location: Seymour, MO

Contact: Tornado Alley Cruisers

Southern Cruiser Crawl

Dates: October 7-10, 2010

Location: Hot Springs, AR

Contact: Cottonland Cruisers

9th Annual Surf N Turf

Dates: November 5-7, 2010

Location: Pismo Beach, CA

Contact: Surf N Turf Website



You have **PLAY** on this old dirt road for years.

Isn't it **NICE** to know
you have the power
to conserve it
for years to come?

For the latest event news
& coverage, visit FJC-Mag.com
and click on Event
Calendar

Our mission is to empower generations to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. So join us. Stay on designated trails. Be courteous. Leave a good impression. It's up to you to become an ambassador for your sport and the great outdoors. To become a member of Tread Lightly!, go to www.treadlightly.org or call 1-800-966-9900.

treadlightly!
LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION

© Tread Lightly! 2009

For the latest event news
& coverage, visit
FJC-Mag.com and click
on Event Calendar

FJ Nation



Mike - Arizona



David - California

*Have a great pic of your FJ?
E-mail a high-res version to pics@fjc-mag.com*