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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF BEST IN THE DESERT RACING ASSOCIATION



**STRIKING
GOLD
IN CALIFORNIA**

**CAL CITY
SERVES UP
2021
CHAMPIONS**





THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
BEST IN THE DESERT RACING ASSOCIATION

DIRTVENTURE

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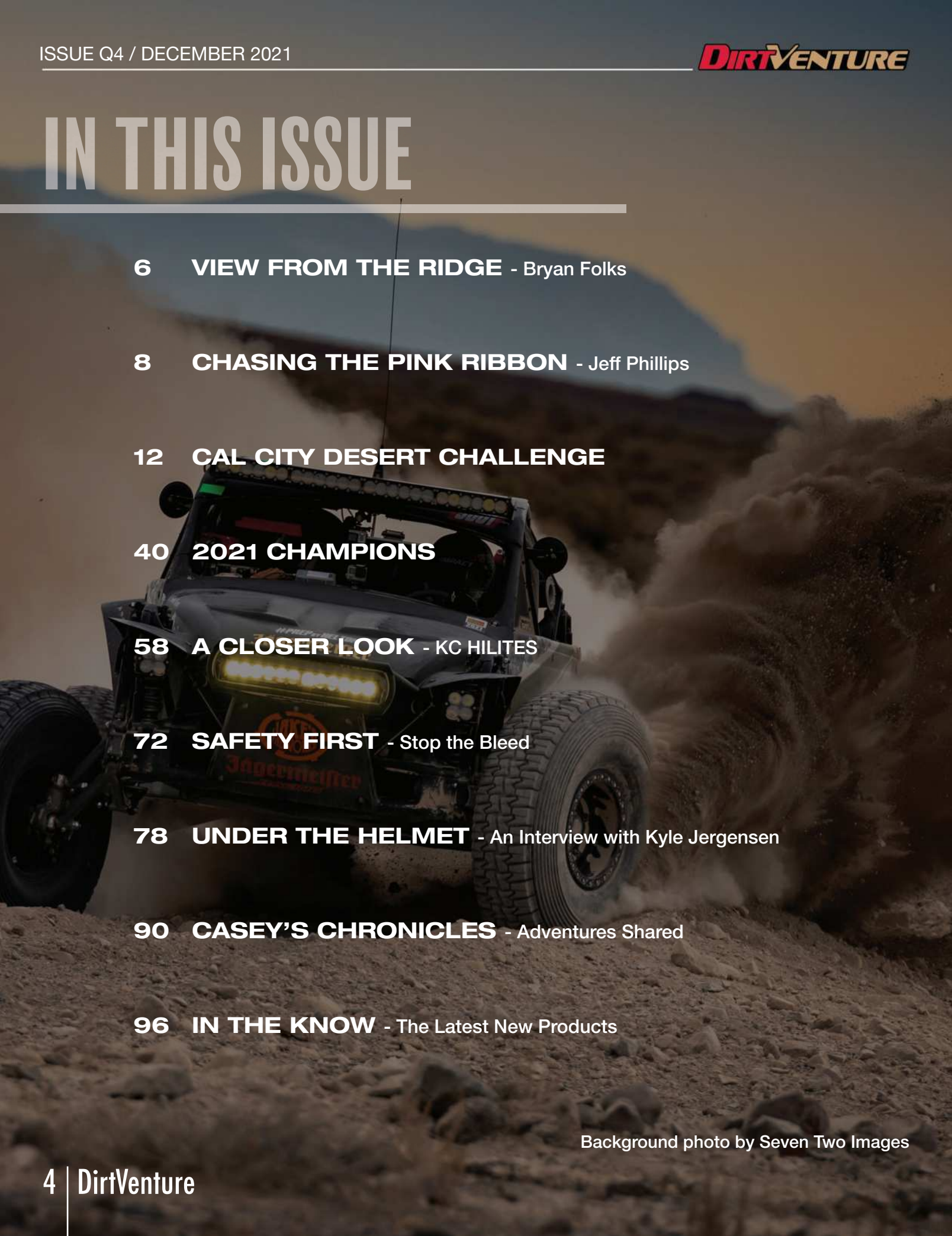


LEAD SHOT

20 year old Joseph Herling on the edge in his 6100 Truck at the Cal City Desert Challenge.

Photo by Daniel Noble Photography

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Optional features shown.



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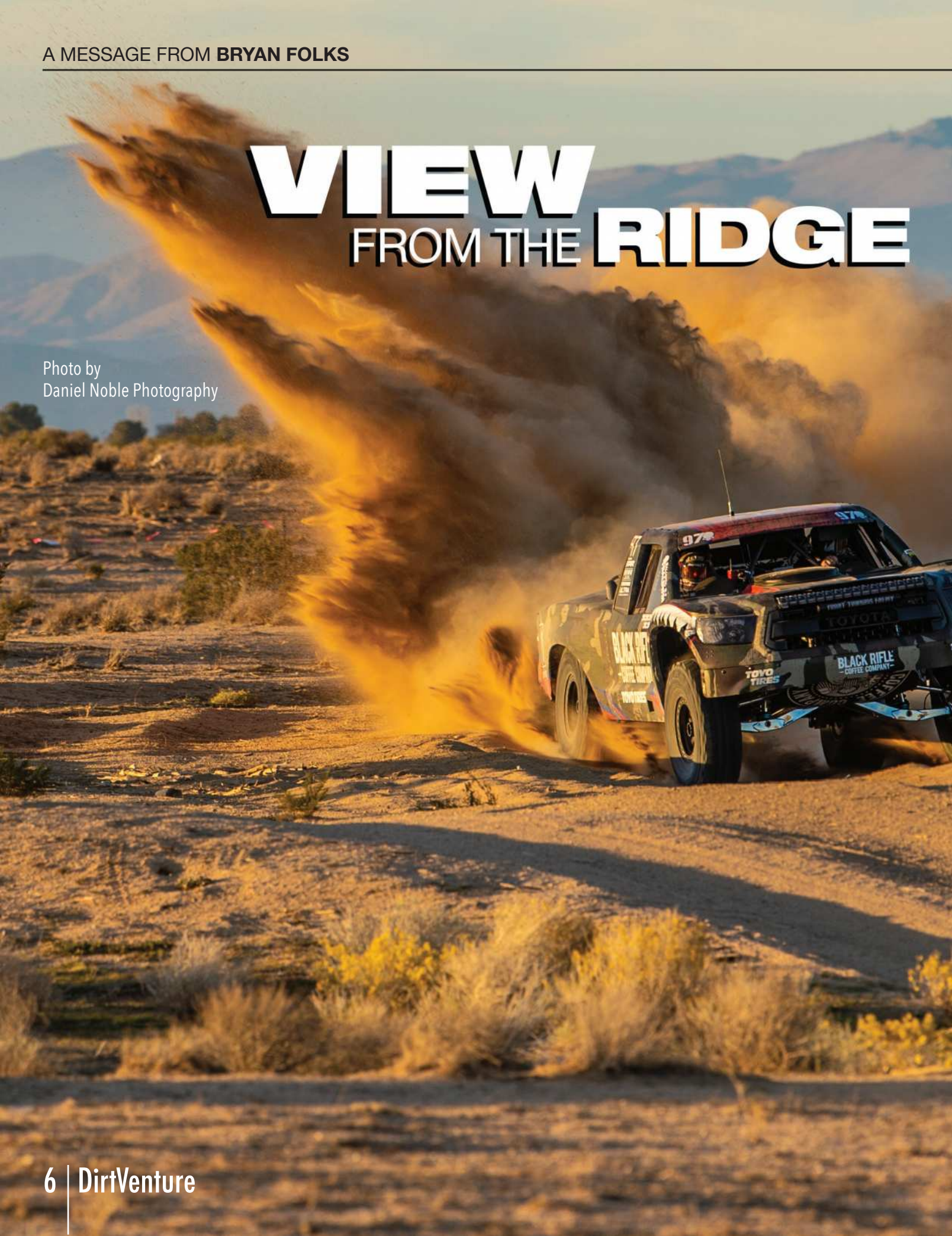


PROUD

A MESSAGE FROM **BRYAN FOLKS**

VIEW FROM THE RIDGE

Photo by
Daniel Noble Photography





As we are wrapping up the year, I wanted to thank the many people who have supported Best In The Desert in 2021. Our dad, Casey Folks, would have been proud of all who contributed to a Fantastic Year of Racing.

First of all, my sincere thanks to all the racers, in every class, who have chosen to compete in Best In The Desert events. We work very hard to create race courses that are challenging, fun and memorable and appreciate you joining us year after year.

Thanks to our many sponsors who offer not only their financial support, but also attend the races and work diligently with racers to make their experience with Best In The Desert a positive one.

My thanks to the hundreds of volunteers who help us maintain a safe environment for racers, their crews, their families and the sponsors at every event.

The BLM has been a great partner assisting us as we deal with the idiosyncrasies of maintaining our lands for future generations. Long before the checkered flag drops at an event, Best In The Desert personnel

and BLM staff have spent hundreds of hours ensuring the best routes, while charting even more challenging terrain. After every race, hundreds of hours more are spent exhaustively restoring our lands.

My brother, Daryl, and I want to provide a personal and very sincere thank you to the staff of Best In The Desert. We have been very fortunate to attract people of the highest caliber to guide and direct the organization. From the front office, to making sure we have all the necessary permits, from retrieval equipment to safety gear, GPS and course markings and even fuel in our vehicles...we could not do it without your support.

As our 4th edition of DirtVenture is now published, we would welcome your input on what you'd like to see in future issues. Contact our media department at mediabitd@fallads.com to comment.

Looking ahead to 2022, we have some very exciting new courses, new live streaming, new television package, new sponsors, and a whole lot more to celebrate! Check our web site often for updates – and we'll see you in Parker in January!





Chasing the Pink Ribbon

Year in Review

A year into my job, no wait... LIFE as Race Director at BITD and one thing I have grown to appreciate as the best and worst part is social media (SM)!

Pre-BITD I followed friends and family and all of their fun times, weddings, graduations, if they went to a race, all the fun stuff. I would “like” and sometimes comment as to how much fun they were having and how jealous I was to not be there. Occasionally I would post about Sue, Megan and Ashlee’s and my adventures. Then I would wait for the likes and comments, I assumed, the same as everyone else. I had a friend list of people I knew from nearly 50 years of motorcycling, work, family and school. Plus, there was the occasional friend request from a mutual friend, but I knew nearly all of them.

Then I took on my new role. Now I get more friend requests than I can keep up with (and I thank you)! My newsfeed is filled with BITD, many other race series, ads for tools, car parts, and in contrast, not nearly as much as just family and friends. Because of this change, I have started to look at SM totally differently! 99 percent

of the time it is the “good stuff”. However, it’s the one percent from the SM Trolls that take up 90 percent of my experience! The majority of that one percent have no actual truth or reality to them. It’s just someone throwing out an idea or a “dagger”, trying to get someone to take the bait and have their comment go viral. As I have told a few of these “fishermen”, please do not stop! All SM posts about BITD are good, even the not so good ones. Any talk is better than silence, and we appreciate all the chatter. If it becomes too bad, and not good for the whole, we pull it.

As a final comment from me to the “trolls”, please keep in mind, my staff and I work hard just like you! We do all we can to come up with new ideas, promote current ideas, and keep the BITD traditions alive. Always remember, “if it seems hard to believe, most likely it is not true.” You can always call me, or the office and we will give you the truth as we know it at BITD!

See you at the races,
Jeff (El Jeffe) Phillips





Jeff got the journey to 2021 car and truck class championships going at the starting line of the Parker 425 in January.

Photo by Rudy A Schmoke



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NIA GOLD

All New Venue and Extremely Tight Racing Puts Exclamation Point on Season's Final Race!

Desert racing is about problem solving. Only one month before the last race of the Best In The Desert season was to happen in Parker, Arizona, a covid outbreak hit the Indian tribes, and the race was not possible. With no time to get a BLM permit, a different solution was needed.

Lou Peralta and his Cal City ranch came to mind. Lou is an avid, successful off-road racer who has competed in bikes, buggies and trucks, and had property to use. He also had an existing relationship with local government to get a race approved on such short notice.

Cal City (California City) is an uncommon place with a rocky past. It is the third largest city in the state of California when measured by land mass and was supposed to match Los Angeles in size and scope. The plan was there, but the mass of people just didn't come. Much of the property was sold sight-unseen by buyers who were unaware that it was located in such a remote area. Because the dream was so big, the dirt roads in Cal City spread out over 158 square miles. While it might not be the utopia originally envisioned, it's a perfect location for a desert race.

Introduction by Mike Ingalsbee

Story by Best In The Desert

Lead photo by Art Eugenio

Special thanks to Race-Dezert.com

Four Days of Non-Stop Racing Started with Thursday's Time Trials





Sam Berri started his weekend by taking the top spot for Class 1500 at Time Trials. He then went on to capture the two-day combined Class 1500 win.

Photo by Dirt Nation

11 year old Jaxon Leaming leads the pack to take 1st UTV Youth 570 Stock.

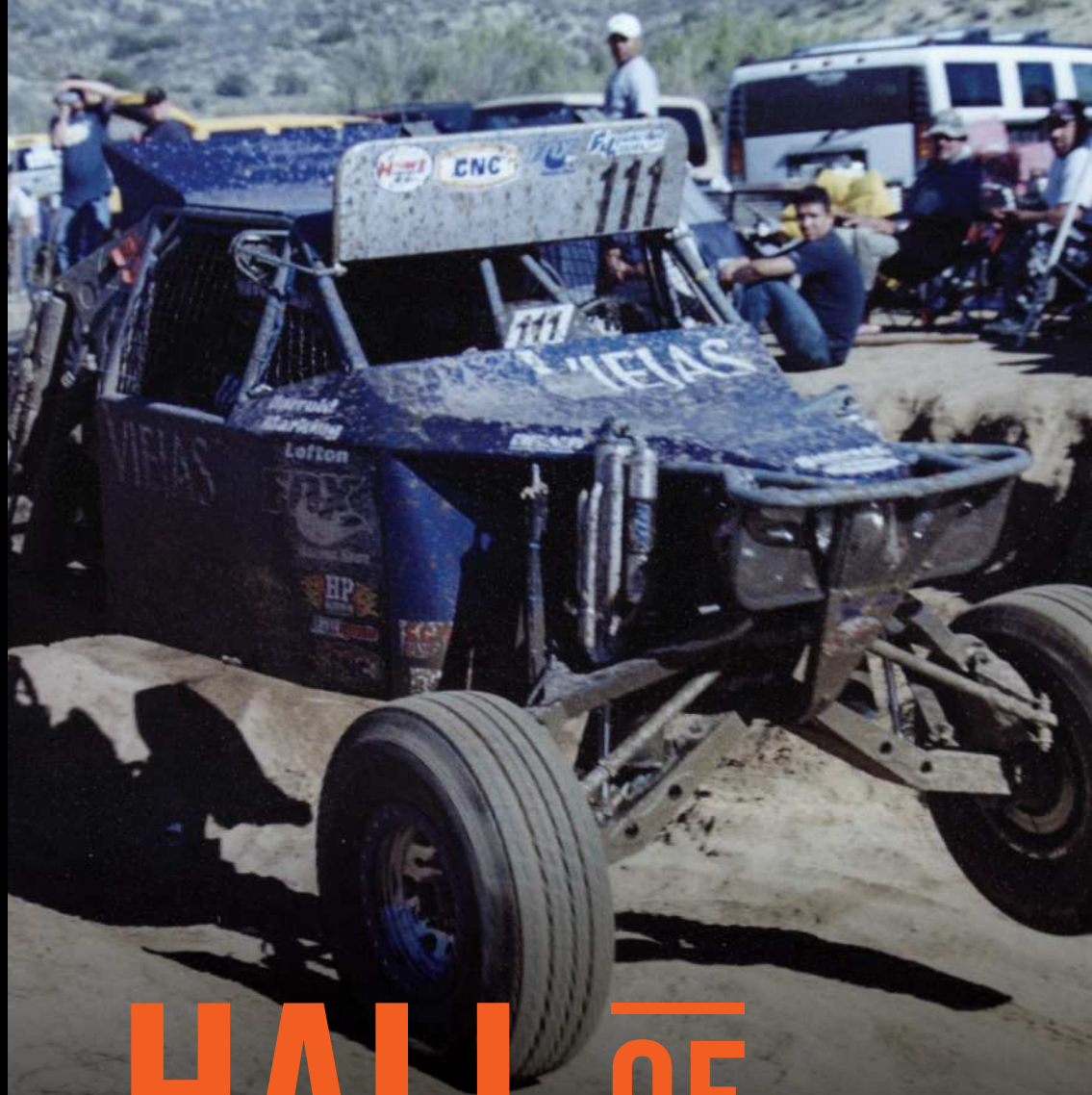
Photo by Dirt Nation



The final Best In The Desert race of 2021 was held in a brand-new location, California City, California thanks to our friend Lou Peralta, and it ended up a winner in everyone's eyes.

"We couldn't have asked for a better weekend of racing or more support from

the town of Cal City," commented Best In The Desert CMO Bryan Folks. "We were very fortunate to not only have their support but also the support of Best In The Desert's lifelong friend and fellow off-road promoter Lou Peralta for helping us make the event possible. The last race of the year is normally



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Young gun Travis Sallee launched his way to the class win in UTV Youth 1000/RS1 Stock.

Photo by Dirt Nation



Joshua Cobb captured the Class 6000 TrophyLite victory for the weekend.

Photo by Dirt Nation



Troy Grabowski piloted his Subaru powered vehicle to the Class 5000 win.

Photo by Daniel Noble Photography



held in Parker, Arizona, but at the last minute, we were informed we could not hold the BlueWater event due to Covid concerns from the Colorado River Indian Tribes. With just three short weeks to pull the event together, it couldn't have turned out better. I especially want to thank all our racers, sponsors, and fans for continuing to support us and for making 2021 one of our best years ever."

The 28-mile course held at the Peralta Ranch just outside Cal City was a huge hit with racers and fans. The course was fun, challenging,

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Hayden Hintz and Trevor Hunter rode to the Open Pro Motorcycle victory.

Photo by Dirt Nation



1st IronMan Pro Motorcycle was Jarrett Curley.

Photo by Dirt Nation



and a true test of off-road skill and ability. With many series championships and the MAXXIS Triple Crown on the line, the competition was fierce.

Four great days of racing and camaraderie started with Time Trials on Thursday, November 4, 2021, followed by the 4 Wheel Parts Youth UTV races on Friday and two days of fantastic racing on

Bryce Stavron claimed the
Over 30 Pro Motorcycle victory.

Photo by Dirt Nation





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The team of Kimberly Loppnow and Mica Diaz took home the Women Motorcycle win.

Photo by Rudy A Schmoke



Patty Blais was 1st Quad Expert.

Photo by Dirt Nation



Saturday and Sunday where every class raced two rounds of three laps to determine overall standings.

Time Trials on Thursday set the tone for the weekend awarding racers with front starting positions in Classes 1500, 1000, 6100, 6200, and 7200, and Trick Trucks. The young Best In The Desert UTV competitors then started the event off with their races on Friday presented by 4 Wheel Parts.

After 12 laps of impressive racing, Chase



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Peter Hajas grabbed the
Class 1000 win.

Photo by Dirt Nation





Jim Beaver was 1st
UTV Unlimited.

Photo by Dirt Nation

Vito Ranuio captured the hotly contested UTV Turbo class victory.

Photo by Dirt Nation



Mankin took the Youth UTV 250 Modified Class beating George Llamosas by seven seconds. In Race 2, young Jaxon Leaming took first place in the Youth UTV 570 Stock Class while Travis Sallee won the final youth race of the day over Jacob Peter and Ethan Groom in the Youth UTV 1000/RS1 Stock Class.

Saturday and Sunday races for adult classes were then combined to name the winners. The weekend racing started strong with perfect weather.

In Class 4700, Jeff Harmonson in his Dodge finished first, while Troy Grabowski took Class 5000 in his custom car. Class 6000 in Pro Limited Cars and Trucks was won

by Joshua Cobb over Greg Bragg and Luke Knupp.

Next up on both days were the Motorcycle and Quad Classes. After three grueling laps around a challenging course both Saturday and Sunday, the Open Pro Motorcycle racers finished in this order: Hayden Hintz, Zane Roberts, Joseph Wasson, and Jeff Trulove. While Hintz took the lead on Saturday, Roberts won Sunday but not by enough to take the overall, finishing a mere tenth of a second behind.

Other motorcycle classes to note included Over 30 Pro where Bryce Stavron bested Danny Cooper finishing with three laps Saturday and again Sunday. In 399 Pro,



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Class 2700 Intermediate



Class 3700 Modified



Class 4700 Open

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Bill Zemek drove to the
Class 6200 victory.

Photo by Art Eugenio



Dustin Grabowski took the class win and in doing so sealed the 2021 Class 6100 Championship.

Photo by Daniel Noble Photography





Taylor Stevens won the class. Jarrett Curley took the IronMan Pro Motorcycle Class over Dustin Vasquez and Kimberly Lopnow beat Ashlee Gage to take the Women Motorcycle Class by 10 seconds over the two days.

Patty Blais took the Quad Expert Class while the 3-Wheeler Class saw a comeback with Wrangel Gubler finishing at the overall spot for the weekend.

Next up in racing order were the UTVs. With two days of hard and fast racing in the UTV Pro Turbo Class, and racers finishing on wildly different spots on the podium both days, Vito Ranuio ended with the best combined time over Best In The Desert veterans Mitch Guthrie Jr. and Ryan Piplic.

In other UTV Classes, the UTV Pro N/A Class was led by Austin Bolton, even though he finished third place on Sunday, over Zachary Kinsman and Dallas Gonzalez. In UTV Unlimited, Jim Beaver came out on top leading both days and finishing over Trey Gibbs and Chris Blais who made up time after finishing in the fifth





Kyle Jergensen overcame the challenging course, the competition and controversy to take the Trick Truck win along with the season championship.

Photo by Dirt Nation

In an extremely tight race, Kevin Thompson came in second place in the Trick Trucks missing out on first by only eight seconds after two days of racing.

Photo by Daniel Noble Photography



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position on Saturday.

Finally, the UTV Rally Class saw some incredible racing and tight competition. Tanner Currier came up from the fifth position after Saturday's racing to blow competitors out of the water with a first-place win on Sunday and an unofficial overall class best time over Colin Miller and John Koltura.

Next on the starting line were the cars and trucks to round out the racing on Saturday. After the same challenging six laps that tested all the classes, a star-studded Class 6100 was won by Dustin Grabowski over Sterling Miller and Ray Griffith. The final combined times were all within three seconds of one another. Class 6200 saw Bill Semak take the lead over Nick Carolan while Peter Hajas took Class 1000 over Wheeler Morgan and Scott Christensen in second and third place, respectively.

The Trick Truck Class is always one to watch and the Cal City Desert Challenge Brought to You By Fox was no different. After two days totaling six laps around the course, Kyle Jergensen finished with the best time of 2:54:52 after finishing in fourth place due to a flat tire on Saturday and making up the time to win on Sunday. Jergensen drove hard to beat Best In The Desert favorites Kevin Thompson, Sam Baldi, BJ Baldwin, and more. While there was a controversy with a penalty due to a tire left on the course, in the end, after a thorough review, Best In The Desert decided not to impose a penalty and Jergensen was named the winner.

All in all, it was a weekend of hot and heavy racing with huge prize purses on the line. Best In The Desert named its Series Championship winners and it was the final round in the Maxxis Triple Crown, so there

was some serious money to be made. The top racers were recognized and awarded at the Best In The Desert Year-End Series Awards held December 11 in Las Vegas.

“Well, another year of racing is in the books, and I could not be more proud or appreciative of the Best In The Desert team, our racers, sponsors, and fans,” said Best In The Desert Race Operations Director Jeff Phillips. “This was my first full year as Race Director, my dream job, and once again I am amazed at the outpouring of support

we continue to receive. I especially want to thank my family for all their help and support over the year. Like many of our race teams, I rely on my friends and family to help get me through the long year and I could not be more blessed to have such an amazing group behind me. Most of all, congratulations to all the racers who competed in every Best In The Desert event and made 2021 our best year ever. Thank you for staying with us and continuing on this amazing adventure Casey started so many years ago.”



Sam Baldi drove a strong race to take third in the Trick Truck ranks.

Photo by Daniel Noble Photography

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2021



The UTV Pro Turbo class fielded the greatest entry numbers throughout the year resulting in Ryan Piplic earning the highest overall points total for all classes.

Photo by Daniel Noble Photography





1 CHAMPIONS

Story by Best In The Desert

Best In The Desert wrapped up the 2021 race season with another amazing year of super-competitive racing. The 2021 Class Championship winners and MAXXIS Triple Crown title holders were honored at the Year-End Series Awards held December 11th in Las Vegas, NV.

Best In The Desert has seen exponential growth in the past several years with record entry numbers and event attendance. Everyone was excited to celebrate the incredible accomplishments of the top racers at the awards ceremony and look forward to what 2022 will bring.

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Kyle Jergensen - Trick Truck Champ
 Photo by Daniel Noble Photography



In the hotly contested Trick Truck Class, Brentnel Racing's Kyle Jergensen brought home the glory as series champ by a scant four points over defending Trick Truck Class Champs Kevin Thompson and Harley Letner. 2021 marked Jergensen's first full year racing Trick Truck and he was never out of the hunt for overall wins since the start of the year at the Parker 425. It came down to the wire at the season-ending Cal City Desert Challenge where Jergensen wrapped up his first Trick Truck Class overall win and clinched the series championship. Following Jergensen and the Concrete Motorsports team came Bill

Appgood, BJ Baldwin, and Steve Olliges as the top five overall points finishers.

Dustin Grabowski turned an impressive series of performances throughout the year into his first Class 6100 Championship, topping Ray Griffith by 27 points. Fusion Racing's Jerry Herling, Patrick Whitt, and Joseph Herling rounded out the top five in class.

Class 1500 was dominated by Best In The Desert veteran Sam Berri who took home the Class Championship with a whopping 394 points followed by Michael Frye with 212. Joe David, James Dean, and Morgan Langley



Dustin Grabowski - Class 6100 Champion
Photo by Daniel Noble Photography

rounded out the top five in that class.

In Class 6200, Nick Carolan took home the Championship over Conner McMullen while in Class 1000, Brett Jeffers earned the Class Championship. Other car and truck classes of note include Class 6000 Champ Greg Bragg, Class 7200 taken by RJ Merritt, and Class 5000 won by Troy Grabowski.

In UTV competition, Ryan Piplic took top honors in the UTV Pro Turbo Class by just three points over Dustin Jones followed by Mitch Guthrie Jr., Vito Ranuio, and Randy Romo proving once again how close UTV racing is and how it's become the dominant

class represented in the sport. Michael Isom defended his 2020 Series Championship in the UTV Pro Unlimited Class by a scant 10 points over Jim Beaver. Michael McFayden, Chris Blais, and Nicholas Shearer rounded out the top five in the class. The UTV Pro NA Series Championship title went to Josh Row while the UTV Rally Class went to Jack Olliges.

In the Motorcycle and Quad competition, Hayden Hintz and Trevor Hunter defended their 2020 Open Pro Motorcycle Series title finishing 14 points ahead of the Jeff Trulove team. Factory Beta Riders Joe Wasson, Zane

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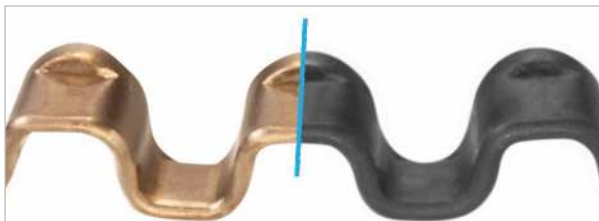
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Nick Carolan - 6200 Class Champion
Photo by Bink Designs



Roberts, and Nic Garvin rounded out the top five places. The highly competitive Women's Motorcycle Series Title went to the Kimberley Loppnow-led team followed by Ashlee Gage and Rachel Stout after a great performance from female racers in all the 2021 events.

The MAXXIS Triple Crown and big bonus money payout that goes along with it went to

the following competitors:

- **Motorcycle/Quad** – Hayden Hintz
- **Car/Truck Limited** – Dustin Grabowski
- **Car/Truck Unlimited** – Kyle Jergensen
- **UTV** – Mitch Guthrie Jr.

These racers proved hard to beat as they earned top podium spots at the Parker 250, Parker 425, Vegas to Reno, and the Cal City



Michael Isom - UTV Pro Unlimited Class Champ
Photo by 4DIRTMEDIA

Desert Challenge. For their racing efforts this year the MAXXIS Tires Triple Crown will awarded a combined payout of \$168,000.

In the 4Wheel Parts Youth Championship Series, Travis Sallee won the UTV Youth 1000/RS1 Stock Series Championship while Jacob Williamson won the UTV Youth 170 Modified Class Championship. Other Series Class

Champions included Dexter Warren, Dylan Finley, Cameron Leaming, Chase Mankin, and Ryan Chapman. These young racers are proving that there is a bright future ahead for the off-road sport and many of these competitors will move into adult classes for the 2022 series.

UTV Rookie of the Year went to Michael

Taylor Stevens - 399 Pro Motorcycle Champ

Photo by Dirt Nation



Kimberly Loppnow - Women Motorcycle Champ

Photo by Dirt Nation





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Mark Kammerlohr - Class 1700 Champion

Photo by Bink Designs



McFayden followed by Angie Mitchell, Cameron Rohn, Keaton Koonce, and Nolan Hendley. These racers have proved that they can compete against the very best even though they don't have the same experience as other drivers.

"We are super proud that 2021 turned out the way it did, and we cannot wait to get started in 2022. Next year will feature an all-new TV and Live Stream venue that we believe will separate Best In The Desert from the rest of the pack. We are excited

to feature our sponsors, racers, and race teams in a way that has never been done," said Co-Owner/CMO Bryan Folks. "We are very grateful for all of our sponsor partners, racers, and race teams and we cannot wait to show appreciation by upping the game next year. Congratulations to all of the racers and race teams that earned Best In The Desert Championships. We could not be more proud of your efforts and more grateful for your commitment."

"Year one down, many to go, and I



Bret Jeffers - Class 1000 Champion

Photo by Dirtfocus



Mitch Guthrie Jr.
MAXXIS Triple Crown UTV Winner
Photo by 4DIRTMEDIA



Jeff Harmonson - 4700 Class Champion
Photo by Bink Designs



Hayden Hintz - Open Pro Motorcycle Champ
Photo by Dirt Nation



couldn't have imagined 2021 turning out any better than it did," stated first-year Race Director Jeff Phillips. "The racing throughout the year was phenomenal. We had races with record turnout despite all the issues in the world today, and I saw more smiles at the finish lines than I could have ever dreamed of! I would like to take this time to also thank all of those who made this year so special, the Team BITD staff, the amazing volunteers, all

the folks at the BLM, the States, Counties, and City/Towns who were all so helpful. Thank you all for your hours of dedications and hard work! See you all in 2022!"

For a full list of point standings go to:
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Youth UTV 179 Stock 9-13 Champ
Cameron Leaming practices for the
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A CLOSER LOOK:

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Born over 50 years ago from a thirst for adventure, KC was created out of necessity to navigate the darkest of roads safely. Our founder Peter Kim Brown, along with his wife Carol, was headed out camping in Parker, Arizona and was struggling to find his turnoff and navigate safely in the spiderweb of dirt roads. It was in this moment that he decided that there had to be a better option for off-road lighting. When he found out that there wasn't, he created the market for off-road

Written by Taylor Ulrich

Photos provided by KC HiLiTES







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lights in 1970 by retrofitting aircraft lights into sturdy housings and influenced off-road culture forever.

Motorsports have been pivotal to our journey, as it serves as a proving ground for the lighting products that we produce. From Halogen, to HID, and more recently LEDs, it all has to withstand the rigors of a desert race in order to be of the quality that we pride ourselves on. Our involvement in motorsports started back







in the early 1971 when Bob Lewis', aka Uncle Bob's, "Bouncing Bronco" was the first ever off-road competition vehicle to use KCs in a race - and the rest is history. Some of the best and most recognizable names in off-road racing have been a part of the KC Family and have chosen to trust KCs to get them to the finish line, including Ivan Stewart, Walker Evans, Curt Leduc, and Rob MacCachren.

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speeds at night, they must be able to see a great distance ahead as well as to the sides of the race course,” says Pete Brown, founder of KC, speaking to the need for specific beam patterns to fulfill specific needs.

Today, the Carbon POD® 70W HID Lights remain at the top of the podium when it comes to off-road lighting. However, some younger contenders from KC including the Gravity® LED Pro6 and FLEX ERA® 4 aim to serve as complimentary products to the HID's by providing

excellent short to mid-range fill lighting without oversaturating the race course and thus blinding the driver.

Equally as important to beam patterns is the placement of lights on the vehicle. “Quite often the top mounted lights will cause a reflective glare when there are particles in the air that the light is hitting,” continues Pete. In high dust conditions, it is often more useful to run only the lower mounted lights, whereas in no- to low-dust and high speed conditions, the roof mounted



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For over 50 years, the KC brand has been a symbol of outdoor freedom, adventure, and performance. We engineer features for off-road racing and then infuse them into lighting and adventure products used by those who prefer the paths less traveled. We stand for the outdoor enthusiasts - from off-roaders to hikers to mountain bikers and anyone in-between - because that's who we are. Today, KC is still a story of family, quality, and innovation.





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SAFETY FIRST

STOP THE BLEED

By David Nehrbass



Over the last several decades of competitive off-road racing, there have been countless injuries and even deaths that have occurred. In some of those accidents, there was absolutely nothing anyone involved could have done. However, in some, a little knowledge could have possibly changed the outcome.

All off road sanction bodies require a basic first aid kit be carried in the vehicles and in some cases, even motorcycle riders are required to carry them on themselves. The problem with most of these

kits is they are loaded with fluff from an inventory list created decades ago and have very little to no hope of helping in a critical situation. Motorsports Safety Solutions is working with several race promoters as well as companies that supply premade kits to update contents for things that will help people when needed.

As a bystander, or even maybe as the injured person yourself, there is only a couple situations that you can control on scene and make a life changing effort of care. The most critical of these is



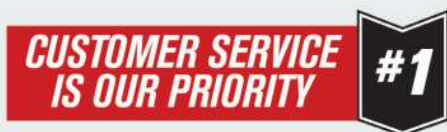


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If someone isn't breathing and you are miles from help, there is very little you will be able to do unless it is a choking type problem. If someone has no heartbeat in the middle of nowhere, there is very little you will be able to do to correct that. Bleeding however when controlled in a critical situation is something that makes a difference between life and death.

Enter "Stop the Bleed"

Several years ago, a movement started in communities to focus on bystanders assisting medical providers before and after their arrival by helping to control bleeding. While the initial

focus of this layperson training was for mass trauma casualty situations, the process is solid and can apply just as easily to you and your co-driver in any race on any given day.

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2 APPLY DRESSING AND PRESS



2. Pack the wound with dressings and add pressure. Yes, that means you have to get in contact with the gooey stuff coming out of the body. Take clean gauze and push it into the wound. This will cause the body to not only use the pressure of the tissue, but will also help facilitate increased coagulation that will slow and hopefully stop the bleeding process. Once the wound is packed, continue with direct pressure.

3 APPLY TOURNIQUET



3. Use of a tourniquet on any limb that is bleeding. I know many will think that the use of tourniquets went away decades ago and it did. Well, it is back as the reality is saving the body from blood volume loss will always outweigh the potential vascular side effects. You can use a belt, strap or simply pick up a commercial grade tourniquet and add it to your first aid pouch.

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numerous Stop the Bleed Instructors on our team. While the last two years have made in person learning very challenging, it is our goal that in the very near future we will be offering various courses to our off-road community free of charge at the races. Stop the Bleed is a course that the basics can be covered in minutes while standing at Tech and Contingency. We hope to share our knowledge and training with our off-road family in hopes that if we can, we make a difference in our fellow racers' lives.



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UNDER THE HELMET

A Conversation with Kyle Jergensen

By Mike Ingalsbee



Kyle Jergensen is the 2021 Best In The Desert Trick Truck champion. Far from a household name, Kyle takes a business type attitude towards racing. He's not into it for self-aggrandizement, he's driven by his own sense of accomplishment, and the satisfaction gained from overcoming the many challenges that our sport provides. He's a hardworking, down to earth racer who feels fortunate to be where he is.

Mike: You're the Best In The Desert Trick Truck champion this year, congratulations on that.

Kyle: Thank you.

Mike: First I want to go over your background for those that don't know. You were raised in a racing family, right?



Kyle sealed his 2021 Trick Truck Championship at the Cal City Desert Challenge in November.

Photo by Art Eugenio

Kyle: Yes. My dad, Todd and my mom Shirley raced motorcycles forever, and then got into cars probably 20 years ago now. We've been kind of working our way up from there.

Mike: Your mom used to be pretty quick. Didn't she take a lot of overall wins in class one?

Kyle: She won the powderpuff race overall three times in a row in the class one car. That was definitely a special moment. She never raced after that. She hung it up on top. She said, "You know what? I'm getting too old. My eyes are starting to fade. Let's just call it good there."

Mike: So how old were you when you started racing?

Kyle: I started racing motorcycles when I was nine or 10; pretty young. I did four years of motorcycle racing in the desert; mostly Enduro. I like to rock crawl on kind of the more technical stuff. I did that for a couple of years with my dad. We had some small success, a couple wins here or there, but nothing to brag about. Then I started navigating for my dad, back when he had a class one car, and then we had a truck that wasn't very competitive but, we were out there. I navigated for him for probably three or four years. Then when I was 13, I did my first race; Parker. No decent results, just out there driving around. We had a lot of years of mechanical failures. It wasn't really until about three years ago that we started figuring out our own equipment, and started having a little bit of success in the 6100 class. Then we started getting a

couple wins and got picked up by Camburg. We did two races with Camburg, and went back to back with them. I then raced for the Cops team for many seasons in Baja, but had nothing to brag about results wise. We were down there competing but someone, or something would always take us out. It wasn't till we came on with Brenthel two years ago that everything; all the stars kind of aligned and things started actually sticking.

Mike: Did you always do the work on your own car? Are you a skilled mechanic, and prep guy?

Kyle: Yes, I am a very, very good mechanic. I prepped and built all my vehicles before I went on with Team Brenthel, so I understand Trick Trucks, and buggies better than anybody. That still helps me today. I understand what they can handle, and what they can't. I've given some input to Brenthel about things that I know work better; stuff that you learn through six years of just absolute failures; as frustrating and as expensive as they were. All those 25 cent parts kept breaking and would leave me sitting out in the desert. I had more Tow Strap miles than I had race miles. So those, as much as I hated in the moment, looking back at it, taught me a lot about the vehicles. My dad, and I learned a lot about what needs to happen with these vehicles to make them live through the punishment. I do think that that has helped now that we finally have some results to back it against.

Mike: It sounds like you've built a lot of character along the way.



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Kyle: Oh, yeah. I mean, you really have to. People always ask when things go wrong nowadays; they're like, why are you not upset? I go, you have no idea what I've gone through in the racing world. I own my own company, so at times it seems like I get a bad phone call every 15 minutes. You just have to deal with it. Deal with it, and figure out what went wrong. It puts a shell over you. So when the poop does hit the fan, I just take a deep breath and move on. You don't get all worked up. You don't yell at anybody. It doesn't do any good.

Mike: I think that's the number one thing with desert racing, especially because there are so many variables. There are so many things that can go wrong, when it when it goes right it's really special.

Kyle: It really is, and I have to give Brenthel a lot of credit. I'm just a small piece of the puzzle on their team. We

At left: Kyle took a wild ride during Time Trials at the 2020 Silver State 300. The team worked wonders to get the truck ready for the race where he went on to finish first in Class 6100.

Photos by Dirtfocus

do drive the hell out of their trucks, and you know, you're only as good as the truck that's underneath you. Once we got the shock tuning right, and made some adjustments in the trucks, they became very durable. That allows me to; the best way to put it, drive it like I stole it because it ain't mine. It's a rental truck. I drive the (bleep) out of that thing because they want one thing; they want me to win; that's it. That's what they told me. Hey, I don't care what it takes, just go be you; win or wad.

Mike: I'm always curious about that. I've asked other drivers if they drive harder in their own stuff, or when it's somebody else's vehicle. A lot of guys they say, I'm more cautious when it's not my truck, but it sounds

to me like Brenthel has unleashed you a little bit to do what you need to do.

Kyle: Exactly. At first, I was the same way. When I drove for Cops, I just wanted to get this truck to the next driver, and not be "the guy" at the Baja 1000 that ruined it all. Just keep the thing moving forward. That was my mentality down there, and we didn't really do anything fantastic with that strategy. After we won a couple races with Brenthel last year in 6100, they gained a little bit of confidence in me, and they liked their first wins. I think they really liked the feeling so I had a conversation about it. I think we got a little lucky on a couple of these wins with the mechanical thing. We literally broke it as we put it on the trailer.

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We're like, wow, that was a close one kind of thing, but what do you want to see happen here? Do you want me to drive to win, or do you want me to just be out there? They said, drive to win. If you crash, you crash. Okay, that's all I needed to hear. So that's what we do. We drive. We drive as hard as we can in qualifying. I've crashed in qualifying, and they said "racing happens." There was no sour feeling; they just said, "Let's bounce back and be better."

Mike: It's not like those guys haven't done the same things. They understand because they've experienced it firsthand.

Kyle: Yeah, there's nobody better at crashing than Jonathan Brenthel. (He said with a laugh). I didn't want to say that, but Jonathan says that himself, so... He knows. We remind him all the time.

Mike: Jonathan is proud of what he builds, and knows first-hand what it will survive.

Kyle: Yes, they are really nice trucks. Two years ago, the Brenthel guys called me, it was in January before the season even started, and said hey, would you be interested in driving one of our trucks? The first thing I thought was that I didn't like their trucks at first, but they took what they made mistakes



on with their first generations, fixed what they needed to and put it all together in the Gen3. The Gen3 is a high quality truck. When I saw the Gen3 for the first time, I thought, yeah, we can work with this thing. The weight is placed properly, it looked strong, and so I drove it, and said, let's give this a shot. It has worked out well for both of us. I enjoy being on the team, and I think the winning has helped their business too I hope.

Mike: From what I understand, the steering is really easy to manipulate on the truck.

Kyle: Yes, one of the big, big, big things is

the steering. It's a swing set steering design; not the typical rack and pinion that's been used for the last 20 years in Trick Trucks, and buggies. Everything was rack and pinion. I have a Racer Engineering truck with a rack and pinion so I drive them when we go testing. With the rack and pinion you feel the road, you feel every bump. The driver fatigue you get when you go into corners and it wants to rip the steering wheel out of your hand; you have to actually hold on to the steering wheel really, really tight. It just wears you out. I've sprained my wrist doing it. All kinds of bad stuff happens because of it. I got in their truck and was whipping around and I felt like I was

Kyle drove his Brenthel to the 2020 Class 6100 Championship.

Photo by RnR Photos



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on the freeway in my daily driver; there's no resistance. You never feel harsh feedback, and you can go the whole race without getting the steering wheel yanked out of your hands; no matter how hard you drove it. I was sold on the steering. On day one I was like wow, this this is very impressive. So impressive that I would never build or buy a rack and pinion truck or buggy ever again. Never, ever, again. I bought a Brenthel Gen3 to use as a prerunner because I don't want to not drive something that is uncomfortable.

Mike: I would think that you can kind of get away with maybe your brakes acting up or being down on power a little bit, but the steering seems to me like it's pretty important.

Kyle: It sure is. It's not important if you're just out there to drive around in a circle for 10th place, but soon as you go for that top five, it's so elite, every corner is where it's won or lost. You have to come into the corner, or come into the braking bumps, and brake late; hard on the brakes. If the steering wheel is yanking back at you, you're going to eventually just stop braking late because, it hurts; it really does. Once I got in the Gen3 with these guys, it helped my confidence in the corners a lot, and I was already really good in the corners. Now I can back that thing in every corner all race and still feel fine afterwards.

Mike: What do you think it was that attracted them to you as a driver?

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Kyle: I don't know actually, I don't know why they chose me. I never feel like I do anything special. I don't have a big mouth. I don't really have a big social media following. We were friends before. I navigated for Jonathan when I was young; I was right out of high school. I said yeah, sure. Why not? It scared me; I never did it again. I'm sure there was plenty of other options that might have had a bigger Instagram following or, or maybe better at selling themselves. Maybe that just wasn't what they were looking for. They were looking for a driver who was quiet, who just did their job. That's what I do, I just show up. I give them input when I can. I help them how I can, when I can, but quietly, I don't make a big fuss about anything. If something goes wrong, nobody ever hears about it besides the crew, and Jonathan, and we work on making a fix. I don't broadcast the negativity to anybody else. I don't know. Maybe that's what they wanted. I couldn't tell you.

Mike: Correct me if my wrong but, didn't you take the pole during qualifying at one of the Mint races? Was that the first time you were shoved into the spotlight a little bit?

Kyle: Yeah, we had some success in 6100. We got the pole a couple times. When I was 15, back with our buggy, I qualified first for the Silver State 300. I was young and dumb; it just happened. I don't know what I did, but I did it. Maybe that opened some people's eyes.

Mike: I think you're being too modest.

Kyle: I really don't know why they actually chose me, but I'm glad they did. We've been having a good time being a part of the team.

Mike: Was it always your goal to win the championship? What's your next goal?

Kyle: Well, I want to go back to back. That would be pretty cool. We kind of did go back to back. First we got the 6100 Championship, now Trick Truck. Being in the same league as drivers like Jason Voss with back to back championships; that's something that only a select few have ever done. I would really like to do that; mostly for Brenthel. It's not really for me anymore, or ever. I enjoy driving cars, and I think I'm good at it, but I don't feel like I'm doing anything special. The Brenthel team put so much heart into their company. I enjoy the feeling that maybe I'm helping them make some money. As a business owner myself, if I have a good asset like that, it makes you feel good. I really enjoy for once not being the guy fully in charge. I only have one job, and that is to drive. I show up, I tune, I test, with them, but I don't prep the trucks. I don't deliver them to the racetrack; I just drive. I have time to just focus on one thing. I feel like an employee again, which is weird to say, but it's very refreshing. I just do what I'm told, and that's drive a Trick Truck, which is pretty cool.

Mike: Everyone who runs a business understands that point of view. So exactly what is it about racing that you most enjoy? Some people like the mental challenge or the physical demands, and other people feel it's just fun to go fast, right?

Kyle: That's a great question. Why do we do what we do in such an expensive sport? During the race, it's not very fun. It's very stressful. The dust is brutal; always. You're

always on the edge. Before the race, you're working on getting set up, and making sure you cross all your T's and dot all your I's. That really isn't that much fun. I think what we do it for that little bit of great feeling you get when you pulled something off like a championship, or a race win that you daydream about all the time. Very few of us actually get to feel that feeling of wow, we actually won this. Once you get a little taste of that, I think that's what brings us back; it definitely brings me back. Only for that little quick second; it doesn't last very long because then you're back to real life. You get to feel like I beat everybody else in the class. We are the winners. That's pretty cool.

I'm the only one right now, at this moment that can say that. Then the next weekend it's a completely different story. You go back to trying to prove yourself again. These things are amazing machines, but you're not in there grinning ear to ear all the time. You're trying not to crash the thing the whole time.

Mike: that brings me to my next question. What type of driver are you? Some people have amazing reflexes to get themselves out of trouble. Other drivers are technicians, you know, every turn is about where you want to stick the wheels. If they are off by an inch or two, it gets to them.

Kyle started his quest for his championship at the 2021 Parker 425 in January.

Photo by RnR Photos



Kyle: I am definitely very precise. Shawn Shanks has been my co driver for the last three years. We seem to be clicking pretty well in the truck. We went to high school together, we're lifelong friends. I was able to bring him on completely green. He didn't even know what a Trick Truck was. I taught him what he needed to know. I think that helps us because he tells me exactly what I want; not too much, not too little. When we're out there on the track, we pretty much nail everything that we're supposed to do. We're not all over the place. I have really good eyes, I can read the terrain really well, and I live in the desert. I don't live in Beverly Hills or something; I grew up in the desert. I'm able to read the terrain on the side of the roads. A good driver can look off to the sides and realize, oh, there's some elevation change coming up. Oh, I see a ravine up to the right, but I can't see it in the road. If some ditch is to the right, there's a good chance it's going through the road, little things like that. You pick that up through the years. You can't teach that. I get questions

all the time. "How do you how do you drive like you do?" I don't think I'm doing anything special, I really think I'm just out there cruising around. Even though it might look impressive from the outside, we're just having a calm conversation. We make very few mistakes.

Mike: You have to have a lot of adrenaline pumping through your blood, right? I mean, some people can handle that, other people get kind of irritable I think.

Kyle: Yes, and that's one thing with me, I don't think the adrenaline is pumping much at all. I have the same heart rate as on the freeway, but that's only because I've been driving trucks and racing for so long. It's kind of like second nature at this point. I think I'm more comfortable in those trucks than I am driving to work every morning.

It appears that Kyle is just driving to work, and his job is to win races, and championships.



With a Class 6100 Championship in 2020 backed up with a Trick Truck Championship this year, the future looks bright for Kyle Jergensen.

Photo by Dirt Nation



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CASEY'S CHRONICLES

Casey's Chronicles feature stories and tall tales about our founder, Casey Folks. In each feature we share a bit about the man himself and some of the key moments in his remarkable career that went into creating the legend that Casey became. Each one is presented by a different member of the BITD family and staff. Some are funny, some are serious, some are just designed to fill you in on some amazing history and facts you may not know about the man. Welcome to Casey's World!

Adventures Shared

By Jeff Phillips

As all of you either know or have heard, Casey was something of an "Off Road Racing Savant". He somehow knew things no one else did, and he would come up with the coolest, most exciting, awesome, outstanding, amazing, (to use a few "Casey Adjectives") adventures ever! He produced races such as the Las Vegas 400, the World Championship Hare and Hound, and the Grand Daddy of them all, Vegas to Reno.

Photo by Dirtfocus

His course layouts were beyond anything most had seen, and always had a few, “gotcha sections”. That is what I am going to talk about next.

The definition of a “Gotcha Section” is a section of a racecourse that has racers at the finish line saying, “WTF, that was something,” or most often, a section those of us on the layout or marking side said “WTF, how are they going to make it”! These sections aren’t necessarily on the “savant” list, as most of these Casey would have liked to have forgotten, but all are part of his “folklore”. These are my three favorite memories of “Gotchas”.

Gotcha Section 3 - Mesquite to Ely, doing in the course crew: We started

in Pioche, NV, sometime in winter as the mountains had snow, but being the race was coming up in the spring, we had to get over them and of course Casey said, “No problem, just follow me!” So, there we went, following our fearless leader over the top of Stampede Gap at around 7,000 ft in two-three feet of crusty frozen snow! Casey in the lead, Jimmy (Glimp), Slim and myself in tow on our trusty Suzuki DRs. This is where the real adventures began; the north side of the mountains, as most of you know, are in the shadows all winter and the snow doesn’t melt and that’s where it gets fun! I had followed Casey for thousands of miles, but I actually remember thinking, WTF are we doing, and by the looks of Jimmy and Slim slip sliding in the ice, so did



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they! We pushed on for maybe five miles and as I approached, Casey was stuck in a three-foot snow drift. Not to be stopped, he said, "Let's turn around, I know a trail back about one mile back that will bypass the next five miles, it'll be no problem and much easier!" As his trusty gang, we of course followed, and for the next four hours we pushed, pulled and dragged the bikes down a single-track trail in the trees on the side of a mountain with three-four feet of crusted over snow. At times, I thought we would have to call in air support for Slim, then Jimmy started gasping for air, and finally with all four of us laying in the mud completely exhausted, we found the end of the trail and the road we were in search of.

Gotcha Section 2 – Mesquite Gran Prix, doing in the racers: The Mesquite GPs were really fun to race, but a total SOB to work. They were generally in September, so this meant many days in the summer, building trails in the swamps and overgrown fields, cutting miles of willow sections, getting stuck in knee deep mud, and building bridges across canals. This was all in 100 degree plus weather, and we were sweating, getting really dirty and super tired, but generally having a blast! At the first Mesquite GP, Casey found a downhill that, anyone who remembers this race, will certainly have insane memories of! The "downhill", or really, a 50-foot cliff, was at about mile eight. Right after the Pros got

A picturesque Gabbs Range hides the lurking "gotcha sections" in the valley below.

started, Keith (same ol' Keith) came on the radio saying there was a bottleneck at mile eight around the Cliff. Casey grabbed me and said get out there and figure out what you can do! Knowing a "fast route" I quickly showed up to 100 plus racers sitting and looking down the hill into the bottom of the canyon as riders threw their bikes over the edge and hope they didn't destroy them! I parked my bike and then spent the next hour lowering bike after bike off the cliff with belts, fanny packs and whatever rope device we could find. The dirt under the cliff had sloughed away as the first racers went down and quickly became a cliff. A few of the racers in the front said, "You should have seen Roeseler (Larry), he backed

up over there," pointing to a thin mesa trail, "and jumped to the bottom and sped away not wanting to wait any longer!" I was in awe of Larry once again, as it was about a 40–50 foot cliff down to a single-track wash at the bottom. We ended up cutting a trail into the cliff just as the second lap came around.

Gotcha Section 1- Grand-Daddy on my adventure list: The first Vegas to Reno, Gabbs Valley: Casey and I had been working on this for over a year and were on a reconnaissance trip in the middle of the summer again. 100 plus degree weather, hot, dirty and all the fun you could take and to boot, we were in the infamous Jeep Scrambler. As we came into Gabbs Valley



over Rhyolite Pass from the Mina area, Casey says, "I have a road that I remember riding a few years ago on my motorcycle that crosses the middle of Gabbs Valley and will shorten the miles from Mina to Top Gun." In my head, I'm remembering a swampy lake out there, but he assures me, "I rode it, and it goes right to the gravel road on the north side of the valley!" Well, that's where the gotcha started. We proceeded down a road past a few houses and ranches and the road became a two tracker, then a trail then we came to the wash/canyon from hell! I said that maybe we should check it out and walk it, Casey said "We have 4-wheel drive and a winch, what could go wrong?" So down into the canyon we go, full throttle, then, bam! We come to a stop in two to three feet of mud, Casey says "I don't remember any mud in the wash!" Well, then

we spent the next 5 hours to cut every bush (no trees) within a mile, used the hi-lift jack like a pole vault stick, put the bushes under the wheels that were in the air, maybe three feet, pushed, pulled and dug until we were on the other side of the canyon about 30 feet away from where we got stuck! That Gotcha section was never used and may possibly be one of the only sections Casey conceded too.

I remember so many of those "gotcha sections." Some from races, some from hunts, and some from just out riding in the hills. But what I most remember is we always had a smile and a story to tell after. Miss you, my friend. I hope you and Slim are reading over my shoulder as I type this, remembering all our amazing adventures together.



Casey's passion for motorcycles and racing was never ending as seen in this shot from the 1973 Baja 1000.

Archive photo by Trackside Photo



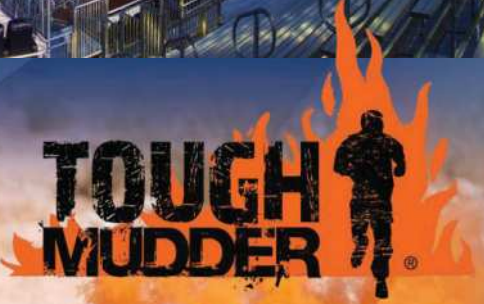


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Sam Berri trying to outrun the setting sun at the Cal City Desert Challenge.

Photo by Dirt Nation

PARTING SHOT

As the sun set on a great Best In The Desert season at the last race in Cal City, we turn our attention to an even bigger 2022.

Photo by Dirt Nation

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Parker 425

January 20-23 - Parker, Arizona
Car/Truck

UTV Legends Championship

February 17-20 - Laughlin, Nevada
UTV/Motorcycle/Quad

Adelanto Grand Prix

March 17-20 - Adelanto, California
Motorcycle

Silver State 300

April 28-30 - Alamo, Nevada
All Classes

Vegas to Reno

August 10 -13 - Las Vegas, Nevada
All Classes

Battle Born 200

September 22-25 - Ely, Nevada
All Classes

Laughlin Desert Classic

October 20-23 - Laughlin, Nevada
Car/Truck

World Hare & Hound

November 4-6 - Tonopah, Nevada
UTV/Motorcycle/Quad



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Jeff Phillips, Race Operations Manager

For information contact:

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