

FJ C

Magazine

January 2008 • Volume I • Issue I

2008 BUYER'S GUIDE
OPTIONS
UPGRADES
DEALER NEGOTIATIONS

FJ SUMMIT 2008

OURAY, CO

"RAPTOR"

Revealed

READERS RIG

"EL DIABLO"

PENNY PINCHER MODS

OFF ROAD 101

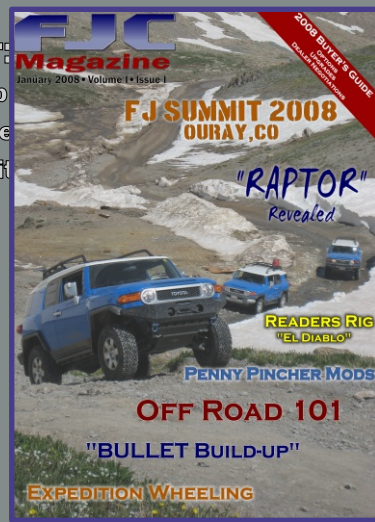
"BULLET BUILD-UP"

EXPEDITION WHEELING

FJCC Magazine

January 2008 Volume 1 Issue 1

On The Cover:
3 VooDoo's Head Up
Imogene Pass at the
2007 FJ Summit



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From The Editor

Everyone enjoys reading a good magazine!

When we began thinking about doing a publication specifically for FJ Cruiser Owners & Enthusiasts, one of the first items we researched was the cost of printing.

For traditional magazines, the subscription cost covers only the cost of printing and distributing the publication. Costs associated with creating and editing, as well as any costs associated with maintaining a website - are covered by companies that pay to advertise in the magazine. With the relatively small market that FJC Magazine intends to serve, an annual subscription for 4 issues would run around \$24/year. While this may not seem like much to some, to others it's too expensive.

As an 'open minded' group of people, we wanted to be able to give the magazine away. Allowing anyone to download the PDF from the website is fairly easy, and the costs are MUCH less than printing and distributing a printed magazine. We chose to promote the 'download and print' philosophy for a few reasons:

-We'd like to encourage our readers to print the magazine on their home printers. This not only costs less, but is quicker and easier for everyone. We understand the appeal of a paper publication, so we feel this is the best way to go.

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For FJ Cruiser Owners & Enthusiasts

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All Pro IMAGES

By ACW



www.allproimages.us



- Scenic
- Action
- Off-Road

Highlands Ranch, Colorado (a suburb of Denver) is home to FJ enthusiast Stan Reed. Even though he's only lived in Colorado for a few years, he's fully embraced what it means to be a real Coloradoan, as well as a hard core FJ owner.

Stan's rig, El Diablo, is a Sun Fusion 6-speed manual trans, go anywhere (and love it), off road machine. The mod list on this beast goes on and on.

Starting from the top-down, Stan sold his stock roof rack and replaced it with the Gobi Ranger. And you can't have the rack without the accessories, the Hi-Lift mount, axe & shovel mounts, PIAA lights, and plenty of straps. You probably noticed El Diablo at the 2007 FJ Summit, it was the one with over 300lbs of camping and recovery gear strapped to it. An amazing thing to watch is the loading/unloading of all that gear. Stan is able to stand on his Gobi, adding the weight of a grown man, without worry.



Up front, El Diablo sports the All-Pro bumper and a Warn M8000 winch with Super Winch synthetic line. He also added the full bull-bar, and mounted two driving and two fog lights for those snowy Colorado nights. Stan chose to go with the All Pro rear bumper as well, it increases departure angle and clearance, and is SOLID. After hearing about the install on this (or any) bumper, we'll be planning a full-day mod party when it's TRD Roxy's turn.

El Diablo rides BFG Mud Terrain 305 70R/16 tires on Trail Ready 16" Bead Locker wheels. These meats can tear up the dirt or mud and come out the other side smiling. Lift? Yeah....he's got lift! Stan chose to mix his lift up a little with Donahoe in the front and Walker Evans (from All-Pro) in the rear. The 3 inches all the way around give the truck plenty of clearance for anywhere El Diablo wants to go. Other undercarriage goodies include All-Pro Upper & Lower Control Arms, All-Pro shock protectors, and his installer suggested he remove his bump stops and install reverse jounce shocks.



"EXPEDITION" WHEELING

By Lance B.

When I tell people my FJ Cruiser is an expedition style 4x4, they often ask "Exactly what does 'expedition style' mean?" "Expedition style is the idea of multi-day, off-highway, destination-bound, vehicle-dependent travel." I know your scrabble boards and crossword puzzles are packed away, and I shouldn't have jammed all that into one phrase, but that encompasses our purpose. Maybe it would be easier to tell you what expedition style 4x4 is NOT and work backwards from there.

Not A Day Trip

The vehicle is not a single seat buggy built for day trips or to be trailered. Instead, it is able to safely and comfortably take you and a companion many hours down a paved highway before you get to your chosen trailhead. Not to forget, it has to be capable of taking you on extensive off-road terrain to complete your journey.

The vehicle is not a wide-tire running, mud bogging, tree branch slashing, swamp stomper, but self-recovery from mud, swamps, or obstacles may be necessary. The driver of an expedition vehicle should have gear on board and the knowledge to assist with vehicle recovery. The vehicle is not a long travel equipped, sand dune bashing, light up the night like a stadium, Baja racer. However, it should be able to cross sand dunes, traverse washes, supply enough light to travel safely at night and usually provide side or rear light for setting up camp. As you can see, many things are desirable to help in your expedition wheeling experience, the difference is, not doing each thing to extremes, just being equipped for each situation.

The mention of camping brings us to the most obvious "not" of all, the vehicle is not just to take you to another asphalt car campground full of giant RV's and electric hookups. Instead, the vehicle is equipped with the intention of getting to those long lost or even recently forgotten hideaways of historic or scenic beauty. We find places that would inspire anyone to build an expedition style 4x4 capable of staying a few days to make it all worthwhile. Continued on Page 24



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so you're not a member!**

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RAPTOR R



REVEALED!

Full Story Page 22

OURAY 2008

MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW!

If you missed the First Annual FJ Summit last July, you probably don't have the itch that the rest of us do. As soon as the Summit ended, many people on fjcruiserforums.com began asking about the 2008 Summit.

Our questions were answered on October 5th, when Jason made the announcement:

July 16th – 20th, 2008 – Ouray, Colorado.

It's Official - The FJ Cruiser World will once again invade Ouray, this time for a full 5 days (3 days of organized trail rides). If you've not been or heard of Ouray – it's the self proclaimed 'jeep capital of the world' (Although in July it will be the FJ Capital). There are hundreds of miles of the most scenic 4x4 roads you'll find in the surrounding San Juan mountains. Infamous passes such as Imogene, Black Bear, and Engineer create the perfect location to wheel your FJ, catch up with old friends, and make new ones.

Key changes for this year:

- Five full days – three days of organized trail rides
- Registration/sign-in will be on the July 16th
- The website (<http://www.fjsummit.org>) should be ready to allow registrations within the next couple of months
- The Best Western is entirely blocked off for the FJ Summit, and will once again be the hub of activity
- More FJ's will be allowed to register, but there will probably still be a maximum number (TBD)

Other ideas that have been discussed (but are not confirmed)

- Online pre-signup for trail runs
- More "How To" Classes for people new to off roading
- More vendors on-site
- A video documentary of the event

There are many other great ideas. For more info, visit this story on fjc-mag.com and look for the link to "Summit Suggestion Box".

If you plan on going and haven't made accommodation arrangements yet, you should soon. The hotels and campgrounds in Ouray are filling up fast. Visit <http://www.fjsummit.org> for a list of hotels in Ouray & the surrounding area.



2008 BUYER'S GUIDE

OPTIONS

DEALER NEGOTIATIONS

UPGRADES

In an effort to answer a few of the first questions new and prospective owners ask, and to help anyone in the pursuit of their dream FJ: the FJC Magazine Staff has put together a 2008 FJ Cruiser Buyer's Guide.

Based in part by the work of Kansas Law Dog (from fjcruiserforums.com), Google web searches, and the suggestions of several FJ owners – this guide should help FJ Cruiser buyers get the vehicle they want at a price that's right for them.

We also break down suggested initial upgrades depending on your style of driving: Daily Driver, Weekend Warrior, and Economical Upgrades.

Have a question about standard features? We have the answers. Every option (including the Manufacturers Suggested Retail Prices <MSRP> and Invoice prices) is listed. Dealer negotiation strategies are also discussed in detail.

It's our hope that anyone ready to join the FJ Cruiser family will find this guide useful, so don't hesitate to visit <http://www.fjc-mag.com> and download the pdf today!

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Penny Pinchers

Top 5 Sub-\$100 Mods

By Eric R

So you picked up the new Cruiser, and the bank account might be looking a little thin, but you've gotta personalize the rig, right? I know I had too, so here are a few less expensive options that are equal parts practical and aesthetic.

A Little Paint

Nothing is more rewarding or much easier than painting the headlight bezel, wing mirrors, door handles or bumper wings. The grill bezel and the bumper wings are a quick and easy job, while the wing mirrors and door handles require more preparation and care. All this can be done with sanding, primer and paint, or use newer polymer bonding paints. Krylon Fusion for Plastic worked well for me, to give a two-tone finish on the wing mirrors and their mounts and also the white bezel.



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The only french speaking FJ Cruiser club invites all FJ owners to come ride with us and discover our beautiful province.



Hi-Lift Mounts

Hi-lift jacks and FJ Cruisers are becoming ubiquitous bedfellows and the hi-lift is an essential tool in any recovery kit. Where to mount one is another question. Several companies have developed quick and easy-to-use mounting solutions that fit on factory or after market roof racks, inside in the cargo area, inside in the passenger foot well, or it can even be mounted to the spare tire on the rear door.

This Demello version (\$89.00 pair) clamps to the factory roof rack. You may want to consider adding a slider adapter from WabFab (\$50.00) to your recovery kit as well.



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Georgetown, CO ICE RACES

Wow! Talk about FUN! The lake in Georgetown, CO every winter turns into an racing track on ice. Every weekend races are held for trophies and bragging rights. You'll see many classes of vehicles on the ice, bare rubbers, studs and cheaters (tires with spikes 1.5 inches long).

But twice a year, for only \$5 per driver, they open the ice up for "Fun Days" where any 4x4 or AWD vehicle can have a go at it. We took a crack at it, and it was a blast! 3 FJ's in total came out for the event and everyone left smiling and laughing. "Fun Days" are held on Fridays, which we know is hard to get away....but trust us, it's worth it!

The ice is set up with 3 race tracks, where anyone can compete against any other class. We tried racing a cheater, and we almost lapped! But hey...what do you expect right?? We were more competitive with other bare rubber SUV's. But raced anyone up for the challenge, Subaru's, Jeep's, and of course, other FJ's. The FJ really is a tank, and stable! We had a time trying to get it to slide around the corners without traction control. Seemed like we got the best performance out of 4Lo, and in 3rd gear. There you could finally get all 4 wheels to slide, helping to swing your back end around curves.

So if you want a full day of \$5 fun, don't pass this up! The next and final, "Fun Day" is Friday, Feb. 22, 2008. Hope to see all our real FJ lovers there, fun starts at 11 A.M. until sunset!!



Off Road 101

By Angie W.

Off Road 101 is FJC's intro to off-roading section. Here you will find all your basic information on getting started. Everything from what features your FJ has and how to use them to trail etiquette. Each issue will have a different topic, so join us each time to learn or refresh yourself on the basics of trail riding. (For an in-depth look at features available for your FJ, visit www.fjc-mag.com/buyersguide)

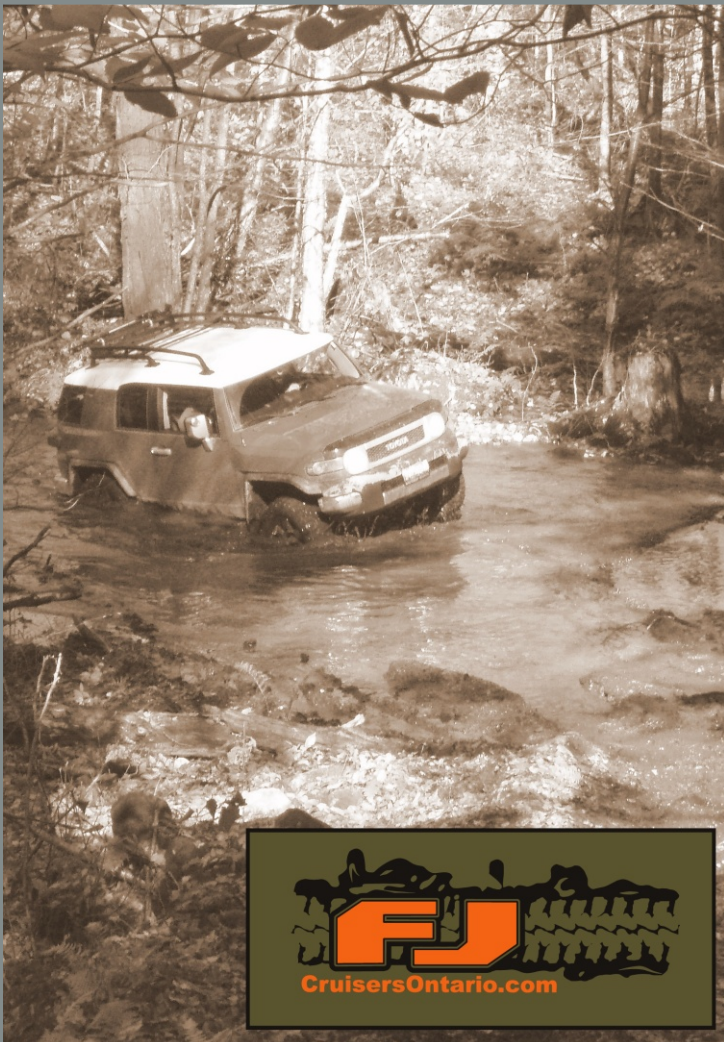
Tires

Your stock FJC comes with Dunlop tires. No offense to those still running these tires, they're fine for road driving, but not recommended if you plan to use your FJ on anything more difficult than a dirt road. Reason being that in basic off-roading, your tires make up for inexperience and basically give you more leeway for error. 4-wheeling, when you're new, is all about traction and control. When you're experienced, it's about skill. Be sure to know which category you fall in and be properly prepared before going off-roading. When you're starting out any all-terrain tire will give you an advantage and help to keep you safe and your rig damage-free.

4HI vs. 4LO

A common question from new off-roaders is "When do I use 4Hi versus 4Lo?" The easiest way to think of these is 4HI is used for increased power and traction to all 4 wheels with the ability to maintain some speed. 4LO is basically a "crawl" mode allowing you to take your foot off the brakes and let the transmission/engine maintain the speed. This is helpful when the grade you're trying to go up or down is steep, and you want to keep your speed down. FYI, your rear diff lock and a-trac only work when you're in 4LO.

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The First Annual Toyota FJ Cruiser Northeast meet will be held at Rausch Creek off road Park in PA on March 21, 22, and 23 (Easter weekend 2008).

The Northeast does not have many places to wheel. If you can't make it to Colorado for the FJ Summit (and even if you can), we'd love to see you out at Rausch Creek.

Spend a memorable weekend in a 1700 acre park, try your FJ in rocks, bowls and hills - or just wheel with other FJ enthusiasts. We have trails for every level of driver and vehicles.

The aim of this meet is to bring together all FJ owners of the Northeast for a weekend of family fun and (of course) wheeling. Drivers and families are invited to attend this international (U.S & Canada) event.

We need your help to make this a great annual event. Sponsorship opportunities are available and would be greatly appreciated. We have space available on-site at the event to showcase all the aftermarket accessories available for the FJ cruiser.

Registration is now open!

<http://www.fjcruisernortheastrun.org/>

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BULLET Build Up

By A.E. Stanley

Fifty feet from me sits a vehicle I'm more excited about than any I've ever owned before, a 2007 Ti Silver Toyota FJC. I spend more time than I care to admit, pouring over any information I can find about my FJ and each modification (mods) I'd like to do. I grew up playing in the dirt and rocks, using anything from dirt bikes and ATVs to Jeeps and trucks. It is an obsession I hope to never be free of. I have seen these mighty FJs in magazines and on the net with \$10,000 in mods and find myself daydreaming about the ultimate FJ. I wake up to the realization that I will be building my FJ over time and on a budget.

The reality is that I bought my FJ for various reasons. I want to go off-roading, camping for the weekend, and also use my FJ as a daily driver. Several times a year, on business, I also drive to Key West (950 miles one way). So, obviously I need my FJ to be road worthy, since every journey takes me far from home (Western NC).

Every off-roader dreams of going to the mecca of 4-wheeling, Moab, UT. My dream is no different. Question is, how am I to get my rig ready to handle Moab and still have the cash to enjoy life's necessities such as food and shelter?



BULLET Before the Mods Begin

So here I sit, pondering where I am going to pull \$10,000 from to build my rig. My financial situation is such that I am paying rent, a mortgage and using out-of-pocket cash for a remodel. The budgeting plan I formulated is to build my rig one step at a time and make my trip to Moab in the Summer of 2009. In the mean time, I can take my rig out on local trails that I am comfortable with. Did I mention that I am 2 hours from Tellico?

I am sure many of you are thinking "I know how you feel pal, I was all set to lift my FJ and then I find out little Mary need braces". Below, you will find a list of the mods and equipment I plan to put on my FJ before I head West. Over the course of the next 18 months, you can join me in the buildup of my FJ. I'll document each step and explain the reasoning behind the parts I choose. I am sure there will be changes along the way to my original list and I am hoping that some of those changes stem from you, the reader. I openly invite your input and opinions. Understandably, we all have our preferences and I want to hear what you guys and gals think.

I plan to do as much of the electrical work as possible in the first stage of the project. First on the list is a stand alone fuse block. If you intend to do anything to your rig that involves adding electrical mods, I strongly advise this addition in particular. Isolating after market electrical items from the OEM electrical system is a very cheap (under \$100) insurance policy. Our vehicles have a rather complex electrical system with more computers and sensors than I can count. A stand alone fuse block separates any chance that a mod you install will damage that system and possibly void your warranty.

So sit back, put your feet up and follow along with my buildup of Bullet (as in Silver Bullet). Hopefully we'll learn a lot about our FJ's together.

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January 2008



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Under Armor

We all know our FJs are tough and capable, but it does need protection on the under belly. The most vulnerable points on the FJ undercarriage are the lower link frame mounts for the rear lower control arms. Bolt-on and weld-on applications are available, either of which are quick and easy armor modification. This bolt on version from TLC4x4 has worked well for me (\$89.00/pair.)



Sun Visors

The OEM sun visors leave majority of the side window area exposed and are difficult to reach and manipulate. These new flip-down side visors are a ten minute installation that will save your eyes and enhance safety (\$53.60.)

Clean Air

Do-it-yourself maintenance and the health of your FJ go hand in hand, and nothing gets easier and makes the engine happier than fresh clean air from a clean, high-flow, air filter. K&N and TRD both offer washable and reusable air filters that are compatible with the OEM air box and a cinch to maintain.



A-TRAC (Active TRACtion Control) & Rear Differential Lock

These 2 options enhance traction and only can be activated in 4LO. Normally if you were trying to gain traction, your FJ would distribute more power to the rear wheel that has the most traction. When you lock your rear-diff, it over-rides that feature and distributes the power equally between both rear wheels. This is very useful if you are already STUCK or beforehand when you need maximum traction at low speed to power over an obstacle. A-TRAC is different from this because it applies only to the front wheels. When a wheel spins from loss of traction, activating your A-TRAC will slow the spin of the wheel, allowing it to gain it's grip. In most 2007 models, you cannot use A-TRAC and rear diff. lock at the same time without modification. The late 2007 models, and all 2008's are able to use these features in conjunction.

Body Armor

The stock FJ comes with basic skid plates and rock rails (optional) The Toyota rock rails are strong and sleek-looking, but don't provide as much protection as some of the after-market rails/sliders that are available. Although the FJ has great clearance even as a stock vehicle, it is much better (and cheaper), to have rocks hitting your rails than the body panels. The under-belly of the FJ is high off the ground, but so are some of those obstacles you'll be tackling. For that reason, under carriage body armor (skid plates) are a very good investment. The ones that come with your FJ, do not provide full coverage and are on the thin side. There are several types of body armor available after-market for various vulnerable spots under your rig. Damage to the under-belly can be extensive and costly, it is better to be safe than sorry!

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R A P T O R

By Shadow Warrior

I chose the name RAPTOR (Reinforced Amphibious Personal Terrain Observation) for my rig. It is to be used for exploring beautiful places like Ouray, CO and others around the country.

HISTORY:

I followed the concept & design of the FJ for years before it ever came out for sale to the public. I read every article that was written and saved any picture I could find. I was hooked the first time I saw it.

I purchased my Toyota TRD SE FJ Cruiser in early Feb 07

TOTAL COST FROM DEALER: \$34,223.00



BREAKDOWN:

The Following is a breakdown of changes that have been done to this base unit. I will be adding more as time and finances permit. The RAPTOR is an ongoing project, even now. RAPTOR is being built as an Expedition capable vehicle, so I want to be thorough in every mod that I make.

ARMOR

Road Armor - Titan Front Bumper

I decided to go with the Road Armor Titan front bumper because of the type of terrain that I will most likely encounter when off-roading. Also living in the heart of the Ozark Mountains we tend to have a lot of deer crossing the highways at night, this will also help to protect the vehicle in any unfortunate wildlife encounters.

All Pro - Rear Bumper W/ Hitch

I went with All Pro's rear bumper because of their upcoming swing arm for fuel carriers. I have been looking at all the manufactures designs and feel that the All Pro is the best option for me. I noticed that most everyone is strapping fuel to their roof. Since no one makes a rack fuel system, I decided to design a fuel storage system myself.

I liked All Pro's approach to carrying fuel for keeping the fuel can on both sides of the vehicle. This helps distributing the weight evenly when on the trail in an off camber situation, along with keeping the COG as low as possible. I am just waiting for All Pro to start selling the swing arm for the rear bumper. I also like the All Pro rear bumper for the departure angles it has.

Bud Built Skids

I decided to go with Bud Built skids for my rig not only for the reputation for having well designed and tough skids, but meeting Bud in person in Ouray, CO at the first FJ Cruiser Summit. I like to support vendors that take the time to go out and meet their customers.

Inchworm E-Locker Motor Skid Plate

I went with the Inchworm E-Locker because I like the design and again their products. I also got to meet them at the Summit. I felt it was prudent to protect one of the most sensitive pieces of equipment under the FJ from trail damage. It's also backed up by the Bud Built skids.



All Pro Rear Lower Shock Skid Plate

I went with the All Pro Shock Skids for protection of the lower part of my Donahoe Racing rear shocks. The rear shocks on the FJ are susceptible to trail damage along the lower portion of the shock housing. The shock skids help prevent damage to my rear shocks out on the trail.

All Pro Rear Trailing Link Skid Plate

The All Pro Training Link Skid again helps prevent any type of trail damage to my rear lower links. I am of the mindset that armor is your last line of defense before damage occurs. It could be the difference of coming home safely having wonderful stories to tell, or broken down in the middle of nowhere trying to find a way to limp off the trail, finding a part, installing it, etc.

TRD Sliders

I am staying at this time with the TRD Sliders that came with the TRD package. I'm normally not a big fan of "OEM" accessories, they are usually are more for aesthetic purposes than function. But this is not the case with the TRD Sliders, I am very impressed with not only their fit, but also how well they're made. They are VERY heavy, which was a big surprise when removing them for the body mount chop. Maybe down the line I'll switch to an aftermarket slider, more than likely it will be Demello's. But right now, they are performing how they were intended.

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Of course, at this point in the conversation most people start asking questions about lifts, lights, winches, roof racks, gear, fridges and fantastic solar power setups. Before we go there, I would like to touch a bit more on the issue of why and what is different about the expedition style build.

The question of why to build in the expedition style is usually answered when a person finds that they either want to go farther than a day trip away from home, or they hear about a ghost town that would be incredible to visit first hand or they read a magazine article about some back country area that not too many folks visit. People that enjoy expedition wheeling wish to combine the adventure of off highway 4x4 travel with a destination or desire that a single seat buggy or day run through the swamp just doesn't fulfill.

What Is Different?

While much of the gear used by an expedition equipped rig is the same as other off-roaders, it's the thought process behind the build that makes the rig an expedition vehicle. An expedition vehicle is more concerned about overall weight since it has an effect on handling, fuel consumption, power and recovery. The expedition builder has to know both the curb weight and gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of his rig since that equals the maximum payload that should be carried. In the case of the FJ Cruiser you are looking at 4x4 with a curb weight of 4290 lbs and a GVWR of 5570 lbs which means a payload 1280 lbs. Figure in a couple of 200 lb people, food, fuel, water, gear; and you may very well already be at the max payload.

An expedition vehicle also has to give much more thought to space. Even a solo traveler on a multi-day trip who believes in the idea of Tread Lightly, will need to pack in and out camping gear, food, water and trash. Now, think about having enough gear to travel for three days in the back country with a family of four. Space, weight and safety become obvious concerns.

So now that we've covered the "lens" that the expedition minded builder looks through, we can start to talk generally about modifications and gear. Don't worry, these will all be discussed with great detail in future articles.

The Basics

Your suspension does not have to be lifted and if it is, it should only be a slight lift. You can always pick the terrain or adventure that suits the vehicle rather than trying to overcome any obstacle. All four sides of the rig should have jack and recovery points to help you get out of trouble. You'll need basic under armor since a cracked oil pan far from home would bring your expedition to a halt. You'll need just enough lighting to drive safely and maybe something extra to help illuminate camp.

Speaking of camp, you'll need gear to make your stay comfortable. Your sleeping options are, setting up the inside of your FJ with a sleeping platform, using tents, hammocks, or the ever coveted roof-top tent. Since you will likely want to eat on your adventure, make sure you have a higher quality cooler that will keep ice a couple of days. For longer trips, start looking into off-road ready fridges. Nothing beats traveling in the heat with ice cold drinks and snacks without anything soggy at the bottom.



Before an expedition, you'll need to be set up with gear to help foresee, avoid and get out of trouble. Items to start with include: navigation aids, such as a quality topo map, compass, GPS or laptop system, as well as extra food, fuel and water. Equally as important is communication gear, anything from cell to satellite phones, CB or amateur (HAM) radio so you can talk to others and get help if needed.

So while an expedition style 4x4 can and will do most of the things any other 4x4 will do, the focus is on the journey and the desire to travel over multiple days. These specific goals are why the build of an expedition rig is different than a rock crawler, swamp stomper, or a desert racer. In future issues of FJC Magazine, I will help you to build your expedition 4x4. We hope to see you out in the back country!

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FJ Bruisers
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For more Toyota and FJ Cruiser groups and clubs,
visit www.fjc-mag.com. Look for the FJ Groups & Clubs link.



2008 Event Guide

2008 All-Pro Off Road Toyota Jamboree

Dates: Jan 12, 2008

Location: Stoddard Valley OHV Area in Barstow, CA

Contact: All-Pro Off Road, <http://www.allproofroad.com>

Northeast FJ Cruiser Run

Dates: Mar 21-23 2008

Location: Rausch Off Road Park, PA

Contact: <http://fjcruisernortheastrun.org>

Rising Sun's Cruise Moab

Dates: April 30 - May 4 2008

Location: Moab, UT

Contact: <http://www.risingsun4x4club.org/cruisemoab.asp>

Great Smoky Mountain Trail Ride

Dates: May 12-17, 2009

Location: Crawfords Campground, Murphy NC

Contact: <http://www.stlca.org>

FJ Cruiser Thrill on the Hill

Dates: May 23-26, 2008

Location: Ruidoso, NM

Contact: <http://tinyurl.com/2xxmch>

Razorback Ramble

Dates: TBD

Location: Arkansas

Contact: <http://www.razorbacklandcruisers.com/ramble.asp>

East Coast 4Runner Jamboree 2008

Dates: June 20-22, 2008

Location: Rausch Creek Off Road Park in Joliett, PA

Contact: <http://tinyurl.com/2eawwr>

2008 FJ Summit

Dates: July 16-20, 2008

Location: Ouray, CO

Contact: <http://www.fjsummit.org>

TTORA Takeover

Dates: TBD (July/August)

Location: TBD

Contact: <http://www.ttora.com/takeover/>

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SUSPENSION AND TIRES Details

Mickey Thompson 8x16 Classic Locks w/ Black Faux Bead Lock Ring

Wheels and tires were a very hard decision to make. I have owned many types of custom wheels over the years. I was looking for something a little different than what everyone else was running. I had been reading about other members that bought the MT's, some members had rub issues when they got them on their rig's, others stated they had no problems. I am very happy with the Mickey Thompson's I chose. I had the chrome bead lock rings powder coated black to off-set the chrome wheels. I think that gave it a more aggressive look.

Dick Cepek Mud Country - 305/70R16

Tires were another area that the decision was hard to make. I was going to go with Nitto Mud Grapplers. I love how aggressive they are, but did not like that they were not siped for handling in wet conditions. In the end, I went with Dick Cepek Mud Country's. I purchased them while visiting Rough Country in Dyersburg TN, for the Coon Creek Crawl. They are awesome off and on road, very quiet riding tires for a mud terrain.



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- Promoting the *Tread-Lightly* philosophy
- Support by local vendors increasing daily!
- Parts and MOD install discounts available



Custom Body Mount Chop

I looked around for a competent shop to do my body mount chop. I found a small Custom Hot Rod shop that had opened up close by, and decided to see if they would be able to do the work that I wanted. I found they were from CA and used to build Sand Rails out there. I gave them some pic's of Tina's (VDM) chop she had done. They said great pic's, we can do that. It looks like it came from the factory that way.



Continued on Page 30

For armor under the rig Stan kept the stock Toyota OEM rails, but chose to go with Man-A-Fre for the skids. He also added a custom rear diff skid from All Phase Off Road. Other mods include a 10lb PowerTank, window vents, iPod & XM Satellite integration, MAGLite, Halon fire extinguisher, and plenty of custom-mounted switches for all those extra lights.



So it's easy to see that this is a do anything, go anywhere FJ. The FJC Magazine crew has the pleasure of wheeling with Stan (and El Diablo) on a normal basis. We have conquered many things together, both in our near-stock TRD and Stan's built rig that keeps us in aww of the FJ's capabilities. A word of advise from your FJC Mag crew. If



you can't mod your FJ out like this all at once, find someone who did. They make the best tail gunners, and there's nothing they can't pull you out of!



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"New Version" Donahoe Racing 3.5" Coilovers

I had a hard time deciding which suspension system that I wanted to go with. I narrowed it down to Donahoe Racing, All Pro Off-Road and King. I was lucky enough to be at the right place at the right time with some great people. I'm talking about the 2007 FJ Summit in Ouray, CO. The Saturday night at the raffle giveaway I was able to get a great deal from a member that won the Donahoe.

Camburg Upper Control Arms

I thought I might be able to get away with using the stock UCA's for a while, but that was not the case with using the "New" DR Coilovers. I called Jason Demello and asked him for some advice on UCA's. In the end I bought the Camburg UCA's.

All Pro - Pro Link Rear Lower Control Arms with Johnny Joints

I decided to beef up the rear lower control arms on the FJ. I had noticed some other owners had some breakage out on the trail, thin walled tubing is not made for that type of abuse. It works great as long as no directional force is applied in just one area; "pushing inward" deforming the spherical wall. When that happens; catastrophic failure is almost certain. I decided to go with All Pro's Pro Links, they are a heavy walled tubing with greaseable Johnny Joints.

All Pro - Rear Upper Links with Johnny Joints

I also went ahead and changed out my rear upper links with the beefier All Pro upper links. I have not heard of anyone breaking an upper link yet, but why take the chance.

Gorilla Lugs & Locks (Black)

I also went with Gorilla Lug nuts & locks for the wheels. I have black ones; I thought the color contrast looks better than having chrome.



Warn M8000 Winch

I decided to go with a WARN M8000 winch. They have been around forever in the four wheel drive world and have established an unbeatable reputation for having the most dependable winches on the market. I will change out to synthetic line for safety reasons down the road, but will use cable until the need arises to change it.



TRD CAI (Cold Air Intake)

I decided to go with the TRD CAI instead of the AFE because of the pictures I saw of both. With the TRD, the box is totally enclosed except for the top which is enclosed with a aluminum lid with a rubber backing held down by six Allen head screws. The only thing I will have to do is make a small transit piece that will go from the Snorkel to the CAI box.

Relocated Rear Differential & E-Locker Breathers (SCUBA Mod)

I then decided it was time to do my SCUBA MOD (a.k.a. Relocating the Rear Differential and E-Locker breather MOD). Toyota has already relocated the front Diff & transfer case breathers, but left the rears alone. I decided to relocate mine up higher, up into the engine bay where the others ones are.



Continues Next Page



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LIGHTING

PIAA 510 Ion Super White Driving Lights (2)

I went with the PIAA driving lights instead of fog lights because of the height of the rig. It gives me better visibility when driving on dark roads.

IPF 900XSD Extreme Driving Lights (2)

I spent a lot of time looking into and reading about the different off-road lights. I was looking for a light combo that would work in very rough conditions. These lights are the only ones that can be fully submerged under a foot of water while on for up to two minutes. I wanted that capability when having to forge a river crossing at night. I will say, they are a very bright white light. I'm very happy with the IPF's.

IPF 900XSS Extreme Pencil Beams (4)

I also went with the IPF 900XSS Extreme Pencil Beams for the top of the roof. These will be mounted to a custom Baja Light Bar. It will be another month or two before I receive it.



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ELECTRONICS

Lowrance 540C Baja GPS Unit

I have been looking at all the different GPS devices on the market for a long time because I do a lot of traveling. I am a spoiled when it comes to GPS screen size. I have been using my 15" laptop screen in the vehicle running a GPS for about 4 years now. I was at West Marine one day and started looking at the Lowrance units that they have on display. I went back home and jumped on Lowrance's web site and did some research and found the 540C Baja GPS was just what I was looking for. It has a 5" screen size, it takes cards for very detailed maps of around the world. It will also handle the abuse of off-road use. I mounted it just above where the rearview mirror. This will give me a good view of the GPS while traveling.



Scanguage II

I bought the Scanguage II to help monitor my engine performance. I wanted to see the difference before and after I purchased my CAI. I noticed that running the Scanguage, I am able to monitor my Intake Air all the time along with many other features. I was getting about 20 -26 degrees over ambient air temp before installing my CAI. Once I installed the it, I was able to not only hear and feel the difference but I could see the difference on the Scanguage. My intake air temps dropped to now 4-5 degrees over ambient. I think everyone should have the Scanguage. What a great tool. I watch it more than I watch the instrument gauge cluster in the vehicle.



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