

NATIONAL MONSTER

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NATIONAL

JAN / FEB 2007

VOL 5 / ISSUE 1

THE OFFICIAL NEWS
PUBLICATION OF THE MTRA

MONSTER

SSOC

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NATIONAL MONSTER EXHAUST FUMES

by Kyle Doyle - Editor



On the road again...

Yes, yes, I know. I totally started off my article with an over-used cliché (from a country song, no less!), but it certainly fits the mood for most of us in the monster truck industry. I'm pretty excited about 2007 for a number of reasons, and I think it's safe to say that the fans are probably pretty excited about '07 and all the neat stuff that has been going on so far, and that is scheduled to take place over the course of the year.

The cause for excitement in 2007 actually started on the next-to-last day of 2006, for me, anyways. An innocent trip to a major national electronics retailer turned horribly expensive in next to no time. Well, that's not entirely fair; what I should say is that I had been intending to make a horribly expensive purchase very soon, and it just so happened that I decided to pull the trigger while at the above mentioned consumer electronics store.

Amanda and I had stopped by the large consumer electronics store (from here on referred to as "CES") to pick up a concert DVD by The Who to enjoy over the New Year's weekend, as it would be my final weekend home before hitting the road. After settling on "Live at Leeds" from 1970, I heard Amanda saying "Hey, come look at this camera." This phrase is what I now refer to as the "Call heard 'round the world." I made my way over to the camera kiosk area, and after manhandling a variety of expensive pieces of plastic and glass (otherwise known as "digital SLR cameras", I decided it would be prudent to set aside my \$14.99 DVD (loaded with special features!) and drop several hundred dollars on a Nikon camera and accessories, which were also loaded with special features (though Nikon didn't offer any wind-mill guitar playing by Pete Townshend). After finishing up the paperwork, we left the "CES". I heavy bag in one hand, and a heavy feeling in my gut to go with it. I'm not sure why, but expensive camera purchases always leave me feeling a bit more queasy than DVD purchases. Hmm...

However, my sickness succumbed to my excitement once I began toying with my newfound digital gizmo the following day. Since then I've used it on every trip I've been on this year, and I'm happy to report that my results are improving each time I press the shutter release button. Nikon makes an outstanding camera, so now I just need to spend a lot of time figuring out how to become an outstanding photographer!

Those of you that read my monthly travel article on The Monster Blog...

www.themonsterblog.com/kyledoyle.htm

...know that traveling is one of the most important things in the world to me, and with that travel comes the undying need to take photos of everything I can in the effort to share my thoughts and experiences with the world (or at least a very small part of it.) With the help of my new Nikon, I've been able to photograph some really great places so far, and I just can't wait to see what's over the horizon (there's gotta be more, man!) From the riverside market in Little Rock, to the Rock N Roll Hall of Fame and Hard Rock Cafe in Cleveland to the Buns of Tony Packo's in Toledo, my magical box of plastic and glass has been capturing it all in remarkable clarity, at least compared to the cameras I've used in the past.

But this is not to say that this new camera hasn't escaped the rigors of the monster truck racing scene, as I've put it to good use in Toledo, Cleveland, Champaign, Madison, and Sioux City, with the results improving each time. With the addition of a new lens to my inventory of parts, I'm looking forward even more to the outdoor season and the exciting action that it brings...in fact, I wouldn't be surprised if I shot ten thousand pictures between now and the MTRA Banquet...and hey! How about the MTRA Banquet! If you haven't heard about the awesome stuff that's being planned for the banquet this year, then you need to read on in this issue and check out the update that the Banquet Fundraising group has provided us. How does the Westport Sheraton sound? Pretty good? We thought so too. Add in...oh, I dunno...maybe a DJ, some really great food, some video presentations...sounds like it could be a pretty good deal, so I'm excited about that as well.

Anyways, enjoy this issue of the National Monster and be sure to get us some contributions for the next issue! Help keep the National Monster from being skinny! Feed it!

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NATIONAL MONSTER **ACROSS THE BOARD**



I can't believe it's time for the first MTRA newsletter of 2007 already! I would like to thank everyone who elected me to the MTRA Board for 2007. We've had our first meeting and things are progressing well for the MTRA.

Several people are taking steps to make improvements on the MTRA corporate image. Nigel got the ball rolling at our banquet with MTRA Board members dressing the part in matching dress shirts. There were banners and other logo placement that really made a visual difference. June Hall, Brenda Noelke, and Destiney Conley are working on improving our banquet for 2007. Ross Bonar is revamping the MTRA website and Kyle and Amanda's last newsletter looked great! Thank you to everyone for their efforts!

I hope your year is off to a good start! Don't forget to get your vehicles inspected soon. If you aren't a member, this is the year to do it!

Andy Hoffman

Greetings All! I hope your race season so far has been filled with good fuel mileage, no broken parts and your newly painted body still without scratches. Having been in this business for 15 years I know that kind of experience is not likely but I'm a promoter and I'm supposed to be optimistic.

As I begin my second year on the MTRA board I have a couple of goals I would like to accomplish. First, is to keep you the membership, apprised of our membership numbers. I think we all need a little perspective of how many members we have from one year to the next. My second goal is to facilitate better communication throughout the membership process.

Following are the membership numbers I have been able to gather so far:

2003 – 48 Own/Drive, 45 Assoc, 5 Sponsors, 3 Promoters

2004 – 44 Own/Drive, 44 Assoc, 6 Sponsors, 3 Promoters, 4 Jr.

2005 – 30 Own/Drive, 40 Assoc, 5 Sponsors, 3 Promoters, 2 Jr.

2006 – 26 Own/Drive, 26 Assoc, 10 Race Team Affiliate, 4 Sponsors, 3 Promoters, 6 Jr.

2007 – 25 Own/Drive, 28 Assoc, 21 Race Team Affiliate, 3 Sponsors, 3 Promoters, 6 Jr.

As you can see the membership has been as high as 100 in 2003 and as low as 75 in 2006. I don't look too seriously at how many members we have or don't have because as of right now there aren't many promoters requiring the monster trucks they use be certified. If NHRA or IHRA didn't require racers to be members of their respective organizations to race their tracks and national events I'm guessing they would have quite a bit fewer members.

Expect a call or email from me in the next couple of months, especially if you haven't renewed you membership yet. If you have items you want brought before our MTRA conference call feel free to contact me or another board member. Until the next newsletter...drive safe!

George Eisenhart
Membership Director



2007 MTRA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



(√ Check One Box Please)

____ JR. ASSOCIATE* \$25.00 (17 YRS. & YOUNGER)
Special Mailings - Voting for M.T of the year

____ ASSOCIATE* \$50.00
Newsletter - Special Mailings – Limited Voting privileges - Invited to Yearend Awards Banquet

____ RACE TEAM AFFILIATE \$75.00
(Members that have a substantial physical connection to the Monster Truck Industry; they can be Promoter, Monster Truck crew personnel, MTRA Directors, and people specifically selected by the Board. These members have the same voting benefits and privileges as Owner/Drivers)
ALL applicants applying for this membership MUST be approved by the Board!!!
Newsletter - Special Mailings - Voting privileges - Invited to Yearend Awards Banquet

____ *SPONSOR* \$250.00 BRONZE LEVEL
All Associate member benefits including Limited Voting privileges & a Web Link

____ *SPONSOR* \$350.00 SILVER LEVEL
All Bronze Sponsor benefits including Limited Voting privileges & a Web Link
PLUS.....
A ½ page advertisement in 3 issues of our Newsletters.

____ *SPONSOR* \$450.00 GOLD LEVEL
All Silver Sponsor benefits including Limited Voting privileges & a Web Link
PLUS.....
A ½ page advertisement in ALL ISSUES of our Newsletters.

____ *PROMOTER* \$500.00
Newsletter - Special Mailings - Voting privileges, List of M.T. shows in each newsletter, Web Link & Invited to Yearend Awards Banquet

____ *OWNER/DRIVER* \$200.00 New or Renewal membership
(After Feb. 28, Membership Fee will increase to \$250.00)
Newsletter - Special Mailings - Voting privileges & a Web Link (Once your truck is certified) - Invited to Yearend Awards Banquet

____ **ADDITIONAL DRIVER \$100.00 New or Renewal membership
Newsletter - Special Mailings - Voting privileges - Invited to Yearend Awards Banquet

****PLEASE FILL OUT MORE INFO ON BACK SIDE OF THIS PAGE!!***

2007 MTRA RULE CHANGES



- 5. Approved motorsports neck collars are required unless the driver is wearing a HANS or similar device.
- 35. MTRA recommends protection on the bottom of all plastic fuel cells/tanks.
- 43B. Ratchet strap seat belts that meet the SFI 16-1 spec are legal, even though they have a 2" lower strap.
- 43C. HANS, or similar devices, are recommended for all drivers (there is a quick release mechanism on these units). When using the HANS or similar devices, the regular strap-type head restraints must be eliminated; the neck collar may also be eliminated.
- 70. Carbon Fiber shields are allowed if they meet SFI 4-1 requirements.
- 71. There is a three (3) year limit on flex plates; after that period of time, they need to then be sent back for re-certification.
- 78. A 2" [50mm] wide, 4-tab safety shield is required on the bottom of GM transmissions. It must be constructed of 1/4" [6mm] steel or aluminum.
- 79. Chain drives are allowed if they meet all of the specifications found in the back of the MTRA Rulebook on pages 47 & 48.
- 80. A minimum 1/2" [12mm] Grade-8 bolt and 1/2" [12mm] heim joint is required on all driveshaft guards.

NOTE: Please review your rulebooks and familiarize yourself with these updates and revisions. The underlined text on this page may not reflect the entire rule, instead it may only reflect the update and/or revision. Rules 78 & 80 were changed during the annual meeting in December of 2006 by a majority vote by the membership. These rule changes will override the rules already printed in the 2007 rulebooks, so please make note of these changes in your rulebook.

2007 M T R A

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TAIL

SUPER-CHARGED SWAMP THING

A QUICK CHAT WITH TAILGATOR/BIG DAWG OWNER-DRIVER DOUG NOELKE

by Kyle Doyle -- Photo by Kyle Doyle

National Monster: With two months of shows behind you now in 2007, how is Tail Gator running, and how has the fan response been to the new look for the Big Dawg team?

Doug Noelke: The truck is running very strong. The fan response to TailGator has been amazing. Numerous fans have made the connection between the Big Dawg Team and TailGator, and have inquired where Big Dawg is. They look forward to seeing both at future shows.

NM: How did the Tail Gator body mature from an idea into a finished product? What hurdles were there to overcome, such as acquiring the use of the Snake Bite body, designing new graphics, etc?

DN: Brenda and I were actually driving to a show and brainstorming on a new identity, which we needed to come up with in order to run the Monster Nationals Tour in 2007. We thought that a 3-D body would be popular. We came up with TailGator because of the way the tailgate drags when doing slap-wheelies. We are also huge football fans, frequently tailgating before St. Louis Ram's games. Thanks to Bob Chandler and Bigfoot, we were allowed to use the SnakeBite front clip mold. We worked closely with Vinyl Images to design the graphics for the vinyl wrap.

GATOR

NM: Is Tail Gator temporary, or can we expect it to be running alongside the Big Dawg machine in the future?

DN: We intended to have the new truck complete for the 2007 winter schedule. Due to unforeseen circumstances, that did not happen. The new truck will be complete sometime this summer. We will be running both TailGator and Big Dawg at a handful of events this year, with Dale Gerding filling the other seat.

NM: As one of the newest MTRA Board Members, many people wonder if it is what you expected it to be, or is it different? What kind of tasks do you find yourself taking on as a board member?

DN: I have only held a position on the MTRA board for about two months. I am learning as I go. As safety director, I attended two SFI meetings at PRI in Orlando. Sitting in the same room with representatives from all sanctioning bodies (NASCAR, NHRA, etc.), discussing safety issues was very cool. Safety is a very important issue, no matter which sanctioning body or organization you are part of.

NM: There are a lot of positive things happening behind the scenes with the MTRA right now; what kinds of things can we look for from the organization as the year progresses?

DN: There are a lot of new ideas coming forth with the addition of new board members. This year's banquet promises to be one of the best ever, with the fundraising efforts of Brenda and June. I predict this to be a great year for the MTRA.



COVER STORY



UPDATE FROM THE FRONT LINES...

R/C Truck raffle news and Banquet updates

by National Monster Staff & Fundraising Committee

It has been decided that the MTRA Banquet has some room for improvement. Since this organization has limited funds, a couple of girls got together and decided to do something about it. June Hall and Brenda Noelke have been fund raising since mid-January, mostly at George Eisenhart's Monster Nationals events. June got together with Horizon Hobby of Champaign, IL, and has been able to purchase Mini-LST R/C monster truck vehicles for \$90.00 each, compared to the \$200 retail value. They have been taking these R/C's to the races and raffling them off; raffle tickets have been \$1 each, or six tickets for \$5. To date, they have exceeded all expectations they had set for themselves. In addition to the Mini-LST trucks, June and Brenda also have raffled off a pair of Team Bigfoot R/C toys that they had purchased from Bigfoot. Along with the raffles, candy bar sales have been an addition to the money making efforts. Rather than spend the money at a convenience store for a candy bar or pack of snack crackers, teams like Hall Brothers Racing are spending their money with the MTRA for these items. All of the monies (raffles, candy bar sales, etc) are being set aside to fund the banquet of all banquets! No kidding! The 2007 MTRA Banquet is going to be fabulous; needless to say, you will not want to miss it!

Brenda and Destiney Connelly spend the better part of two days meeting with eight different hotels in the St. Louis area. They narrowed their search, made a presentation to the Board, and are now proud to announce that this year's banquet will be held at the Sheraton Westport Plaza Hotel. The room rate, which is normally around \$170 per night, has been negotiated all the way down to \$69 per night! This place is fabulous and has so much to do there without even crossing a street! You won't want to come for just one night either; you should really think about making a weekend out of it. Check out the websites for more information:

www.sheratonwestport.com/hotels.html for the hotel, and...

www.sheratonwestport.com/westport.html for the plaza.

Further plans are being made to include better raffle prizes, an improved awards ceremony, a DJ, a more elaborate lunch for the meeting, and a sophisticated dinner in the evening. The MTRA has never had funds available to do the things that are going to be done this year. You will be glad you came and sorry if you didn't! Mark your calendar now for the weekend of December 14-16, 2007. Tell anyone that would be interested in joining the MTRA, as well as inviting them along. This will be the best opportunity for them to see what we are all about. We will hopefully be able to take advantage of this opportunity to grow our organization.

Keep watching the National Monster for more information, as there is lots more to come!

IT'S NOT THE SIZE OF THE DOG IN THE FIGHT...

Little trucks are helping the MTRA put up big numbers in the 1st Quarter

by Amanda Weldy

Ever since Tim and Mark Hall's "Big Boss" brought Kyosho and Champaign, IL-based Hobbico into the full-size monster truck realm, many R/C companies have seen the benefit of getting involved with their much larger counterparts. From Ohio's Parma PSE Bigfoot 4x4 aftermarket bodies, to complete trucks and tanks, including the USA-1 Nitro Crusher, Heavy Metal and Snake Bite, R/C companies are bringing hobbyists to the world of monster trucks. Such products have even spawned large organizations like the NR/CTPA (National R/C Tractor Pulling Association) and the R/CMTRA which hold racing events all over the country for electric R/C monster trucks with replica painted bodies – who knows, there might even be one out there painted just like YOURS!

So, how, you ask, does this all bring radio control monster trucks and the MTRA together? Earlier this year, June Hall and Brenda Noelke saw the need to help the MTRA financially, and with the blessing of the MTRA Board of Directors, formed the MTRA Fundraising Committee. Some of you may remember "back in the day", when the MTRA sold trading cards, videos and various other items, to assist in their fundraising and to raise awareness for the MTRA. On January 20th, the fundraising once again kicked back into high gear during the pit party at the Monster Nationals event held in Cleveland, Ohio. Bigfoot 4x4 was gracious enough to donate a pair of Snake Bite R/C monster trucks to raffle away and by the end of the weekend, these two little trucks had raised well over \$1,000 for the MTRA. In keeping with the family atmosphere of the Monster Nationals tour, tickets were kid-friendly at \$1 each or 6 for \$5.

Fundraising excitement was starting to build, even before the teams reached their Cleveland destination and I was contacted to see if there would be interest in my employer, Horizon Hobby, Inc. of Champaign, in joining up to help the cause. Horizon Hobby is also the parent company of Team Losi, a California-based manufacturer known for their top-shelf racing kits. A brief conversation with Team Losi brand manager, Bill Jeric (who was also instrumental in bringing the Kyosho Big Boss together with the Halls), brought Losi's support on full force.

The decision was made to partner Team Losi's ultra-successful "Mini-LST" 1/18 scale ready-to-run monster truck with the MTRA in the hope of putting up big numbers for the organization, just like it did with hobby stores all over the country. After 4 events, the MTRA has given away 7 new Mini LST trucks to new homes in Madison (WI), East Lansing (MI), Sioux City (IA) and here at home in Champaign. The little trucks have packed a big punch, putting some stellar numbers up on the board and pushing the MTRA's annual banquet budget to record numbers for this point in the year.

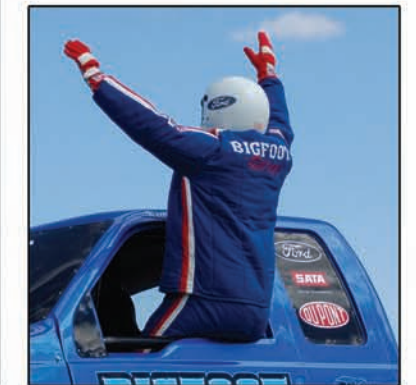
But wait, there's more. For those of you who attended our 2006 banquet, you can't forget how great the room looked with the help of all the folks over at Vinyl Images, right? Well, the great stuff doesn't stop there. These 7 trucks have put up such large impressive numbers, they've gotten together with June and Brenda and together, they've come up with some great ideas on how to give BACK to the MTRA membership. How you ask? Well, we can't get the trucks to talk, but there have been rumors of some pretty awesome things going around. If you want to be a part of it, get geared up, signed up, and most importantly, get your trucks certified! We've got a good list of trucks/drivers that got into gear and were certified by the deadline, but there's still plenty more out there. Flip to page XX to get the number for your nearest tech inspector and get ready for a great year with the MTRA!

THE MONSTER BLOG.COM Presents

MITRA 2006

"A Year In Pictures" 

By Ross Z. Bonar & Lauren Z. Bonar





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CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (_____) _____ - _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY) _____ - _____ - _____

EMAIL: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

REFERRED BY _____

RETURN TO:

MTRA, Robyn Brow, Secretary

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If you have any questions, you may contact her at:

561-383-7290 or Fax: 561-784-4691 or email mtramembership@adelphia.net

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Whether you are a small business or a large corporation, Vinyl Images, Inc. has a full time, in house design department eager to help you in any way they can. We will design anything for print or web from logos to billboards and beyond. Our design rates are very competitive and our designers are world class.

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The world wide web is a resource many companies underutilize. The website is also a first impression to many clients so a smart business will have an up to date, quality website. Let Vinyl Images help your business create a web presence that you are proud of.

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FINAL SHOT



Photo by Kyle Doyle | Gear: Nikon D50 \ 18-55mm Nikkor
Andy Hoffman's "War Wagon" \ U of I Assembly Hall - Feb 07