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SPRING HAS SPRUNG?!?!?!?

Well the Michigan Buggy Builders 2016 show is now history. It was a good show, we had a chance to talk to a lot of enthusiasts, and display a few products. We had a completely welded, +6" wider Stalker 2+2 on display that we built for the guys at Alpha Fab Industries, of, Brighton, Michigan. We displayed it, then, they took possession after the show. We returned home with one of their great Stage III, Ecotec engines for a shop project we have. They have some great stuff. Check them out at www.alphafabindustries.com.



The Michigan show is a fun show, but we don't get much down time when we do it. The rig is loaded by Friday afternoon. We leave about 7:00 AM. on Saturday and drive straight thru to Lansing, about 8 ½ hours of driving. With stopping for lunch, and a nature break or two, we arrive at the Lansing Center about 5:00 PM. I back the truck into one of the loading dock doors, which makes our life easy the next morning. We check in at the hotel, then eat and chill out a

bit. Vendors are expected to begin set up at 5:30 Sunday morning, which means we get up between 4:00 and 4:30 AM. Add to that, it is daylight savings weekend and we loose an hour of sleep. The show officially opens at 10:30 am. But we end up spending time talking to other exhibitors before the official start time. After the doors open it is non stop till about 4:00 pm. Then it is time to load up and get ready to head home, which goes well for us because we can use the dock instead of sitting in line and wait our turn to drive inside to load. Because the parking lot and street are pure chaos for awhile, we walk across the street to The Nuthouse, a sports bar and eat supper. By the time we are finished eating the Lansing Center is almost empty. We leave and make it to the interstate with no hassle.

The next step is to head home. Sometimes we stop to deliver parts, or pick up parts. In either case we stop at a motel somewhere, and rest for the night. After a day that long, and because I am the only one with a CDL, we can't make the trip home by driving straight thru. Monday morning it is leave from somewhere in Ohio and drive home, then back to work on Tuesday. This year the trip became a little more exciting as we blew out a rear tire on the truck, and had to limp into a truck stop and buy a replacement tire.



Bob has Mike and the crew at the fiberglass shop working on some new colors. The manufacturer calls it Electric Jewels Glitter. They are basically fluorescent metalflake colors. We were told that, to the manufacturers knowledge, no one had tried it on fiberglass like on our bodies. Mike did a few test panels and the results were disappointing. Everything seemed too dark and flat. Mike then got the idea of a back coat of white, and bingo, they popped, and looked like the color chips. They are still playing with it but the colors are really looking promising. The colors are; Electric Yellow, Electric Lime, Electric Blue, Electric Magenta, Electric Pink, Electric Orange and Phosphorescent Poly (glow in the dark). The first body will be A Nostalgia in Electric Orange, including Electric Orange side pods. If it doesn't work out we will have a paintable Nostalgia body available at a bit of a discount. There are also 16 pearlescent colors but we do not know if they will work in gel coat as of now. Stay tuned.



A story of credit cards, scams and the "global economy". We have two policies which sometimes seem to frustrate some of our "non local" customers. The first is that we hand enter ALL credit card transactions, then immediately destroy the card info. After talking to several card companies, we were assured that hand entry is the safest method of credit card processing. Maybe not the most convenient, but surely the most secure. Someone may at some time hack us, but they will not get our customers credit card info! Policy number two, any transaction outside the US is only done by wire transfer. Customers money wired into our account. Straight forward, fairly simple, and as secure as we know how to do it.



That leads me to the story of the scam. We are constantly being hit with scams on our online store and web sites. They are all about the same with minor variations. I have never looked, but somewhere on the internet is a set of instructions titled "How to Cheat an American Company". I will detail the latest.

Double John gets a request for a fully welded sand rail frame, to be shipped to Utah. He produces the quote with shipping. The customer calls back and changes the shipping to Austria, and he has a freight forwarder he wants us to use. Payment will be by credit card. Because "Double J" has not been aware of international shipments, and because the initial request was for Utah, he finalizes the order, takes the credit card info (surprisingly the zip code does not match any Utah zip codes), and processes the order.

The next morning, as we review the previous days activities, I became aware of this sale. I remind Double that it has now become an international sale and should have been by wire transfer. He asks me what he should do as he has already taken payment. I instruct him to contact the customer and inform them that we will proceed with the sale, but will not pre pay any freight charges, and will only pay the freight bill when we have written delivery confirmation. This conversation has barely finished, when I got a call from a gentleman in Tennessee telling me he sees that he purchased something from us, but has no idea who we are or what he purchased. Bingo! Stolen credit card. We immediately refunded the charge to him, and suggested he contact his credit card company. I further informed him that whoever had his credit card number also had his home address and zip code, because when we do a

phone order we must enter that additional info. I am sure he had to cancel his card, but by doing it the way we do we were able to refund his charge without him going to a dispute settlement with the credit card company, and tying up several thousand dollars of his credit during the process.

So, what did the thief want? At the end of it all, the product, but also the freight money. Eventually the card theft would have been resolved. We would have refunded the card owners money, maybe the product had already been shipped(which we would have lost), but ultimately the pre paid freight money would have ended up with the thief, and the freight forwarder was in fact the thief or his "operation". We would never have recovered that money.

We will continue to process credit cards by hand, and also insist on secure payment from abroad. With all due respect to our customers from other countries, my apologies. There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the people I talk to are honest, but there is always somebody trying to cheat. Once it goes outside the US, it becomes almost impossible for us to do anything, but eat the loss. Our feeling is better to be safe than sorry.

Next up is the Kit Car and import nationals in Carlisle, Pa. This year will be interesting as the "tuner" crowd has been included into this show. These will be the folks I talked about in my March newsletter, younger, but still motor heads, only with a different perspective. I am looking forward to this one. I expect to learn a lot, and be entertained.

That is it for this month. Next month I expect to report on my adventures in Carlisle, and reveal the "Gob Stopper Project"

John

Featured Products for April.

Scat Shifters.

C004-SC80501



Scat Drag Fast Shifter with Angled handle

\$111.92

C004-SC80500



Scat Drag Fast Shifter with Straight handle
\$111.92.

April Sale Specials

(While Supplies Last)

C002-BP2506-12 - **\$3.83**



Small 3 bolt exhaust flange 2in collector

C007-EM9148 - **\$11.86**



Engine Case Adapter 8mm

C012-EM4551 - **\$10.37**



Brake,Clutch,Gas custom covers

C012-EM17-2994 - **\$69.68**



Billet aluminum gas pedal assembly

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