

TESTING A TURBO RZR IN SWEDEN



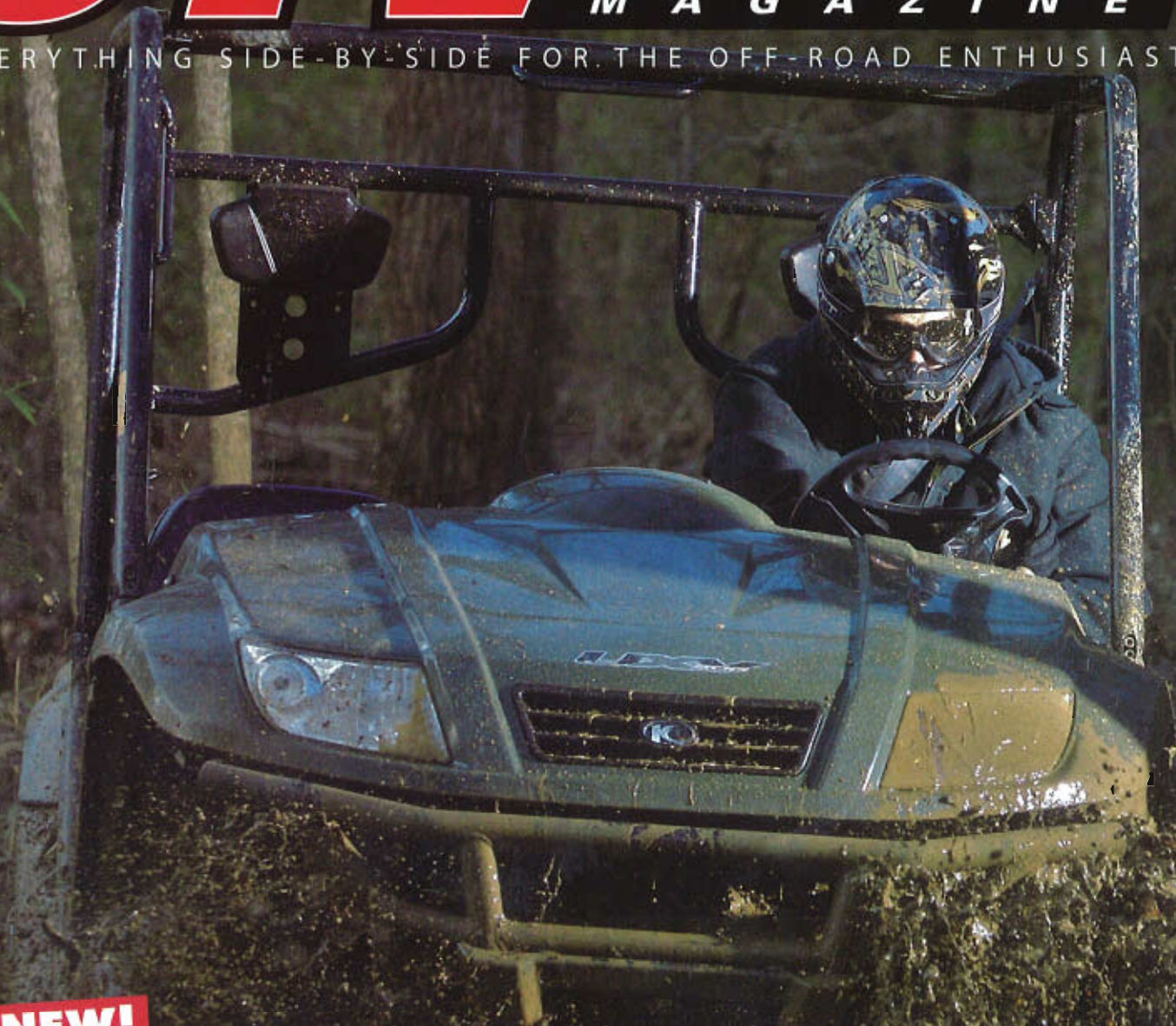
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UTV Concepts Desert Bloom

BY DON MERRIFIELD PHOTOS BY CAROL MERRIFIELD



Break time on the trail

Sometimes a seed is planted in a man's head and he can't get it out of his head until it comes to full bloom, or in Jason Cobbs head it came to a Desert Bloom. When he first started thinking about doing something to show off some of their new products that UTV Concepts were starting to manufacture a ride came to mind but a location was never set. Jason's Dad has been going over to Quartzsite, AZ for a number of years and told Jason he should come over there and check out all the trails around the area. After a couple of trips into the area Jason knew he had found the area for the ride. Quartzsite is the home of one of the biggest swap meets and Gem and Mineral shows you have ever seen and it has been going on for 40 years, so going there on a ride during that time of the year is almost impossible. Jason called the Chamber of Commerce in Quartzsite and talked to the ladies there and asked them when would be a good time to organize a ride in the area and they told him around March 1st when the Desert starts to bloom and from that the name of the event was born.

Everyone started to arrive around the camp on Friday night and early Saturday morning for registration and to sign up for the rides. When we were all ready to start the ride Jason had



Signing up for all the rides

everyone drive thru a makeshift type of door to see if all the rigs would fit. We couldn't figure that out but we found out

soon enough. To get to the other side of the highway we had to go under the highway and thru a tunnel. It was a seven mile



Breaking out of the tunnel

detour but worth it to see everyone coming thru the tunnels and busting out the other side. Once we were out on the trail again we headed north of the highway out into a area where General Patton had a tank command and training area. The troop barracks have long been torn down but the area where they once stood are marked by stone and all around the area you can still see the tank tracks of a once proud command. After leaving the Patton area we headed south back to the camp for some rest and lunch before heading out on our afternoon ride.



Dealing out the cards at Stone Cabin



Table inside of Stone Cabin

Our ride in the afternoon was the poker run and we headed west again but we turned south towards the area called Dripping Springs and Stone Cabin. Stone Cabin is an old miners cabin that has been there for many years and for some reason has become a desert shrine. Visitors to the cabin bring stuff and leave in there for other visitors to enjoy and there is the largest collection of the crazy stuff you'll ever see. It's like "if I leave something in the cabin I'll always be a part of the desert". Everyone that visits gets a big kick out of the cabin and respects what's there and leaves it for the next visitors enjoyment and maybe the next generation of off-roaders. After a little rest we all got our cards and the group split up from the cabin and some went the long way and more difficult trail past Dripping Springs and the rest went up and over the mountain back to camp. Even on the easy way back there were some pretty steep hills to go down and but it

The long road back to camp

turned out to be a great way back. Once everyone got back to camp and we drew our last cards of the poker run. Jason broke out all the prizes for the raffle and we had just enough time after all the goodies were handed out there was just enough time to rest and clean up before the drive into town down the power line road, drop into the big wash and end up at the restaurant for an evening of fellowship and good food. The restaurant was the local hangout for all the locals and had a karaoke stage and some of our group was brave enough to get up and sing and save us from some of the other talent that was singing.

Saturday was a perfect day for riding and normally morning on the desert is one of prettiest times on the desert if the wind



Pushing street tires to the limit





Coming out of the Hog Backs

wasn't blowing 40 miles an hour on Sunday morning and the start of our longest ride. The area we were going was called the Hogbacks and it's one of those areas where you wonder where they get their names. It might come from an old prospector years ago who thought the area was as rough as a hogs back and he was right. The ride took us way south towards the Kofa Mountain range which is one of the roughest desert ranges in the area, but that's another ride.

Once we left the protection of the mountains and headed back to camp out on the flats the wind was up to 60 mph and the dust was so thick you could hardly see anyone in front of you. Back at camp it was time to pack up before we were blown away and to say good bye to our new found friends.

Congratulations have to be given to Jason and all his volunteers and all the sponsors for one of the most organized rides we have been on. We are looking towards the 2nd Desert Bloom and more great riding in the Quartzsite area.



Tony from Sanderson Ford in his Darth Vader Helmet



Did I say dust



The Desert floor was green, the road was good, life is good



The real Desert Bloom