

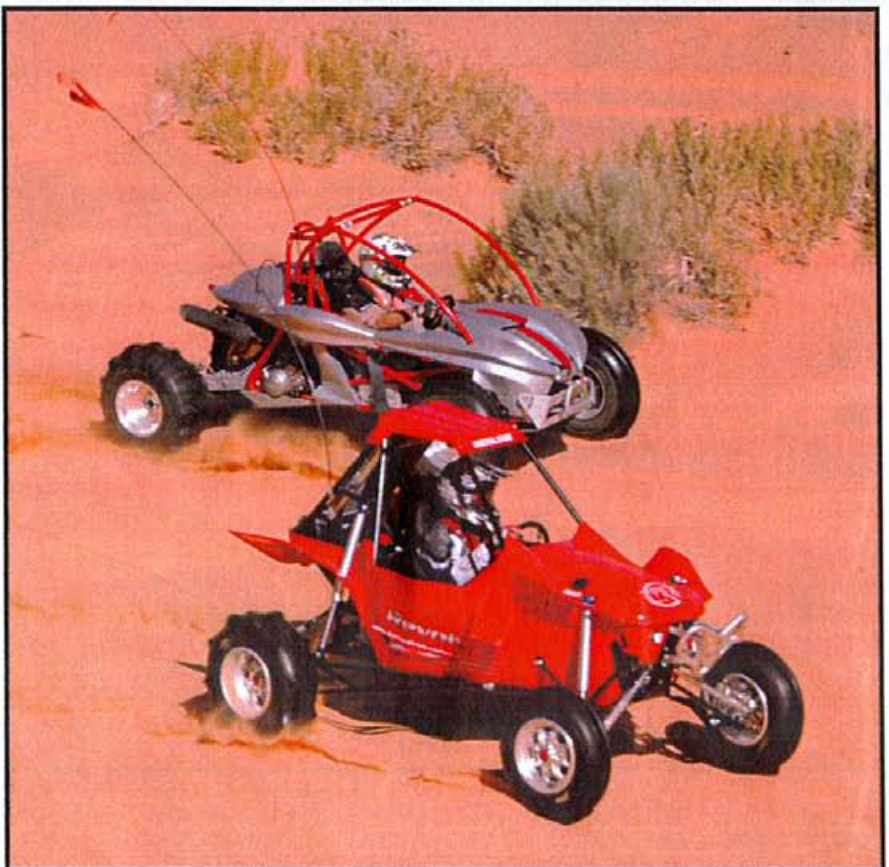
# DUELING DUNERS

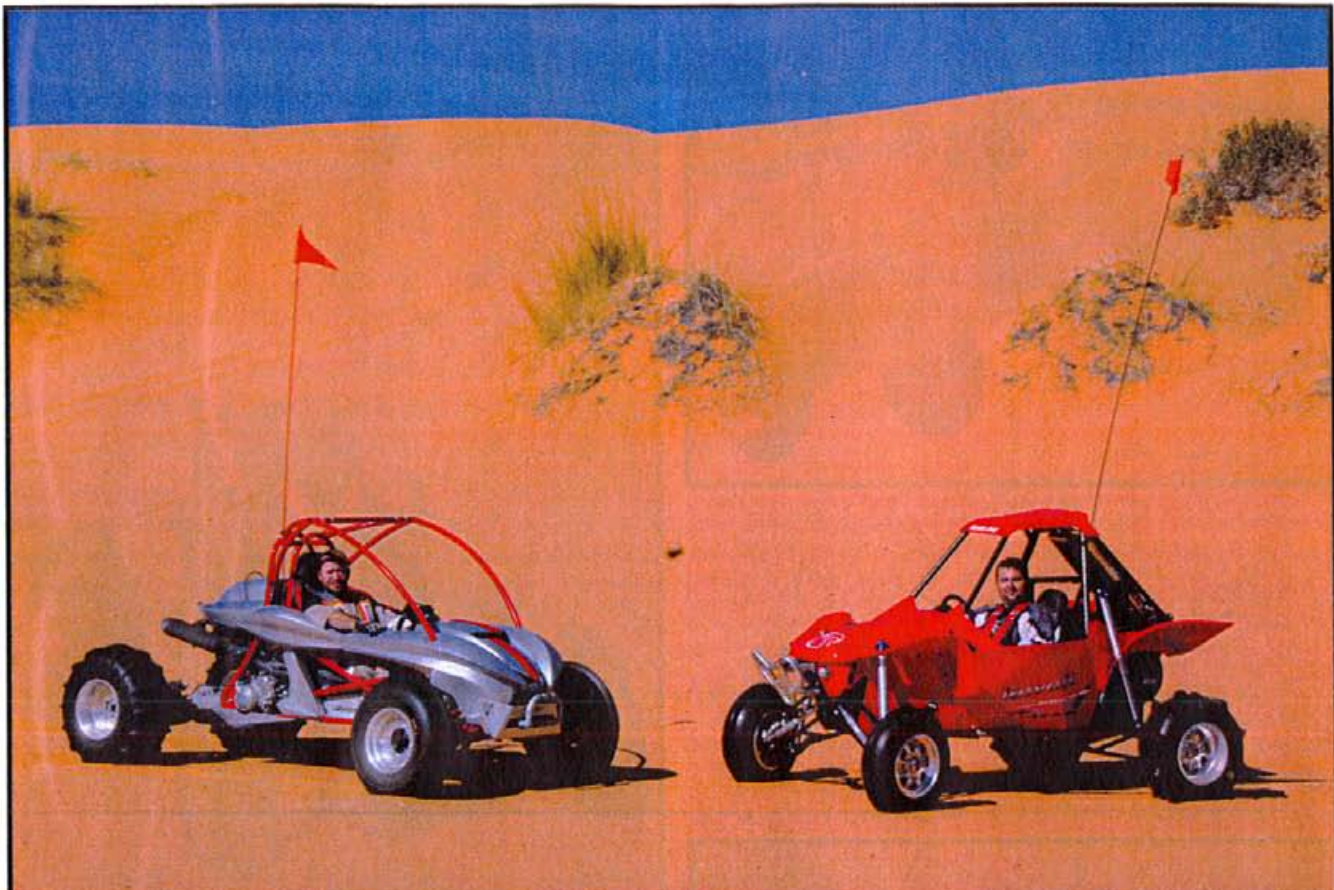
**We put two new sand vehicles in a head to head comparison at the Coral Pink Dunes**

BY MARK A. ROLLAND

My high school American History teacher, Mr. Andrews, told our class that history will often repeat itself. Maybe not as much in actions as it is in products, but Mr. Andrews' lesson seems to ring true. Who remembers the white Bell-Bottom pants worn by John Travolta in the movie "Staying Alive?" Didn't we see them come back in style just a few years ago? It seems there is also something else from 1977 that is trying to making a return in our modern day off-roading world. Do you remember the Honda Pilot FL250? It was produced from 1977 to 1984, and a 350cc model was made in '85. That was followed by the FL400, which was produced for two years in 1989 and 1990.

Today, there are two separate companies that claim the Honda Pilot inspired the design of their new vehicle. The vehicles we are referring to are the Speedy by Llanos Motor Sports, and the Revolt made by Redline. Although the two products look nothing alike, their designers both say the





## SPEEDY

### SPECIFICATIONS

**MOTOR:** Yamaha Raptor 700 (fuel injected)  
**TRANSMISSION:** 5-Speed Manual Clutch W/Reverse  
**CHASSIS AND ROLL CAGE:** Aerospace Alloy 4130 Tubing  
**FRONT SUSPENSION:** Double A-arm with high/low speed compression and rebound, threaded pre-load adjustment, 9.1 inches of wheel travel (Elka shocks are optional)  
**REAR SUSPENSION:** Cast aluminum swing arm with high/low speed, compression and rebound, threaded pre-load adjustment, 10.1 inches of wheel travel (Elka shocks are optional)  
**WHEEL BASE:** 85 inches  
**WIDTH:** 56 inches  
**GROUND CLEARANCE:** 12 inches  
**DRY WEIGHT:** 600 pounds  
**FUEL CAPACITY:** 2.9 gallons  
**FRONT TIRES:** 25x7x12 (Knobbies), 27x8x12 (Sand Tires)  
**REAR TIRES:** 26x12x12 (Knobbies), 27x12x12 (Paddles)  
**MSRP:** \$19,500 (\$12,500 without motor)  
**CONTACT:** <[www.speedy-buggy.com](http://www.speedy-buggy.com)>



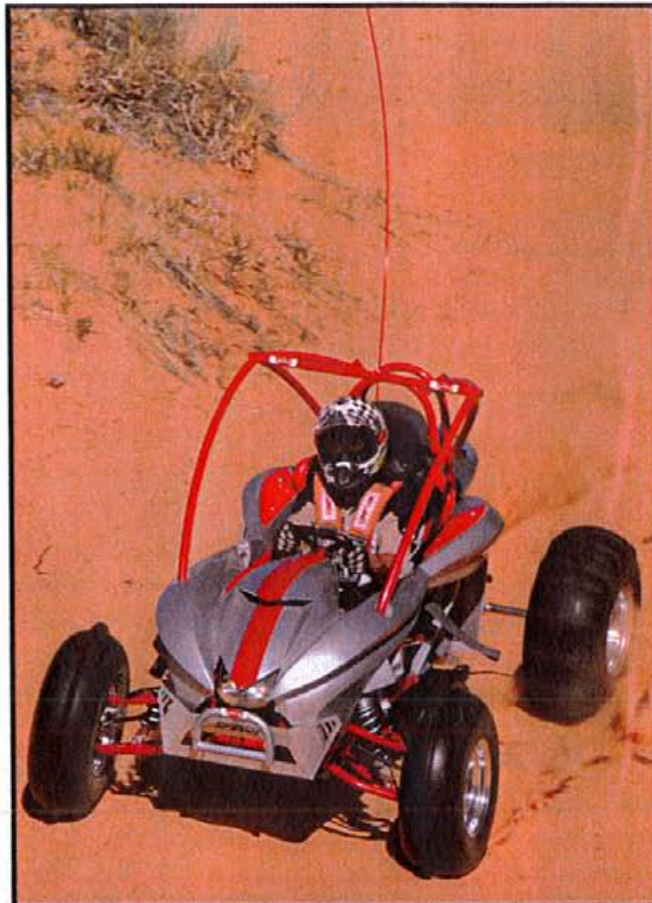
## REVOLT

### SPECIFICATIONS

**MOTOR:** Weber 749cc, 4-stroke, parallel twin cylinder, SOHC, EFI 72hp  
**TRANSMISSION:** Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT), Redline proprietary F/N/R gearbox  
**CHASSIS:** Powder coated tubular space frame  
**FRONT SUSPENSION:** Chromoly double A-arms, 10-inch Fox air shocks, 17 inches of wheel travel  
**REAR SUSPENSION:** Chromoly trailing arms, 12-inch Fox air shocks, 16.5 inches of wheel travel  
**WHEEL BASE:** 73.5 inches  
**WIDTH:** 65 inches  
**WEIGHT:** Approx. 700 pounds  
**FUEL CAPACITY:** 5.5 gallons  
**FRONT TIRES:** 23x8x12  
**REAR TIRES:** 26x10x12  
**MSRP:** \$15,999.  
**CONTACT:** <[www.1redline.com](http://www.1redline.com)>



During the test, our two drivers were told not to talk to each other about their personal impression of the vehicles. Trying to be as fair as possible, I told them not to tell me anything either, until I had a chance to drive them both. When these two guys agreed to be the test drivers they didn't even know for sure what they would be testing. All they were told is the size of the motors, weights of the vehicles and that they were single-seaters. By the time the test date arrived, they had put a few of the clues together, but were totally surprised to see the Speedy. And just to be fair, it's probably best that you know the placement of the radiator on the Speedy moved. It was relocated from in front of the left rear wheel to behind the driver's head, out of harm's way from anything that could cause damage to it.



Honda Pilot was at the root of their ideas while they were in the process of designing these off-road vehicles. Some people may call this a coincidence, but we think it is a testament to the superior design of Honda's Pilot and the lasting impression it left on the off-road world.

On paper, the Speedy and Revolt are fairly similar. They are both single-seaters that are equipped with 4-stroke motors, and the driver sits in a well protected seat. However, once you get strapped in and start driving, they are as different as they visually appear.

Each vehicle also has a unique and interesting history in regards to how they were developed. The Speedy is the creation of an individual who came to the Sand

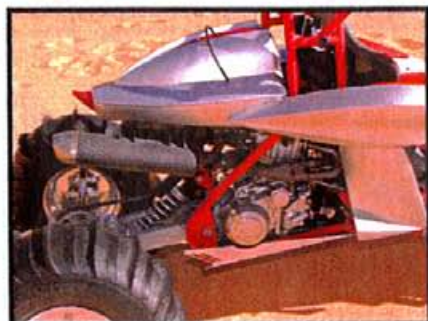
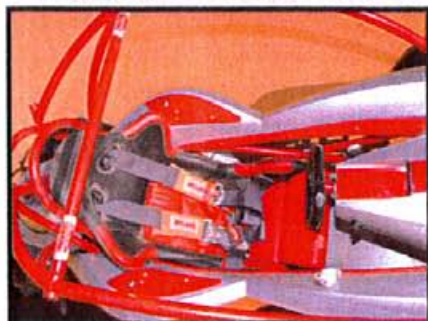
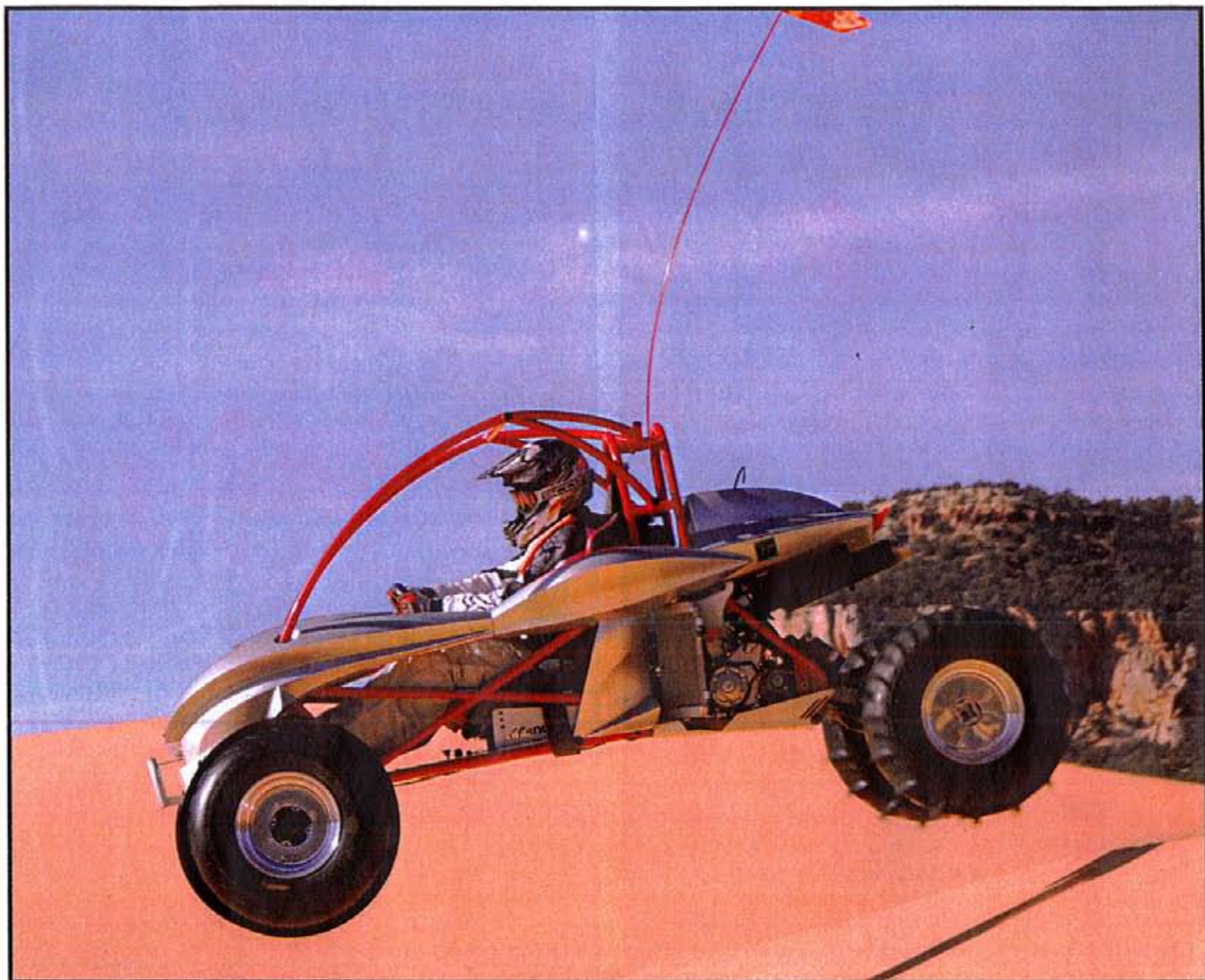
Sports Super Show and was inspired to create a completely new off-road vehicle. The Revolt was the result of two failed companies, from engineers who had a great idea that just wouldn't go away. Both of these vehicles stand out because of their individual design, and the single-seat buggy market is a segment of the sand industry where not a lot of new vehicles have been introduced in recent years.

## HISTORY BEHIND THE SPEEDY

Nestor Llanos is the brains behind the Speedy. A designer from Buenos Aires, he came to the U.S. in 2001 with an invitation from the Gaffoglio family to do some work at their company called Metalcrafters. He

thanks John Gaffoglio for his guidance and opportunity to be a part of the Metalcrafters team. Nestor's talent is designing concept cars. You may recognize a few of the big name concept cars his team has worked on over the years; Jeep Hurricane, Ford Bronco, Chrysler Me-4-Twelve, and the Dodge Challenger. Those that made it to production were the Toyota FJ Cruiser, Dodge Nitro, Jeep Compass, as well as the Mopar NHRA bodies used on the Top Fuel Funny Cars driven by John Force and his team.

In 2006, Nestor stepped out on his own as a design engineering consultant. The Speedy (Silver Dart) is the first "dream come true" for Llanos and his new company, Llanos Motorsports. From a production



standpoint, the owners at Mosebillt have agreed to manufacture the Speedy as orders come in. The best part of this story is that the concept of this buggy began as a simple sketch, which happened after Llanos attended the 2001 Sand Sports Super Show. And now, it's a running vehicle that was tested in the dunes and featured in Sand Sports magazine.

### HISTORY BEHIND THE REVOLT

Keith McGovern is the President and one of eleven members of the Board of Directors at Redline. An off-road enthusiast himself, as well as a veteran B Class racer who has broken his neck twice, Kevin is the one who pushed for the Revolt to be built.

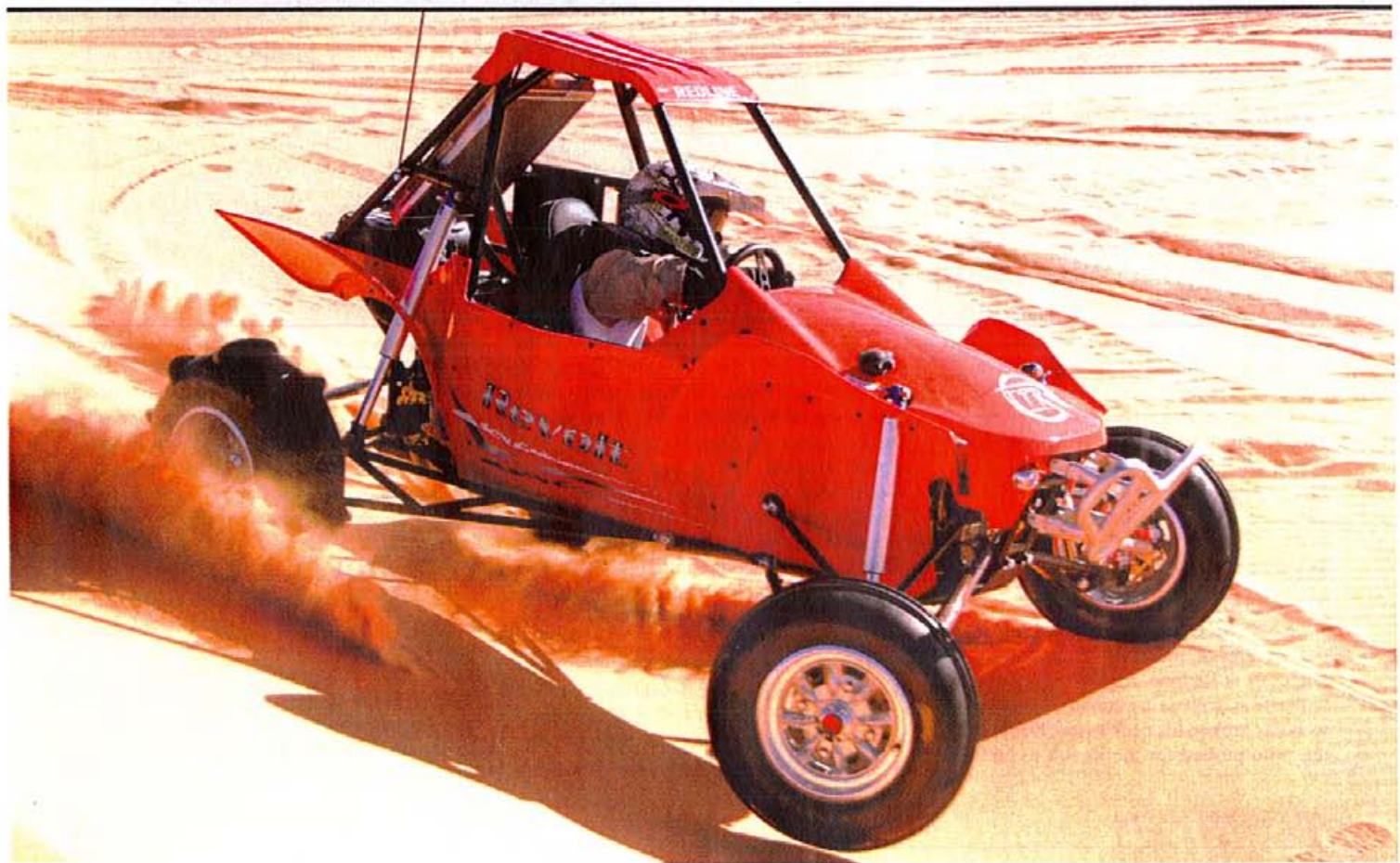
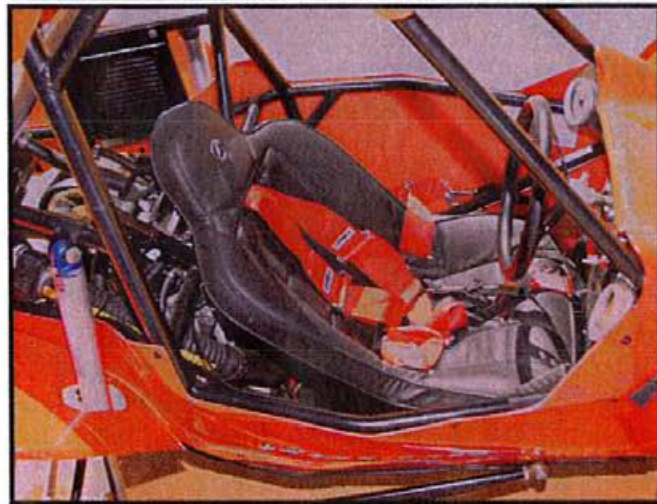
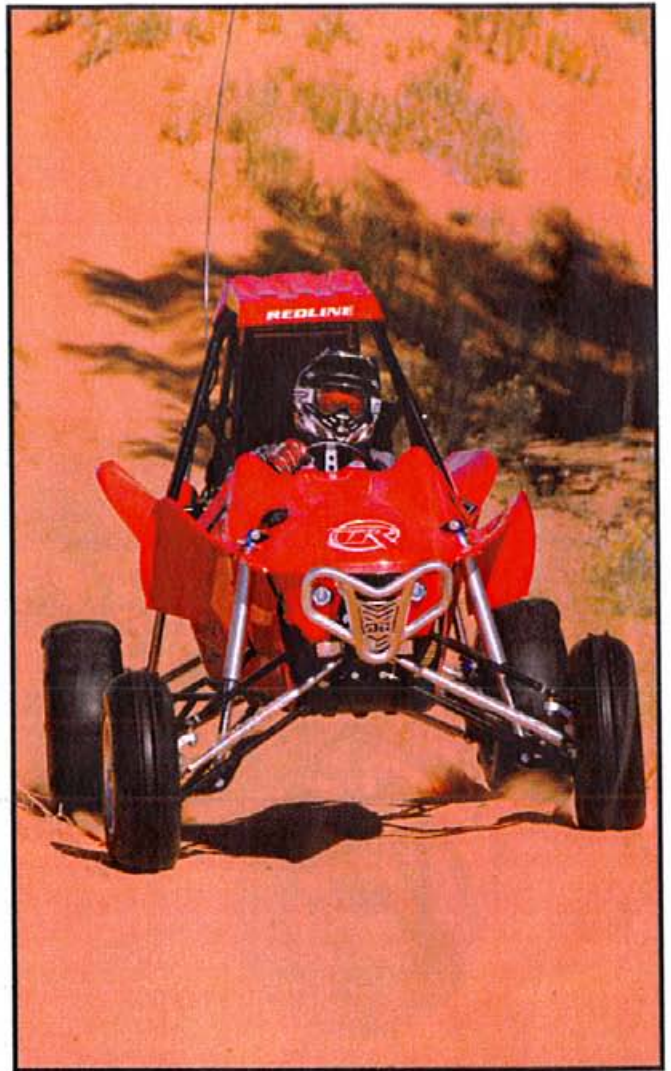
The history of how this vehicle came to be actually started in southern California. A group of designers and engineers were designing snowmobiles. They won awards for their ideas, but found that producing the actual machine was going to cost more money than they thought. Bankruptcy followed, and a small group of team members found investors in Minnesota and North Dakota to continue the initial dream with a vehicle called the Interstate. Again, bad fortune would follow, and another great product died.

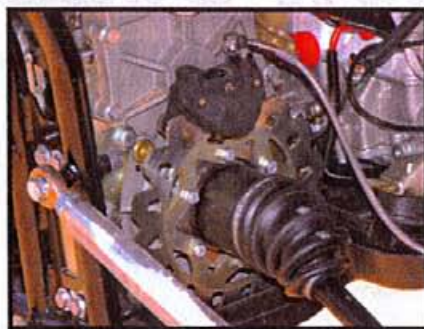
It was at this point when Keith offered the idea of the Revolt off-road buggy to his team. Keith said to his fellow board members, "Let's take all the good parts of what we've already engineered, and use those

components to build a modern day version of a Honda Pilot." That's all it took. What you see here is the result of countless hours of effort invested by many people, one of which was Terry Talbert who races in the Best In The Desert off-road series. Rumor is that we may end up seeing a class for Revolts in desert racing during the 2008 season.

### TEST RIDERS

You may be wondering how we chose the test drivers to evaluate these new vehicles. To be honest, they were friends of a friend. It all began with a phone call to a person I know in New Mexico. I contacted my friend Jimmy Allison, owner of Champion Motorsports in Roswell, New Mexico. I thought it would be interesting to





**Just from looking at the Revolt, you are reminded of the Honda Pilot. We doubt that Pilot owners will take offence to this, but rather appreciate the idea of seeing a more up-to-date vehicle. This motor is almost twice the size of the largest displacement engine in the different Pilots built. And, having air shocks really makes a difference. Although a person over six foot may not fit as well as someone in the five-eight range, it was still a fun vehicle to drive. The company is aware of the UTV market and told us that in spring of 2008, they plan to have a two-seater version. Could Redline become the Kia of the off-road world? Stay tuned to find out.**

have a dealer's point of view on these new vehicles. Plus, I've ridden with Jimmy in the past, and he is someone I would trust to give an honest opinion about the performance of these vehicles, without trying to intentionally break them. Unfortunately, Jimmy wasn't available to participate with this project, because he had plans to be in the Bahamas at the time of this test. Offering a solution, Jimmy gave me the name and phone number of his friend in Las Vegas who was a former dealer, and is now a full time mechanic. That person introduced me to Pat Donnelly, a guy who basically grew up riding OHVs and has been competing on a quad in the Best In The Desert series for several years. His friend, Scott Caraveau, also grew up riding at the dunes and has experience driving off-road trucks and sand rails.

I also appreciated the fact that both test drivers have a different size and weight. This will help give you a better idea of how these vehicles are suited for drivers with a particular stature and weight. At 37 years old, Pat is 5-foot 4-inches and weighs 155 pounds. Scott is 35 years old, stands 5-foot 10-inches tall and weighs 200 pounds. So, with each of them having 25 years of riding experience on dirt bikes, 3-wheelers and quads, I believe we found two guys who were more than qualified to give an honest opinion on the performance of these two vehicles.

### **SPEEDY DRIVING IMPRESSION**

Both drivers thought the Speedy had good acceleration, although Scott gave it a little higher ranking and commented that it

would go as fast as you could shift through the gears. It's powered by a 686cc Yamaha Raptor engine, pushing a vehicle that weighs 600 pounds. This is well over a hundred pounds more than what the Yamaha Raptor weighs, but it's half of what a Rhino weighs (both of which are powered by the same motor). I felt the acceleration was fine, and it did a fine job of giving you a good sensation of speed. In my opinion, however, it came equipped with paddle tires that were much too big. I say this because when it came to climbing a dune, it lost power very quick, as if the motor was being bogged down from too much traction. On a hard packed surface with knobby tires, I doubt you'll have this problem.

When it came to braking, Pat liked it a little more than Scott. Pat had no problem

*Continued on page 120*

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## DUELING DUNERS

Continued from page 35

bringing it to a halt, but Scott and I agreed that the placement of the brake pedal could have been moved a little further away from the clutch. Although the Speedy has an ATV motor, it drives and shifts just like a car, with three foot pedals (gas on the right, brake and clutch on left) and a shifter handle on the right side of the cockpit.

Pat and I both noticed something about the steering, or how the vehicle tracked. At some point in time during our test session the left rear tire developed a leak and, because it had less air pressure than the right tire, the vehicle would begin to "walk" when driving it at higher speeds. Once the air pressure problem was corrected, I found the Speedy's steering to be very responsive. And speaking of the steering, both vehicles had removable steering wheels, to assist in getting in and out of the cockpit.

All three of us had particular comments on the comfort of the ride, and how it felt inside the Speedy. Scott said it felt good, except for his elbows touching the sides of the inside panels. Pat would've liked to have adjustable foot pedals, to make it easier for those with shorter legs. Me being the tallest, I found that the top of my helmet was higher than the roll cage. So at 6-foot 2-inches, I might be a little too big for this OHV. (I'm sure the height of the cage could be modified by the manufacturer if the request was made when the vehicle was ordered.)

Pat and I agreed the suspension worked well. If you pushed it in the whoops, things got a little bouncy, but it corrected quickly when you let off the gas and got back into the rhythm. Pat also thought that for a recreational rider, who did not intend on getting crazy, it was a nice ride. Scott felt it could be a little softer, but part of that may have been his weighing more than Pat.

When I asked the test riders to tell me where they thought this vehicle would best be suited to drive, they both believed that the long, thin design would be great for drag racing. Pat added that he thought most recreational duners would also like it as long as they weren't expecting some kind of high performance racer. (This left me thinking, "how would it perform with a Hayabusa motor?")

Another question I thought could be interesting to ask them was, "what would you change about the vehicle?" Scott suggested making it wider and putting in an automatic transmission. Pat would like an adjustable seat, hard roof and a sun visor. If I had to make a suggestion, I would ask for more wheel travel, or better tuned shocks and, of course, a taller roll cage.

## REVOLT DRIVING IMPRESSION

Driving the Revolt has a different sensation to it. Having a tighter fit and a louder motor, it gave the driver the sensation of what it might be like to be a test pilot in some of the early jets of the 1970's, perhaps

even the famed Blackbird SR-71. It clearly has more horsepower and climbs much better than the speedy. Both Pat and Scott thought the Revolt had great throttle response, but Pat gave it a slightly higher score. Again, this may have been because Scott is 45 pounds heavier. But, even at 230 pounds, I thought it had plenty of power to have fun with, and it climbed hills very well. We all agreed the braking was superb. When it came to steering, Scott and I agreed that at high speeds it was fine, but at slower speeds it pushed. In tight turns, hard on the gas, there was one front wheel that almost always came off the ground. Pat had no complaints about the steering, saying it was great. Pat also felt very comfortable in the Revolt. He said having the fuel cell between his legs was a different feeling (I agree), but you always knew how much gas you had by looking down at the transparent tank. Scott had no complaints with how the Revolt felt inside the cockpit, but it was simply too small for someone taller than 6-feet. (I was told by the owner of Revolt that a Rally seat would make room for an adult up to 6-feet 4-inches.) My knees rubbed the bottom of the dash, and at the end of 30 minutes one ankle and thigh were sore. This was due to the extreme angle of my leg position. The foot pedals were much easier to use, as it only had two pedals. The right foot operated the gas, and the left foot was the brake — although I didn't use it much.

Suspension and wheel travel was much more than the Speedy, but the shorter wheelbase was noticeable in the whoops. All three of us said it was a little bouncy, but the less body weight the better the ride. We also agreed on where this vehicle would best be suited. Pat thought it would be great in the sand, desert or short track, where Scott agreed with Pat on saying it would be great in desert racing. I think it would be a fun vehicle for the Best In The Desert series. And, of course, it was fun in the sand. When it came to suggesting any changes, Pat was satisfied with the Revolt as it was, but mentioned this vehicle probably isn't for the first time driver. Scott felt it got a little squirly at high speeds and could use softer shocks. (Remember, with air shocks, making adjustments is fairly simple.) I thought the motor was a little loud, but it had great power. As big of a person as I am, it would have been nice to have a little more leg room. But, for someone a little smaller, this will be a lot of fun to drive. Also, look for a two-seater version to be released in spring of 2008, the TS 750 & TS750R.

In conclusion, these two new vehicles were a lot of fun in the dunes. However, I'd be curious to learn how they would handle on desert trails. It will be interesting to see how the single-seat market does over the next couple of years. Hopefully, the soft economy will not affect potential sales. These OHVs are well designed and have a lot to offer the off-roader that enjoys a solitary desert experience. Don't be surprised to see either of these units in a desert racing series, as they each have race inspired features.

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