

Teams Hustle to Complete their Builds on Time for the Toyota Racing Dream Build Challenge

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TORRANCE, Calif., (Oct. 8, 2012) — Customizing a vehicle can often be broken down into a series of tasks that can then be scheduled and executed—at least until the clock runs out. Then all bets are off. And so it goes for the Toyota Racing Dream Build Challenge teams with time to complete their ambitious builds coming to a close in about two weeks, just before voting begins on October 20. And just like a race car, these one-off rides must be ready to go when the green flag drops.

Kyle Busch's "Rowdy Edition" Camry is "getting close." Busch's team at Detroit Speed has extensively reworked the Camry's body with strong fender flares, a NASCAR-style splitter and front and rear belly pans to direct airflow under the car. All of these parts have been custom designed and fabricated by hand—a painstaking and time-consuming process. More recently, the team has been scrambling to finish custom interior touches with completely redone seats and a custom electronic entertainment package.

Getting a complex collection of custom-built electronics to work seamlessly in his "Tekked-Out Prius" seems to be keeping Clint Bowyer's RKM Performance Center team awake into the wee hours. It's loaded with hi-tech gadgets like side-view cameras that replace the mirrors, 45 feet. of fiber optic interior lighting and a 16-speaker stereo with six crossovers and dual amplifiers. Then there's the suspension which has dropped the Prius "lower than a Sprint Cup car." And, there's certainly no lack of team spirit as their build will sport no less than 364 copies of the Toyota logo.

Alexis DeJoria's Pre-Runner Tundra concept has her Racer Engineering team working on virtually every aspect of the truck. Long-travel suspension (20 inches in the rear), an elaborate custom roll cage wrapped in leather, and a TRD-supercharged engine are all part of her design to make a serious off-road tool. The team is also squeezing in a JBL audio system and a specially-built fuel cell. It's all more than enough to keep them busy right up to the due date.

Some builds are more ambitious than others, and Antron Brown's "DragQuoia" is a big concept that's challenging its capable builders. The "family dragster" idea means that whatever they do has to leave room for the family to ride safely and comfortably. And they're doing quite a lot. For starters, the Motorsports Technical Center team is lopping more than 2,000 lbs. off the factory curb weight. A TRD blower and nitrous coax the 5.7-liter V8 to pump out more than 650 hp for those "quick" runs to the supermarket. Massive 21.5-inch wide rear tires put the power to the ground, which in turn need big fender mods—inside and out—to keep the hot rubber bits contained in the wheel wells. Fortunately, Junior will have a comfortable perch in the back to view the scenery rushing by, secured with his own five-point racing harness. And between runs, he can watch his favorite DVD on the seat-back media player.

Every one of the Dream Build vehicle teams has the chops and experience to deliver for their driver. The simple question on delivery day may come down to this: Which team will be the least sleep deprived.

All four of the Toyota Racing Dream Build Challenge vehicles will be unveiled at the Toyota display during the company's press conference on October 30 at the 2012 SEMA Show. Fans can vote for their favorite team beginning on October 20 and may vote once per day through October 29. For more information, go to the home page at www.ToyotaRacingDreamBuild.com.