



February 17, 2008

ACTON RACING TEAM'S BITD BLUE WATER RESORT AND CASINO PARKER 425 EXPERIENCE CUT SHORT

With clear, sunny skies and cool temps Saturday morning, three-hundred and seventeen off-road race trucks, buggies and Jeeps began to stream off the starting line for the **Best in the Desert Blue Water Resort and Casino Parker 425**. The law enforcement themed **Acton Racing Team Jeepspeed 1737** entered the racecourse with emergency lights and sirens blaring to the crowd's delight at roughly 8:30 A.M.

Having drawn the 5th starting position for the **Jeepspeed** class at Parker, the **Acton Racing Team** was positioned to execute their race strategy and begin the 2008 off-road racing season with an upset win. Having learned the limitations of the vehicle through the rough terrain at the previous race, driver **Mike Acton** was more conservative through similar terrain at Parker, allowing the **Rubicon Express** suspension components and **Sway-a-Way RaceRunner** shocks to demonstrate their superior traction control.

Additionally, the decision to install the **Currie Enterprises** 4-wheel drive front axle for this race provided a strategic advantage as the soft, moist sand had been chewed up by the previous 290 racers. Using front wheel drive as needed got the **Acton Racing 1737 Jeepspeed** up on top of the sand faster, while many of our competitors plowed through the sand with their front tires. It also provided much needed traction for higher speeds through soft corners.

After passing the Graham Well pit area, **Jeepspeed 1737** was flying down power line road at top speed, threading the needle of the power polls, when a Trophy Truck blew past leaving them in a cloud of dust. Forced to slow down significantly due to zero visibility they plowed right through some obstacle on the drivers side, providing a wake-up call to both driver and co-driver. This was alarming but seemed to have no effect on performance so they resumed speed.

Throughout the race **Acton Racing** respectfully pulled out of the way to allow fellow **Jeepspeed** competitors with a different race strategy to pass, only to slowly and methodically regain position as they became disabled due to mishap or equipment failure. At midway into the first lap, the **Acton Racing** team was running in roughly 8th place from a field of 25, pushing the vehicle to the limit of it's current 4-wheel drive setup with no problems, broken equipment or bad fortune.

At roughly mile marker 81 **Jeepspeed 1737** entered another high-speed section of the course. Mike had the Jeep strung out in full drift around the corners, with top speeds of 83 MPH and based on IRC satellite tracking averaging 62 MPH through the hazards along the entire 10 mile graded dirt road. Less than a mile before Midway Pit 3 and the last turn on this section of road, the **Acton Racing Team** had their one and only mishap for the entire Parker 425.

Running at full speed with foot to the floor, Mike decelerated into the curve but set the vehicle up toward the outside of the road instead of planting the nose against the inside hill as he had on all previous sweeping turns. This turn was sharper by roughly 10 degrees than previous sweeping turns, and at high speed in that position on the road, it became obvious that **Jeepspeed 1737** was not going to make the turn. A split second driver decision to straighten out the path of the Jeep thwarted a side rollover crash and instead launched the racecar over the outer berm into the unknown at roughly 60 MPH.

With a horrendous CRUNCH and BANG the team landed in a cactus garden but was still moving, and after an enthusiastic “yeah, that’s how you get it, baby” **Mike Acton** hammered the throttle and reentered the race course. It was obvious due to the loud grinding sounds that the vehicle was seriously damaged. Additionally, co-driver **Scott Johnson** had taken the brunt of the force of the crash in the passenger seat and was possibly in need of attention. The **Simpson Performance Products** padded neck support collars purchased just days before the race saved both driver and co-driver from serious whiplash injury.

Since **Scott Johnson** was seeing stars and needed to get out of the vehicle, **Mike Acton** pulled off the course a quarter mile up the road where it was safe to get out. Upon evaluating Scott’s condition it was determined that he was uninjured and just needed a few minutes to regain composure. Unfortunately, the **Currie Enterprises** front axel and support members were snapped completely in half six inches before the passenger side wheel. They also discovered that the rear axel was bent slightly from right to left and shaped more like a contact lens now, at least two of the **Sway-a-way RaceRunner** shocks were completely blown out and leaking fluid, the **Borla** exhaust system was crushed, and the unibody frame rails on both sides of the Jeep were bent and cracked right in the rear wheel wells.

After a brief discussion, they decided to try and limp the Jeep back to the main pit so that they wouldn’t be waiting until 2 A.M. after the race for recovery. The only thing holding the front end together was the axel being longer than the broken axel tube but it allowed them to continue slowly for 28 more miles, stopping for each broken down competitor to offer assistance. Just before mile marker 118 the axel finally fell out of the axel tube and the passenger side front suspension fell apart.

Sitting sideways in the middle of the racecourse at the end of another high-speed section with sand up to their differentials, the fear of getting T-boned by a Trophy Truck took priority. Needing to get pulled out of the racecourse immediately, the decision was made to try the newly installed **International Racing Consultants IriTrack** satellite communication and tracking system. After pressing the appropriate button a message came through the speaker “*transferring*”, and then after three rings it said “*please leave a message after the tone*”. Although the team needed immediate assistance they had been sent to voice mail.

Luckily, two different recovery Jeeps happened by within 20 minutes of each other, one driven by **Bob “Weatherman” Steinberger**, and each dragged **Jeepspeed 1737** further off the race course to safety. After ratchet strapping the Jeep’s front end so that it would roll straight, the **Acton Racing** crew got it onto a trailer with the help of **Ben Palma Jeepspeed 1792**. The first **Best in the Desert Blue Water Resort and Casino Parker 425** for the **Acton Racing Team Jeepspeed 1737** had been cut short, but when asked how the race went driver **Mike Acton** said “*it was awesome!*”

The Acton Racing Team would like to thank:

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We would like to thank these manufacturers whose products we not only use, but also believe in and recommend to our family and friends:

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