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# Building a Legend

BY BRONCO DRIVER STAFF

For over 15 years Shaun Bryant dreamed of building a trophy-truck quality Early Ford Bronco. He wanted to create an Early Bronco that he could take surfing or just drive around town, yet tough enough to take down to Baja and pre-run the Baja 500's rugged off-road trails. Shaun been surfing and driving in Baja for over 30 years, so his dream Bronco had to be able to conquer his summertime surf excursions. In his first Early Bronco, a '68 with a 351 Windsor and 3.5" K Bar S dual-shocked lift, he and his friends got literally pounded to death navigating the driving dirt roads and trails looking for new surf breaks. There HAD to be a better way.

## HOW IT BECAME THE LEGEND

The Legend Bronco was already built in Shaun's mind many years ago. After restoring hundreds of Early Broncos for over nearly 20 years for customers all over the world, and trying a number of different suspension configurations at his former shop in Inglewood CA (a three-seater in 2002 with 15" of front & rear wheel travel, a four seater in 2004 with 14" of wheel travel) plus heavily modifying his '72 Vintage Class 3 Racer, Shaun has been getting ready for a yet to be determined future challenge.

In January of 2012, Shaun received a call from a potential client. This client had seen his work on RockyRoads.com, and knew what he wanted. He wanted the traditional Early Bronco look and feel, the smoothest possible ride but also wanted more wheel travel than any EB suspension system being offered in the EB industry. A daily driver that could double as a trail rig.

He said that he had actually talked to Icon 4x4 after their Icon Bronco concept had peeked his interest. He wanted something more 'traditional' than what Icon was offering, something he could actually tinker with himself. He wanted his new Bronco to be more flexible as

far as options, plus it had to be more affordable. Most importantly, he wanted a unique suspension system not typically seen on most Early Broncos, but not quite a 'Desert Racer'. There had to be something that could fit his imagination as well as his budget.

## THE DETAILS

That same day, the client and Shaun set out on a mission; to design and build a radical new Early Model Ford Bronco, based entirely on the factory Ford Early Bronco chassis. It would be unlike any Rocky Roads had built in the past with a truly unique 12" coil-over four link suspension system that could handle any off-road and 4x4 situation; from Pre-Running an off-road race to Rock Crawling, to taking to a truck show or car cruise. The client wanted his new Bronco to be able to actually withstand an EMP (Electromagnetic Pulse) attack as well, so running a late model engine with Fuel Injection was out of the question for his build. After agreeing to take on the job, Shaun located a perfect candidate in Burbank, CA. It was a clean 100% rust-free 1971 Ford Bronco with a mildly modified 351 Windsor & NV 4500 5-speed transmission, which was exactly what his client wanted.



Shaun set out on his search for a fabrication shop that would be willing to help him design and develop a radical new 12" travel coil-over suspension system with four-link and Fox race shocks. After discussing this new concept with various designers in the off-road racing





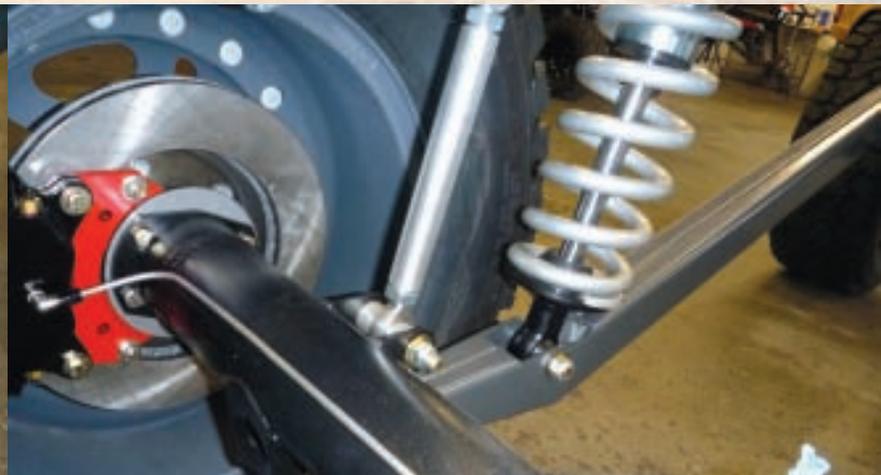
industry, Shaun was referred to a new and upcoming company with an outstanding background in suspension and chassis design. This company had built, prepped, and maintained countless championship winning race cars, ranging from open wheel unlimited buggies and Trophy trucks to stock class vehicles and even worked on the development and race program of the Ford Race Raptor, so Shaun gave them an opportunity to develop his new Legend product line for him.

In the development of the new Legend, Rocky Roads saw a lot of room for improvement on most of

the aftermarket parts they were trying to use and decided to start producing a new Rocky Roads product line. Some of the new products include a new coil over front and rear suspension package (including radius arms and trailing arms) with 12" wheel travel, a replacement dash with integrated GPS, a unique billet speedometer bezel with key switch built in, a unique front plated / pre runner bumper, a stylish purpose-built roll cage, and a CNC mandrel bent stainless steel exhaust

system. Carefully combined with other high-end EB parts, including the RR Cowl Induction fiberglass hood and match painted fender flares, these components will make the new Legend Bronco stand out in a crowd.

The first RR Legend Bronco was built using a high-torque 351 Windsor engine with ceramic headers, the new mandrel bent stainless steel exhaust system, March billet aluminum pulleys, MSD ignition and a Ron Davis aluminum radiator, NV4500 five speed transmission, Atlas 2



transfer case, Electric hydro-boost system, fabricated Currie 9" rear axle housing with 31-spline axles, 4.11 high pinion Detroit Locker, Wilwood 4-piston caliper disc brakes coupled with a Dana 44 front axle utilizing an ARB Air Locker and Ford disc brakes, and custom designed steering. The Hutchinson 17" bead lock wheels with Mickey Thompson ATZ tires will carry the new Legend over treacherous terrain or simply around town. This Bronco will be capable of handling any terrain the owner would ever dare to take on.

After nine months of hard work and patience, their dream has now become a reality. The finishing touches are now completed, including the roll cage, dash, Vintage A/C system, Sirius XM Radio 6 speaker sound system, Pro Car Elite interior, and roll cage padding and wrapping. The first Legend Bronco has been tested and delivered to it's client.

**THE FUTURE**

Rocky Roads will begin to offer full frame-off Legend Restorations (as the first Legend client chose) started in early 2013. The new Legend 12" coil over suspension package is also now available to all Bronco enthusiasts. They just gotten in five more Legend suspension systems from the, so they can now duplicate the amazing suspension of this truck for anyone who also wants to think outside of the box. 🚙

