

by Kevin Hetmanski
PHOTOS BY PETE HALL

4WD is good. 6WD is Better!



PROJECT: Truck Stop Racing Nitro 6 ST



THERE'S A LOT OF DIVERSITY in the world of monster trucks, but you can always count on four wheels. Mini, electric, nitro, gas, 1/4-scale ... No matter which kind of monster you have, it's got four wheels—unless you have a Truck Stop Racing (TSR) Nitro 6 ST, that is. It's available as a conversion kit for the Associated Monster GT, and you can also buy it ready to run right from TSR. It isn't exactly the sort of truck you see every day, but that doesn't mean you won't find a bunch of customizing options for it. Since it's basically a Monster GT with an extra axle, there's a universe of upgrades you can bolt on. I tricked out my 6-wheeler big rig with a new engine, heavy-duty suspension arms, aluminum shock towers and more to take it to another level.

VIDEO ONLINE
see it at rccaraction.com



Project
NITRO
6 ST

Inside the
TSR NITRO 6 ST

TSR starts with a stock Associated Monster GT 4.6, so all the truck's standard features are carried over to the Nitro 6—pivot-ball suspension, 3-shoe clutch, 4.6 dual-start engine, single-disc brake, 2-speed tranny with slipper clutch and reverse. Aluminum brackets and plates tie an extra rear drivetrain and suspension assembly to the chassis, and the original rear diff housing, which is now the middle axle in this 6x6 configuration, has been modified so that it has an output shaft to join it to the rear axle. A long dogbone driveshaft connects the middle diff housing to the rear diff housing.

No off-the-shelf body will fit the limo-size Nitro 6, so TSR custom-pulls its own clear shell and leaves the painting to you. I cheated and sent mine to Zegers R/C Graffixx, and they laid down the Parma FasKolor paint for me.

That's one big body! I sent it to Zegers R/C Graffixx, who laid down the paint job using Parma FasKolor paint.



the
gear

Base kit
Truck Stop Racing

- › Nitro 6 ST—\$850

Chassis
New Era

- › Aluminum front body posts—item no. AMG318HP; \$25

Drivetrain

Team Associated

- › Robo disc brake—25410; \$16

Suspension & steering
New Era

- › Aluminum shock towers (F/R) AMG336SDF/AMG336SDR; \$28 each

Team Associated

- › Green slime—01105; \$3
- › Aluminum shock bodies—25403; \$35/set of 4

Body, wheels & tires
Pro-Line Racing

- › Narrow Bead-Loc wheels—2683-01; \$46/pair
- › Moab XL 40 series tires—1119-00; \$33/pair

Zegers R/C Graffixx

- › Paint job—\$100

Electronics

Airtronics

- › MX3 radio (transmitter only)—90510TX; \$50
- › 94359Z servo—94359Z; \$140

Engine & accessories

LRP

- › Z.28R engine—LRP32802; \$170

OFNA

- › 250cc fuel tank—40269; \$20

Team Associated

- › Side-mounted header—25405; \$19

Vantage Racing

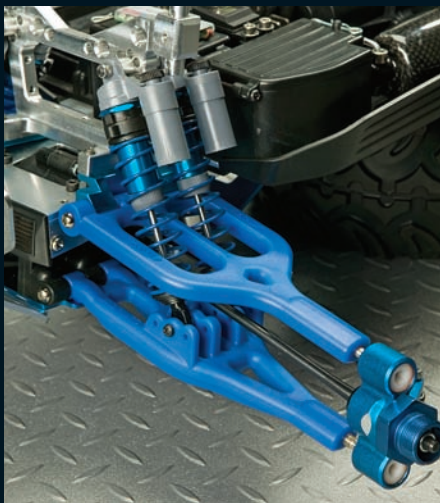
- › .21 carbon-fiber tuned pipe—SA120L; \$75



Now, *that's* a long wheel-base! The stretched-out Monster GT chassis is ready for anything.

Project
**NITRO
6 ST**

the Mods



These RPM suspension arms look great and will take a beating.

RPM suspension arms

On any monster truck, the suspension arms take a lot of abuse, so I replaced the stock arms with a set of blue ones from RPM. RPM goes the extra mile when designing parts to make them much stronger than the stock units. The color is a bonus and makes the truck look even cooler.

Heavy-duty hexes

For high-load applications, 14mm drive hexes just don't cut it. Some trucks move up to 17mm, but I wanted the beefiest setup I could find, so I installed Pro-Line's 23mm hexes to get the engine's power to the rims without being stripped out.

I filled my Nitro 6 ST's tank with Trinity Monster Horsepower 30-percent-nitro fuel.



Fast forward, better brakes

I rarely use the reverse on any truck, so I removed the shifting servo and locked the transmission in forward gear. I made a simple link that's attached to the servo mount and holds the shift lever in place. Slowing this truck down is very important, so I replaced the stock brake spring with a piece of fuel tubing to apply a little more pressure to the brake disc, and I installed Team Associated's after-market brake disc. These two mods make a much improved braking system.



These good-looking shock towers are also tough. New Era gives you more shock-mounting holes so that you can fine-tune the suspension.

Factory Team shocks & New Era towers

I ditched the stock plastic shock bodies and installed aluminum ones to help smooth out the suspension. I was concerned about the body mounts and shock towers. I've bent plenty of stock body mounts on a standard MGT. I know I'll flip this truck, and the extra weight is sure to stress the body mounts, so I replaced them with aluminum ones from New Era. I also replaced all three stock shock towers with stronger aluminum ones from New Era. Not only are they strong, but they also offer several shock-mounting positions; the stock towers have only one.



I added a Vantage Racing tuned pipe to the mix. It looks great.



This oversize fuel tank will ensure that my rig runs for a long time. I made the custom mount out of diamond plate aluminum and a couple of standoffs.

Fat fuel

There's so much space between the middle and rear gearboxes that I decided to mount the fuel tank there. Instead of the stock 150cc tank, I went a 250cc tank from an OFNA Hyper One Seven sedan. I used two standard fuel-tank mounts and a piece of aluminum diamond-plate to mount the tank on the chassis.



An LRP Z.28R engine puts out the ponies and gets this truck rolling.

LRP power

The MGT comes with a Thunder Tiger .28 engine, but it's rather tame compared with some of the available aftermarket ones. Need it or not, I always want more power in my trucks. I removed the stocker and installed an LRP Z.28R. This engine has ABC construction, a 10-fin heat-sink head and a 6-port sleeve, and the slide-type carb has an 8.5mm opening—all this for a reasonable price. Before I installed the new engine, I attached a side-mount header and a Vantage carbon-fiber tuned pipe. The engine mount is from New Era.



Pro-Line Moab XL tires wrapped around Pro-Line narrow Bead-Loc wheels provide plenty of traction.

Beefy Bead-Locs

You can't use 23mm hexes without picking up a set of rims with a matching 23mm hex. I decided to use Pro-Line's Bead-Loc wheels for several reasons: they look great; they don't require glue; and they have a tight hold on the tires. No way could you rip them off, no matter how hard you thrash on your truck. This truck is a backyard basher, and it's going to see different types of terrain, so I wanted suitable tires. Pro-Line's Moab XLs are the perfect choice here.



I replaced the stock radio with an Airtronics MX3; its 3-channel operation makes it great for reverse.

Serious Signals

The Nitro 6 includes the standard Associated AM radio system, which is functional but light on features. I stepped it up with an Airtronics MX3 radio. It has dual rate, servo-reversing, 18-model memory and endpoint adjustment. It also has a third channel so I could reinstall that tranny servo if I decide I want to use reverse. I bought the radio without servos because I wanted better ones. Once again, I was concerned about the truck's weight, and I wanted strong steering and brake servos. In went a pair of Airtronics 94359Z servos that each put out about 200 oz.-in. of torque.



Soil sampling with the 6x6

I was a bit nervous when I first went to run the Nitro 6 ST. It's very heavy. Would the engine have enough power to get it moving? Would a single disc brake slow it down? I put those thoughts aside, and after breaking the engine in, I headed to Wolcott Hobby in Wolcott, CT, to try the truck out and shoot a few photos. I filled the tank with 30-percent-nitro Trinity Monster Horsepower fuel and went to a concrete pad to run back and forth and fine-tune the LRP .28 engine. At a rich carb setting, the Nitro 6 ST spun all six tires; I couldn't believe it! The brakes were slightly soft, but I fixed that with an endpoint adjustment on my radio. My worries about its brakes and stopping power went out the window. I dialed in the engine and then drove the truck around the track. I took it easy over the jumps until I knew how the truck would handle. It accelerated well, but it spun its tires on the dirt going down the straight. I rolled the quad jump in front of the drivers' stand and turned the wheel toward the first turn. Off-power the truck digs in hard and turns very well, but on power, it pushes badly. That's to be expected when four tires try to make the truck go straight while two are trying to make it turn. The rear tires easily overwhelm the fronts. Entering the first turn, there's a steep, 5-foot hill, but the Nitro 6 ST laughed at it as it made its way to the top. On the rest of the track, the truck was very controllable. Braking was consistent, and the truck put down good power and left the corners fully in command of the situation. It took me a few laps to get used to the steering, but when I figured it out, I was soon ripping up the turns. After a few laps, I decided it was time to pull the trigger on the jumps. I lined up at the beginning of the straight and pegged it. The Nitro 6 ST had enough momentum to jump easily over three of the straight's four jumps. The truck consistently made it to the third jump's far side, and tapping the brake brought its nose down and lined it up perfectly. The doubles were easy and didn't need as much throttle to get over. Impressive! After track time, I hit the dirt piles to see how well the truck would climb them. This thing has so much power and grip that nothing could stop it.

WRAP-UP

The tweaked Truck Stop Racing Nitro 6 ST is one impressive rig. It handles like a standard truck but it has more traction, thanks to its extra set of tires. Every time I take it out, I'm swamped with questions and drooling people. Thanks to Truck Stop Racing for giving us a vehicle that isn't a cookie-cutter-type monster. This one stands out! ☼

SOURCES

Airtronics airtronics.net
LRP distributed by Team Associated; rc10.com
New Era neweramodels.com
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