Toyota’s TRD Desert Chase Tundra Is Every Off-Road Race Fan’s Dream Ride

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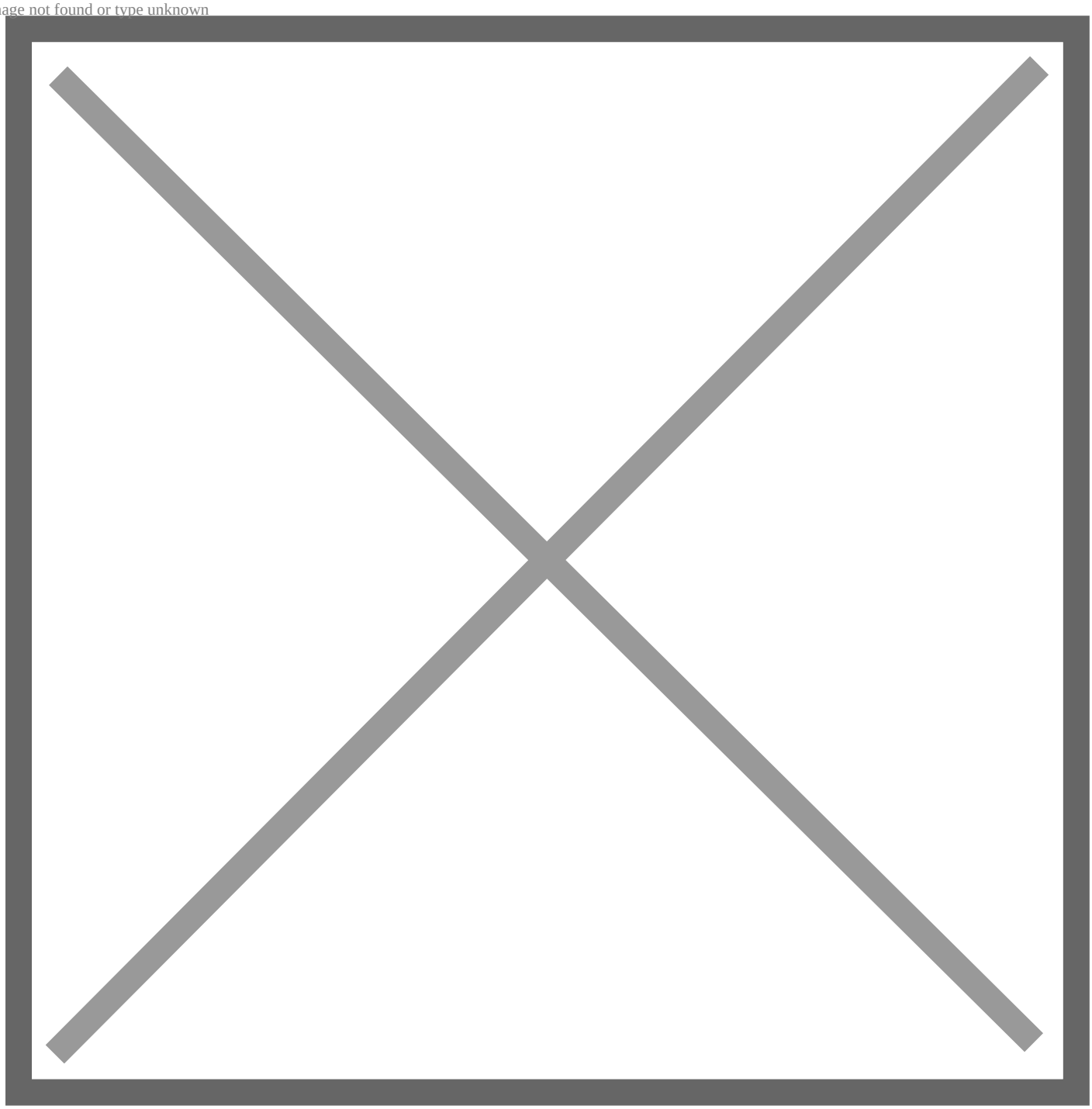

LAS VEGAS (November 2, 2021) – The all-new, third-generation 2022 Toyota Tundra – designed, engineered and assembled in the United States – is the toughest, most capable, most advanced Tundra ever. To prove it, the Toyota Racing Development (TRD) team decided the ideal way to showcase its "Born from Invincible" off-road heritage was to feature it as a chase support vehicle. The result is the TRD Desert Chase Tundra[1].

TRD naturally turned to Marty Schwerter at the Toyota Motorsports Garage to make this concept a reality, and today Toyota unveiled the end result during its 2021 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show press conference. The TRD Desert Chase Tundra, along with a collection of on- and off-road performance concepts, are on display Nov. 2-5, 2021, in Toyota's SEMA Show exhibit at the Las Vegas Convention Center (Central Hall, Booth No. 24800).

"Once again TRD and the Toyota Motorsports Garage have outdone themselves with this TRD Desert Chase Tundra," said Lisa Materazzo, group vice president – Toyota Division Marketing. "We're excited for the all-new Tundra to go on sale later this year. With its upgraded platform and improved payload, what better way to show off the Tundra's capability than building it into a desert racing support vehicle!"

Off-road racing differs from most traditional auto racing. Traditional auto races are held on closed-course circuits with dedicated pit lanes and paddocks where teams can manage repairs, adjustments and the driver's needs. Off-road races typically are in the remote desert, so any support outside of the driver and navigator is led by the team's support crew in a chase vehicle. Chase vehicles are a vital part of desert racing and also need serious off-road capabilities in order to support their race teams. Oftentimes, a support vehicle can mean the difference between getting across the finish line or a Did Not Finish (DNF). Rather than a dedicated pit lane and paddock, in off-road racing, the pit team chases the race vehicle the entire time.

The TRD Desert Chase Tundra starts with a solid foundation: the all-new 2022 Tundra TRD Pro, which features Toyota's new, innovative and capable hybrid powerplant. The i-FORCE MAX twin-turbocharged 3.5-liter V6 engine is paired with an electric motor system that is sandwiched in line between the engine and a 10-speed automatic transmission, and the package produces 437 horsepower and a whopping 583 lb.-ft. of torque, with that peak torque coming in at an impressively low 2,400 RPM.

To help ensure the TRD Desert Chase Tundra can negotiate the often-rigorous off-road courses, the team fitted a TRD-designed, long-travel suspension that uses the Tundra's stock mounting points. The team also added a wide-body kit designed and manufactured at TRD's North Carolina composite shop.

To help reduce unsprung suspension weight, the Chase Tundra rides on a custom set of lightweight 18-inch forged aluminum wheels from Method Race Wheels, wrapped in 37-inch General Tire Grabber X3 all-terrain tires on all four corners.

Many off-road races are not daylight-only competitions and often extend into the night, and competitors and support teams cannot enjoy the benefits of closed-course circuit lighting. To illuminate the way during the darkest nights, the TRD Desert Chase Tundra has rear- and side-facing Rigid lights and a front-facing Rigid light bar with room for up to eight lights. The light bar also can be electronically raised when needed and can be lowered below the roof line to eliminate wind noise and help improve aerodynamics.

In the bed are the competition chase team essentials: a custom-made roll bar, custom-mounted off-road jack, 15-lb. CO2 bottle, fuel and water containers, two roll bar mounted spare tires and an ARB Tred Pro Recovery Board with everything secured using the Tundra's existing OEM truck bed bolts and bolt locations. Complete Customs in McKinney, Texas, a long-time and trusted Toyota partner, handled the paint work, laying on a beautiful coat of bright white paint.

“This thing is so cool, and I’m really proud of what my team and TRD accomplished,” said Schwerter. “I started my career in off-road racing, so it’s in my blood. This thing is ready to go. We’re in Vegas and not too far from the desert, so I just might have to take it out to see what it will really do!”