

ON THE STRAIGHT



PATH



Raising the bar on a 4x4 Dakota

By Dan Sanchez
Photography: Dan Sanchez

Ever seen a lowered Dakota before? How about a lifted one? There's nothing new about modifying the suspension on a Dodge Dakota to gain some attention. This is the reason why Sean Flickinger (BlueDak) wanted to set his Dakota apart from the norm. Flickinger is a student studying mechanical engineering, who wanted to take on the challenge of installing a straight axle front suspension onto his 1999 Styleside.



Inside the cab is a cool subwoofer enclosure that houses three JL Audio subwoofers and two Phoenix Gold amplifiers.



Pioneer head unit operates the system, as well as a CD/MP3 player.



The factory gauges were replaced with Nu Image flamed face gauges. A Nu Image AC face panel is also used.



Flickinger took the time to sand and paint the dash and center consoles. He also added a billet 4x shift knob.



A flamed Trezz billet mirror is also used to add some flair to the interior.



The 5.2-liter V-8 features an F88 throttle body, Gibson headers and a 360 Degree Air Intakez intake system.

Flickinger designed the system and brackets himself, and had his friend Tory at Wild Ridez give him some assistance in installing the drivetrain. The front axle is supported by a custom five-link system that utilizes Sway-A-Way RaceRunner shocks. The rear is lifted using new leaf springs and a set of Fox Racing shocks. The total amount of lift allows Flickinger to use a set of 38-inch tall TSL Super Swamper tires mounted to a set of 15x12-inch Eagle Alloy wheels.

The overall effect gets Flickinger plenty of attention everywhere that he takes the Dakota. But Flickinger didn't stop there. He also added a Cervinis SS hood, as well as a Sir Michael's steel roll pan and shaved tailgate handle. Once these items were installed, Flickinger took the truck to San Luis Customs where the rest of the truck's body work and paint were added.

The bed is covered with a Snug Top hard tonneau cover and in order to get up into the cab, a set of Kodiak Sidewinder power retracting steps are used. Of course, Flickinger couldn't leave the factory grille alone and added a Trezz billet piece to brighten up the front end. APC carbon fiber taillights and clear corner lenses replaced the factory units and the front headlights are from ProCar Parts. To be different, Flickinger also installed a billet third-brake light cover and billet fuel door from All Sales Manufacturing. However, he painted them to match the body color and the effect blends in well with the rest of the truck.

It takes lots of power to rotate a set of 38-inch tall tires, so Flickinger added a 360 Degree Air Intakez Power Shot intake system, along with a set of Gibson ceramic coated headers and a modified Super Truck exhaust system. The 5.2-liter V-8 also features 1.7 Roller Rockers and breathes through an F88 50mm throttle body.



Flickinger replaced the factory steel hood with a fiberglass Cervinis hood.



Just to be different, Flickinger painted the billet fuel door the body color.



The truck has some clean lines and stands 10-inches taller, using a set of 38-inch TSL Super Swamper tires.



The Snug Top tonneau cover helps smooth out the bed, as well as the Sir Michael's tailgate handle relocater kit and steel roll pan.



Flamed window tint and SS mirrors with L.E.D. turn signals are also used and painted to match.



The factory seats are protected from dirt and moisture with a set of Wet Okole seat covers.

So how does one get into the cab of this 10-inch lifted truck? Open the doors and a set of Kodiak steps extend down to assist. Once inside, you can see that Flickinger has been busy here as well. Aside from the Wet Okole seat covers, Flickinger spent lots of time sanding and painting the factory dash, center console and other pieces of the interior to match the factory blue exterior. The dash is accented with Nu Image blue flame gauges and door sill plates. A flamed Trenz billet rear view mirror is also used and matches the blue flamed pedals.

One of the first things you notice on the truck is that there is no back seat. It has been replaced with a custom subwoofer box and amplifier rack that houses three JL Audio 12-inch W3-D6 subwoofers. The subs are powered by a Phoenix Gold 1200 amplifier while the rest of the system uses a Phoenix Gold 400 amplifier which sends power to JL Audio 6.5-inch mid-range speakers. The entire

system is operated through the Pioneer DEH P8400MP head unit that features a CD and MP3 player.

Although all of these modifications sounds like Flickinger's truck are a high-dollar show piece, the truth is that the truck is used as a daily driver. Flickinger does take the truck to shows but keep in mind that he built most of the truck himself and prefers not to turn it into a trailer queen. If you have any questions regarding how Flickinger built his truck, feel free to contact him through the DTW Trucks website. He is more than happy to share information and tell others about his mods. Since he is not yet finished with his truck, he is also open to hearing your ideas that he might be able to implant into his unique Dakota. **DTW**