

PRODUCT EVALUATION:



Rox Project Yamaha

WITH ITP TUNDRA-CROSS STUDED TIRES

Staff Report

This project was motivated by a single new product from ITP: TundraCross studded ATV tires. These are the industry's first production-built snow and ice studded ATV tires. ITP contacted Rocky Cutsforth at Rox Speed FX to put together a custom quad that would highlight its new product and showcase it in the elements it was built for. Many ATV enthusiasts in the north country make the most of their vehicle by using it for winter activities such as plowing, ice fishing or even just play-riding in the snow. This obviously puts man and machine into a completely different element, so to properly deal with snow, cold and ice, both must adapt.

The Grizzly 450 4x4 Automatic used in this project has 4-wheel independent suspension; 3-position On-Command, limited-slip 4WD and a pushbutton locking differential. Ground clearance is critical when venturing through snow, and the Grizzly 450 offers 10.8 inches of it. Mid-sized utility ATVs are often overlooked in build projects but we think this is a perfect fit for demonstrating the effectiveness of these tires.

'Tundra' is Frozen Dirt!

These new TundraCross tires have nearly 100 carbide-tipped, steel case studs strategically placed for maximum performance on ice and snow. Their lugs look a lot like automotive ice tires, with more



There's about a hundred of those little carbide-tipped studs positioned on the lugs of ITP's TundraCross snow and ice tires. Their grip is impressive and opens up a whole new world of winter riding.

edges to grip hard packed snow and ice and 4-ply bias construction tire casings are kept light for maximum floatation. Those carbide studs have no mercy on whatever surface they come in



The 450 Yamaha was a perfect host for the WARN plow and winch setup. You can move a lot of snow with this combo and the studded tires with aggressive lugs really perform well on all kinds of slick surfaces.

contact with, not only clawing their way through ice and snow but over frozen logs and dirt.

When the temperature drops and ground surfaces get hard and frozen, traction becomes far more challenging. In these conditions, standard rubber tires slip and slide until forward progress ceases. Because your wheels are still spinning, friction and temperature increases between the tire and the ground causing the snow and ice to melt, glazing the ground at those points of contact.

Momentum is crucial when navigating through these conditions. ITP's TundraCross tires are riddled with attributes to help keep you moving forward and over whatever frozen challenges come your way. Hey, why not look good doing it? Our test tires were mounted on ITP's new SS312 wheels with custom SS wheel caps. These lightweight, one-piece aluminum wheels come with a lifetime structural warranty. If you bend or break them, ITP will replace them.

WARN XT25 Winch & Plow

The second item Rox chose to insure its forward progress was a WARN XT25 (2,500 lb.) winch with wireless remote control. The XT25 comes with 3/16-inch x 50-foot synthetic rope rated for 3,500 lbs. Getting stuck in a remote location on an ATV without help can be a grim situation, add freezing temperatures and it can be downright deadly.

Another WARN product that was a no-brainer for this project was a 54-inch straight blade snowplow. WARN has reinvented the mounting system for its plows and there's a couple of key benefits. The tubular arms that attach to the ATV's mounting bracket are much shorter. The mounting bracket is permanently installed out of the way behind the winch. The plow arms drop into supporting slots and are quickly pinned from the front of the ATV. This is much better than lying in the snow on the ground and wrestling with the long arms and pins from underneath. Secondly, this new mounting point behind the winch eliminates the brackets that typically hang down from the frame in the center of the vehicle on conventional plow mounts. There is nothing more embarrassing than forgetting about your plow mount and trying to traverse over a downed tree or log. Talk about throwing out the anchor... ouch!

Yamaha Protection

Next, we grabbed a few goodies from Yamaha for additional protection and insurance - A-arm guards and skid plates. Hitting frozen ice and rocks hidden under the snow can take its toll on the undercarriage.

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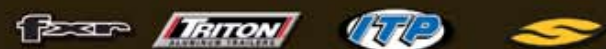


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LEFT: Nothing says cool better than great looking wheels and tires. Those ITP oversized rims are a sweet addition and add incredible function, too. We think the overall look of the jazzed Yamaha is flat-out stunning!

BELOW: Aluminum skid plates and A-arm guards were provided by Yamaha's own accessory department. Check the Yamaha PGA catalog to get a match for yours.



Yamaha's guards are made from durable 5052 3/16-inch thick aluminum and provided superb fit and finish. Mounting hole locations and bolt alignment were spot on but Rox did have to trim the new plastic boot guard on the front axles of the 450 to clear the A-arm guards when turning. A handy rack soft bag was also added to the back to carry extra gloves, hats, underlayers or even a blanket.

PIAA Lighting Boost

Anyone spending time outdoors in the winter knows night comes quickly. With this in mind, Rox added some extra lighting power, first in the form of PIAA's 510 ATP lights. These lights offer a Star White all-terrain pattern and a much whiter light than stock. 510 lights come with a rugged grill cover that is not only functional but also visually appealing, plus a wiring harness, relay and switch. The stock headlight bulbs were removed and replaced with PIAA's Extreme White Plus H6M bulbs providing 55watts of



PIAA makes great light kits for off-road vehicles and these one come complete with a wiring harness and all brackets to make installation super-easy.



light from only 35watts. This is a very effective and affordable upgrade to any ATV.

Rox Jumps In!

Rox then pulled a few items off of its own shelves to improve the ergonomic comfort of the 450 and offer some additional hand protection and warmth. First, the stock handlebars were removed and replaced with Rox combo kit which includes a 5-inch patented Pivoting Riser and a set of Solex CR-HI fat-bars. The bars provide a more comfortable (straighter) 16-degree sweep versus the stock 29-degree. The 5-inch Pivoting Riser makes up for the loss in height the stock bar (5 1/2inches total) had and then some. The risers plus the CR-HI bend bars add up to 7 3/8-inch total, providing just over 2 inches of rise over stock.

Rox also makes a 3 1/2-inch riser that would keep the height closer to stock. The cool thing is that the risers are held by and can be pivoted to any position in the stock 7/8-inch handlebar clamps; thus allowing you to find your desired fore and aft handlebar position, then the top clamps in the riser are 1 and 1/8 inches wide to clamp the fat-bar to your desired orientation. These risers are basically a tall fat-bar adaptor that can be pivoted forward and back to an infinite number of positions. In the end, the bar position feels much more comfortable at this new height and sweep and you can now stand more comfortably and in control over technical terrain as well.

It was not necessary to replace cables with this set-up on this particular ATV, however, cable ties were clipped in some



ABOVE: Rox PowerMadd Star hand guards are a great idea for winter riding but the real deal is the Rox 5-inch bar riser with a modified angle to make a drastic improvement in both sitting and stand-up ergos.

RIGHT: Blown Graphics provided cool looking custom coated graphics.

areas to insure free movement. Always, first determine if you have adequate cable length before installing handlebar risers. Amount of extra cable length varies depending on routing, make and model. Rox recommends you consult your local dealer for details. Rox also modified its Grizzly 700 aluminum dash panel that cosmetically covers up the stock handlebar clamps to accept the Grizzly 450 key.

Since this is a cold weather build, Rox naturally decided to install its PowerMadd Star Series guards with Rox own billet machined handguard mounts. This keeps cold wind off the hands and also protects them from branches in the woods. Rox went as far as to add one of its snowmobile accessory products to the guards: handguard Flares. These are made from closed



cell foam with a Cordura type skin on them. They snap onto the back side of the Star Series guards with plastic push rivets, providing much more protection from cold than the stock guards alone, yet they do not interfere with your hands when riding like gauntlets do.

Blown Concepts Graphics

Finally the quad was sent to Robb at Blown Concepts for a custom vinyl graphics makeover. These graphics make a powerful statement and help define the direction and purpose of this 4-wheeler. All graphics from Blown Concepts are covered with thick, 12 mil clear, so they are super durable and will look good for a long time.

With this build complete, we're truly looking forward to the onset of winter and all its challenges. TundraCross tires add one more season of capability to this ATV and help us put the 'all' in all-terrain. Thanks ITP!



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