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CHEVY **WINNER UPDATE** RUNAROUND

LONG-TERMING THE CST CHEVY

Too many times during the examination and testing of products, only the short-term durability is addressed within these magazine pages. But when we created this suspension testing program,

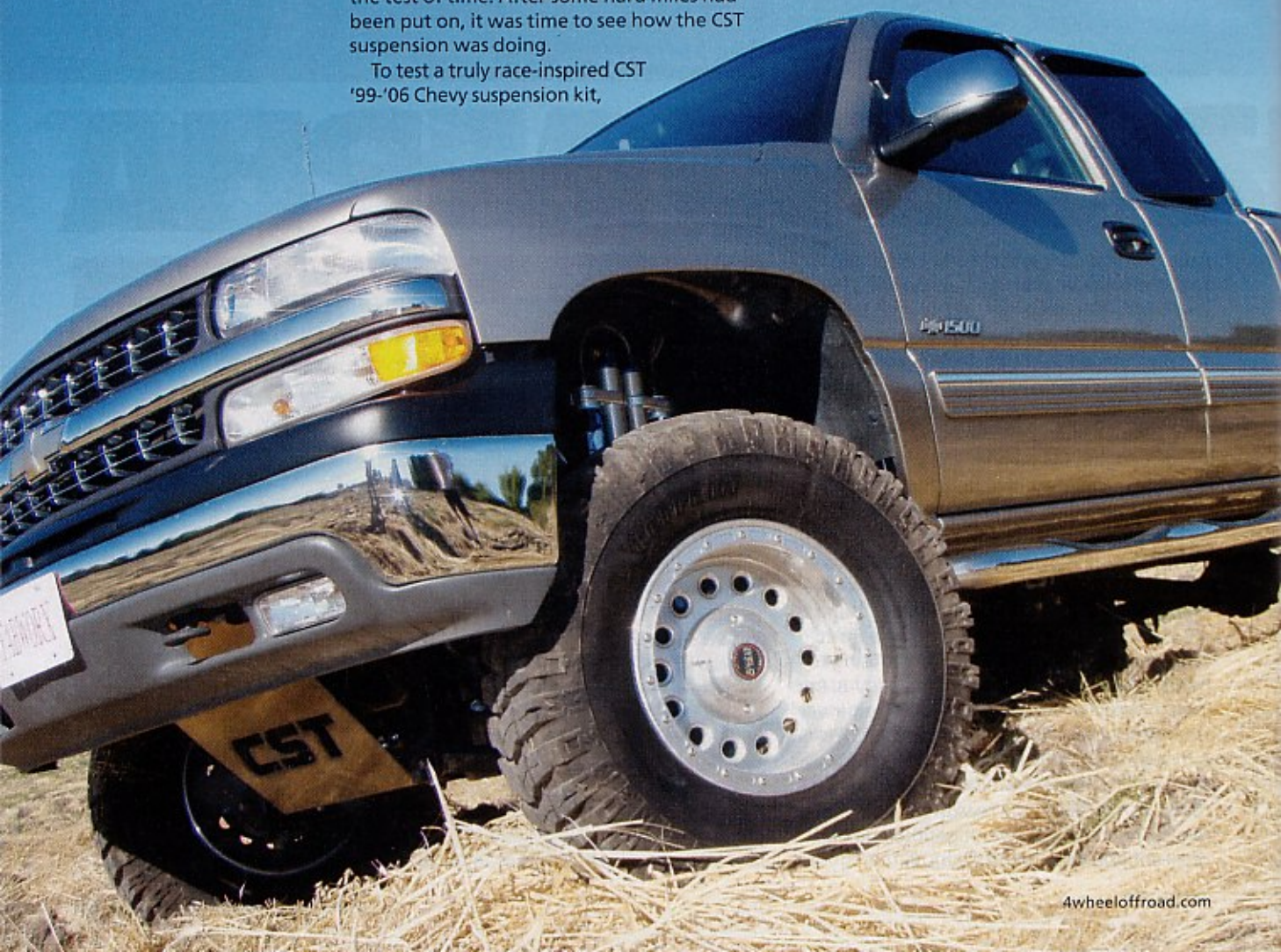
BY Jerrod Jones

PHOTOGRAPHY JERROD JONES AND FABWORX OFF ROAD

we made it a precedent that all winners of the Suspension Runaround series would have to fork over a kit for us to put on someone's daily-driven vehicle. The kit would get tested over at least a six-month period, both on and off road, to examine the true long-term durability of the kit and how it would hold up to the test of time. After some hard miles had been put on, it was time to see how the CST suspension was doing.

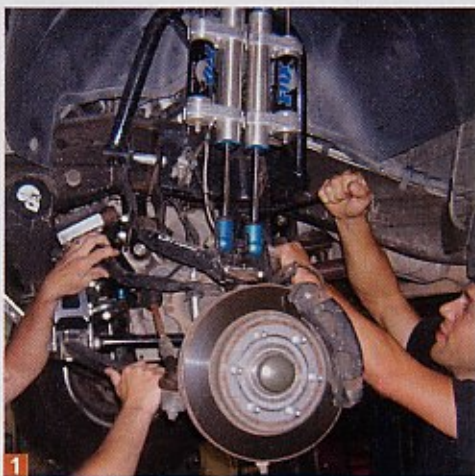
To test a truly race-inspired CST '99-'06 Chevy suspension kit,

we handed the box over to Fabworx Off Road to put on Rick "Ricky Racer" Latimer's Chevy truck. Rick used to drive for RAZO Racing in the mid '80s, racing a Class 5 1600 car and doing a dang good job of it. From what Fabworx told us, Rick would put the kit through its paces, while knowing enough to not totally waste his truck or the suspension in an effort to make something fail. Anything can be made to fail, and we mean anything, if abused badly enough. We weren't looking to make things fail, but we wanted to make sure that the kit we voted as being the king was deserving of its crown.



TECH SPECS

- 6-inch lift height
- Drop bracket upper A-arm kit (no new knuckle)
- New upper A-arms
- Dual Fox remote-reservoir shocks in front, singles in rear
- Front shock hoops
- Deaver rear leaf springs, no blocks
- Skidplate included
- Drop bracket steering correction



COMPLAINTS

If there were two things wrong with this kit, they were the availability and the price tag. It took us some time to get all the pieces together, because CST works with Fox Shox and Deaver Springs to make such a good kit. And it is a great kit, but having parts outsourced can add to your wait time, and we definitely did some waiting. But once the kit was all there and ready to be bolted on, it went on in under a day and performed flawlessly.

The price is something you will have to justify as well. At \$4,200, this kit was more than double the price of most kits in our Chevy Runaround. It comes to this: If you want the absolute best, then you're going to have to pay for it.

3 We didn't get to play in the dirt as much as we would've liked to (we never do), but we did get enough time in the dirt to get a feeling for how well this truck and suspension reacted off road. We're not sure if we've ever been in a street-legal truck with so little rebound in the suspension before. We were going into ruts, hitting rocks, and driving up curbs on the street trying to make the truck hop after hitting a bump, but the suspension soaked it up like nobody's business.

4 Though we like CST's different approach to the '99-'06 suspension using a tried-and-true upper A-arm drop bracket instead of a longer knuckle like most of the kits in last year's Runaround, we think there were two main reasons this truck rode so well: the Deaver leaf springs and the Fox Shox. The nine-leaf Deaver packs smoothed out the rear end of the truck very well, though there was now no overload leaf to speak of, so hauling super-heavy loads was out of the question. But in our eyes the upgrade would be worth it since so much of the "bounce" that trucks exhibit comes from a stiff and poorly working rear suspension.

5 The biggest attributes that gave this CST kit its incredible ride have to be the six Fox Shox. The folks at CST really did their homework, and after years of racing, they've gotten their shock valving as close to perfection as we have felt in a long time. Though dual remote reservoirs might be a bit overkill in the front of most people's Chevys, the dual shocks are dialed in to work together so well that it is hard to question it. For most customers, a single remote-reservoir shock would be more than sufficient to fight shock fade due to heat, but the dual Foxes look mighty nice in the wheelwell, and CST did an awesome job of making sure that the ride was not too stiff, but not so soft that the truck would sway and bob. If anything, we're even more impressed with this kit now than we were in the test. 🙌

1 Many miles had been put on the CST kit, some off road, but most on road. We weren't so concerned with parts breaking (we doubted they would), but instead we were more concerned with parts wearing out. Bushings can fail over time, incorrect angles can cause ball joints or tie rod ends to wear out, and even CV shafts can wear if put at improper tolerances. The test truck was put up on the rack at Fabworx and the 35-inch Pro Comp X-Terrains were pulled off to inspect any subtle or obvious wear. Nothing was found out of place or overly worn. In fact, this truck's drivetrain and suspension were masking its age, as everything still looked and felt brand new underneath, save for a little dirt here and there.

2 We put the truck back on the ground and took it out for a little drive to get a personal feeling and firsthand experience of how well this kit has held up. On the road, the CST kit had the truck feeling tighter than a brand-new truck. It was amazing at how well the truck still reacted to steering input, even up 6 inches taller than stock height. The ride was incredible, no doubt thanks to the Fox Shox and Deaver leaf springs, and we felt reassured that our group had made the right decision at last year's Chevy Runaround.

SOURCES

California Super Trucks
951.328.9902
www.cstsuspension.com

Fabworx Off Road
www.fabworxoffroad.com