



Employees at Randy's Transmissions built a custom rat rod powered by a 24-valve diesel engine.

Custom-Built Turbo Rat Rod

Strapped into official automotive racing harnesses on a comfortable living room recliner mounted on the open chassis of a 1,000-hp rat rod, Andrew Kaplan attracted much attention at the 2024 Ultimate Callout Challenge (UCC) diesel industry show.

Kaplan and other workers at Randy's Transmissions built the vehicle because the company wanted something to stick out and be exciting for the crowd. "We slapped this together in five days because we wanted to look ridiculous, do burnouts, and have a lot of fun," Kaplan says. "The more you look at Methany (its name), the worse it looks, but the more fun it gets."

Kaplan says the crew had plenty of extra metal in the shop and a 98.5 24-valve compound turbo Cummins sitting outside, so they just went to work. The engine had painter's tape over the intake, the turbo was rusted, and the wiring harness was a rat's nest. Initially, they couldn't get it to fire up, but a new breakout box brought it to life. Initially installed in a race truck, the engine's dyno sheets showed 1,300 hp on spray and 1,000 hp on fuel. Randy's crew mounted it on a truck chassis and installed many unusual accessories.

The radiator overflow hose drains into a Jack Daniel's bottle. Right behind it, the air intake filter is held on with duct tape. Kaplan

says that wasn't a problem because when the engine revs up, the inrushing air just sucks the filter in. The tubular frame has a partial roll cage; behind it, a huge garbage can serves as the exhaust pipe. It blows a huge plume of black smoke as the engine revs. Kaplan says the crew added the garbage can because "the whole rig is sort of trashy."

Randy's wanted something that had never been done before, and Methany certainly fit the bill. The rat rod was exhibited at other shows in 2024 and will make additional appearances in 2025 to provide visual and noisy brand awareness for Randy's Transmissions.

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Whiskey bottle radiator overflow.



Lanoue on lead G while plowing.

Two Deere Gs In One

Jeff Lanoue loves going to plow days with his piggyback Deere Gs. With 125 combined horsepower, he has no problem pulling a four-bottom plow.

"I fastened an I-beam under the rear end of the lead G," says Lanoue. "After I pulled the tricycle front end off the second G, I mounted it to the I-beam."

Controlling them both from the lead tractor's seat was a little more difficult. Lanoue wanted to keep it simple, so he attached hydraulic cylinders to the hand clutches on both tractors and ran oil-filled hoses between them. When he moves the clutch on the lead tractor, the second tractor follows suit.

"I have to start both tractors and put them in gear separately, but after that, I can control both from the lead tractor seat," says Lanoue. "I ran a cable between the two throttles for dual control and a kill switch wire to ground out the magneto on the rear G when I want it to stop."

Getting 125 hp out of the two tractors also took some work. He'd already beefed up the lead G.

"The rear G was stock when I started and barely produced 30 hp on the dyno," says



"I have to start both tractors and put them in gear separately, but after that, I can control both from the lead tractor seat," says Lanoue.

Lanoue. "After I bored it out with a long crank and some headwork, it was pushing 60 to 70."

Lanoue hit 13 plow days one year, mostly with his Deere 4020 and a semi-mounted plow. He took the double-header G to a few, but they were limited by the room he has on his gooseneck trailer.

"Transit is the problem with the Gs," he notes. "If a plow is available at the event, I can take them. I don't have room for both the Gs and a plow."

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International Travelall limo version was a partnership with Armbruster Stageway Company of Fort Smith, Ark.

Travelalls Serve As Redneck Limos

By Cindy Ladage

Ed Sohm, from Battle Creek, Iowa, owns Redneck Limo. He had his International Harvester Travelalls at the ill-fated 2024 Red Power Roundup in Spencer, Iowa. Being in emergency management for environmental health, Sohm was consumed with work when rain and flooding hit, causing the show's closure and emergency evacuations.

Before the rains, Sohm and his daughter, Claire, had three of his Travelalls, "Chip," "Betty" and "Bob," on display. "Bob,"

his first Travelall, purchased in 2013, is a 1972 Airporter five-door blue model with a luggage rack on top. Originally used by a large family and to transport a band, "Bob" was at a bike rental business before Sohm bought it.

Sohm's second Travelall, "Betty," is a blue 1970 model decked out with horns. Getting "Betty" up and running was a big job. Sold new in Albert Lea, Minn., Sohm found it in 2017, in Virginia, Minn. Previously used

as a promotional vehicle for a Coors Light distributor, Sohm said, "I have pictures of 'Betty' with 'The Silver Bullet' on the back windows."

"We take 'Bob' and 'Betty' out to Sturgis. This is my seventh year; it's a lot of fun. It's neat to be part of the event."

"Orville," Sohm's third Travelall, is a 1971 white, 8-door Travelall residing at the Harvester Homecoming Museum. "I purchased it in rural Nebraska in 2019, it was said to have been originally used at the Omaha airport, and then as a tour rig for the Dick Wickman Orchestra."

"Chip," the fourth and last of Sohm's Travelall stable, was purchased in 2022. "Chip" is a white 1973 Travelall coach and is 98% factory. It's the one of the bunch that sports the Redneck plates. "Chip" was used in South Dakota by a man who guided pheasant hunts (Buffalo Chip Tours). That's how "Chip" got his name.

Sohm never intended to have a limo service. It began with a group of local women who get together monthly for an outing. "They're the 'Dressers,' as in clothes dressers. They put \$50.00 in their dresser drawer each month," Sohm shared. "The group is limited to 12 women, and each month, someone is in charge of what they do. One asked me to take them to Sioux City in September 2013. At that time, I'd had 'Bob' for six months."

The girls liked the redneck theme and hired Sohm to drive them during a Redneck Pub Crawl, where they raised \$24,000 for charity. This led to getting many calls, and Sohm reports, "The limo is booked most every weekend."

Sohm shares the limo driving with his 24-year-old daughter Claire, who helps when not attending nursing school.

Sohm's interest in big vehicles began as a child, and he especially loved the red Farmalls. "I'm an IH guy; I bought my first Scout in 1989."

His interest in Scouts led Sohm to add Travelalls to his collection. Introduced in 1953, Travelalls were manufactured in Springfield, Ohio, until 1973. Based on the R-Series full-size truck, they were like panel vans with windows added. These two-door and four-door 4-WD models were advertised as "America's Every Purpose BIG Capacity Station Wagon."

The limo version came when International Harvester partnered with the Armbruster Stageway Company of Fort Smith, Ark. Armbruster Stageway originally restored horse-drawn wagons. The company changed over time, and when asked to stretch a vehicle for a bus company, it built the first combustion-engine limousine. Then, it built limos for the International Harvester Company.