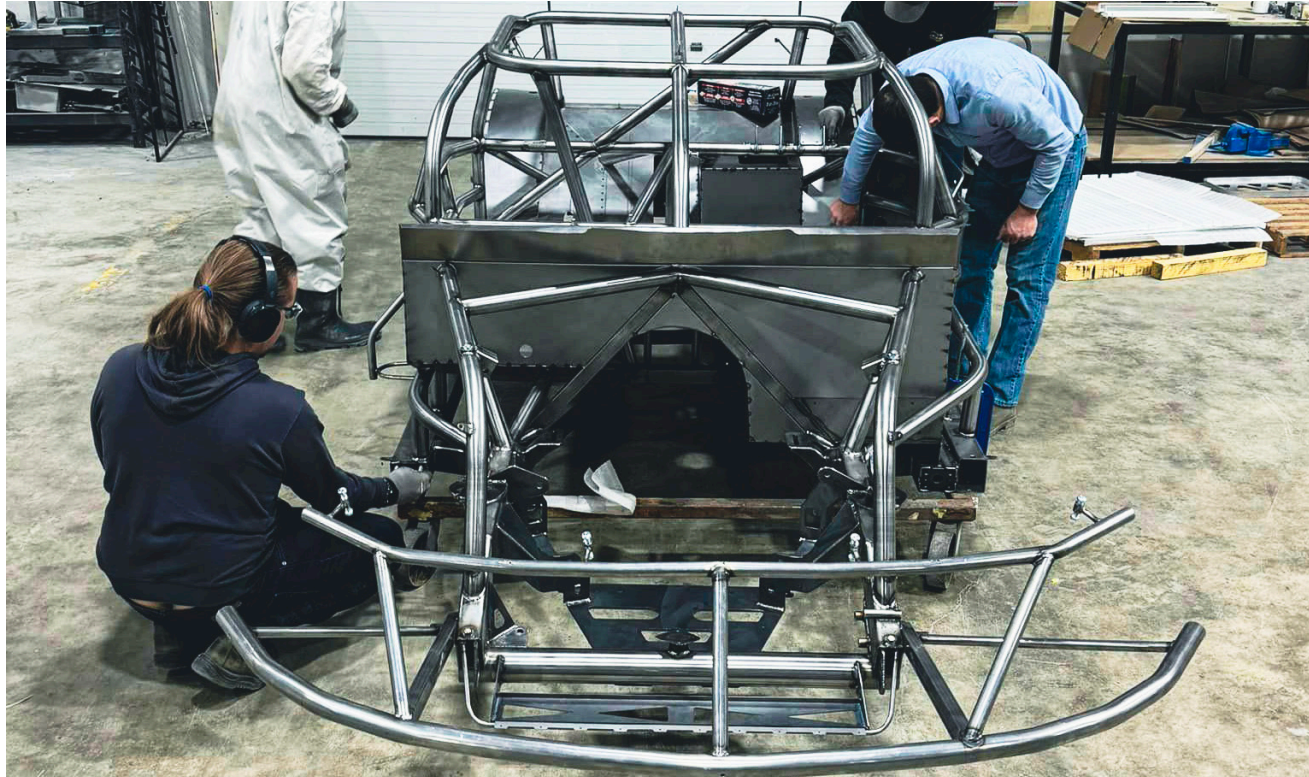


TRAX POWER DOLLY SYSTEMS AND ONE STOP FAB SHOP



Seven years ago, Wayne Axelson, formerly of Super Cub Construction and a partner at Backcountry Super Cub LLC in Douglas, Wyoming, shifted his focus from the aerospace industry to the power dolly business. The move was prompted by the opportunity to collaborate with his friend and former schoolmate, Jeff Sawlor.

At the time, Sawlor had over 16 years of experience at the Freightliner assembly plant in St. Thomas, focusing on Kaizen – the Japanese business philosophy of gradual productivity improvements and the creation of more efficient work environments. He also spent significant time wor-

king with power dolly competitors and gained insights into the shortcomings of existing products, particularly in terms of their ease of use and performance.

"Jeff worked for other companies that sold power dollies and he was having problems with them," explained Axelson. "I told him to make something better. He said he didn't know how, but you can do that."

Sawlor's recognition of gaps in existing dollies and Axelson's manufacturing background let to the founding of TRAX Power Dolly Systems, Inc. – and the opportunity to drive innovation and improvement in TRAX's product line compared to its

competitors. Today, the company is celebrated for its superiorly crafted and high-performing dolly solutions. Knowing they wanted to prioritize efficient fabrication and assembly processes within the company, the pair turned to BLM GROUP for a laser cutting solution – one that could ensure swift, top-notch cuts, while also minimizing extensive deburring. BLM GROUP suggested the BLM LS7 3015 L (longitudinal) equipped with 10kW fiber resonator with dynamic control. This optimizes performance based on material thickness and assist gases, helping to expedite cuts and guarantee superior quality across various metals, including



one-inch steel and alloys. With its LS7 laser cutting system, TRAX can control quality and production timelines needed to manufacture motorized dollies for boats, RVs, airplanes, and supply factories with handling dollies for many sized equipment. Additionally, the LS7 laser cutter led to operational expansion. The company is now housed in a 20,000 square foot facility in Aylmer, Ontario, Canada, equipped with welding power sources, a press brake, and a powder coating line. Within TRAX Power Dolly System, Sawlor and Axelson established the One Stop Fab Shop with the aim of offering comprehensive fabrication services, including custom built designs for their dollies and for outside customers, and streamlining processes for just-in-time delivery. Sawlor and Axelson attribute a pivotal role in their success to the LS7 laser cutting system, which has become instrumental in attracting new customers and fostering growth across their diverse business segments. The company

has gained esteemed clientele as a result, such as the U.S. military, Tesla, NASCAR, NASA, FedEx, Horizon Airlines, and Boeing.

Behind the decision

Initially considering a competitive laser cutting system, Axelson's visit to a Toronto trade show illuminated the significance of more than just features and benefits. It led to the resolute decision to invest in BLM GROUP.

"It's about the software and customer service," Axelson emphasized. "Plus, being within driving distance of BLM GROUP was a significant factor."

Axelson's and Sawlor's forward-thinking nature played a vital role in investing in the LS7 laser cutting machine. Operating a debt-free company, they understood the necessity of financing for this sizeable purchase but were confident it was a sound decision. "Our projections indicate that the machine will pay for itself in ten years, allowing us to handle our own fabrication and manufacturing for the power dolly business,"

Axelson explained. "We foresee an economic boom by January 2025 and we want to capitalize on that opportunity."

Taking an educated risk backed by BLM GROUP's support has thus far proved to be a sound business move.

A worldwide first

One Stop Fab Shop received the first LS7 laser cutting system worldwide, leading to a learning curve for both TRAX and BLM GROUP. Collaboratively, they worked through the details, with BLM GROUP representatives from Italy installing the system and regularly communicating with Axelson to tailor software to meet TRAX's cutting needs. They even accommodated requests like changing measurements from metric to imperial for use in Canada.

"The team welcomed our suggestions and we agreed to serve as a demo center for the LS7," Axelson explained. "I've had numerous conversations with potential customers, sharing my experiences using the machine."

Processes and materials

At One Stop Fab Shop, a dedicated operator handles LS7 laser cutting system programming, aided by another employee who assists in material handling. Axelson noted the operator's adeptness in robotics and computers, finding the LS7's software and programming intuitive and straightforward. The shop manages a range of materials and thicknesses, from inch-thick aluminum to steel that is 3/8 inch and thinner, including stacked sheet metal. The LS7 laser cutter's fume extraction feature proves beneficial, particularly when cutting galvanized steel since it eliminates the smoke generated during the process.

"We handle cuts that other compa-

nies with smaller machines struggle to manage efficiently," Axelson explained. "In the last week alone, one job covered a tenth of the machine's cost."

"Beyond serving our dolly business, we cater to customers like motorcycle trailer manufacturers, restaurateurs needing large metal bars, cabinets and exhaust hoods," Axelson added. "We also provide pieces for approximately 25 Amish buggies weekly."

Reaping the benefits

While TRAX Dolly Systems' main business is making dollies, with the One Stop Fabrication Shop side supporting that business, being its own fabricator and having the LS7 offers definite advantages. Na-

mely, the combination is growing the overall business. Axelson and Sawlor now have 14 employees working full-time during four-day, 10-hour shifts and the LS7 laser cutting system is bringing in new streams of revenue.

"Actually, right when we had got the laser, we only had seven people in here. Because of the laser we've added more people. The spinoff of the laser is that our powder coating picked up," said Axelson. "Also, everything that goes through the laser needs to go through the press brake and then it brings more welding work and so on. It's made the big decision-making to invest in BLM GROUP worthwhile."

WITH **LS7** WE BECAME *LEADERS IN INNOVATION*, EXPANDING OUR TEAM AND PRODUCTION