

# Elka Suspension Stage 1 + R Front Shocks

By Craig Nicholson, *The Intrepid Snowmobiler*



**Most of us take sled suspension for granted** – and pay the price with uncomfortable rides and sore backs. As when we buy a new automobile, suspension on a snowmobile is standard equipment. But unlike with that new vehicle, the suspension under our sleds is meant to be tweaked according to weight load and surface conditions. The problem is . . . how do we figure out that fine-tuning?

Last fall, I visited suspension guru John Sharrard at his Accelerated Technologies shop near Buckhorn, Ontario. From motorcycles to ATVs to every brand of snowmobile, John has a magic touch and the unique ability to explain it all in layman's terms. All of which makes Accelerated Technologies an excellent suspension resource for a touring rider like me that just wants the most comfortable ride possible every way and every day.

For this suspension tune up, John told me to bring all the weight I'd be carrying on tour – snowmobile gear, full saddlebags, full gas tank – and a track full of Woody's studs. For reality's sake, I even ate a large lunch beforehand.

I quickly learned that if you've ever hated a sled, chances are its suspension wasn't set properly for you. A suspension that's dialed in for your weight, height and riding style makes an amazing difference. I also learned that I should pay more attention to my front suspension, where initial contact with moguls and bumps occurs. How the front shocks absorb these bashes and blows affects everything that happens farther back in the sled, to say nothing of steering control and how

much strain my arms and shoulders endure. John suggested I try a set of Elka Suspension Stage 1 + R Front Shocks, assuring me that they would be calibrated for my style of trail riding. These premium shocks will fit on any stock sled made by Artic Cat, Polaris, Ski-Doo or Yamaha.

From the get-go, I could feel a difference. The Elka Suspension Stage 1 + R Front Shocks ate up all the trail irregularities and stutter bumps for the smoothest ride possible. Throughout the variable surface conditions on the many trails I encountered, the Elka Suspension Stage 1 + R Front Shocks delivered consistent, predictable and reliable handling quality. And after putting almost 10,000 kilometres on Elka shocks last winter (a distance that the average snowmobiler might do over 4 or 5 winters), my body is pleased to report never suffering any jarring jolts inflicted by those surprise bumps hiding at the bottom of some large trail dips. Day in and day out, I finished each ride with less strain and less fatigue.

As I departed Accelerated Technologies last fall, John Sharrard imparted one other word of wisdom: As you pile on the miles, every shock will degrade over time. That's a slower and more gradual process with a premium shock like Elka Suspension Stage 1 + R. Certainly, these front shocks didn't seem any the worse for wear after 10,000 kilometres. But just in case, I'm taking them back to John for a rebuild that will make them as good as new – and ready for another 10,000 clicks of trail riding for Snow Goer Canada! Find out more at [www.acceltechacing.com](http://www.acceltechacing.com)