

Storm Chasers stop in town with 'Dominator'

Written by Chris Lee



The Dominator storm chasing vehicle from the Discovery Channel's Storm Chasers show made a brief stop in Holyoke Thursday, June 10. The unique vehicle drew quite a crowd of people stopping for a quick photo and finding out what the unusual vehicle was all about.

—Enterprise photo

The Dominator vehicle from the show Storm Chasers on the Discovery Channel made a brief stop in the Holyoke city park Thursday, June 10.

Reed Timmer and his team parked their armor plated vehicle near the tennis courts and enjoyed a pick up game of basketball before preparing for a night of storm chasing. Timmer said they don't usually stop for long periods of time like they did last Thursday, but they needed to install a radar on the vehicle.

They were in the area preparing for possible storms in northeastern Colorado, southwestern Nebraska and southeastern Wyoming.

Timmer predicted Thursday morning the storms would build near the front range.

The Dominator vehicle is covered by Rhino Lining, is equipped with a complete roll cage and has the capability of lowering itself down to the ground with hydraulics to prevent wind from getting underneath. Timmer said the vehicle could be hit with a sledge hammer and it would just bounce right off.

The Dominator is used for collecting data and filming tornados. Timmer said they had already been in four tornados this year with the vehicle. The fastest wind speeds recorded with it were 155.2 m.p.h., he said.

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Timmer also said they are capable of shooting transmitters from the vehicle into the tornado to capture data. The Storm Chasers website also says Timmer is experimenting with a remote-controlled flying drone.

Other units the show uses are the Tornado Intercept Vehicle (TIV) and Doppler on Wheels (DOW) and the Vortex 2 team. A newer unit nicknamed the Doghouse is used by the Twistex team.

The Dominator received plenty of attention last Thursday as many people stopped to snap a quick photo and check out the unique vehicle.