FIVE COOL CAMPING DESTINATIONS
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TECH: ABS BRAKES AND DIRT ROADS
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DAKAR 2017
TOYOTA vs MINI vs PEUGEOT

READY. STEADY. GO!

Kalahari TOUGH TEST
13 4X4S TAKE ON THE KALAHARI

JANUARY 2017 ISSUE NO 153

INCLUDES
NEW KB, TRAILBLAZER, NAVARA & SCORPIO S10

COOL GEAR
DIGITAL CAMERAS GALORE
VW AMAROK GETS SOME NEW KIT
Durability, comfort and sophistication – it’s at the core of every Land Rover we produce and reflected in every element of the Land Rover 2017 Lifestyle Collection. Our latest range continues the use of the Union Flag and the Union Flag logo graphic. We’ve also extended using the Land Rover wordmark across our lifestyle products as it has proven to be exceptionally popular in 2016.

Our Heritage Range is celebrating one of the most iconic off-road adventures of all time: the British trans-Americas crossing by the original Range Rover in 1971-1972. As it’s a Range Rover themed collection, we’ve taken the opportunity to develop products that are slightly more premium in nature.

For our youngest explorers, our forest-friends themes for boys and girls have maintained an element of the “scouting” badge theme The Range Rover collection continues delivering high-quality products in rich contrast colours, carrying the Range Rover name for the first time. We’ve also extended the range with female-focused colourways.

Visit your nearest Land Rover Retailer and explore our 2017 Lifestyle Collection.
A legend – now on his own time

I MET JANNIE HERBST in 1997. The first issue of Leisure Wheels was in the making, and Jannie and the late Johann van Loggerenberg needed an apprentice to help with the legwork for the new magazine.

I joined the small team not long after that meeting and soon realised that I was in the company of two printing industry legends. A few months into the job, Jannie sent me on assignment to Magoebaskloof with former Mitsubishi Motors public relations man Bennie van Rensberg, in a Colt bakkie. I was to photograph a 4×4 trip and do a short write-up.

By then I had obviously figured out that Jannie was quite the photographic legend. So keen to impress, I decided my old, basic Pentax 35mm SLR was just not going to cut it. So I borrowed a friend’s SLR camera with a fancy motor drive for the shutter so that I didn’t miss any action.

And so it happened that I went 4×4-ing with Bennie and the Colt in the beautiful Magoebaskloof. A most enjoyable outing, it must be said. In the end I shot three rolls of slide film, just to make sure I get plenty of good stuff for Jannie. Back in Joburg, the three rolls of film were handed in to be developed, and although I thought it may be a bit early for a raise in salary, seeing that I had been in Leisure Wheels’ employ only for about two months, some praise from legendary photographer Jannie was definitely on the cards.

The next morning I arrived at the office. Jannie was unusually quiet. Then he called me over, with a grunt. Something did not seem quite right. “What is... that?” Jannie managed, clearly trying to restrain himself, pointing at a light table upon which were sprawled three rolls of film.

“Ah, those must be my Magoebaskloof photos!” I said in a most upbeat manner, pretending not to recognise the sensation of an impending nuclear explosion. Jannie stared at me. For at least two minutes.

“Photos?” he finally said. “You call those photos? They are not photos. There is not a single usable image in there! Go and have a look yourself.”

He was right. All the images were underexposed; too dark to use. Not familiar with the fancier camera, I had got a setting wrong, and without an LCD screen on the back of the camera (as is now the norm), I had not realised the error. It was a case of fait accompli.

At the time, Jannie had just started experimenting with a new computer programme called Photoshop, and after scanning some of my photos on a drum scanner, he used the programme to successfully lighten two images. They were still not great, but at least you could see some 4×4s in a forest.

Jannie Herbst, a true motoring media legend is now going to take a well-deserved break. He was a tough but fair taskmaster, and I wouldn’t have had it any other way. Over the past 18 years I’ve learnt a heck of a lot from him. Jannie and his wife Maryke now have the opportunity to travel the world at their leisure. We wish them many happy travelling miles.

Hamba kahle, Uncle Jan. Hamba kahle.

Below: The photo that was saved by using copious amounts of computer software.

DRIVEMOZ: GOOD NEWS

Last month I vented about the corruption in Botswana and Zimbabwe – and I’m afraid I still feel the same. But here’s a bit of good news.

DriveMoz is a social media community initiative that aims to assist people travelling to Mozambique. This includes help with pre-trip paperwork, rules and regulations, pointers about border posts and, most importantly, assistance when a police officer attempts to solicit a bribe.

You get a DriveMoz sticker and contact numbers, and when a police officer starts giving you hassles, you can call a number and you’ll receive assistance from someone who speaks Portuguese.

Those in the know say that, as soon as the officers see that sticker on your vehicle, they rather wave you on. Check it out at facebook.com/groups/DriveMoz.
THIRTEEN 4X4s TAKE ON THE KALAHARI’S ROCKS AND SAND

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Main cover photo: Waldo van der Waal
Mail
We welcome your views

Email your views to editorial@leisurewheels.com or submit them via our Facebook page or the website at www.leisurewheels.co.za. Please supply your postal address, in case you win a prize.

 Winning Letter

Congratulations! Your letter wins you a CAT watch to the value of R1 200. We will be in contact soon to make arrangements for delivery.

Rigged Petrol Pumps

I have been purchasing your magazine for the past 15 years and enjoy every article. However, I was hoping that someday I would come across something that bothers me a great deal and that I have observed over the years, but nobody else seems to notice.

I feel that most filling stations, if not all of them, around the country are ripping us off.

Notice every time that you fill up your car, the pumps always count more than a rand before the petrol starts to come out of the nozzle. The petrol starts to flow after the R1.20 mark.

I’ve checked this in several filling stations to the extent that I took even a 5-litre container and asked the attendant to pour petrol in and to stop at R1.00. By the time the pump registered R1.10 there was nothing in the container. So, basically we are paying far more than we anticipate.

You can also conduct this experiment yourself and respond with your verdict.

I am a game ranger in Pilanesberg and have been operating there for the past 15 years and we have our own pumps. The petrol flows without any delays from our pumps, as soon as you press the lever to pump petrol. This means that somehow someone is rigging the other pumps.

I will appreciate it if this matter can be taken into consideration and you can test this at different filling stations and respond to us the loyal readers of this magnificent, awesome magazine.

I believe that many motorists are not aware of this matter and that it should be corrected – people should pay the petrol price, not more.

Solomzi ‘Buffalo Soldier’ Radebe
Pilanesberg Game Reserve

Write a letter and win a watch!

We’ll be giving away a smart Caterpillar watch to the writer of the winning letter in upcoming issues.

Caterpillar is a technology leader and the world’s largest maker of construction and mining equipment, diesel and natural gas engines and industrial gas turbines. And it also makes some pretty decent watches.

Constructed from the highest-quality materials, CAT watches are developed to meet stringent requirements, without compromises. There is great emphasis on the casual, yet powerful design, reflecting the philosophy of the brand.

So, what are you waiting for? Write to us on the topic of your choice, and you could win a CAT watch of your own.

Solomzi ‘Buffalo Soldier’ Radebe
Pilanesberg Game Reserve
I refer to the report in the August 2016 issue of Leisure Wheels regarding the replacement of the cam belt on your long-term test Amarok. My 2015 Amarok D/C 2.0 BiTDI 4Motion needed a cam belt replacement at 45,000km. According to the workshop manager at NTT VW Potchefstroom, the cam belt is a ‘wear and tear’ item and is not covered by the warranty, as was the case on earlier Amaroks. No reason was given why this cam belt, that is supposed to be replaced at 90,000km, must be replaced at 45,000km (of which only 966km was on gravel and sand roads).

This would cost me R7,147.80, so I took the issue up with VW’s Customer Interaction Centre. Their response?

Whilst we appreciate your disappointment with regard to the cam belt issue, we wish to reiterate that the cam belt is a wear and tear item and its lifespan depends on various factors such as mileage, age of the vehicle, environmental factors. We have reviewed all the relevant information with the respective stakeholders. We are, regrettably, not in a position to assist with your request for a refund. Please note that no further communication will alter our position in this regard.

My questions are:

Why did the cam belt fail? Was it a dud cam belt? If not, what (else) could be the reason? Dust, sand, mud? If that is the case, then the timing cover issue, that has been a problem in earlier Amaroks, has not been rectified.

Why are cam belts on Amaroks in mining areas, like Rustenburg and Witbank, replaced free of charge while still under warranty?

It seems the Amaroks do have an Achilles’ heel after all.

MC Eloff,
Sekoma, Botswana

We’ve since had a reply from VW:

I am happy to advise you that the matter has been resolved amicably. Our dealer mistakenly replaced the toothed belt ahead of the scheduled replacement interval. The dealer has accordingly reimbursed Mr Eloff.

Kevin Rudden
via email

We were just as disappointed Kevin! Unfortunately we don’t have a monthly chat to the other publications to see what letters and articles they are running, so if a reader (as happened here) sends a letter to each publication without telling us that they did so, this can happen. Thankfully it only happens once in a blue moon, and believe me, we certainly do our very best not to duplicate any articles. – Ed
We welcome your views

A GREAT FIND

Thanks for the kind words, Rivonia

Greg Parkin,

from now on. Great work.

I opened your November 2016 issue nervously and began scanning through the first pages.

I started reading Voetspore - Forbidden Land. Great article, written like an off-road man, such as myself, would have experienced it. I went back to the front page and started again.

I read every single article! I’m just sorry the magazine had to come to an end.

Your contributing writers really tell the full off-roading story, with their words painting brilliant imagery and simple, fun pictures.

The layout is really awesome too. I found the 4×4 Icons story an epic, the Rovos Rail vs Blue Train article of such value, and the general vibe of the articles inspiring.

Adverts that pay the bills are there, but they do not interfere with the flow of the articles. Thank you for being creative about this.

All in all, Leisure Wheels is an exceptional magazine with everything a car person could want – even the Prius

As an owner of a few Landys and a Jeep, I’ll be keeping your magazine front of mind from now on. Great work.

Greg Parkin,

Rivonia

Thanks for the kind words, Greg. Our team works hard to put a product on the shelf that our readers will enjoy. But please, don’t keep your enthusiasm for our mag to yourself – spread the word to your family and friends. – Ed

AN IRRONIC KGALAGADI MISADVENTURE

Journalists from leading off-road motoring magazines were invited by a local manufacturer of 4×4 accessories, together with a bunch of South African and Australian off-road boffins, on a trip into the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. The reports published in the various magazines read like that story that you submitted as a reader’s contribution, after it has been edited!

How can the reports differ that much and how can there be so many misquotations and lack of common sense? It prompted my response with critique:

- When travelling west from Van Zylsras, along the R31 gravel road, you hit the R360 tarred road near Askham that takes you straight to Twee Rivieren. Leaving this road (after 13km) and getting lost in Klein Mier, near the Namibian border, (the entire convoy) is beyond my grasp.
- Towing the Jimny for 40km with a snatch-strap isn’t the right thing to do and it can even become dangerous!
- Arriving at camp more then 30 minutes late, without a sound reason, is unforgivable and puts the tour leader’s position in question. Blaming the section ranger Aubrey’s irritation and response to that rookie mistake, and to substantiate it with our national rhino poaching debacle, isn’t doing the magazine any good.

This statement is nonsense: “increase in rhino poaching has forced the park to limit traffic at night in order to spot a possible suspect vehicle”. It is simply common sense not to drive in any game park after sunset unless it is an organised night drive.

There aren’t any rhino in the park, neither white nor black, and there never were any. Same with elephant, buffalo and impala.

- The antelope in the pictures are not impala as claimed, they are springbok.
- One magazine is pretending that... from Mata Mata we travel east into the Botswana side of the park where we will spend a night at Matopi and two at Mabua”. There were five vehicles in the convoy with one being a soft roader, a Kia Sorento. However, there is no indication about this venture in the other magazine and neither is there any evidence that it actually took place.

- The Bosobongolo 4×4 trail from Nossob via Matopi to Mabua is 170km long and its first section over the dunes (with the bomb craters in deep sand) is no terrain for a Sorento nor any vehicles without sufficient clearance (unless it’s an Avis car).

The controlling factors for sand driving are tyre pressure and speed and this is also applicable (in principle) when driving on heavy corruptions. A 19-inch low profile tyre is out of place here and should not be deflated. The punctures substantiate this.

- There were allegations made that the Sorento is touted as a competitor to the Fortuner and Everest and if that is so, which I contest, it rather should be compared and tested against these.
- Losing the spare tyre from the Sorento, without noticing it, sounds like a good joke around the campfire about that verdant European tourist. Same with the pop-up tent that ended up as a tree house in some windy conditions. I shake my head and rest my case.

Jürgen Höntsch,

Durbanville

Your letter regarding the Kalahari ‘misadventure’ is largely based on assumptions. Firstly, the adventure comprised three publications. Only Drive Out (Wegry) did the entire trip – our man and SA 4×4 completed only parts of it. Hence there will be discrepancies between the different articles in facts, story, treatment and photography. That’s also why there is no mention of the Sorento’s 4×4 feats (or much of its 4×4 ability) in our article.

On getting lost: the co-pilot in the leading vehicle entered incorrect details into the GPS and for that reason, they got lost. I assume you’ve never taken a wrong turn somewhere? It happens to a lot of people, somewhere down the line.

Towing the Jimny was not ideal, no matter the method of towing. But as you may or may not have experienced, in the middle of the bush, sometimes you’ve got to make do with what you have. And at that time, the snatch-strap was what they had. I’m sure they have all learnt from that experience and will, in future, pack in a tow rope.

Yes, the team arrived 30 minutes late after bad judgment about time versus distance. Yes, Aubrey shouted at them in a most unprofessional manner. But the next morning the group went and paid thousands of rands in fines. They admitted they were wrong and I’m sure the lesson has been well noted. If Aubrey had handled the situation better, it would all have been resolved in a much more amicable manner.

Dear Aubrey sparked the rhino horn ‘debacle’, when he wanted to search the group’s vehicles for illegal rhino horn, not the touring group.

Fair enough about the impala caption... that should have been springbok. We’ll print a correction to this effect.

We can’t comment on the merits (or not) of the Kia Sorento in the deep sand, or versus a Fortuner and whatnot. That was published in the other magazine and you are welcome to take that up with them.

I won’t be as crisp as my summary as you were in your introduction and summary, but suffice to say that there are always two sides to a story. Especially if what you assume to be the very same story is published in three different magazines. – Ed.

leisurewheels.co.za
Here are some of your thoughts, SHARED ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.

Keep up to date with news, videos, photos and articles, with Leisure Wheels online
Like our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/LeisureWheels  |  Follow us on Twitter: @LeisureWheelsZA  |  Web: www.leisurewheels.co.za

**Victor Swan** Almost lost my finger due to a nasty bite from one of these. NOT to be handled.

**Barend Jansen van Vuuren** Also got bitten by one in Kuruman. It’s amazing the pain this little fellow causes.

**Dyllan Kleingeld** Almost lost my hand due to this snake...

**Deon Strydom** Had an encounter where this snake about 30cm long bit (just nicked) a girl in Okahandja/Namibia one night. She spent two days in hospital... vomiting repeatedly. I battled for hours on the internet to look this snake up. It’s also called ‘sidewinder’ – people should make antivenom for it. It spends most of its time underground.

**Colette Templeton** I was bitten by this species of snake in December 2011. Spent eight days in hospital. The worst pain I’ve ever experienced in my life.

**Nicolaas Viljoen** Don’t play with snakes. Avoid them if possible.

**Paul Roxburgh** When the doc asked me what the pain level was on a scale of 1 to 10, I said 4 500.

**Moses Gao Molale** Blessing T Marabu... we sleep in the Land Cruiser, man.

**Peter David Adams** Know this fella too well! Don’t pick it up!

---

Bibron’s stiletto snake is a bad-tempered snake that bites readily. It emerges on hot summer nights, especially after heavy rains. If you are planning to spend your summer holidays camping or out in the wild, here are some facts to keep you informed about how to look out for this critter – and what treatment is available if you get bitten (there is no anti-venom). Snake expert Johan Marais shares more:


African Snakebite Institute #StilettoSnake

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RESPECTING THE RULES
I have been a reader of your publication since inception, but for the first time in all the years I have found it necessary to express displeasure after reading An Ironic Adventure, in the November 2016 issue. Like so many Leisure Wheels readers, we are regular visitors to both the Kgalagadi and other national parks. It should be well known to all that return times are sacred, and applied. To be late by 30 minutes is an intentional disregard thereof.

More disconcerting is the derogatory remarks made about the official who had in their minds, the audacity to speak out against their behaviour.

Another report from the same party has it with the girth of said official, and the length of his trousers. It is such an attitude that poisons the well for the rest of us.

Well done Aubrey!

Thinus van Niekerk, Waterkloof

We certainly hear what you say, and we do agree about the timing issue. The touring group, on their first visit to the park, should have been on time. However, it was Aubrey’s attitude towards the group that added fuel to the fire. As mentioned in our article, the team humbly admitted that they were wrong and were ready to pay any fines as required, a lesson learnt, I’m sure.

Unfortunately, Aubrey continued to scream and shout. I think this was what irked the team: if he had reprimanded them in a (more) professional manner, it would have been better received, and the lesson in ‘timing’ certainly would have been noted. – Ed