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## Peake March 2013

The boy stood on the burning deck.....

Oooopppps! Wrong story.

The horses gathered at the gate,

Chomping on their bits,

Fillies in hats were prancing about,

Expectations high,

That one day in March to have some fun,

To place a bet and step out on the strand.

But what care I for dams and dames and coloured silks and hats we're off to Peake for fun in the sand and heat. Men and women and tuned machines, honed skills to perfection ready for the challenge. Damn, Viv did you turn the gas off? I forgot the recovery gear, did you see those snatch straps I had earlier. So it was at 0630 as we rolled out of the 'burbs to meet the group at Tailem Bend.

We were first there and it was hot already, have I done the right thing or should we stayed at home with the aircon. The rest of the group slowly gathered, none seemed too keen. There were those who had to follow along due to items missed (Martin/Lyn and Ken) but we won't mention any names. On our way out to Peake a couple of trucks passed through the convoy, giving the "thank you" blinks as they went. Nice to know our convoy procedure works and is appreciated.

After setting up and a quick briefing it was out on the sand, the temp was already up so I was hoping there wouldn't be any prolonged recovery exercises on this occasion. Apparently it is considered cheating to put your pegs in with a hammer drill, more on this later. The sand proved to be quite powdery on the side slopes making for some interesting runs.

Training was kept to a minimum but we still managed to get some done thanks to Stuart and Martin, with me filling a few gaps. Stuart didn't have much choice his vehicle had split a boot on the CV the day prior, spraying grease about the place. Not good for sand driving. Gordon was the first to suffer with his Prado suddenly developing a new noise from the rear. It looks odd when the rear wheel only rotates part of the time while driving forward, sort of playing catch up, one down. Gordon hopped in with me to see how a real 4WD operates and we would drag his out later. The ridge along the top of Hill7 was the next issue, turns out the sand was a bit soft to support a vehicle once you were on top. Two of us made it up but Chris and Sue missed it by *that* much, leaving them on a bit of an angle. Some digging once we got Sue out of the car, coupled with some gentle driving had Chris reversed out fairly quickly. I drove down but when Shane followed he went sideways over the other edge. More digging, the use of a restraining strap and a gentle pull soon had things sorted.

Happy hour awaited so while the others headed back I went with Gordon to recover the Prado.

Happy hour was a cold affair, figuratively speaking, with no fire. Ken did however give a mime of fire walking over some dead remains. There were a few drops from the heavens, certainly not rain. Boy was it a hot night and not that way.

Sunday dawned hot as expected, with just enough cloud cover to ease the pain. Driving was uneventful with some more training while Les took Gordon to meet the RAA. We heard later he was home OK. The majority of the group packed up and headed off at various stages of the afternoon while Les, Viv and I spent the evening relaxing and headed home early Monday after another warm night.



Tuesday I noticed that my toy was making an odd clunkin' sound around corners, steering maybe. What now? That day I had the tappets adjusted and my first thought was how are the two connected? Well turns out they're not because the noise was the left rear spring. It decided that it didn't like it's snug place under the support tower and had tried to escape out the side, the only thing stopping it being the now distorted air bag and line. Some minor adjustment and an hour later all was good with no apparent other damage.

What a great weekend and thanks to all who came along and participated in less than ideal conditions. See you all in June, same place, same time, same bat channel.

As for those pesky pegs, they are very very hard to get out of the ground when you have hammered them into a little hole with some sand as a packer, might not do that again.

Cheers

Mark W