



NEWSLETTER

April 2018

Andys grand tour of Hampshire, or what would I do if I won the lottery

On the 18th Feb some of us met up at Tot Hill Services for one of Andys laning trips. This was supposed to be a laning trip taking in a lot of the lanes in Hampshire hence the reason for starting at the Tot Hill services on the A34. There were about 7 or 8 of us in total so we split into two groups with myself and Keith Lister leading one group and Andy leading the other group. As it now seems like a long time ago I've forgotten exactly where we went except that we appeared to be driving past a lot of large houses whenever we appeared out of some woods or as we started to drive up another lane. The lanes at the beginning of the day were the usual mix of wooded tracks some tight but not too technical although according to Andy we were going to have some fun later on (how very true as it turned out!). It was during a previous laning trip that Keith and I had a discussion on what to do if we won the lottery which as we were driving past a lot of large properties seemed to be a good time to bring the subject up again as we came out of another wooded track and past another large property. When I mean large I'm talking large detached house with several detached garages and more out buildings. We managed to pull over onto some flat grass only to have Andys group join us. As all of us were together having lunch and looking at the range of outbuildings over the road I think the general consensus was that most of us would love to have a property with a decent size garage/workshop with all the tools ie; four post ramp, air compressor, welding gear, full set of spanners/sockets. Jon even went one stage further by saying he would buy 2 JCBs (a 4CX and a 360 degree excavator) and a wood so he could build his own off road course. I would most probably do the same but also let certain invited clubs use it as well as for my own use.

After a leisurely lunch and deciding what we were going to spend our lottery winnings on we set off again with Andys group hanging back to allow a bit of distance between us. As we came to the end of one lane we could see the lane on the other side of the tarmac road going straight up the side of a hill past a tree with some exposed roots towards where it levelled off. This was a good example where one could see what was coming so best to get the motor into the right gear, wait for a gap in the traffic and go for it. All the Landies managed it ok past the tree and its exposed roots but the Nissan pickup struggled a bit but with the use of waffle boards and a bit of digging managed to get over the tree roots. Later on we drove past a golf course which involved some tight maneuvering between trees after coming down a hill. The best way of describing this particular part of the track is to say it was like trials driving but between trees. Myself and all the Landies made it ok and so did the Nissan pickup despite its length.

Later on we came to a very interesting track which Andy had originally wanted to drive/winch up but after talking to Jon and realizing the pickup would seriously struggle due to its length it was decided it was best to go down it. I was reminded that I had done this track before but had actually come up the track as I could remember the bungalow at the end of the road and it was the last lane of the day. There were some serious holes in the right side of the track which meant that when the front offside wheel dropped in them my Rangie stood a good chance of losing its front side light and also getting hung up on my drivers side sill.



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But with careful placing of waffle boards and spotting we all made it down the track.

The dreaded last lane of the day!

Before we got to the last lane Paul in his pickup and Paul and Julie decided to call it a day and left us. I don't know if Andy planned this but myself and Keith Lister ended up being the lead vehicle. This was fine till we came to the last lane at about 4.30 in the afternoon. As we entered the lane I was blissfully unaware of what was about to happen. It started off innocently enough with a slight climb up and a bit of a lean to the right. This bit of a lean to the right got worse and worse till I really didn't want to go any further for fear of damaging the whole off side of my RR. The vehicle was that close to the bank it was literally inches from my right shoulder and I made it quite clear to Andy that I didn't want to go any further. As reversing was not an option due to the rest of the group behind me and that I could actually see the end of the track it was decided to winch my RR sideways away from the bank using my winch on the front and Jon using his winch on the back of the RR. With a combination of winching sideways and driving forward a little bit I eventually made it to the end of the track with no damage at all. Jon drove and winched himself out and I used my winch to help Neil out. The only damage we had was Andy lost his drivers door mirror and Neil lost the small indicator light on his 90. It then transpired it had taken 2 hours to clear this last lane with it taking a whole hour just to get my RR out. We found a pub car park and decided to have one last mug of tea and a bite to eat and then made our way home. I don't know about anybody else but I didn't get home till nearly 9 o'clock that evening.

RTV Trial

On the 25th March we had our first RTV Trial of the year at Great Brickhill. Despite having a long and wet winter the weather on the day was fine with no rain at all and it was quite mild. We normally have a good turnout at our RTVs but the numbers were down slightly for some reason. The sections were laid out by Jon and Roger with help from Neil and Keith Richards. There were 5 sections in all with the idea of being able to reverse one of them to make a sixth. They were of the usual high standard that we have come to expect of our Clerks of the Course. The first couple of sections for my group started over on the sand bank. Both sections required us starting at the top of the sand mound with the first one going down the sand/grassy slope and then trying to drive up the side of the grassy hill. This sounds straightforward but driving up a grassy slope is not the easiest thing to do and I along with some others in my group failed to get up it. Maybe if I did what Duncan did and let my tyres down a bit I might have got up but hey it's just a bit of fun. The next section involved driving round the end of the sand mound that's assuming you could get started as Roger was insisting one started with the front wheels exactly on the line of the first gate which was also on a bit of a side slope. Later on in the section there was quite a short sharp drop down a sandstone bank. This might have been alright for the 90s but all the people in there discos declined to do it. There was one section down in the gully and around a tree and back up again. This was an interesting section to drive with Marcus one of our novice drivers doing very well on this section. The other 2 sections were over in the trees and in the far corner. The tree section was not too severe but still needed and slow and steady drive to finish it. The last section was a nice drive over the humps and round trees but well away from the mud hole in the far corner. This last section was later reversed just to finish the day off. Another successful days trialing and a great atmosphere. Can't for the next one.



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