

Project Trailblazer

We the team at OTR are very excited to announce a long term (1 year) project vehicle in the form of a brand new Holden Trailblazer. Along with the new Trailblazer we also welcome additional partners to the project namely Jurgens Caravans with a Tuff Trax van and Cruisemaster with their first class XT Suspension

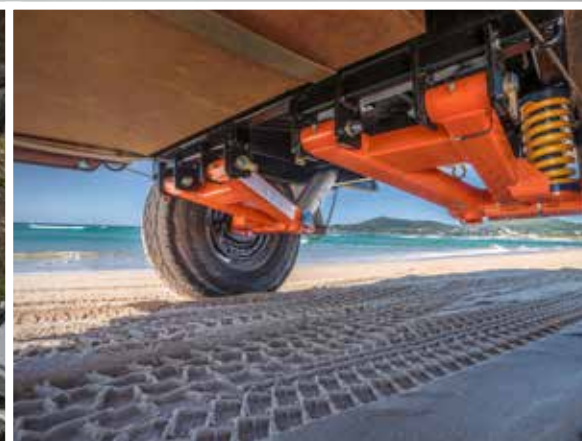
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OTR has always believed that having access to RV vehicles and caravans/campers for a longer period would allow us the opportunity to truly evaluate the various products under real world conditions. Too often our testing and reviewing of RV units both vehicles and caravans/campers is very short term and how those units would have performed in the true touring situations that they were designed for is often an educated guess. Now production considerations and real costs make it difficult for many companies to supply product for long term testing and this is totally understandable, added to those factors is the additional consideration of the risk in that your product may not perform to the standards hoped for.

So firstly I would like to go on the record in thanking Holden for their willingness to go with the project, their trust in OTR that we will do a professional job and their keenness to learn any lessons and/or considerations regarding the vehicle from the 12 months of real RV touring and travels. That vote of thanks also applies ►



Above: We took the Trailblazer and Jurgens up to the snow and they performed well. **Right:** The Trailblazer has a 3 tonne towing capacity and the Tuff Trax comes with Cruisemaster XT suspension ready for the rough stuff.



to Jurgens in making available one of their 'in demand' off road caravans and Cruisemaster as well.

So what are our intentions with regards Project Trailblazer? Well firstly as stated above, the project will run for a full 12 month period, the new vehicle was received from Holden just a few weeks ago at the end of July, thus it will wrap up in July 2020. Over this period we have planned about 10-12 destination features across at least four states. Some will be your more traditional touring trips and mostly on the hard top, however the rest will be very much off-road bush travelling and camping. We will push both vehicle and van but without been silly. In a nutshell we will treat the units as they were our own and drive and travel accordingly.

Apart from the destination stories we will of course give a full and frank review of all the units, vehicle, caravan, suspension and along with any other RV products or accessories that may become part of Project Trailblazer. A full review of the vehicle and caravan will be published after we have completed about three months of travel and then a final wrap up review will be undertaken at the end of the 12 months, with many thousands of kms under our belt at that point in time, I believe you the RV audience will be very well informed as regards the suitability of the units and how they may well be an option for your own travel requirements.

The Vehicle, Holden Trailblazer

This new SUV offering from Holden is a tough SUV made for towing under

Australian conditions, with a 3 tonne towing capacity and the great 2.8L Duramax turbo diesel under the hood it's aimed right at the RV or boat towing audience. The Trailblazer which comes equipped with seven seats comes in three models LT, LTZ AND Z71. Our project unit is the LTZ and its list of features is rather impressive but more on that when we complete the first full review. The unit had a grand total of 43 kms on the dial when we took delivery and now after only a few weeks we have clocked up 2024 kms, included in that period was a short shake down trip up to the High Country of NSW and back home towing the Tuff Trax including some snow driving. The Trailblazer vehicle was super comfortable and very sure footed and happy in the white stuff. I am really looking

forward to our next set of trips away but first impressions were good. A nice looking unit to boot, we have added a set of Goodyear Off Road tyres, nudge bar with a light bar but that's all at this point in time. Aside from towing our project caravan the Tuff TRAX, we will also put the Trailblazer to the test with some larger RV units given its 3 tonne towing ability and boats as well, given my passion for chasing the fish.

The Caravan, Jurgens Tuff TRAX

This tough looking off road unit from Jurgens has been around for a few years but this model the Tuff TRAX XP1850, to give it its full title, is the latest with a number of major changes and improvements from the first released model. I did have the pleasure of travelling with the first model Tuff TRAX to Birdsville and back some

years ago and was impressed with the unit but time was limited, this time around we will get to do so much more and run it and the Trailblazer over a range of terrains. It's also our intention to look at a range of possible accessories and options that may be added to further enhance the Tuff unit and/or the ease and pleasure of camping and travelling. As with the Holden Trailblazer we will publish a full review on the Tuff TRAX in an upcoming issue and also follow that review up with a comprehensive wrap up after the full 12 months.

The Suspension, Cruisemaster XT

The TuffTRAX is fitted with the Cruisemaster XT Suspension one of the best and well-respected off-road suspensions on the Australian market, it's now in its fifth generation and has well over 10 years of

taking you off-road in the most testing of conditions. As stated above we will look to give a far more expansive review of the Cruisemaster once we have completed a few more trips away. We are also having further talks with both Jurgens and Cruisemaster as to other possible options from the Cruisemaster range that may be added to the Tuff.

With only one trip away to-date with our new Project Trailblazer units it's still early days but that trip gave us a taste of the possibilities that we can achieve with this exciting new project, a chance to truly test and evaluate for you our OTR audience. It's a journey that we at OTR are really looking forward to and I look forward to bringing you the next stage in Project Trailblazer.