

4x4 RUN AT DES LOW'S PLACE, 20/07/08

We were up early on Sunday morning, having loaded the buggy on the truck Saturday night. Got lunch and thermos organised, and then set sail for Hikurangi (Carol's place) for last minute bits and pieces. Arrived at Hikurangi weighbridge at 8:15am; bugger me, Hogan and Hogan already there. This time we're waiting for Colin and Nat, Bert and Kate. Set off for Marua at 8:30am; arrived at Low's about 9:00am. Had a chinwag with Des, then decided to head up to the cattle yards and unloaded there, we being last in line. Everybody set about unloading buggies; Colin not quite sure about his (hiab comes in handy eh!). We set off, through the cattle yards, up the first track on the right, going up the old pine block. Very wet and slippery, going to be a good test of man and machine. Brett got to the top of the track, followed by us, then Bert and Kate after being towed, then Colin, then Syd bringing up the rear. It's a dead end track, so we turned around and headed down the ridge, Brett leading. Brett decided to investigate the track over the bank, then down he went into the wilderness followed by the rest of us – the girls decided they didn't want a bar of this so took photos as they walked down. We went around the next track, driving under or over trees, down the ridge to the dam. Guess who was the only one to get stuck? We all played around trying to get up the bank above the skid site; I managed to get up to the top but, damn, the only way down was awfully close to a very dead, very smelly black cow. After this we all had a cup of coffee and some fuel for the body. Headed off along the main track to a paddock where we had played on a previous run. Some of us decided to see whether we could fly. Bert managed partially off the ground, Wozit was airborne. Syd had at this stage broken down – seized steering box. Then it was up the hill, through the trees onto a very wet, slippery track. Bert got through okay, but Wozit decided to go backwards faster than forwards. I suggested to Carol it might be safer if she got out, which she did. Wozit on the point of balance, but thanks to team efforts got out okay. Next Brett and Syd had a go, but this proved disastrous, losing traction and sliding backwards over the edge and away they went; I think it was four rolls to the bottom. Suddenly all hands on deck as Syd is hurt. Thanks go to Kate with her nursing skills for stepping in and taking control of the situation. A team effort got Syd out of the Hilux and, after checking Brett out as well, got them up to Colin's Landy for a slow, painful trip to Low's house where an ambulance was called and Syd was dispatched to hospital. For the rest of us we went back and recovered the Hilux and brought all the vehicles out, loaded them up and headed for home. A nasty rollover, but certainly shows the benefits of a well constructed roll cage. Good luck Syd, see you when you get back from your trip, fighting fit and rearing to go.

- *Brooke*