



BUILT TOUGH

WE TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT MAKES IRONMAN 4X4 SUITED TO THE HARSH AUSSIE BUSH

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When you go out to spend a chunk of your hard-earned coin on your 4WD, there are a few things that everybody wants to know before they reach for the wallet and lay down the cash. Quality, reliability and trust are the three sides to the equation for a successful transaction. Quality products and advice coupled with the knowl-

edge that when you need to use a particular piece of gear, it is right there ready to go, and trust that what you need is exactly what you are getting.

In this rapidly evolving world, value for money is becoming increasingly prominent in our minds, and 'bang for your buck' has taken on a whole new meaning and importance when you set foot in the accessories store. The information age has

brought with it the convenience of internet shopping, which is a whole other can of worms that doesn't bear opening!

The simple fact is that to get quality product, you don't have to stop off at the clinic to have an organ removed to pay for your new gear. To get great prices, you don't have to resort to searching online auction sites to sift through the multitude of no-name brands

on the net.

Ironman 4X4 has been in the 4WD industry for 23 years as we know it, and about that much time again before that as Jacob Spring Works. We headed down to Ironman 4X4's head office in Victoria to speak with Products Director Adam Craze to take a closer look at the latest range of 4WD products and figure out exactly what drives the Iron man ■

THE CUSTOM COMFORTS BUILT INTO THIS TRUCK REVOLVE AROUND MAKING LIFE OUT IN THE BUSH EASY

1 When we caught up with Adam Craze, we nearly tripped ourselves up when we saw this tough 76 Series wagon in the flesh. Even with the fleet of tough tourers that Ironman had fitted out parked in front of their showroom, Adam's 76 Series stood out from the rest!

Since buying the 76 Series three years ago, Adam has been heading bush as often as he can. The previous escape machine was a 200 Series 'Cruiser', but Adam felt that "the 76 wagon was a better-suited vehicle" to his line of work and play

2 Ironman products all go through standard testing to meet the required regulations and certifications before being released. The guys over at Ironman also take their testing one step further. Adam tells us, "We test our products in real places, the same tracks and challenges that our customers want to drive. Every time one of our vehicles heads off-road, we are testing to make sure everything works the way it should"

3 Before we get stuck into the finer points of Ironman 4X4's motorised dual-battery system, we wanted to take a moment to show you around Adam's pride and joy. Adam has left nothing to chance when modifying his 4WD, opting to include a set of Harrop E-Lockers as part of the build to keep the big wagon moving forward in even the toughest of conditions.

Adam explains, "The E-Lockers are great because they draw less power than an air locker because there is no compressor to pressurise first."

4 For the times when traction has become harder to come by than a rear diff in a Corolla, Adam has the Ironman 12,000lb winch tucked into the bullbar as his saving grace.

"The 76 Series is a hugely capable vehicle," Adam says, "but when it does get stuck, it's well and truly bogged, and having the winch there to fall back on is great."

5 tasked with plenty of towing duties in day-to-day life. Apart from the regular outback trips towing his camper trailer, Adam owns a GU Patrol race truck, which needs to be trailered to competition events.

"The Redarc was easy to fit and compact too, the adjustment is also very simple," Adam tells us



6 The roof console in the 'Cruiser' is another addition Adam would find it hard to get along without. Apart from the added storage, Adam has added some LED lights and the Icom UHF radio. HHe's also added even more of a personal touch and cleverly programmed the Icom to display his nickname since childhood 'CRAZIE' when it first starts up. You'll have to check out his GU comp truck to see if he has earned the nickname these days!

7 All the custom comforts built into this truck revolve around making life out in the bush easy and enjoyable, and with technology today being so advanced, the heart of the wagon is the 275A dual-battery system

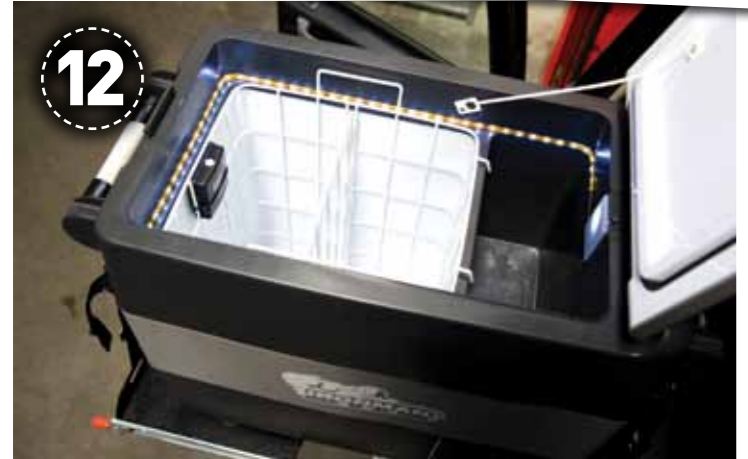
8 Ironman 4X4's motorised 275A dual-battery system is as durable as they come! It's been designed with simplicity and reliability in mind. It's designed to be fully automatic to allow the system to connect the batteries together and isolate them as required

9 The motorised dual-battery kit comes with a dash-mounted manual override switch to link and disconnect the batteries easily to assist with starting after a flat battery has occurred.

The circuit will stay linked together for 10 minutes, and uses heavy-duty wiring between the batteries so that the link can be used to power a winch or to help start the vehicle

10 The coloured LED monitor panel is fully sealed for durability, and allows you to quickly and easily read the status of both the main and auxiliary batteries at

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a glance. The scaled LED-style gauge makes comparing the two batteries easy, especially when establishing the level of the auxiliary battery when powering appliances at camp

11 Installing the system is a simple process, with just about everything you need being supplied, along with detailed instructions for wiring. Each component of the unit is pre-wired and clearly marked, making DIY installation too easy

12 Having all that extra power on tap, Adam has installed a number of power options in the way of lighting and appliances to take the comforts of home with him on the road. The main additions are the two power boxes built into the drawer system at the back with 12V and Anderson plug sockets. These also power the inverter and the fridge, which Adam has modified to use LED strip lighting as the internal courtesy light. Adam also runs a water pump to help get access to the 60L of water carried on board

13 The final creature comfort for High Country winter trips was the addition of a set of heated Recaro seats to keep the chill away. With seats like these passing as the front pews of the 76, it's a wonder Adam ever manages to get out of it!



When the name Ironman 4X4 first made its debut in the 4WD suspension and accessory market, it already carried with it some 30 years worth of experience. Originally the company started out as Jacob Spring Works, founded in 1958 and based in Melbourne. In 1982 they took on the abbreviation JSW to brand its extensive range of suspension parts, for all types of applications worldwide. Ironman 4x4 as we know it today is still owned by Tom and Barbara Jacob, who are the son and daughter of the original JSW founder.

While every product produced by Ironman 4X4 meets the stringent standards for safety and quality in Australia, there is a far more demanding form of research, development and testing being undertaken for Ironman 4X4's

military contracts. Over the last four years, Ironman 4X4 has been a key supplier of parts for over 30,000 vehicles deployed into Afghanistan by the US military. Ironman 4X4 also works closely with specialty demands from armoured vehicle manufacturers who need to be able to carry excessive payloads without compromising the ride or handling of the vehicle.

All of this activity may seem superfluous when it comes to the 4WD industry, but the reality is the link is more direct than you may think. In a similar way that the top sports cars today gained their advancements from formula one racing, the pinnacle of off-road driving nets Ironman 4X4 invaluable knowledge when it comes to what works and what

doesn't on its product line-up.

Ironman 4X4 may have its roots in suspension, but its range of top-shelf gear has expanded rapidly in response to the explosion in popularity of 4WDing. Ironman 4X4 camping gear follows the same stringent testing, and covers the full range or requirements from rooftop tents and awnings through to swags and camp chairs. If you can think of it, Ironman 4X4 probably has a product that will help you out. With its huge commitment to quality research and design, just about every accessory from the winch fairlead right through to the back of the vehicle and everything in between now forms part of their range!

To ensure that the end result is up to the exacting standards, the testing is finished off by Adam and

the team at Ironman 4X4 by heading straight out into the great Aussie playground to really put their gear through its paces.

Adam explains it simply as, "What better confidence than when I talk to a customer about places they have been and they know we have been in the same area testing products." The true value of any product is the trust that a buyer can rely on it. After years of weekend trips, extended touring all over Australia and off-road racing, Adam says, "If I will not fit a product to my vehicle, then we shouldn't be selling it."

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