



Wilbinga2Two Rocks 12/1/19

Date	12 January 2019
Trip Leader	Paul Gunton
Meeting Point	Wilbinga Grove Rest Area
Participants	Bob Dorizzi, Greg Wright, Bob Jones, Kim McClean, Paul Plant, Greg & Pauline Jones, Kerry & Steve, Neil & Debbie Jones, Steve King, Mike & Clare, Gang Xu, Xiu & Jack, Chris Redgrove, Susan Mortin, Nicole, Hannah and Andy.
Trip Report	Susan Mortin

Wow, what a memorable day. By all reports new records were broken, trophies will change hands, new tows were tested, Santa and his reindeer made an appearance and even the oldest and toughest members learned new tricks.

There are so many ways I could go about writing this report, in the end, for poetic emphasis and to build the disaster story that developed through the journey, I decided to begin at the end and fill you all in on how we reached the finale.

As Paul led the exit team through the barren wasteland, past bowls and burned out cars, we contemplated our comrades left behind manning the tireless rescue team still battling the elements; the promise of the rescue vehicle still to arrive still fresh in our minds. 12 cars went into the Wilbinga, only 8 cars had come out. 3 remained to aid and support, 1 could not make it out on its own. Who knew when they would be able to return home themselves, whether their replenished water supply would last, when the promise of a cold fresh beer



would satisfy the stress of the day.



The day began so beautifully, the weather picture perfect as we met at the Rest Area. 12 cars signed in 9 belonging to members 3 to visitors. We met all the visitors including Greg & Pauline, Bob and Kim, Greg (with Bob), Paul Plant, Neil & Debbie, Gang, his daughter and Jack, Hannah and Andy and chatted excitedly about cars and trips. Paul briefed us on convoy procedures and what to expect for a day of fun in the dunes and beach and then we were off. Quite remarkable (this was a first for this new Out and About member) we all achieved our first challenge... to radio in our convoy order. Feeling like this was an omen for a super day, I relaxed into the trip.

To begin, we followed a very curvy and bumpy track just to rattle the joints of our cars and to exercise a few vertebrae. At one stage we were bumping

along like a kangaroo which according to the squeals of joy from my backseat drivers was quite a treat.

Finally, we reached our first real challenge, an immense sandhill with a corner half way up and then another indine. Paul, briefed us on the best way to tackle the obstacle – ‘put your foot down and momentum is your friend’ and gracefully glided up the hill. Gang then gave it a go but needed to roll back down the hill. More advice from Paul was issued ‘drive it like you stole it!’ Gang floored it and made it up the hill. Most of the convoy gave it a go including Bob who on his first attempt got it up around the corner. So close Bob! When rolling back down around the corner, his wheels had a mind of their own landing him jammed between a steep indine and a bush – after a few more words of wisdom and a few moments of thought the tree was sacrificed and Bob rolled all the way down ready for take 2 and success. In the end, only 5 cars made it to the top.



After a few more twists and turns and bumps along another chicken track we arrived in the first bowl and parked up for morning tea. Kerry gobbled her morning tea and excitedly announced she was going to go play (just like being back at school Kerry – I think the students have influenced you more than you think!!!). And just like school, the ripple effect grew and soon so many cars were flying through the bowl Paul got a taste of what it would be like to be in flight control orchestrating who was flying where and when. Good job Paul, you remained very calm and after repeating the catch phrase of the day ‘drive it like you stole it’ no one got stuck. As Paul rounded up his flock ready to move on, a radio announcement from Gang came through the radio. ‘Can I go up one more hill?’ as he came zooming round the bend and up the hill.



Back into formation, we moved slowly around a twisty track towards the beach. There were several obstacles in this section including a few drops and some very uneven tracks causing tilts and a section that needed carefully organisation and bumper to bumper driving around a tight 360 corner. There was a bogging up the front of the convoy (could have been Gang???) which took a few volunteers to sort.

Finally, we hit a beautiful stretch of beach and time for lunch.



This is when Gang's bad luck really started as he decided he wanted one last ride before lunch. By the time we parked up on the rocks and pulled out our sarnies, Gang took Paul's advice, driving his get away car 500m up the beach, turned around and got stuck...



Sitting around Kerry and Steve's awning, Paul calmly explained while eating his food that when it is time to play, we play but when it is time to eat, its eating time, we don't play. Excellent logic Paul!!!! Eating time finished and the Jeeps took off up the beach to help out the still unmoved car. Patiently waiting under the shade of the awning, it was clear there was very little movement from the Landrover. No news came from the 3 cars causing several other cars to need to investigate.

Finally, news came back via Steve King, Gang had blown his gearbox – sand was in the gearbox and oil was leaking onto the sand. Me thinks Gang may not getaway too fast this time. Thus started the first of many toolbox meetings (hereby called the gathering). It was decided that two grunt cars would try to pull Gang up the beach to the bowl. Most cars stayed back and watched from afar – (a gentle way of saying keep out of the way). After several attempts trying to move the car and steer it along the desired route, it became clear that there was another problem. The cv joint had snapped meaning Gang had no ability to steer the car, the wheels having a mind of their own. After another gathering it was decided it was time to pull out a few tricks and attempt a new tow – a team of 4



cars were tethered to the broken car and led by the ringmaster himself, little by little the Landrover moved along the beach.



On Dancer. On Prancer. On Cupid. On Blitzen. With joy cheers and claps we watched the team move past us and up towards the bowl. And I couldn't believe my luck when right in front of my vantage point, the great man in red himself made an appearance!!!!





The car finally secured off the beach, we joined the convoy in the bowl. It was clear that there was no way we could get the car to the road and another solution would be needed. At the next gathering, the wise one (Kerry) informed us all that we needed to know what, who, when and how the car would be rescued. We cannot leave a fallen brother behind. Gang did not have roadside assistance and it was decided he would phone the RAC and join. To the phones.

And there lay the next problem. In the bowl there was no mobile phone signal. The wise one climbed to the top of the bowl with Gang's daughter and managed to get a bar or two. Together they made contact with the RAC...only to run out of credit!!! Whilst all this was occurring, the rest of the convoy started experiencing mirages of beer bottles and mids of frothy ice cold beer – but sadly they were all out of reach.

Suddenly, the wise one noticed Gang was missing. She had noticed him walking to the top of a sand dune but he hadn't returned. We waited a few minutes calling for him, still no Gang. We waited a few more minutes, still no Gang. Paul decided to take his trusty Jeep up the dune path Kerry had seen Gang climb. A few seconds later a call came on the radio "Umm. I'm stuck! Can someone please pull me out?" Mike, thinking this was a dream come true to show Paul one more time why a Prado is better than a Jeep rushed to his aid. He decided to reverse up the hill to pull him. Several of us had rushed up the hill to see if we could help (in other words take photos) and then came the line of the day:

Paul: 'Mike, don't back on me you need to come at me straight. I need a little tug not a snatch'.

Realising what he had just said, Paul looked at me trying to keep a straight face. 'That came out wrong didn't it?'

Ummmmmm! I'll keep it in context!!!

Mike then ran straight up the hill. Attached the snatch strap and gave Paul a little tug (again...keep it in context!!!)



Altogether again, we had another gathering. If we couldn't find Gang in 20 minutes, the wise one said she would call the police. Paul once again tore up the hill (a different one) and drove round searching.

Eventually on a distant dune, Gang was spotted and a rescue vehicle raced towards him. Phew! He reported back to the gathering that he had made contact with the RAC and they had refused to rescue him. Back to the drawing board, or so we thought, because while all this was taking place, Jack had found a way to save the day. He had found, and made contact with a rescue vehicle from Two Rocks who was prepared to come out to the bowl and pick up the Landy. Hooray for Jack!

The final gathering involved the convoy deciding to split into two teams – the exit team and the recovery team.

Thus ended my part of the journey... however the adventure continued and in an effort to ensure this report is complete, the next chapter is a copy and paste of the emails sent by the wise one and then Gang the next day.

Hi all,

You were on the trip we did yesterday and I just wanted to let you know that Gang Xu, our visitor who was recovered off the beach was assisted by a very nice man who's number plate was Chooko. Not sure if that is his name or the car's name but that's what I called him. ;).

Chooko towed Gang's car from the sand dunes where we last saw you all, out to the road. It was difficult as the car seemed to want to brake all by itself along the way. Gang also had to replace a tyre which was slashed on some limestone rocks and at the same spot, re-inflate the rest which had gone flat along the way. Steve and I waited at the entrance to Wilbinga with Jack and Gang's daughter Xiu, whilst he went with Chooko to hire a car trailer. They returned at about 9:00pm and Gang had the unenviable task of hand winching a dead weight on to the trailer. Gang was ever positive and undefeatable on this adventure.

I would like you all for your help at every stage, from the beach to the dunes and a special thank you to Paul, Chris and Mike & Clare for staying with us for the recovery from the dunes to the road. I am very proud of you all.

Warm regards,
Kerry

Hi all,

Firstly thank you all very much for all the time you stayed with me and/or with my car yesterday. It was such an eventful day and is so great from an adventure point of view!

After we said goodbye and good night to Kerry around 9:30pm, we were on our way with Chad (the recovery guy) driving his car and my car of course is on a toll trailer. About 5 Km away my car was on the trailer, we were all in a very good mood, we even joked that my car was tailgating Chad's car. A few seconds later, a car chased us from behind with flashing lights on. We stopped and heard from the passenger who was still in a great shock and found out that one wheel from the trailer was off!! We walked back for about 500 meters trying to find the missing wheel, only to find two wheel nuts on the highway! We could not find the missing wheel in the pitch black of night.

Anyway another great experience for both me and the recovery guy Chad was to replace a tire for a trailer!

After we fixed the trailer wheel problem, we run out of any out mishaps!

By the time we arrived Joondalup, it's almost 11:30pm! My daughter and I showed some pictures and videos to my son who was supposed to go for our trip but didn't, "what a great and eventful day! : Pity that you missed it!" We serious meant it! My daughter said "What a day!" My son replied, "Haha I'll come next time when you break your car again."

My car is now in proper work today, I will keep all of you updated.

Good night!

Gang

Finally, the damage to the car



The car will live to see another day... maybe even a beach or two?!?