

club LAND ROVER WORLD OFF ROAD

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Dogfight Club

The expression 'confusion reigned' comes to mind. A combination of inaccurate phrasing from myself, and a steely determination by readers to interpret things the way they wanted them

to be, led to some confusion between *LRW* Off Road and our usual Off Road Driving Day at Tong.

However, it was alright on the night. The philosophy for *LRW* Off Road was simple: let Land Rover drivers have a chance to go

off-road in small numbers, with the inimitable assistance of the Redcoats. As well as loads of driving, watching and impromptu winching sessions, there was the mini-Bulldog event.

Puppies are notoriously boisterous, playful and diffi-

Tong was the setting for two great off-roading events in March – both were popular and blessed with sunshine. And as for accusations of elitism, Brian Hartley sets the record straight

cult to house-train. Bulldog pups are no exception, as was eloquently displayed by four 4x4s on a sunny March Sunday in Tong. The opportunity to have a ringside seat at this all-action dogfight, normally seen only by the local wildlife, was eagerly taken by over 100 spectators.

In a reversal of their fortunes on the 1999 Bulldog Trophy, Team Ninety – Pete Codd/Martin Lewis and Simon Buck/Matthew Cook – won the day over Team Ibex. Team Ibex was Steve Maddison/Bob Whamond and Steve Barras/Patrick

Diary dates

TRACTION IN ACTION 2000, WEARDALE 24-25 June

This is the one for anyone with a 4x4 of whatever make, and a sense of fun and adventure. Traction in Action is for the road-going motors that want to stay that way, with just enough optional tough stuff to make it interesting for the more specialised off-roaders. It is a unique (well, you try and find one somewhere else!), fun 4x4 challenge, but one that has more to do with



Lose yourself (and your 4x4!) at one of COR's driving days

navigation, treasure hunts and scenic off-roading than death-defying 4x4 antics. It's fun, it's all held in a truly beautiful part of the Dales (look for Wolsingham, Co Durham), you can camp or stay B&B, and you can join in with all the fun and games run by the Redcoats. As a weekend away, it makes Blackpool look positively pedestrian. The cost is £150

for the weekend, which includes all the off-roading and an al fresco meal. To get the full details – with no obligation, of course – just use the usual methods to contact COR. We interpret smoke signals, dig the beat of jungle drums, and crack messages in bottles. Or you can just phone, fax, e-mail, or even write a letter.

SCOTTISH SAFARI 23-25 July

I cannot believe that this still isn't finalised, but even as I write this, the necessary funds are being found for another high-velocity hike into the Highlands to view a virgin forest range that

might just be the answer to this particular Holy Grail, and indeed turn it back into a Highland (as opposed to a lowland) Safari. This is going to be the successor to our previous successful run of Highland Safaris. Make a note of the date, and contact COR to receive details of the event.

August is traditionally our month off, and I'm nothing if not a traditionalist!

BALA DRIVING DAY 3 September

A fine site in an incredibly scenic part of the country. Scale the higher reaches to take in the view over Lake



Hard-charging at Tong – it made a great day out for competitors and spectators alike

Club Off Road

of mere mortals yet again.

Aquatic antics delight the spectators who frequent the banks of the lagoon, drivers with snorkels, waterproofing and a desire for their moment of glory, and the video users and photographers who happily get their feet wet to capture the drama and disasters.

However, there are always some who pay the price with an engine hydraulic, or some such mechanical mishap. From the wheelbarrow proportions of a stripped-down Haflinger, (a long-discontinued Steyr Daimler Puch 4x4 named after an Austrian breed of mountain pony) to the larger proportions of a Hiab-equipped Bedford MK, we had just about every 4x4 there on the day.

Finally, and regretfully, after ten years of static prices, it is now time to lift our fees. In the future, all driving days will be £20 for subscribers and £25 for readers. Other events will continue to be priced individually. I do believe we provide value for money on all our events; certainly no-one else works as hard at them as we do. I shall soon discover whether that belief is shared by others...

Smart – not quite the Bulldog team, as Neil Redpath was busy being a proud father.

As well as being a good-natured grudge match, it just happened to be a North vs South fixture. The trophies went home well below the M4 on this occasion.

Team Ibex had what can best be described as a bad day. The absence of their usual leader, and bad luck with equipment, took its toll. Team Ninety were on fine form, and were within an ace of putting me in an early grave when Simon Buck

looked as if he was going to go for a full roll off a six foot bank into three feet of liquid mud. Luckily he was teasing!

Hopefully, the assembled spectators enjoyed the match and the commentary that kept them in the picture as to what was going on and why.

This event did elicit accusations of elitism. For the record, Club Off Road covers every make of 4x4. Always has and always will, as off-roading is more about people than products.

We will be running the off-roading for the Suzuki Rhino Rally at Tong on 18

June. As you may expect, this is only open to pre-booked Suzukis. Want to go? Call the Suzuki Rhino Club on 01293 884292.

Danger

Two weeks later, we were back at Tong again. A new attraction for this event was the instant digital photo service. They did a good trade, as everyone wants a picture of themselves in deep water. Despite the danger to personal wealth from such activities, the siren song of the water reached into the hearts

Bala, or ride the rhododendron run. This driving day is suitable for all abilities, with easy tracks as well as the testing stuff. We have the usual facilities (toilets, hot food, informal tuition, Redcoats and recovery). There's no need to book, but if you want an accommodation list for the area to make a weekend of it, just call COR. The site will be signed off the A494 just north of Bala, which is in North Wales, in case you were wondering.

THE BULLDOG TROPHY 28-29 October

The Bulldog is for those with bottle, brains and

brawny 4x4s. Teams should contain at least two vehicles, one of which must be winch-equipped. Prizes will be handed out to the winners (there are two classes – Standard and Specials), but you'll have to be good to get your hands on one of them. The Bulldog is more than just a 4x4 challenge – it's a team challenge too. All 1999 entrants will receive details



automatically; if you weren't there last year, call us and get yourself on the mailing list pronto.

Attention!

Important points to note when attending events mentioned in the diary:

- Check whether prebooking is required.
- There is a blanket speed limit of 15mph on all sites.
- Drivers/riders must hold full driving licences.
- No tractor/dumper tyres or anything more aggressive than Mud Terrains or SAT. If in doubt, ring first
- Spectators welcome at driving days. Please check with COR on other events.
- Driving days run from 10am to 5pm.

Costs per vehicle (driving days only): COR members £20. Others £25, spectator parking £5 per car.

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Any variations on the above will be detailed in the relevant section of the events diary