



2010 Snow Trip – Mt.Skene

4WD CLUB

Dates	21-22 August 2010
Event Organiser	Daryl Owen

Attendances	Daryl, Veronica & Rachel Owen John Brandwood Brian McLean Wylie McGinnes Grant Thomson Albert Armor*
Visitors *	

Mt.Skene is located along the Jamieson-Licola Road, east of Woods Point and south of Jamieson. A permit is required to travel along this road during winter.

The trip commenced meeting at the Warburton Bakery at 8am, also allowing time for voting in the federal election for those who had not voted early, we departed and headed up the Reefton spur.

Fairly soon, travelling along the Warburton-Woods Point road we reached the snow line, at about 1000mASL. With snow at this level, the likelihood of good snow conditions on Mt.Skene was promising.



Mt.Selma Rd



Warburton-Woods Point Rd

After travelling in snow covered roads for about 2hours, we reached Connors Plain camp ground. The camp area was covered in snow. The plan was to head upto Mt.Skene summit and then return to the camp ground for the night. Last year, the journey upto Mt.Skene summit took about 30minutes.

About 30minutes later, and 1/10th of the way to the summit we realized that the significant snow dump was going to slow us down. We soon reached another group who were bogged in the snow. One vehicle on their own, with no snow chains, no map, no warm clothing, and no idea had just been recovered by the Deleliquin 4WD club group (who had a vehicle of their own stuck).

The journey through the snow was slow, with numerous recoveries. Vehicles would slide in the snow and loose traction. Although becoming bogged in the snow, with the depth of the snow there was little risk of any damage and no chance of sliding over the edge of the road, or into the embankment.

Some vehicles were able to recover themselves by winching out and others were towed out. The opportunity to practice recovery techniques in a clean, although cool, environment was invaluable. At times, winching from one tree, then relocating the anchor to another tree to obtain sufficient distance to pull clear of the soft snow.



Convoy near Mt Skene Summit



Recovery on the Jamieson-Licola Rd

Snow chains in this environment are well worth their weight. Once applied, although on Daryl's Hilux they only fit on the rear, the driving is significantly easier and the ability to tow other vehicles clear was made much easier.

One downside is that when trying to tow a bogged vehicle, the snow chains really dig in. When the vehicle to be recovered does not move, within a split second the snow chains can cause the wheels to dig a hole and become bogged. This required the tow vehicle to be winched out.

Reaching the Summit of Mt. Skene about 4 ½ hours from the camp site we realized that to head back, through the same and potentially time consuming terrain it was likely to be well after dark.



Rachel Owen on the toboggan

After spending a short time on the toboggans, we decided to head onto Granny's Flat Camp ground, just out of Jamieson.

Reaching the turnoff just on dark, and finding a new seasonal road closure gate, the plan was quickly amended to dinner at the Jamieson Pub where we could work up a plan.



Snow chains can dig a hole when trying to recover another vehicle





Preparing to recover



Mt. Skene Summit

After the pub meal we all headed to the Howqua caravan park and set up camp for the night.

After a big day on Saturday, Sunday provided for relaxing pack up and drive into Mansfield where we grabbed morning tea before the easy drive home via Bonnie Doon. Lake Eildon water was almost at the bridge pylons when we crossed.

More photo's at www.cfa4wd.org

Report by Daryl Owen