

Registered by Australia Post publication no VB0170

4X4

MAR. 21 to APR. 26
No. 63 1989
\$3.50 NZ\$4.95 Inc GST

AUSTRALIA



WHITE LIGHTNING
-NOT FOR THE GOOD OL' BOYS

Scoop! .com.au

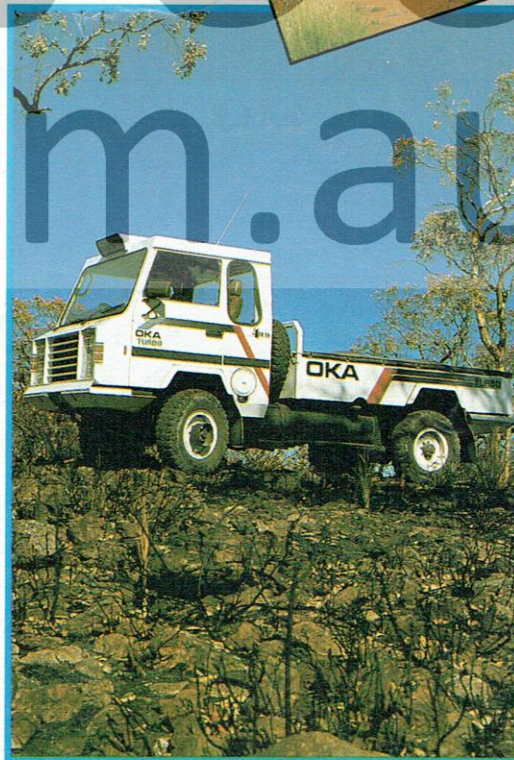
TRUE BLUE AUSSIE OKA

Destinations

Cape York—Qld

Grant—Vic

Watagans—NSW



WAGONS ROLL!
YOUR FULL GUIDE TO ESCORTED SAFARIS

NEW!
Viscous Rangie
Daihatsu's Feroza

WYNN'S SAFARI PREVIEW! 16 PAGE SUPPLEMENT

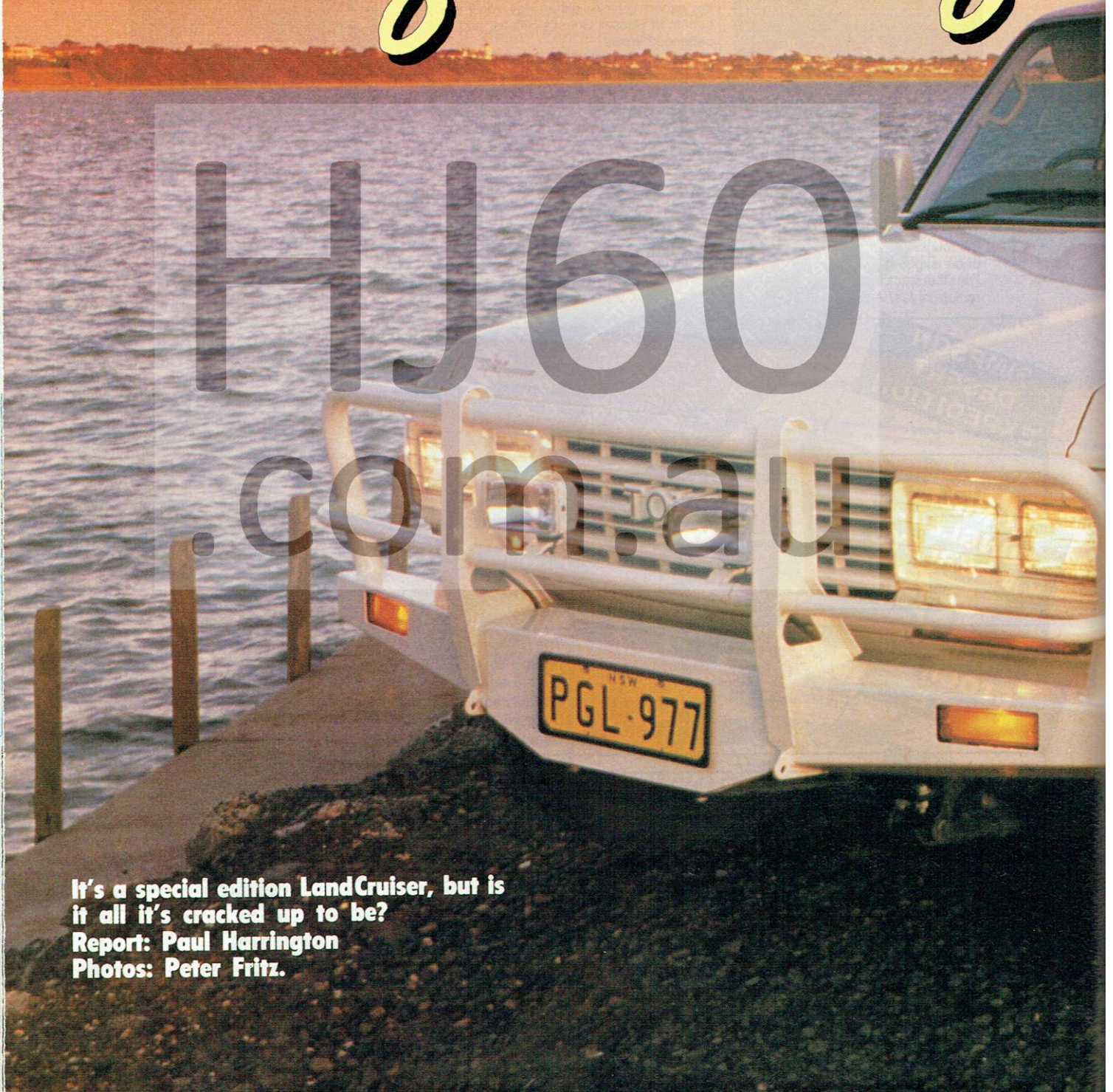
WHITE

Lightning

HJ60

.com.au

It's a special edition LandCruiser, but is it all it's cracked up to be?
Report: Paul Harrington
Photos: Peter Fritz.





HJ60.com.au

These days white seems to be the theme for most 4WD vehicles that have been given special treatment. We've had David Brown's "White Warrior" version of the GQ Patrol, together with Duncan's Tyre Services' similar project, based on the SWB GQ. Now it's Toyota's turn with its highly specified White Lightning limited edition of the LandCruiser 60 series wagon.

Priced at \$39,329 for the petrol engine model and \$51,600 (gulp!) for the diesel, White Lightning represents one of those typical manufacturers' ploys to breath a little life into a market which is beginning to reconsider a model's desirability.

In all mechanical respects this is a standard GX model. Powered by the well known 110 kW four litre petrol engine, it has a five speed manual transmission. Gear and differential ratios are standard, but the optional limited slip rear differential is fitted.

Where the vehicle does differ is in its lavish kit of extras, together with its stark white paint job. Adding just a touch of exclusivity, there's also a Peter Brock-like "build number" plate mounted on the centre of the dashboard. The test model was "number one".

Other obvious external additions include an impressive bull bar finished in the same white as the body, fitted with a pair of PIAA driving lights, again featuring white

WHITE *Lightning*

bodies and lens protectors. There are perspex headlight protectors as well.

The most important, and certainly most practical feature of the White Lightning is a set of Pirelli's excellent Scorpion tyres. These are 255/75 R15 covers fitted to wheels. Pirelli's Scorpion tread design is of the all-round type. Although we didn't do much testing in sand, the covers appeared to be just as at home there as in the thicker ooze found on our annual 4 X 4 Australia Awards weekend for the media in the Victorian Alps.

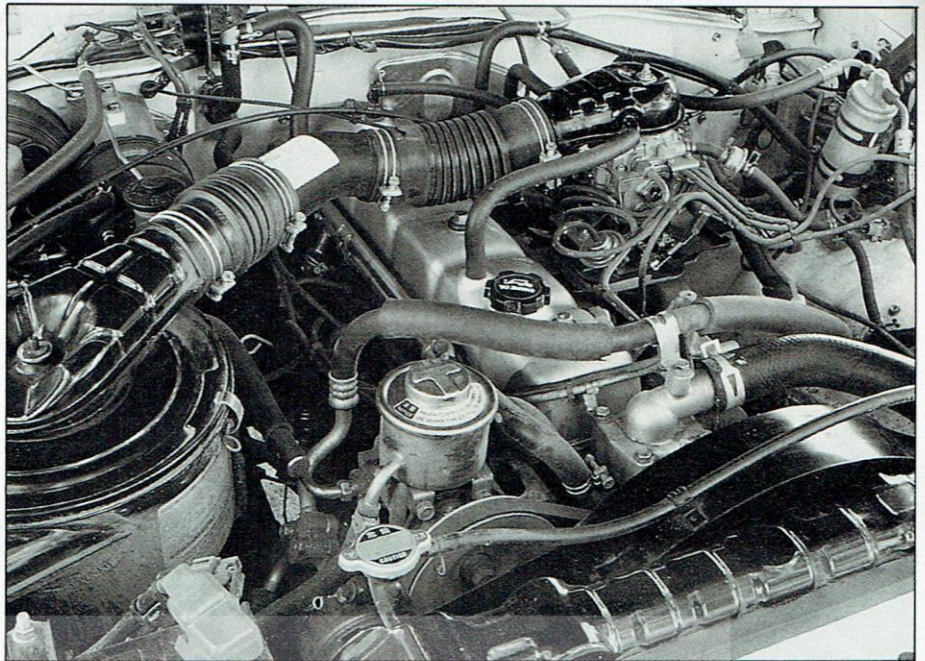
Inside White Lightning's cabin there are sports bucket seats up front with cloth trimmed facings which also feature on the rear bench. More luxury is suggested by the effective Momo leather covered steering wheel with matching leather gearshift knob. The steering wheel had its practical side too, providing comfortable grip, with minimum strain on the shoulders over long distances.

Almost all the other extras are normal LandCruiser options. Here we have air conditioning complimented by darkly tinted side and rear glass and electric window lifters. Then there's central locking (which didn't work!) and an integrated car alarm. There are even electrically operated remote control external rear vision mirrors. For entertainment there's a first class four speaker AM/FM stereo radio/cassette player.

Certainly there's plenty of luxury in the package, but none of it hides the ageing character of Toyota's top-of-the-line offroad contender. That fact is likely to cause the company more than a few sleepless nights during the next 12 months before a new model appears.

There was no better way of judging the 'Cruiser than in company with a wide range of its challengers. In this case we took away no less than ten vehicles, along with a large group of Melbourne's radio and TV people. The occasion was part of our build up to the recent 4 X 4 Australia Industry Awards.

There were petrol and diesel GQ Patrols, four and six cylinder Mitsubishi Pajeros, a couple of Holden Jackaroos, a turbo diesel Range Rover, a diesel Hilux and even a Suzuki Vitara. It's probably fair to



say the old LandCruiser suffered by comparison with most of these in one way or another.

We've commented at length on Toyota's revised suspension. Here we can only repeat that it is far better these days than it used to be. Nevertheless, every other vehicle on this trip left it for dead, both on the highway and in the high country. There's still far too much chop in its ride and, although bumps are well damped, front and rear spring/damper rates seem out of phase with each other.

An extra touch of luxury in the optioned up 'Cruiser is the Momo steering wheel and gearshift knob.



WHITE Lightning

Power assisted steering is nowadays a pre-requisite for offroading. The 'Cruiser's steering assistance is fine, although the steering geometry itself still has its quirks. Basically the vehicle enjoys taking left hand corners, but tends to wash out on right handers. It seems that the front end was optimised for roads with fairly pronounced camber, with Australian roads featuring far less.

Then we come to the power unit and transmission. The engine is a sluggish thing. It will rev out, but it does so grudgingly without much vigor. One might reasonably expect some sort of compensation in the form of strong low down torque, but even that isn't brilliant. Really for 110 kW under the bonnet it just didn't want to perform.

While gear ratios are acceptable as far as their suitability is concerned, the shift is laborious. The overall effect of this is to stress the 'Cruiser's commercial vehicle nature at a time when all other manufacturers have orientated their



Bucket seats feature up front, trimmed in comfortable cloth, and capable of a wide range of adjustment.

designs more towards a passenger car flavor.

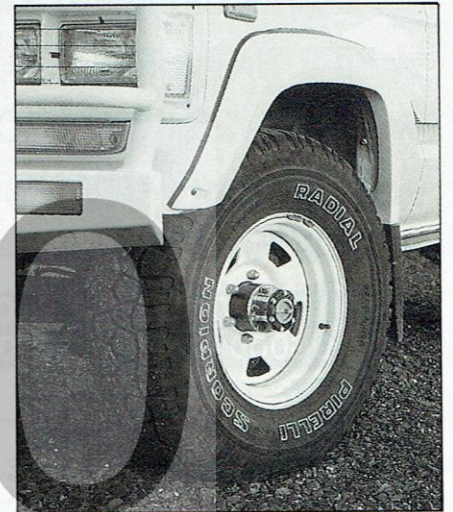
Off road we were interested to put the Pirelli Scorpions to the test. They were very impressive indeed. Strong grip, particularly when climbing in the loose, means less power is required. That in turn tames the 'Cruiser's propensity for hopping due to spring wind-up. As always however, the long engine hood is a

handicap, hiding the all important ground immediately ahead.

As we said earlier, few of these comments are new. Furthermore, most of them will probably remain pertinent until that happy time when Toyota finally releases its new LandCruiser. Meanwhile the White Lightning, and whichever subsequent limited editions the company produces to stem the tide, will keep the model's head above water until then.

4X4

Pirelli's Scorpion tyres proved to be excellent, on, or off the road.



4WD WRECKING SPECIALIST

TOYOTA 4WD

- ★ Toyota Landcruiser all models including 60 & 70 Series and Bundera
- ★ Toyota Hilux petrol and diesel
- ★ Toyota Blizzard
- ★ Toyota Tercel

FORD

- ★ Bronco
- ★ F100 4x4

NISSAN 4WD

- ★ Nissan MQ Patrol petrol and diesel
- ★ Nissan 720 petrol and diesel
- ★ Nissan G60 Patrol

DAIHATSU

- ★ Daihatsu Rocky petrol and diesel
- ★ Daihatsu F10, F20, F50
- ★ Daihatsu Scat

SUZUKI

- ★ Suzuki LJ50, LJ80
- ★ Suzuki Sierra 1Lt., 1.3Lt.

HOLDEN

- ★ Holden Jackaroo petrol and diesel
- ★ Holden Rodeo
- ★ Holden Drover ★ KB Isuzu

RANGE ROVER

LANDROVER

SERIES 1, 2A, 3

JEEP

- ★ Jeep Renegade
- ★ Jeep Cherokee

MITSUBISHI

- ★ Mitsubishi Pajero
- ★ Mitsubishi L200—L300

LADA NIVA

CURRENTLY DISMANTLING OVER 200 VEHICLES

★ ENGINES, GEARBOXES, DIFFS, WHEELS, TRANSFER CASES, DOORS AND PANELS ETC, TO SUIT ALL THE ABOVE VEHICLES.

★ ALL PARTS ARE EX AUSTRALIAN VEHICLES NOT IMPORTED.

**CASH BUYERS OF 4WDs ANY
CONDITION, DELIVERY
ARRANGED AUSTRALIA WIDE**

ALL FOUR WRECKING

4WD WRECKING SPECIALISTS

60-62 FRANKSTON ROAD DANDENONG 3175

Ask for Geoff Munday
or Murray Dunkinson

PHONE (03) 791 1922

FAX No. (03) 794 7849

LMCT 6699