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### Paragon - A beautiful Place

Jason Hagg



ultimate trail rig accessory, a real live GPS!

If you've never been the lead vehicle on one of these types of excursions, I don't think I can recommend it. You can't watch other's lines (read: mistakes), and you're always wondering if the people behind you are enjoying it as much as you. Of course, the view is much better up front, and I'll try to describe a few of our more memorable experiences: the "crick" crossing, "Puddle of Mud", and "Competition Rock".

The water crossing was our first cross-over from tame "green-laning" to "this-could-seriously-void-my-warranty" type trail riding. With a depth of only 3 feet, it was still deep enough to wash over our hoods and conceal the large boulder that was just to the left, (or was that slightly to the right?). After the successful crossing of what seemed like the Amazon River, we headed to a trail that will live in our memories forever. "The kind of trail our grandchildren will tell their grandchildren about.

The dreaded "Puddle of Mud" certainly lived up to its name. What a beautiful, unassuming trail. This must be the access trail to the real trail, right? I mean, where's the mud? Oh, there it is! Breaking through the hard candy shell to the creamy goodness underneath revealed a quagmire of biblical proportions. I believe at one point we had three trucks stuck at the same time! With Drew and his winch at the ready, and me and Ed with a slightly soiled strap, we were able to snatch and winch the wounded to terra firma while only the trucks with HTGRD mud tires (Honest To Goodness Real Deal) were able to spin through with minimal drama. Then there was Bill with his locked and loaded Disco wondering what all the fuss was about.

To wind down the day, why not do something crazy that may result in total carnage or perhaps death? Now I know what you're thinking. You've had a great day, no one got hurt, no one broke anything (major), and you're guide gets off in 15 minutes. Why climb "Competition Rock"? Because it's there! We have Land Rovers, the most capable 4x4xfar, or so I'm told, so we must be able to do it, right? To see a picture of this 80 foot cliff would not suffice. There is no way to adequately describe it using

What a beautiful place! I still can't get over the fact that there are over 150 miles of trails here. Whether you are a seasoned pro with a dedicated trail rig, or a "newbie" with a brand new stocker, this place has a lot to offer. Paul and I arrived in the morning, a little later than expected due to some navigational errors on my part, and were met by Ed and Michael patiently awaiting the throngs of Rovers that would soon be entering the park. As I went to the office to register our group and pay for the guide I had reserved, the rest of our crew barreled in with Drew leading the way, followed by Bill and then something large and green that resembled a RRC. Game on! We met our fearless leader, Chris, who was piloting a Geo Tracker that would give a MB Unimog some serious competition. He chose to ride with me instead, providing me with



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### Trevors Tidbits

I like to wheel every season of the year, but it seems that more trips occur in the early spring and summer than any other season. Typically, the spring thaws bring mud but also deeper water at some of our favorite off-road sights. I have had to bale the Disco out twice due to the ingress of water up to the door pockets! Which leads me to a maintenance item that is often overlooked: the swivel pin housing.

During routine maintenance on our customers vehicles, we check the quantity and the quality of the fluid in the swivel pin housings. Low or no fluid has the typical failures associated with inadequate lubrication. Land Rover has suggested gear oil or CV joint grease depending on the model, but the oil is easier to drain from the swivel pin housing, especially if it is mixed with water!

Has anybody ever weighed the spares and equipment they load for a weekend's adventure? I removed my camping gear, recovery gear, tool boxes, spares: brake pads/tie rod ends/ track rods/axles/ belts/short block/ transmission/radiator, powertank, and the back of the vehicle came up several inches! Some of the containers required two hands and considerable effort to remove them from the vehicle! there is an addtional bonus: fuel economy broke into the low 30's with a hot cammed 4.6 under the hood! Not really.

But I wonder, do I really



join us for the next trip to Paragon scheduled July 3rd, 2004.

» Read on.

### *tech tips*

something from LRM perhaps?

R.O.V.E.R.S. (ROVERS Club ) is an incorporated Land Rover club (Series Land Rover, Range Rover, Defender , Discovery and Freelander) serving the Mid-Atlantic region (including Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey). Membership is open to all Land Rover enthusiasts. The club plans and participates in off-road events, picnic, rallies, car shows and shop days. We also publish a newsletter The Fairlead six times a year.

words. It must be experienced. Try giving a haircut over the phone, and you'll know what I mean.

Getting to the top was the most butt-puckering 4x4 experience I've had so far, and I'm sure I'm not alone. Just ask Ed. He and Chris were battling the evil forces of gravity after Ed lost traction and did a dead-on see-saw impression. The only thing keeping him from careening backwards was Chris's strap attached to Ed's front bull bar and, of course, my amazing Jedi powers. Needless to say, Drew was able to hook up his winch rope and retrieve Ed with no further drama. After a quick change of shorts, Ed vowed never to speak to us again. I can't imagine why. Please

take it out because I have decided that I haven't needed it for a while, will I need it next time out? Is Jeremiah going to run out of brake pads on the downhill side of a ski resort in Vermont again? Is Peter going to put another hole in his Range gas tank that could only be fixed with a sheet metal screw? What would you bring along?