



4WD

BY ERIC GREEN

# WINCHING without the effort

**Austracks 4wd  
Training test runs the  
latest in winches from  
Bush Winch & Anchors.**



**W**hen you are hopelessly stuck, the good old hand winch can be a real life saver, but those of us that have used them know only too well that it's hard, tedious work. So most of us save up our pennies and purchase an electric one and think all our problems have been solved.

That is until we burn out our batteries trying to get our mate up the hill, then it's back to the hand winch for the hardest part of the recovery.

Not any more, Bush Winches & Anchors Pty Ltd have developed the "Bush Winch"; a fantastic little helper that is lightweight, easy to use and extremely safe. The Bush Winch can be fitted to most 4WD and 2WD vehicles and there is no need to

purchase winch bars, batteries or tow hitches, because the Bush Winch relies on the vehicle's own drive power.

I was asked to give this product a test and was only too pleased to do so.

The first part of the test for me was to evaluate the actual size and weight of the unit because we really don't need any more heavy equipment to carry around!

I found that the kit comes in 3 components:

- The Winches — there are 2 of them in each kit and they are available in most wheel stud patterns.
- The Rope — a specially designed rope that comes in two weights: 2 ton 4mm & 3.2 ton 5mm.

- The Wheel nuts — these come in 2 lengths to accommodate varying rim thicknesses.

Weighing in at only 4 kilos, the weight factor was not an issue so it was onto the next part of the test, replacing your existing wheel nuts with the Bush Winch nuts.

This can be done without jacking up your vehicle and you simply replace each nut, one at a time, in a diagonal pattern. It is not necessary to remove the nuts once they have been put on your vehicle. They replace your existing wheel nuts.

Nb. Don't forget to retighten them after you have driven a couple of K's to make sure they have seated and are still tight.



LEFT & RIGHT: The winch is easy to attach and you can have both sides of the vehicle done in minutes

ABOVE & OVER PAGE: Rocks, soft sand, boggy mud and rubble, the Bunch Winch handles them all

ABOVE RIGHT: The Bush Winch, installed easily and ready to go



Once we have done this we can fit our winch to our rim. The winch has been manufactured for a tight fit, so it is best to loosen it up by taking it on and off a number of times before we head off into the bush.

Now we are ready for the real test ...

Usually we need a winch when we get hung up, we can't go forward and we can't go back so I thought this would be the place to start. We tackled the infamous "Fence Line Hill" on the Mundairing Power Line Track just to give the Bush Winch a real work out.

But ... we had to get a vehicle slightly hung up first - then of course, we applied the hand break and chocked the wheels.

The next step is to place the winches on our rims and we can use

either the front, rear or a combination of front and rear rims, it just depends on which wheels have lost the traction. In this case we chose to use our back wheels and then we ran our lines out to the anchor points. In this scenario we used a tree and another vehicle for our anchors. We can also use a rope strung between two trees, rocks or practically anything that will take a load.

The winch is now ready to do its thing and all I have to do is get back in the vehicle and drive it forward while the rope reels me up the hill. I can hear you saying that the rope doesn't look strong enough but I have to tell you I am using the 2 ton rope at a mere 4mm thick.

Don't forget we are using a winch on each side of the vehicle, so that is 4

ton capacity and, because the rope is positioned right at the wheel, the load is nowhere near as severe as you might think it is. The rope is acting like a lift as well as a winch, winding the wheel up and out of the rut. The Bush Winch had no problems getting me out of this jam, there were no spinning wheels and the load seemed to be non-existent. I simply drove myself out.

Once I was out, I drove to a safe spot to park up and disconnect the winch. I was quietly impressed with this part of my test but I must admit, I was expecting it to work well in the rocks. So what about the sand?

We headed for my training grounds which are on an old sand pit with a few dunes and plenty of hot, fluffy sand. Normally we would deflate our

4WD



**"... now all I have to do is get back in the vehicle and drive it forward while the rope reels me up the hill."**

tyres and make it easy for the vehicles but we needed to get bogged and we needed to do it quickly because it was going to be another scorching 39o day. The entrance to the training ground is a small dune that very few vehicles with high tyre pressure can negotiate so, needless to say, the vehicle went straight down.

Once again we used a tree and another vehicle for anchor points, just because it was quick and easy and the heat was coming on strong. We refrained from letting our tyres down to make it that much harder for the Bush Winch but, to my surprise, the little fella just pulled the vehicle straight out of the bog and up the dune. Now I was really impressed. It was absolutely effortless.

This just left one more test, the no trees no cars and no natural anchor points test. Bush Winch have devised a couple of anchors that I am not privy to discuss at this point but, let me tell you this, they work! I will keep you all



informed on that one when I am given the nod.

What more can I say? It's a damn good WA product and I will be using one from this day on. Where do you get it? From any good 4WD outlet or contact Austracks 4WD Training on 9248 2620.

## TEST RESULTS

- It is light and easy to use, even for our lady enthusiasts
- There are no moving parts to jam your fingers and hands
- It is around the same price as a decent hand winch

- You can add more rope to it if you need a longer pull
- It is extremely safe to use even in sticky situations
- One unit can be shared with other vehicles by purchasing more studs
- It is quick to set up and quick to close down
- It can be used in reverse as well as forward motion
- It will replace the use of a snatch strap in most cases
- It can be used by large 4WDs, Soft Roaders and even 2WD vehicles

Travel Well,  
Eric Green — Austracks 4WD Training