



Left: Scott Rockliff and Phil Napier negotiate the mud on their multi-wheeler motorcycles.

Windscreens and Wipers are only for "Woosies"

By Martin Agatyn

North-West Coastal four-wheel mud-drive racer Scott Rockliff is as tough as they come.

Rockliff, from Sassafras, is the reigning Tasmanian champion and showed why at the Devonport Four-Wheel-Drive Club's recent winter mud run at the infamous Latrobe Mudbowl.

Situated adjacent to the Peter Jackson International Raceway (Latrobe Speedway), the mudbowl had been altered for the winter event to provide a faster course, but even Rockliff couldn't have been prepared for what was to follow.

The event drew a very big spectator crowd, which was kept entertained throughout the day.

Rockliff was having fun too early in the piece, racing his well-known radical mid-mounted Chev-engined Toyota Hi-Lux, "Mud Muncher", as well as his four-wheel-drive farm bike in special demonstrations, which delighted the crowd and had officials of the Devonport 4WD Club considering making the bikes a regular addition in future events.

However, it all went horribly wrong for Rockliff later in the day in his third round in the V8 outright un-registered class.

Looking for a fast time, Rockliff launched his Mud Muncher off the first bump, about 50m into the course.

Unfortunately it landed awkwardly and reared upwards into one of the most spectacular rolls seen since the mudbowl was built a few years ago.

Rockliff soon emerged from his up-turned vehicle shaken but not injured.

Once the vehicle was righted, he hopped back into the driver's seat and drove it back to the pits, abandoning his third run.



Above Left: Scott Rockliff, of Sassafras, gets out unharmed from his upturned Hi-Lix.



Above Right: Back on its feet again, and Rockliff (with helmet) is keen to get back in and get going again!

But, despite some un-scheduled body modifications and a broken windscreen, the vehicle was still operational and Rockliff lined up for the final a short time later – minus his windscreen and wipers.

What followed was a courageous effort against all the odds – and a lot of mud and water – as Rockliff established the fastest time to take the final.

Spreyton driver Warren Allen was second fastest on the day in his V8 Holden-powered Hi-Lux – almost 13 seconds behind Rockliff, with George Town's Garry Joslin steering his Nissan 720 to third place.

In the six cylinder unregistered class Paul Walters, of Glengarry was a convincing winner in his SWB Landcruiser, actually recording a time faster than Rockliff's V8 class winning time (the only driver to do so on the day).

Second place in this class (some 16 seconds slower) was local Latrobe driver Norman Slater in a LWB Landcruiser, with Tony Streets, of Launceston, third in his Holden Rodeo.

Mike Heald, from Ulverstone, won the four cylinder un-registered class in his Hi-Lux, from Devonport's Lance Lunson, in his highly modified Suzuki, which still had a few bugs to sort out in the system, indicating stronger future performances can be expected.

Third in this class was Kurt McBain, of Smithton, competing in a Hi-Lux.

Frank Quillerat, of Exeter, was victorious in the V8 registered class with his Chev-powered Landcruiser, winning from Derek Carr (Devonport, SWB Landcruiser) and Chris Lavell (Burnie, SWB Landcruiser).

Victory in the six cylinder registered class went to Lyndon Kettle (Launceston, SWB Hi-Lux), ahead of Rodney Simmons (Hadspen, Hi-Lux) and Sean Norris (Devonport, SWB Landcruiser).

Another former motocross racer (as is Scott Rockliff), in Gunns Plains driver Richard Hardstaff, was equally as successful in his class for four cylinder registered vehicles, taking victory in his Hi-Lux, with the minor placings in this class being taken out by Steve Gower (Port Sorell, Hi-Lux), and Tony Quinn (Launceston), Hi-Lux.

Martin Agatyn □

RESULTS – DEVONPORT FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE CLUB WINTER MUD RUN.

V8 (unregistered) class

1. Scott Rockliff (Sassafras, Chev Hi-Lux), 84.18.
2. Warren Allen (Spreyton, V8 Holden Hi-Lux), 97.13.
3. Garry Joslin (George Town, Nissan 720), 105.34.

6 cylinder (unregistered) class

1. Paul Walters (Glengarry, SWB Toyota Landcruiser), 82.68.
2. Norman Slater (Latrobe, LWB Toyota Landcruiser), 98.25.
3. Tony Streets (Launceston, Holden Rodeo), 106.22.

Four cylinder (unregistered) class

1. Mike Heald (Ulverstone, Toyota Hi-Lux), 91.56.
2. Lance Lunson (Devonport, Suzuki rotary), 94.54.
3. Kurt McBain (Smithton, Toyota Hi-Lux), 96.85.

V8 (registered) class

1. Frank Quillerat (Exeter, Chev Landcruiser), 115.68.
2. Derek Carr (Devonport, SWB Toyota Landcruiser), 124.11.
3. Chris Lavell (Burnie, SWB Toyota Landcruiser), 132.89.

Six cylinder (registered) class

1. Lyndon Kettle (Launceston, SWB Toyota Hi-Lux), 102.39.
2. Rodney Simmons (Hadspen, Toyota Hi-Lux), 127.30.
3. Sean Norris (Devonport, SWB Toyota Landcruiser, 140.41).

Four cylinder (registered) class

1. Richard Hardstaff (Gunns Plains, Toyota Hi-Lux), 111.72.
2. Steve Gower (Port Sorell, Toyota Hi-Lux), 116.63.
3. Tony Quinn (Launceston, Toyota Hi-Lux), 121.63.



"The rear axle was here a minute ago" – Warren Allen of Spreyton gets his Hi-Lux down and dirty.



Devonport's Lance Lunson shows off the power under the hood of his mean looking Suzuki.