

JPFreek

LIFESTYLES OFF THE BEATEN PATH



June/July 2007 • Issue 3 • Volume 2



WANTED

Rough and Ready Men
for a Dangerous Job.

Mark D. Stephens rides
along with the U.S.
Border Patrol, Arizona
Sector.

ASSOCIATE

**JK IN THE UK • TO HELL DURADO AND BACK • STILL ON TOP
WILD WATERS OF SoCAL • FAMILY FOUR-WHEELING
CATSAILING IN OKLAHOMA • BUFFALO BAYOU REGATTA**



It recently occurred to me that much of what we do in this world depends on the amount of risk we're willing to take. For some, breaking out of a monotonous routine can be a challenge in itself. Something as simple as trying a different food at a restaurant you frequently visit can be a risk, while for others the prospect of visiting a place you've never been before, whether physically or mentally, can produce a drama that quite often is what makes life so exciting. I've always found myself to be the type of person who becomes emotionally attached to the situations I face, and that passion is a part of a personality that yearns for adventure without forfeiting the experiences that can later be taken for granted. Sometimes it can be scary to take that leap of faith and do something that breaks the mold; however, you'll never know if you don't try and quite often you'll eventually wonder what could have been. So what's the point of all of this? Well, the answer is that if you have something you want to do, or a feeling or place you want to explore, do what you can to make it happen.

I hope that you enjoy the latest edition of JPFreek Adventure Magazine. With nearly half of 2007 having already passed by, we've got just three more issues before JPFreek officially goes to print. In the meantime, enjoy the upcoming summer months and let the great outdoors be your Petri dish for cultivating your next grand adventure.

Happy Adventures!

Frank Ledwell
Editor-in-Chief



Crew & Contributors

Editorial

Editor-in-Chief
Frank Ledwell

Hiking Correspondent
Ray Schindler

Expedition Correspondent
Mark D. Stephens

4x4 Correspondent
Matt Adair

Climbing Correspondent
Jeff Haley

Contributing Writers
Alan Ellis
Michael Pavelin
Mark Filonowich

Photography & Design

Art Director
Richard Tinnell

Marketing & Financial

Business Development
Frank Ledwell

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The Ultimate Roadtrip...An American Legend on America's Legendary Highway

The founders of Jeepbrokers.com, in association with JPFreek Adventure Magazine, recently completed a two-week trip that featured a one-owner 1948 Willys Jeep ® that was previously owned by a WWII fighter pilot. Nick Fallier, now in his mid 80s, flew over 129 combat missions in the south Pacific during World War II and upon his return to the States, he purchased his Willys Jeep ® and kept it for nearly sixty years. The vehicle toured cross-country from Georgia to Arizona with a portion of the trip having been driven on America's legendary highway, Route 66. For more details on the trip, please visit:



Virginia to Host Camp Jeep 2007 in July

Camp Jeep 2007 will be held July 26-28 in the Blue Ridge Mountains at the Oak Ridge Estate in Nelson County, VA. The event will feature a number of adventure opportunities including:

- Patriot 'Adventure' Park
- Compass Sound Garden
- Liberty Lifestyle Path
- Jeep Journey
- Wrangler Unlimited 4Wheeling Forest
- Wrangler Skate & Snow Summit
- Commander Base Camp
- Grand Cherokee Action Canyon

More details can be found at:

http://www.jeep.com/jeep_life/events/camp_jeep/index.html

JeepBrokers.com

http://jeepbrokers.com/roadtrip_2007.htm

An exclusive write-up of this trip will be featured in the August/September issue of JPFreek Adventure Magazine so be sure to visit the JPFreek website for future updates.

June 7-9: 'Abenteuer & Allrad Off-Road Fair' in Bad Kissingen, Germany. Hosted by the Extrem Events team that set the Jeep High Altitude World Record in Chile in mid-March 2007, this event will feature a number of important representatives from throughout the off-highway community. For more information, visit:

<http://www.abenteuer-allrad.de>

June 9: 'Beginning Off-Road 4x4 Skills Clinic' at Hungry Valley SVRA near Gorman, California. For more information, visit:

<http://www.4x4training.com>

June 9-10: 'Velirium International Mountain Bike Festival'

in Mont-Sainte-Anne, Canada. The Vélirium International Mountain Bike Festival comprises three weekends of competitive mountain biking, including the World Cup, Québec Cup and Marathon/Raid, featuring Downhill, 4-Cross and Cross Country competitions. For more information, visit:

<http://www.velirium.com/>

June 9-10: 'Durham Regatta' in Durham, England. The River Wear in Durham fills with boats for the city's annual regatta, incorporating the running of the Grand Challenge Cup, the most prestigious event of the weekend. For more information, visit:

<http://www.durham-regatta.org.uk/>

June 16: '1st Annual Top Rope Competition' in Wildwood, Pennsylvania. A rock climbing competition with preset top rope routes setup for a number of skill levels. For more information, visit:

<http://www.rockclimbing.com/calendar/Detailed/175.html>

June 15-17: 'Nova Scotia Jamboree' at the Fox Mountain Campground in Aylesford, Nova Scotia. A fun weekend for Jeepers and Jeep ® enthusiasts. For more information, please contact Geraldine Haines at prpnps@yahoo.com, or visit:

<http://www.novascotiajeepclub.ca>

June 23 & 24: 'Blackfoot Challenge 2007 Whitewater Race' in Missoula, Montana. An 11 mile down river race, Boatercross, giant slalom, and slalom race on the Blackfoot River. For more information, visit:

<http://www.canoerack.com>

June – July 2007: 'Jeep Jamboree 2007' in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Michigan, Vermont, Alaska, and Nevada. Jeep® Jamborees are off-road adventure weekends that bring together the outdoors, down-to-earth people, and their Jeep 4x4s. For more information, visit:

<http://www.jeepjamboreeusa.com>

June 30 – July 1: 'International Rowing Regatta' in Tampere, Finland. Tampere hosts two days of rowing competitions on Lake Kaukajärvi, with teams from Finland, Sweden and Estonia. The 2007 event combines the annual International Regatta with another 50-year Jubilee Regatta. For more information, visit:

<http://www.takonsoutajat.fi/>

July 2007: 'Are Extreme Challenge' in Are, Sweden.

An annual adventure racing competition hosted in beautiful Scandinavia. For more information, visit:

<http://www.puls.se/agent/index.cfm?CornerId=4>

July 1-7: 'Pedal the Peaks' in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Cycle between two of America's most famous landmarks, the Grand Teton Mountains and Devil's Tower. For more information, visit:

<http://www.cycleamerica.com/cc3rangeride.htm>

July 13-15: '20th Anniversary TOYO Tires Summer

4-Wheel Jamboree Nationals' in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. Held at the Bloomsburg Fairgrounds, this is sure to be a fun event. For more information, visit:

<http://www.familyevents.com>

July 20-22: 'MS Crawl 4 A Cure' in Gilbert, Minnesota. A fun weekend at Iron Range Off-Road Park for Jeep ® enthusiasts, benefiting the Multiple Sclerosis Society. For more information, visit:

<http://www.crawl4cure.org/>

July 21 & 22: 'Pennsylvania Jeeps All Breeds Jeep Show' in York, Pennsylvania. One of the east coast's largest Jeep shows, the All Breeds Show in York will feature hundreds of Jeep ® vehicles from post-war Willys Jeeps to brand-new JK Wranglers. A must for any Jeep ® enthusiast! For more information, visit:

<http://www.pajeeps.org/>

July 21 & 22: 'Wine Safari' in San Bernardino, California.

Enjoy the wines of Napa Valley while also adventuring in your Jeep ® vehicle. For more information, visit:

<http://www.4x4training.com>

July 28 – August 4: 'Hobie 16 and Hobie Dragoon European Championships' in Denmark. A catamaran sailing competition in the heart of the North Sea. For more information, visit:

<http://www.sailing.org/default.asp?ID=j6-FnA?/2>

July 28 & 29: 'Truck & Jeep Fest' in Canfield, Ohio. The festival will feature a number of Jeep-related events, as well as a special show featuring XTREME 4x4 TV show hosts Ian and Jesse. For more information, visit:

<http://www.familyevents.com>



Jeep® JT Truck and Jeep® Wrangler Ultimate Concepts for SEMA 2007

Jeep® enthusiasts have another reason to be excited with the recent release of two new Jeep concept vehicles that could possibly see a future in production. The new JT Jeep® truck, based on the JK platform and recently shown at the Rose Bowl in California, as well as the Jeep® Wrangler Ultimate, will be featured at the SEMA 2007 show in Las Vegas later this year. For the Jeep® Wrangler Ultimate, the name says it all.

The Jeep® Wrangler Ultimate concept vehicle answers the question 'how far can you go with the new Jeep Wrangler?' Beginning with the all-new Wrangler Unlimited Rubicon®, the team set out to create the best of the best – combining high style and materials with the best off-road machine ever offered by Jeep.

The suspension has been enhanced with a 3-inch lift to clear the massive 35-inch BF Goodrich Mud-Terrain tires mounted on custom, polished Alcoa Forged 18-inch wheels. The exterior is all chromed out courtesy of Mopar®:

- Fuel filler door
- Tubular side steps
- Tow hooks
- Hood hinges
- Tail lamp guards
- Exterior mirrors
- Door handles
- Fascia overlays

To complete the look, the exterior is coated in a wildly experimental color: Liquid Charcoal Pearl Coat.

The Ultimate's real story is its interior. Taking cues from rugged adventure sports bags and accessories, the specialty concept vehicle designers created a high style, detailed interior compartment that is as tough and beautiful as the exterior. Seating surfaces are clad in durable orange mesh fabric and dark slate gray Nappa/Province leather – bound with a heavy black-leather baseball stitch. Instrument panel details are treated to a stunning Argent Pearl/Satin Silver paint combination, reinforcing the machine character for which Jeep is known. The interior is also home to the exclusive MyGIG™ Multimedia Infotainment System. There are also DVD screens for passengers in the front and rear.



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WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

If you're looking for engaging content about Jeep and outdoor adventure, you've come to the right place! JP'Freeks' are inspired by lifestyles off the beaten path, and we encourage anyone with a story to tell or a photograph to share to submit them to JPFreek. Who knows, we may very well use your story and/or photo(s) in an upcoming issue, and your submissions will be rewarded with some really cool JPFreek gear including decals and t-shirts. So what are you waiting for? Submit your adventures to JPFreek at:

mystory@jpfreek.com





JK in the UK

Text and Photos by Mike Pavelin

It's 08.30 on Sunday, May 13th 2007 and this morning I'm on my way to Yarwell Quarry in Northamptonshire. I'm looking forward to a spot of offroad driving but I won't be using my own Jeep this time. Instead, I'm off to Jeep Trials 2007.

DaimlerChrysler UK runs the Jeep Trials in several locations across the UK to give the British public the chance to test their latest models. This year, two thousand lucky applicants were invited to attend, and prospective buyers got the chance to drive new Jeeps on the road. In addition, trained instructors were on-hand to guide each driver through a specially constructed trail designed to allow even the most inexperienced drivers to safely discover for themselves just how very capable a Jeep can be. For me, the main attraction was the long awaited JK Wrangler, which doesn't arrive in showrooms in the UK until June 2007.

As I hit the road, the weather didn't look very good. The UK has seen a very long dry spell this spring, but now we have the traditional British wet weekends that we all know and love. The prospect of seeing and driving the long awaited JK was pretty exciting for a Jeep enthusiast like myself, and the eighty mile drive from my home in Essex seems to take much longer than the hour and a half that it normally would be.

As I pulled my Jeep into the visitors car park, a Willys MB stood guard on a hill alongside its new JK Wrangler cousin. I wasn't scheduled to join until 11am, so I watched the early birds from the 9am group put the Jeeps through their paces. As I waited, I took a few pictures and chatted with the Jeep reps and other guests as they arrived. Although there are some experienced Jeep enthusiasts amongst us, most attendees had never driven off the tarmac before and they were quite apprehensive yet excited about driving a brand-new Jeep around the quarry trail.



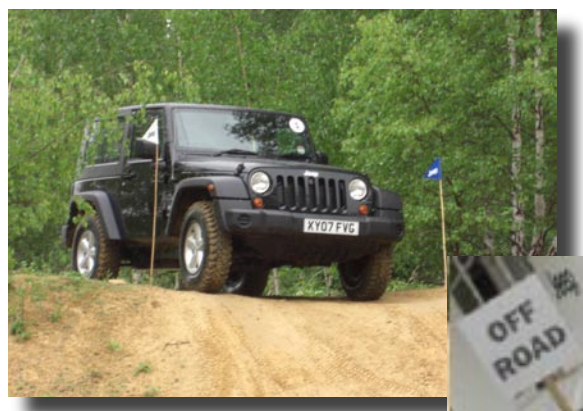


About ninety miles north of London, Yarwell Quarry is a working quarry where sand has been extracted for the construction industry since the 1940s. Yarwell isn't open to the public, but Jeep has been allowed to use it for years for events such as Jeep Trials. Although the trail has to be safe and moderately easy for the novice, the presence of an experienced instructor in every Jeep means that there are challenging climbs, descents, and side slopes to negotiate. In addition to the off-highway drive, each group had the chance to drive a new Jeep on a circuit of local roads, an agility course (tight slalom and parking manoeuvres), and they were also invited to see a demonstration of the finer points of the Bosch ESP system and the Grand Cherokee's clever Quadradrive II four-wheel drive system.

When the 11am start approached, I signed on and collected a coffee from the bar in one of two tepee-style tents set up on site. Once the group had assembled, there was a short safety briefing, and each of us was allocated a Jeep and an instructor. For the trail around the quarry, I was lucky enough to be given the chance to drive a black 2-door CRD JK Sport with the 6-speed transmission. I climbed aboard with my instructor, Owen, and took my first look around the inside of the new Jeep. Without a doubt, my first impression was good. The driver's seat was comfortable and adjusted easily. The trim seemed solid and well assembled, and although I had never been behind the wheel of one of these Jeeps before, I felt right at home.

The view through the windscreen revealed the unmistakable curved profile of the Wrangler hood, but with a turn of the ignition key, the muted rattle of a 4-cylinder diesel heralded a new era for the Wrangler. The Jeep was already in 4-low so I pressed the light clutch pedal and slipped the 6-speed into second gear. Owen directed me straight onto the trail. The route was marked with pairs of blue and white flags, and all I had to do was keep the white ones to my right. After a sharp right turn, I took the Jeep to a short but steep climb.

Having driven diesel Jeeps on this type of terrain before, I simply let the torquey commonrail diesel take over. Without any need to touch the gas pedal, the Wrangler clawed its way up the slope on idle. Once I was over the crest, the Jeep's engine management backed off the power and the diesel's engine braking brought us safely down before the power returned smoothly, taking us to the next obstacle. Only once during the twenty minute run did I have to touch the throttle to complete a steep climb. The traction control also impressed. On the loose surface, the Wrangler paused on a climb where previous drivers had dug deep into the sandy slope. The Jeep slowed for a second or two with gently spinning wheels, then the technology kicked in and the Jeep resumed the climb without any drama at all. For most of the trail, all I had to do was steer, and with an occasional shift into first for really steep climbs and third for the flats, my drive ended all too soon.



I reluctantly surrendered the keys and headed for the next section as another group assembled to drive the trail. No worries though as I then got the chance to drive a JK Unlimited Sahara. This one was also a CRD (all UK models except the Rubicon burn diesel) but this one had the automatic transmission. Again, as I climbed aboard, this new Wrangler had a solid feel to it. Although it has the familiar utilitarian Wrangler look, it also had creature comforts such as power door locks and windows, which were a welcome addition and essential in 4-door Unlimited form. Driving the new Jeep out onto the road, the whole car felt taught and controlled. As the transmission shifted up through the ratios, the new 2.8 litre diesel engine was quiet and smooth.

The ride was a little firmer than expected, and sitting behind the large 4 spoke steering wheel, the Unlimited reminded me of the good old XJ. As we picked up speed, the inside of the Wrangler remained quiet (for the UK, the Freedom Hardtop is a standard fitment on all models) and the Jeep remained surefooted on the wet, greasy roads.

Acceleration appeared quite leisurely, especially compared to the 3.0 V6 CRD in the latest Grand Cherokee, but as the engine is brand new I didn't push it too hard. In my experience, the diesel will loosen up when it's covered some mileage. I guess time will tell if I'm right, and speaking of time, mine was up as the convoy of Jeeps snaked back into the quarry. Before I handed back the keys to the Unlimited, I checked out the space in the back. If I'm ever lucky enough to be able to own one of these, this cargo space will be crucial. The JK would probably replace the KJ that I use for work, and it's always full of spares and equipment. If my stuff won't go in then it's a no-go, but it looked good so far. The split rear seat folded easily but I found that, annoyingly, although the two main head restraints fold automatically, the central one has to be removed to allow the larger section of backrests to fold flat. With the seats folded, the cargo space is impressive and certainly adds a whole new dimension to Wrangler ownership. It looks big enough, and I resolved that I would try loading all my stuff in the back at the local dealership when it finally gets an Unlimited in the showroom.



From there, I followed the group to the agility section where drivers were invited to discover how manoeuvrable the Commander was by driving it through the slalom and parking tests (no traffic cones were harmed in the making of this test), and we then collected another complimentary cappuccino before a short presentation on Jeep's Electronic Stability Program and the Quadradrive II system. Finally, there was a chance for us to ask questions. Afterwards, we talked Jeeps amongst ourselves but by this time the rain was really pouring down so the group broke up quickly and headed for the sanctuary of their cars. I drove south on the spray shrouded A1 back home with happy thoughts of the future of Jeep vehicles.



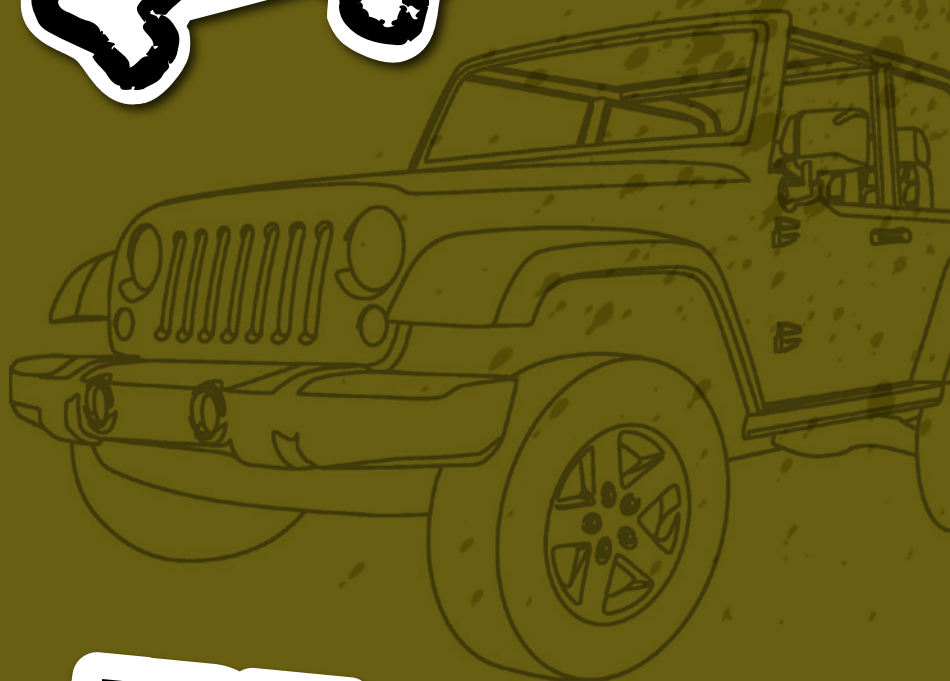
Sales of new Wranglers in the UK have always been very limited, languishing at around 100 units per year (about one per dealership). With the high cost of fuel over here (unleaded is currently around \$7.15 per U.S. Gallon) and the lack of rear passenger and cargo space (the previous Unlimited was never imported), the TJ could only ever appeal to a small number of enthusiasts. DaimlerChrysler UK (and the soon to be born new Chrysler Corporation) must be hoping that this new 4-door diesel fuelled incarnation of the Wrangler will open up a wider market for the brand, and I'm sure this will be the case. However, amongst many Jeep enthusiasts, there is much debate about DCUK's choice of models to import. For example, the Rubicon is only available in 2-door versions with 3.8L gasoline engine, even though a diesel version is on sale throughout the rest of Europe. Some hardcore modifiers would also welcome a low cost base model like the Wrangler X to build on, rather than paying extra for a whole load of unwanted factory extras. With the help of the Internet, we in the UK are aware of the models that DC chose not to import and this has been very frustrating. As for pricing, the CRD JK Sport is the least expensive UK model starting at £17995 (\$35675 U.S.), which has opened up a whole new debate. Only time will tell if the JK succeeds in the UK, but one thing is for certain: I want one!



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Text and photos by Kevin Mokracek

Whitewater in Southern California? No, I'm not talking about the waterfall you see at the interchange of Interstate 5 and Highway 14 as you speed along at 80mph. I'm talking about romp stomping, honest to goodness whitewater; and not just the Kern River either. Whitewater in southern California does exist. It's practically right under your nose.

Where you ask? Well, you could try the Los Angeles River but unless you are up-to-date with your Hepatitis vaccine and you don't mind dodging shopping carts and an occasional car, I wouldn't recommend it. Southern California does have some great rivers and creeks that offer challenging kayaking. You could try the east and west forks of the San Gabriel River above Azusa. I learned to kayak on these back in 1986. You can also take a look at Big Tujunga Creek Narrows, high up in Angeles Crest National Forest. Big Tujunga is one of the steepest creeks around, and once you start down the creek, you are surrounded by 200 foot walls of polished rock so steep and overhanging that it is impossible to climb out. Arroyo Seco has been kayaked from Switzers Falls all the way down to Devils Gate Reservoir in

Pasadena. Piru Creek straddles Los Angeles and Ventura County, and offers over thirty miles of outstanding kayaking in a remote canyon. All of these creeks are great but they pale in comparison to the crown jewel of southern California Whitewater: Sespe Creek.

Sespe Creek flows for more than fifty miles through the Los Padres National Forest in Ventura County. Sespe Creek is probably most noted as the home of the California Condor reintroduction program. But those who choose to tempt fate by kayaking or rafting down Sespe Creek will have little opportunity to bird watch while negotiating the miles of Class 4-5 rapids in its deep gorges.

Last Spring I decided that I wanted to attempt a raft descent of Sespe Creek. I had run Sespe twice before by kayak but in the back of my mind, I had always wondered if it was possible in a raft. Brian Baker, a life long friend and partner in crime in many adventures over the years, was equally keen to give it a shot. We kept a close eye on the weather and water level throughout the winter and early spring. When schedules and water levels aligned, we jumped at the chance to



be the first people to ever navigate a raft down Sespe Creek. We loaded our dry bags with enough food for three days and enough coffee for eight days.

DAY 1. Brian's wife was gracious enough to drive us to the start of the run at Lions Camp, high in the mountains above Ojai. A gate blocks direct access to the river at Lions Camp, requiring a one-mile hike down a road to the river. I knew this would be the case so earlier in the year I had welded a frame with a bicycle wheel attached to it so we could carry the 100 lbs of gear easily down to the river. After the short hike, we arrived to find the water a little on the low side. Normally

this would be discouraging but I knew that there would be several streams adding water to the river over the next thirty-five miles. By the end of our trip, the water level would be four times what it was at the put in. Brian's wife, Tina, wished us luck as we pushed the raft into the current and slowly drifted down stream.

The sun was warm and comforting. The air was fragrant with the smell of Sage that grows on the surrounding hillsides. The first fifteen miles are really not that difficult, and the miles passed quickly. The river flows through a broad valley with views of the Topa Topa Mountains to the South and Pine Mountain to the North. Snow did its best to cling to the gullies of the North side of the Topa Topa's in the late springtime sun. The rapids in this section are mostly Class 2-3 on a scale of 1-6. Class 1 being a leisurely float while Class 6 would be comparable to floating over Niagara Falls, possible but you will probably die in the process. Sespe Creek runs the gambit of difficulty from Class 1-6. We would be carrying our raft around the Class 6 sections. After covering several miles, we started to look for a place to camp. We spotted a nice sandy beach with a pile of drift wood that had been washed ashore during heavy winter storms. It was perfect! It was a nice sandy place to sleep and it had an endless supply of firewood.

The evening was spent drying our wetsuits, cooking freeze--dried meals, and talking about what great time we had made. I had Chili Mac while Brian choked down Chicken Cacciatore. All was made a little more tolerable with a few smuggled cans of Guinness Extra Stout and fresh brewed coffee. Happy with the days work, we fell asleep easily under an almost full moon.

DAY 2. Muscles a little sore and cold, we moved as slow as a turtle until the sun warmed us while loading the raft. Our raft was a ten foot long, self-bailing boat with a double wrapped floor and tubes to prevent

puncture and to allow water to drain away when running large rapids. After copious amounts of coffee, we were back on the river.

After fifteen miles, Sespe Creek makes a sharp turn to the South. Among the very few kayakers who have done Sespe Creek, this is known as "The Edge of the World". The canyon narrows, and the walls and the gradient of the river bed grow steeper. Rapids in this section are so steep that you cannot see the river below until you drop over the edge at the start of the rapid. Imagine Lombard Street in San Francisco with water rushing down it and house-sized boulders blocking your path. That





time we emerged at the end of the rapid, we were spent with exhaustion. We paddled to shore and collapsed on the sandstone, letting our bodies soak in the warmth of the sun and taking a well deserved break.

The first day of the trip we had covered almost fifteen miles. On this, the end of our second day, we had only managed to cover five difficult miles. Between scouting rapids and portaging around unrunnable rapids, it had slowed our pace down to a crawl.

Since the canyon walls had become much steeper and higher, the sun set sooner. We needed to find a place to camp for the night. Up ahead, we saw what looked like a promising spot. When we got there we found only a steep shoreline that was unsuitable to make camp. This

scenario played out several more times before we finally found a small, flat piece of ground with just enough space to lay our two sleeping bags.

We were in high spirits and proud of the progress we had made the night before but tonight, we were tired and discouraged. We had only rafted approximately five miles and we knew that we had fifteen more miles of the same challenge ahead of us. While wandering the riverbank to find firewood, I spotted something I hadn't seen on my two previous kayak trips on Sespe

is what the characteristic of Sespe Creek is for the next twenty miles. Rafting at this difficult level is physically and psychologically exhausting. We constantly read the river ahead and reacted to obstacles like a boxer ducking punches, hoping that one of those punches wouldn't land and knock us overboard. It was mid-afternoon on the second day when we came to a 1/4 mile long rapid choked with boulders. We pulled the boat to the side and got out to scout the area. Scouting a rapid is a little like choosing a line while four-wheeling. You choose the route that you think is best and then go for it. Only a raft doesn't have brakes, and the consequences are a little more severe than blowing the bead on your tire or busting an axle. Getting off your line while rafting in a difficult rapid can mean getting swept over the falls, flipping out of your raft, and swimming where the chances of survival are minimal. There are probably fifty rapids on Sespe Creek where you must make the move or face a very serious outcome. After a very thorough scout of the rapid, we hiked back to the boat ready to tackle the toughest rapid we had run to this point on the river. A few forward strokes propelled the raft into position. We pointed the raft toward two car Volkswagen-sized rocks. We then dropped over an eight foot waterfall between the rocks and immediately began working our way to the right to line up for the next drop. The next drop was not as high as the first but with more water flowing over, it was more powerful. With a strong forward paddle we plunged over the five foot drop only to be stopped dead in our tracks by the powerful back current known as a reversal at the bottom of the waterfall. The reversal sucked our ten foot raft back into the face of the drop causing the raft to stand precariously on end. Throwing our bodies on the downstream side of the raft caused the boat to fall flat, and we were barely able to paddle our way out of the jaws of the falls. This all happened in the first one hundred yards of a four hundred yard long rapid. By the



Creek: mountain lion tracks. Big mountain lion tracks. Needless to say, my senses had now been heightened by the tracks, and at that moment I high-tailed it back to camp and lit a huge fire thinking that if we were going to be eaten by a mountain lion, I at least wanted to be able to see it coming. After a tense and jittery evening that included tuna and coffee, I was off to bed and sound asleep with practically one eye still open.

DAY 3. I would like to say that on day three, we made up for lost ground but when it was all said and done, we still had only managed to raft approximately seven to eight miles. Better than the day before but still not great. The river ahead was not necessarily any harder but there were more portages where Brian and I would have to carry, pull, hoist, and drag our raft around with a number of impassible rapids.

It must also be said that during the last three days, we had not seen a single sign of civilization except for con trails from jets streaming thirty thousand feet overhead. I don't know of anywhere in California, with the exception of the Sierra Nevada, that you can get this far away from it all.

In this section of the gorge there are no trails to take. If we were to need to hike out of the canyon for any reason, it would entail having to swim and rock climb. This is true unspoiled wilderness. We also knew that the most physical part of the trip was just ahead. We decided to make our overnight stay at a spot just above what has been dubbed by Sespe Creek veterans as 'The Portage Fest'. The boulders in this section of the river defy description. Boulders the size of small apartment buildings choke the riverbed, and the water literally disappears into the giant maze of boulders, rock, and scree. This continues for at least two to three miles with few sections that can be rafted for more than a hundred yards at a time.

We had found a nice small, sandy beachfront and that was where we made our camp. Being that we were too exhausted to cook, we settled for cold tuna



and an energy bar. That night we talked of past trips that we had shared together. Brian and I had formed a partnership over the years that took us rock climbing in Yosemite, backcountry skiing in the Sierras, and working together as firefighters for the Los Angeles City Fire Department. I can't think of anyone else I would want to attempt such a demanding trip with.

DAY 4. Day four began with a brutal four hundred yard portage through a boulder field. This required us to climb to the top of a thirty foot boulder, sometimes using the raft as a ladder. At the top of the boulder, we would then haul the boat to the top and then lower it down to the other side. At several other points, we had to rock climb just above the river and past rapids sections that weren't passable with our raft, all of this with a rope trailing behind. Then one of us pushed the tied-off boat into the river while the person downstream would try and guide the boat with the rope over the waterfall and safely to the riverbank below. This was the routine for almost three miles. At the end of 'The Portage Fest', we were rewarded with several miles of difficult but consistent rafting. As we rounded a bend in the river, a landmark called 'Devils Gate' came into view. This is generally thought of as the end of the difficult sections of the river. If we had the strength, we might have high-fived each other as we paddled through 'Devils Gate'. Instead, we paddled on with a determination to reach the take-out point in the town of Fillmore before dark. A few miles above Fillmore, the scent of orange groves drifted up the canyon by a warm breeze. After miles and miles of class 4 and 5 rapids, the class 2 and 3 rapids we were cruising through were a welcome relief as we finally made our way to the take-out point.

As I had mentioned before, I have kayaked Sespe Creek twice before and each time I had kayaked it, I swore that I would never do it again. After finishing the first raft descent of Sespe Creek, I swore once again that I would never do it again. Call it addiction or flat-out craziness, California's whitewater rafting is top-notch and a must for any adventurer.



TO HELL BORADO AND BACK

Text by Matt Adair



If any place in the world could be considered Mecca for Jeep enthusiasts, Moab, Utah would certainly be a contender. The terrain is legendary for its beauty and diversity. Landmarks such as Lion's Back, Hell's Revenge, Poison Spider, Escalator, and the Golden Crack are indelibly burned into the minds of every 4x4 enthusiast.

One of my local Jeep clubs (PNWJeep.com) was planning a trip to Moab the second week of May, after the congestion from Easter Jeep Safari had calmed down, and they assured me that I absolutely had to go for the life altering experience, and all that. Moab is also well known for eating Jeeps whole and picking her teeth with the broken axle shafts, so it was not without a little trepidation that I agreed to come along.

A search on Youtube or Google will reveal too many roll-overs, flops and catastrophic failures to count. I will let you know this: the night before I left, I was glued to my computer screen watching Jeep after Jeep after Jeep plunge down some impossibly vertical piece of sandstone to its death. It was then that I realized driving my Jeep the 1100 miles each way might be foolish.



Our group of Jeeps would consist mainly of Cherokees, with a few wild cards thrown in. Of course, there's my '94 2-dr XJ, running a High pinion D44 front axle, Ford 8.8 rear, Detroit's and 34" Interco Trxus tires on about 6.5" of lift. Riding shotgun with me was good friend and fellow XJ driver (though not on this trip) Sean Hudson; he was nice enough to take pics for us as well.

The lone vehicle with a real frame was the '95 YJ of Aaron Candiloro, running 35" Toyo M/Ts. And four furious little cylinders which Aaron put to good use, getting himself into trouble more than a few times. Aaron also took home the trophy for most carnage.



The other Jeep that does not look like the rest is a 1990 Jeep Comanche, Jeep's experiment with the small truck market, owned by Jason Abbitt. Pretty rare, and always gets admiring looks on the trail, especially with his full width Dana 44 axles and 37" Creepy Crawlers. The "MJ's" longer wheelbase helped Jason immensely during our trip, enough to get him up some seemingly impossible lines.

This is John Mathews, owner of Auburn Car Repair & Offroad, whose stickers you see on many modified Jeeps in the Northwest. His rig is the undisputed monster of the group, with John making the most impossible looking obstacles look possible, if just barely. He's running a HP D44 front axle with 5.13 gears, full Detroit lockers and 35" BFG Krawlers, the preferred tire choice of many competition rock crawlers.





John Herrick was the other sage veteran who we all looked to for the right lines and paid close attention as he spotted us. John was perhaps the most experienced wheeler yet, on paper, had the least capable vehicle. He was the only person not running an upgraded rear axle (the popular choice being a Ford 8.8 with a Detroit locker), had the baldest tires and the most miles on his Jeep (250k+ miles). Yet, he went everywhere we did all week, showing what finesse and careful planning can achieve.

This is Jesse Connor, a veteran of Moab and experienced wheeler in the NW. This would, however be the maiden voyage for this Jeep; just recently he swapped parts over to this newer rig. Despite the untested nature, the rig did fine, with only minor issues the whole trip. It even acted as an ambulance (fitting, as Jesse is a paramedic) for a hurt hiker we discovered on the Moab Rim Trail.



This very well put together Jeep belongs to Gary Prong, another Moab veteran who ran with the group. With ARB's front and back, he had an easy time of most of the obstacles, including him here flexing out the Clayton Long Arm kit on the Golden Crack, one of the most recognizable challenges Moab has to offer.



Here is the group on the Moab Rim Trail, a relatively short but steep trail just outside of town. While the individual obstacles were not severe, the fact that they were on the edge of a cliff and very off-camber lent them a special complexity. The scenery made up for it though, as this picture shows the breathtaking views the altitude afforded.

The Kane Creek Trail was a surprise for most of us, not only because of the lush scenery, but also how much fun we had on this supposedly "easy" trail. Coming from the Seattle area, we were surprised to see so much water in the many creek crossings in the desert.



Also on the Kane Creek trail, here's Jason showing his cool under pressure. Those of us watching was sure he was going to put his Jeep on it's side, but just the right amount of finesse saved him.



Back at camp, here's John welding Aaron's axle tube back to the pumpkin. Even with a 4-banger, Aaron was able to break stuff convincingly. We were the envy of the campground, and made good use of the welder the rest of the week.



Oops. Here's me on my side on Escalator, one of the more challenging places in Moab. I was the first to attempt it, and unfortunately miscommunication between me and my spotter led to this fiasco. Luckily, I was able to back out of it and keep going...at which point I put my Jeep over on the other side. My armor saved me though, with only a little scratch on my roof rack to show for my efforts. Wish I could build some rock sliders for my Ego, though....

Me again at the top of a stair-step obstacle on Moab Rim. This was a common challenge in Moab, one that is overcome in two parts. Initially, just getting your front tires over the first ledge is the goal. Once you do that, it's time to hammer-down and bounce the rears up and over. With the amount of traction afforded on these rocks, this can lead to catastrophic failures. Jason found this out when he blew up a hub on this same section.



A common scene in Moab, this one on the Hell's Revenge Trail. Hells Revenge is relatively easy due to the high grip, but approach and departure angles might conspire against more stock vehicles. The optional obstacle at the end, Hell's Gate, however, is a tricky and fun one. Lockers recommended.

All things considered, we came through relatively unscathed. My alternator died (on the last day, after the last trail, a mile from camp) and I slashed a sidewall, not bad when looking back on the week, running the most difficult trails Moab has to offer.

While some of my expectations of Moab were not met (I'm still alive, for example), the experience was truly unlike any other. What makes this experience all the more impressive is that three of us were able to get in our Jeeps, drive 1100 miles, wheel some of the most amazing trails in the world, see some of the most breathtaking scenery imaginable, and drive another 1100 miles home. It's a testament to Jeeps and an experience I highly suggest everyone do at least once...per year.

Photo Credits and thanks to: Brian Medley, John Herrick, Sean Hudson, Jesse Connor, John Mathews, and the rest of the guys from PNWJeep club.

Still on Top



Matthias Jeschke - Statement on the record attempt of the Chilean team

First of all, congratulations to all those who were inspired by our high altitude world record and ventured to follow our tracks on the Ojos del Salado.

The comparison with the biblical epic of David and Goliath seems to be something of a misunderstanding, because the aim of our expedition was not only to break the new high altitude world record but also to test out a completely new development of two DaimlerChrysler vehicles and of two ARGO amphibious vehicles.

Moreover, it was the first time that a complete team had been prepared for the stresses and strains in a test centre for high altitudes, located at 250 m above sea level. Detailed monitoring and supervision of the team members was carried out by a local physician and the results of the experiments will influence further investigations of "high altitude" sickness and diabetes.

An additional aim behind our attempt was inspired by our solidarity with the country and the people - to promote Chile and the Atacama region in the world. For this purpose we cooperated fully with the ministry of tourism.

The fact that DaimlerChrysler will be issuing a special model of the Jeep® Wrangler will give added publicity.

The action of the Chilean team, which was not authorized by the area and regional administration, will certainly not be beneficial for a controlled and safe development of the area and the resulting tourist industry.



In addition, the Chilean team did not follow the rules of Guinness World Records™. They drove without fixed GPS installations and without the necessary official independent observer.

With regard to the present situation, we will have to wait and see whether someone, somewhere in the world, will exceed our new high altitude world record.



Family Four-Wheeling with **THE WHOLE GANG**

A Guide to an Experience the Whole Family Will Enjoy

Text by Jeff Haley

When most people think of four-wheeling, it is often thought of more as hard-core excitement for the individual rather than an adventure suitable for the entire family. This certainly is not the case and with the proper planning and understanding of local recreation areas, a day of four-wheeling can be enjoyed by the whole family.

Many four-wheel drive enthusiasts understand the importance of family and maintaining hobbies that include spouses and children. While not every family member may enjoy spending a whole day working on a four-wheel drive vehicle in the garage, most will enjoy time in the outdoors while driving along a



backcountry road and experiencing all that the natural world provides. Understanding the interests of your family, and planning an itinerary for the weekend or just for a day, can provide an experience that your family won't soon forget and will certainly enjoy.

The most important aspect of four-wheeling with the family is maintaining a safe experience for everyone as it's not just you and the Jeep ® this time. Fortunately, every recent model of Jeep ® vehicle will provide the proper seatbelt and safety restraint systems that will allow everyone a safe ride on the trail. In addition, there are a number of car seat options for small children that can be adapted for any vehicle with standard seatbelts, and these will allow even the youngest family members a secure seat. On a recent day trip, a friend of mine had a Jeep Wrangler with two child seats in the back, and his children were safe and secure while enjoying the views and excitement throughout the day.

The second aspect of a family four-wheeling trip is to accommodate everybody's needs during the adventure. This might include bringing special snacks on the trip, carrying a football or frisbee in your Jeep ® for some time to stretch the legs, or even bringing along a book or magazine with you. I have noticed that some family members will get tired and bored if they're not the one driving so it's always wise to have some back-up entertainment for those dull moments along the trail to keep everyone occupied. In addition to bringing along entertainment items, it is fun to research the cultural and physical history of an area that you may be going to. It is always exciting to learn new and interesting information about an area



that you may be driving through, especially if it has historical significance or was previously a ghost town.

Aside from bringing along extra entertainment, you just can't beat enjoying the natural world around you. This can be achieved by taking a hike, enjoying a relaxing picnic, locating a fishing hole, or racing down a mountain biking trail. Obviously, several hours in the back of a vehicle crawling over rocks and mud puddles can get a bit monotonous so you must keep in mind that when the family is with you, it's all about being creative. The easiest item to plan for is the standard picnic; just bring some food, find the perfect spot, and you've got fun for everyone. Most places will have either a nearby creek or pond to try some fishing or rock skipping. After the picnic there is always the quick hike. Most four-wheeling areas are in the vicinity of hiking and biking trails, and nothing stretches the legs better



be to let each person drive a certain section of the trail (if capable to do so) or to assist in spotting at certain obstacles. Another idea is to bring a camera just for the kids to use so that they can take photos of certain landmarks or cultural highlights and start a journal of each trip, complete with a specific souvenir such as a rock from the picnic spot or an old lug nut found along the trail. You may also want to teach your family about a certain aspect of conservation of the environment and the resources that you are enjoying to make this not only an enjoyable experience but also a respectful one.

As you see, an ordinary day of four-wheeling can be transformed into a fun adventure for the entire family. Each one of these ideas can help accommodate each member of the family throughout the day, and leave the family anxiously awaiting the next four-wheeling adventure.



than an hour-long hike. Most children are captivated by hiking and exploring an area with binoculars, butterfly nets, or even a bug box to bring some pets home at the end of the day. Just be sure to spend some time researching the areas that you plan to visit, either at the local outdoor retailer or on the internet, to make sure that your family will have fun and will be safe.

The last idea to keep in mind is to make the trip personal to everyone so that each member of the family goes home at the end of the day with a certain memory that will inspire and encourage them to go again. This will transform a simple day of four-wheeling into a personal adventure of fun with the family. Some ideas to make the trip personal for everyone would



BUFFALO BAYOU REGATTA

2007



Text and Photos by Frank Ledwell,
Editor-in-Chief

As the horn pierced the humid air with the ferocity of a jetliner ascending from a tarmac, paddlers from all over the state of Texas wafted through the waters of Houston's Buffalo Bayou in anticipation of a first place finish 15-miles away.

For 35 years, the Buffalo Bayou Regatta has maintained a tradition of excitement and adventure for kayakers and paddlers alike. Held annually in Houston, Texas under the auspice of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, a non-profit organization devoted to increasing local involvement through pedestrian, biking, and boating amenities along Houston's Buffalo Bayou, the Regatta is a true testament of endurance and is the largest kayak and canoe race in the Lone Star state. Nearly 200 kayaks and canoes competed in the 15-mile race through the heart of Houston, and paddlers raced in a number of classes including the Corporate Cup, which featured competitors from a number of Houston and International-based companies, as well as novice and experienced classes for men, women, and coed teams.



The race began under overcast skies the morning of March 24 with sporadic drizzle adding to the drama of the race. Scores of boats tore away from the start line as a number of first-timers and veterans built a level of camaraderie while still taunting their fellow competitors in friendly competition. This competitive spirit continued throughout the day as the bayou zigzagged through trees, buildings, and cloudy skies en route to the finale with Houston's skyline greeting them at the end. Plenty of excitement was had as paddlers made their way to the finish line. The overall race winner, Nicolas Coute, completed the course in just over 1 ½ hours at 1:32:52 in his ICF (International Canoe Federation) K-1 boat, and defending Corporate Cup champion BHP was finally dethroned by Chartwells team members Jerry Cochran and Richard Steppe with a race time of 1:44:17. Said David Pearson of Hines Management, a Corporate Cup participant:



The regatta was an absolute thrill to say the least. The opportunity to view 15-miles of the bayou from a canoe was amazing. Aside from many of the spectacular homes seen from the bayou, the best view was coming around the final bend and seeing the full skyline of Houston! Neither my teammate nor I had paddled a canoe in a very long time, but that didn't matter. After a little warm-up and some hysterical moments of crossing back and forth into the banks, we got the hang of it and had a ball. All of the participants we "ran into" before, during and after the race were extremely helpful and eager to participate as well. The volunteers' level of service and great attitudes took the event to the next level. "See you next year!!"

The 2007 Buffalo Bayou Regatta was an exciting and entertaining event for paddlers and spectators. With a tradition of adventure and competition, Texas' largest kayak and canoe race provides a welcome contrast to the bustling atmosphere of Houston, a city whose hidden treasures provide plenty of opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors and for a select few, a 15-mile race that encompasses all that is grand about Texas.



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Text and Photos by Mark D. Stephens

Think driving a Jeep for a living sounds like fun? Harvey MacKay says, "Find something you love to do and you'll never have to work a day in your life." Just between you and me, I think driving a Jeep on dirt roads sounds like a great job description. Toss in some exercise – such as hiking, or a little running maybe – and we're on the way to really cool fringe benefits. That's a day at the office for a Border Patrol agent . . . sort of. By the way, the United States Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection are hiring.

QUICK HISTORY

The Border Patrol, as we know it today, was established on May 28, 1924 out of the need to enforce Prohibition and the Immigration Acts; other forms of border security existed earlier, but they were not as organized or permanent. Prior to The War on Terrorism, the Border Patrol received little public attention, yet illegal immigration and smuggling has been going on since the borders were established – don't kid yourself believing this problem is recent. Since the 1800s, Europeans and Chinese flooded into the country through parts of Canada where the border was meagerly patrolled, and Latin Americans poured in from the south in remote regions of the desert. In 2001, border protection suddenly sprung into the mainstream limelight for emphasis on anti-terrorism.

And they use a fleet of Jeep TJs to handle the rough desert terrain along the border in the Tucson Sector in southern Arizona.

ADVENTURE JOB

What's it like to be a Border Patrol Agent? It begins with a lot of paperwork, and waiting. Then – if you get the green light, pass the background check – you enter a five-month academy in which you:

- Learn two and a half years worth of college Spanish
- Run eight miles a day
- Get trained in controlling large groups alone
- Learn federal law
- Oh, by the way this is the toughest academy in all of the law enforcement departments, second to the FBI academy.

Like most law enforcement academies, there is a high turnover rate. To quote one agent, "You've got to be a fighter, you can't be a quitter. I don't need a quitter as my backup – I've got a family, and they're counting on me to come home at the end of the day. We're out there alone sometimes, and we'll apprehend groups of 10 or 15 people. If one decides to retaliate or resist, you've got to be willing to do what it takes until help arrives. It's your only choice, but not everybody can do it. It's a great job, but it's not easy."



Above: The green stripe says it all: Border Patrol

Bottom Left: Border Patrol Jeeps are simple with M/TR tires and outfitted with a cage in the rear for transporting 2 people.

THE JEEP

I first met Agents Sean King and Robert Gumtow at the Tucson Border Patrol Office. While signing a waiver – an easy little thing that says if I get maimed or killed today, I promise not to hold it against Uncle Sam.

"Before I sign," I thought, "I want to see the Jeep." Then Agent Gumtow handed me two pictures.

"This is one of our Jeeps from the Casa Grande office. It's pretty nice."

Looking at the first photo, I noticed the typical stuff: mods. It was a white TJ Sport with no suspension lift, 31" Goodyear M/TR tires, some heavy skid plates, the standard green Border Patrol stripe running down the side, and the dark blue and gold emblem on the door.

"Here's the same Jeep two weeks



Agent King inspects a below-ground drainage in Nogales; they've found full size fans and dead bodies in this drainage

later," Gumtow coolly told me while revealing the next photo, scratching his nose like it was no big deal.

The Jeep was entirely smashed. The passenger side tire folded like a taco, hood crushed, windshield destroyed, doors gone, and otherwise unrecognizable.

I must have established myself as the type of guy who could take a joke. So I bottle fed them a line: "What's this? Just another day at the office? Brutal job, man."

"Still want to sign the waiver?" One quipped back.

After chortling for a moment, King explained that an agent had been using this Jeep in pursuit of another vehicle but the transfer case skid plate snagged on a railroad track when he tried to cross it. A few minutes later, a train came along. Luckily the agent escaped before the Southern Pacific iron horse plowed through, but he had to sacrifice the Jeep.

Odd how they showed this to me as I signed a Hold Harmless Agreement. Nevertheless, I was anticipating an adventurous day in the desert and seeing some first-hand apprehensions. And it wasn't long after we arrived in the border town of Nogales, Arizona when we heard on the radio that a group of people breached the border in a yellow van and a passenger car of some kind.

Being in the very sector where they caught 392,000 illegal immigrants in fiscal 2005, I figured the odds of

were pretty good of observing these guys do their job – an average of over 1000 arrests a day, just in this area. To get a feel for the territory, they drove me along the existing steel wall that divides Nogales by two countries. Only ten feet away from the road and on the other side of a tall steel wall topped with rusty barbed wire: Mexico.

A team of agents stood on a hill as we passed by and one warned Agent King, "They're throwing rocks over the wall down at the bottom of the wash. Be careful."

King then sarcastically reaffirmed me: "This could get interesting."

He drove us down the hill parallel to the wall, into the wash and up the other side. No incident; "Damn," I thought. The Border Patrol typically uses vehicles they call "War Wagons" for this section. With protective steel grating wrapped around the windows, you'll know where this nickname comes from. They appear to be remnants from a Mad Max movie. When the rocks start flying the agents stay protected, albeit the stones slamming into their rig are unnerving.

Here's the deal with the wall at Nogales: it ends just a short distance outside of the town and then continues as a barbed wire fence and short steel barricades – the barricades a recent addition, courtesy of the National Guard. "That's all we

got for a border out here," they told me.

When I asked about the logic of a brick-n-mortar wall along the entire length of the border, they just laughed at me.

"First, there's a reason why this wall just ends beyond the city. It's not designed to stop people from crossing. It's designed to slow them down or get them away from the population. Nogales, Arizona is primarily a legal Mexican-descendant population. If someone without authorization to be in the country can cross the border in town and blend in with the population, we'll never catch them. So we want the wall to force them away from the city where we have a better chance at spotting and catching them. Otherwise, they could just duck into the back door of a market or store and blend right in."

I had never thought about that before, but it makes sense. He continued on, "Second, there are some problems with the existing wall, which shows why a full length wall will never work, no matter how tall or thick."

The topography around Nogales is mountainous with steep hills and desert washes. King brought the Jeep to a stop in front of a section of the steel wall that spanned a wash. What I saw of this wall was simply toppled over and utterly destroyed.

"See that? Any time it rains, this wash fills up with water and the current plows that part of the wall down. We've got to come out here, patch it up, and then do it all over again after each storm. Guess what? That means we've got fewer agents in the field doing their job. The terrain around here just doesn't work well for a wall."

King then pointed at a camera tower reaching into the air 50 yards away.



King points out the international boundary at Nogales. Mexico on the left, Arizona on the right.

"See the cameras? These are monitored at the Nogales station, but they can't give us a view all the way down into every wash. So when that wall comes down in a torrent, it's like a gateway. But we've seen people smash vans straight through the wall and cut it open with a torch. We can't control what's on the other side of that fence. Anyone who thinks a physical wall is a good idea hasn't talked to a Border Patrol Agent."

"I believe what will work," he continued, "is a virtual wall. Have you heard of Project 28?"

"Nope."

"It's a test for the virtual wall, near Arivaca. It's basically 28 ground radars with cameras. They are sort of like the camera towers here, except with ground radar. Each radar has a 10-mile radius ability, and anytime it senses ground movement an agent can check the

camera and zoom in. If the motion is from cattle, big horn sheep, or a group of people, we'll know in a second. What's going to help is technology, not walls."



BORDER PATROL FIGURES:

Total land border: 6,900 miles (5000 Canada; 1,900 Mexico)

Total shoreline: 95,000 miles

Ports of Entry: 326

Agents: 12,300

Driving along the border, and avoiding flying rocks.



THE NITTY GRITTY

So what does an Agent do when he apprehends people? He or she will begin with three questions:

1. Are you seeking asylum in the U.S., or do you fear your country?
2. Will you go back voluntarily?
3. Do you want to see a judge?

They have to establish why a person is entering the U.S. without authorization. Some people are fleeing their country for their lives – economic meltdowns, corrupt governments, or exploitation/persecution: likely the same reasons why our ancestors came to this continent in centuries past. John Muir once wrote, “The United States Government has always been proud of the welcome it has extended to good men of every nation, seeking freedom and homes and bread.” The U.S. offers protection for those in such need.

However, if someone crossing illegally admits no such need, he/she is then asked if they are willing to go back to their country voluntarily. This is a little different from being deported, but they still get fingerprinted and a photo taken for the database. If they are caught again, though . . .

Yet, sometimes a person claims that they have a legal right to be in the U.S. Perhaps he had been issued a Green Card, but it’s not with him. He can request to see a judge to plead his case.

Anyone being deported gets taken to a holding facility where the Agency takes fingerprints and photos of each person. Men, women, and juveniles get separated and locked into secured areas, and usually they will be on a bus back to Mexico within a few hours. Those who are not from Mexico or are being held for a hearing in front of a judge are the exception.

On the way back to the office, we pulled over on northbound I-19 where a Border Patrol car had stopped. Two agents stood by a red Cadillac and relayed to King and Gumtow that they’d just caught two smugglers.

“They tried to run, but they didn’t know there were two of us. They didn’t get far.”

“Come here, check this out,” Gumtow motioned to me. We crawled on the ground under the Cadillac. “See these spacers on the suspension? They do that to make the car ride at the normal level when they’re fully loaded with contraband.” He stood up, paused, adjusted his sunglasses and then mused, “We still catch ‘em though.”

There you have it: a day in the life of a Border Patrol Agent. Still want to drive a Jeep for a living?



Top: U.S. Border: Steel barricades and barbed wire

Above: Patrolling along the wall at Nogales



Tucson Sector is the busiest of all Border Patrol.

FACTS AND FIGURES OF THE TUCSON SECTOR:

Sector guards 262 miles of the U.S. Border, which is only 0.04% of all land borders.


2700 agents intercept 36% of all illegal immigrant traffic and seize 46% of all smuggled marijuana.

Of the arrested immigrants:


- 87% male, 13% female
- 5% under 18 years old
- 2.5% other than Mexican
- 10% have a criminal record in the U.S.

In fiscal year 2005, Tucson Sector:

- processed 392,000 illegal entries
- seized 616,000 lbs of marijuana



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One summer day in 2002, a friend invited my wife and me to go sailing on her little Sunfish. The power of the wind and water was exhilarating, and we were hooked. Pitting our skills against nature and the technical aspects of a sailboat drew us into catamarans which are the ultimate adventure in small boat sailing.

Catamarans (or cats) are the Formula Ones of small sailboats, and are the fastest and most powerful way to enjoy the sport. Cat sailing is all hands-on, no nonsense sailing where one mistake or lack of attention could capsize the boat at high speeds. Wet suits, life jackets, and gloves are normal attire.

There are many brands and several sizes of small catamarans. The Hobie 16 is by far the most popular in that it has been around since the 1970s and has not changed much in design since that time. Other brands of catamarans include Prindle and Nacra, and they all make boats between 14 ft. and 22 ft. Cats have two fiberglass hulls connected by a mesh "trampoline" where the sailors sit. There are no chairs or benches to lounge around in, and the boat is normally crewed by only two sailors for maximum performance. Although the Hobie 16 is 16 ft in length, its sail stands over 26 ft tall. The combination of short hulls and tall sail make for an extremely fast and powerful boat.

So, on this typical Oklahoma spring day (windy), we headed to the beach in our Jeep Rubicon to get in a day of cat sailing. Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City is one of the premier sailing lakes in the Midwest, and there is usually a nice southwest breeze to take advantage of. The typical catamaran crowd is there with all their boats and we hurried to get the boat into the water while the winds were still strong. The Rubicon is perfect for



Top Left: Jackie gets the boat off the trailer into the water.

Above: Catamarans are best used from a beach. All our cat friends are ready to sail.



getting the boat off and on the beach, especially when the water is low and the beach is muddy. More than once, Ol' Rubi has been used to drag out a stuck vehicle that strayed too close to the water and was sucked in.

Once on the lake, the boat surged with the high winds. This was our first really windy day of the season, and we were anxious to test our sailing skills against the conditions. One of the attractions of cat sailing is the ability to get one of the boat's hulls out of the water while at high speeds. This is called "flying the hull," and there is a constant fine line between flying the hull and a sudden capsize which was exactly what happened on one of our runs. One minute we were flying the hull, and the next minute, the boat flipped over and we were in the water. This is a fairly normal occurrence and we were prepared...or at least we thought so. One of the objectives in "righting" your cat is to first get the bow pointed into the wind. However, we had trouble doing this due to the high winds and we spent 20 minutes in the water getting the boat in the correct position. Of course, help is never too far away since there were so many other cats on the water. A passing cat sailed by, dropped off a "helper" and with his assistance, we got the boat upright and back on the water. That epic was exhausting, so we made a few more runs before heading back to the beach.

Above: Two Hobie 16's in a race on Lake Hefner , Oklahoma . Alan is on the boat on the left.

Right: Jackie and her sister, Christie, on the Hobie 16. The boat best performs with a two-person crew.

Small boat sailing, especially on a catamaran, is a great way to test your skills against nature. The next time you see some cat sailors out there, stop your Jeep at the beach, and get to know some of the nicest people in the world having fun with the fastest boats on the water.....without a motor. Who knows, maybe you'll be inclined to purchase your first cat and enjoy some high adventure on the open water.



Left to Right: Our friend, Eric, launches his boat and heads out from the beach. This is a Nacra 5.2. Our Hobie 16. This classic design is virtually unchanged since 1970's.



PRACTICAL TIPS FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Text and Photos by Mark Filonowich

Everybody wants a Jeep that looks good and is highly capable off-road, and after purchasing a new Jeep, the question almost always crosses one's mind: How should I spend my first aftermarket dollars? Lift kit or bigger tires? That question gets asked a lot at our classes, and I often hear from my students that they want to run 5+ rated trails... run with the big dogs...yet still have a comfortable daily driver. This is a tall order and many compromises wind up being made. The bigger the tires and taller the lift, the more necessary it becomes to re-gear or re-axle our vehicle. Brake upgrades should be made (especially if it's a daily driver and driven at highway speeds), and fuel economy becomes an oxymoron that makes it seem like money keeps going into the project in a never-ending cycle.

Somewhere in all of this, most people seldom give any thought to safety. If you really want to run with the big dogs, the best money spent is on a frame-mounted roll cage. Make sure that the seats and harnesses are capable of protecting you when (not if) you lay your Jeep down, or roll it over, on the trail. Buy quality skid plates for the steering box and other "vital" daily driver components. And finally, 'wheel it smart'. An occasional bypass of a difficult trail, or timely use of a tow strap, is much cheaper than making a bad decision and paying for its consequences.

Since we're on the topic of safe Jeeping, let me share a few of the ground rules we talk about in the parking lot before we hit the trail. Let me stress that this is only a portion of the list, and that common sense has to play a key role in any off-highway adventure.

- Make sure the load is balanced and secured. You cannot become distracted by items bouncing around inside the vehicle while you're supposed to be paying attention to a tricky section of the trail.
- Air down at the trailhead and shift into 4-Lo before you need it, and air your tires back up upon exit of the trail. Soft, mushy tires are great for trail traction, but cannot safely travel at highway speeds.
- Buckle up, and don't drink and drive. Just because you're not on a road, doesn't mean the law doesn't apply.
- Take pictures or give advice from a safe distance. I've seen photographers and spotters get run over. No one will stand around your coffin saying, "I thought he knew better..."
- No rock surfing. I'm sure you've seen burly guys hanging on the bumper or rollbar to help a vehicle over an obstacle. The obvious problem occurs when the vehicle lurches unexpectedly, and the 'surfers' experience the inevitable wipeout. Hang onto a towstrap, or try a different approach line.
- Hands, feet and head must stay INSIDE the vehicle. I don't care how strong you think you are, you cannot stiff arm your Jeep off a tree. If it's going to make contact, at least make sure no part of you is in the way.
- Follow all winching. A winch is a powerful tool that requires respect when you use it. Make sure one person is clearly in charge, and responsible to make sure spectators are out of the way in case a mishap occurs.

Safe Jeeping should be a habit that you consciously develop and encourage in others. If you build a foundation of good skills, you will enjoy a lifetime of adventure on the trail and your first aftermarket expenditure will prove to be a good one!

Iron Range Offroad offers a comprehensive training course geared toward entry level Jeepers that stresses safety and environmental responsibility. The classroom setting is the spectacular Iron Range OHV park, 3 hours north of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Trail riding is integrated with class modules covering trip preparation, vehicle maintenance and repair, driving skills for different terrain, extraction techniques, vehicle upgrades, and much more. Learn more about offroad driving classes at:

www.ironrangeoffroad.com



JPFreek

GARAGE

TECH TIPS & BUILD UPS

GARVIN WILDERNESS OFF-ROAD SERIES EXPEDITION RACK SYSTEM FOR JEEP TJS

Garvin's Off-Road Series Expedition Rack system for Jeep TJs is a well-built solution for weekend excursions or long-term vehicle dependent adventures where limited space is no longer an issue.



Pros: As mentioned in a previous review of Garvin's EXT Series bumper/rack system (see the December/January issue of JPFreek), the one thing I noticed in this particular setup is the craftsmanship. The

welds on all of the $\frac{3}{4}$ " square tubing and 1" square tubing on the support brackets are flawless and smooth and let's face it; this rack looks very cool on a rig especially when it is loaded down with gear. That's another thing: this rack can handle loads in excess of 300 lbs without problem so there's no worry about having too much gear and not having the space or setup available to carry everything. Another item of note is the design itself. Whether your Jeep TJ has a soft-top or a hard-top, this rack system will work with either one. The design is simple yet aesthetically pleasing, and the rack is durable enough to withstand any elements be it rain, sleet, snow, or heat. Install time is approximately 3 hours which is pretty reasonable, and the directions are straightforward and easy for anyone to understand. Lastly, Garvin has introduced a version for the new JK so for those of you who are interested in a rack system for your new Wrangler, you now have a quality option.

Cons: My biggest complaint about this particular setup is the design of the support brackets on the back of the rack system. Garvin Industries did a wonderful job of designing this system in such a way that evenly distributes the payload; however, the current design requires the user to drill holes into the body in two separate areas on the back side of the vehicle which can be an open invitation for rust if you don't use a thin gasket of sorts to space between the support brackets and

body. Also, removal of your soft or hard top becomes a much more time-consuming process as the front bolts on either side of the front of the rack require removal, as well as two bolts on the upper portion of the rear mounting support, in order to swing the rack system open for top removal. If you're not in a big hurry then this may not be an issue but keep in mind that if you're in an area that suddenly changes weather conditions (as we were when the rack system was tested), you can pretty much forget about salvaging any dry space inside your Jeep vehicle. We would suggest the use of wing nuts for quick removal of the aforementioned bolts; otherwise you will be required to carry the appropriate tools to remove your soft or hard top. Lastly, the rack itself would be better served if it had an additional support beam through the middle to help leverage the payload of weight from gear, etc.



Overall, the JPFreek crew is very pleased with this rack system. Sure, at \$750 plus for the entire rack system it might be on the pricey

end compared to other systems out there; however, we see this cost as being fully justified based on the rack system's craftsmanship and durability. A few slight design changes could make this a truly outstanding rack setup, and in the end despite a few criticisms, Garvin Industries has done a nice job of providing an excellent setup for the weekend warrior or for those who seek a solution for long-term expeditions.

For more information about Garvin Industries and its products, visit: <http://www.wildernessracks.com>

CHOOSING THE RIGHT ROCKER PANEL PROTECTION

In the last version of 'The Freek Garage', we discussed the fabrication of rocker panel guards on Matt Adair's XJ. This issue, we'd like to focus more on choosing the right rocker panel guards for your rig, and the different options that are available to you when choosing the proper protection.



When most Jeep enthusiasts hit the trails, often times body and frame protection come second to having plenty lift and large tires. The fact of the matter is that if you don't have a properly prepared rig that includes rocker panel protection, a lift and large tires won't protect you from the prospect of leaving the trails in damaging your vehicle. There are several design options for rocker panel guards that provide aesthetic value, and functionality for your rig, and depending on how you plan to use your Jeep, some options may be better than others.

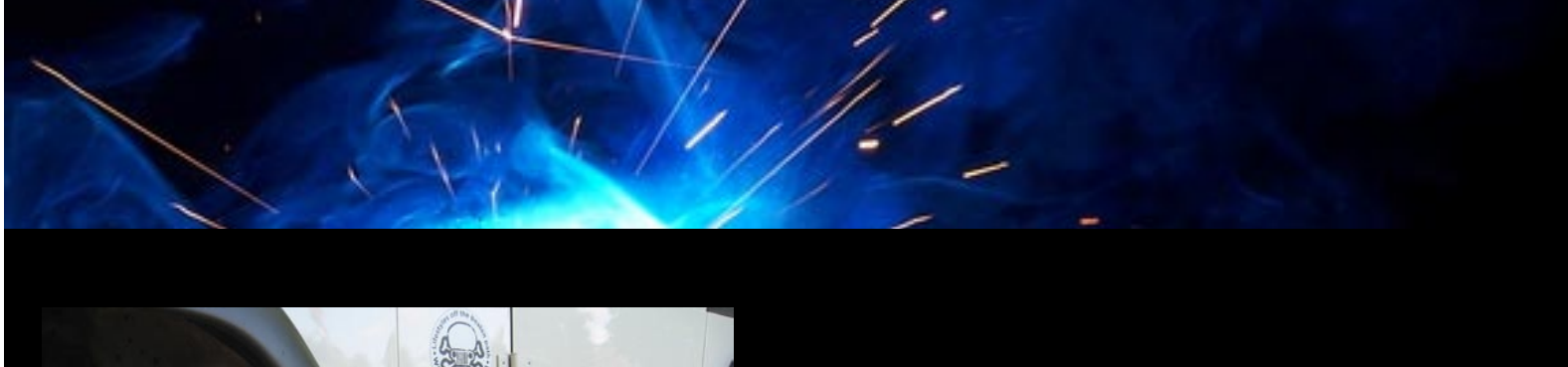
If you plan to use your Jeep vehicle in occasional off-highway situations where there are easy terrain and non-technical trails, then stock nerf bars will work just fine. They provide adequate protection along a portion of the Jeep body, but because they usually decrease the amount of clearance available under the vehicle, they will limit the terrain that can be explored.

For those who use their Jeep vehicle to explore varying terrain difficulties, there are several options available from several manufacturers including Rokmen

Manufacturing, an industry leader in the off-highway fabrication market. Rokmen offers two types of rocker panel guards that both provide tremendous protection on the trails: the Mercenary series for TJs and LJs, and the Step Slider option available for TJs.



The Mercenary series features wheel well to wheel well protection, as well as complete underbody coverage, to protect your vehicle from practically anything on the trails. Side-mounted for maximum clearance, this option is undoubtedly an excellent choice in any off-highway situation.



The TJ step slider, which we recently tested, is another option whose hybrid design not only protects against trail damage but also from debris damage in the big city. We were thrilled by this rocker panel protection because it has functionality that works wonderfully for daily driver use but still provides excellent protection on even the most difficult of trails.


Choosing the proper protection for your Jeep is vital while out on adventure. Whether it's a trip to the local adventure park or a transcontinental excursion through desert and jungle, the options are out there to make your next trip a fun and damage-free experience and one in which you should always remember to 'tread lightly'.

To learn more about Rokmen Manufacturing and its product line, please visit www.rockmen.com for more information and to purchase their products.

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