



Indian four-wheel drive exceeds expectations

Road Ramblings

with Rhema's
Chris Goodsell



I'VE just had my first Indian experience, no not a hot curry. A car actually. The Mahindra 4WD Crew Cab Pickup. Thanks to Wally from Mid Coast Mahindra I had the use of a Mahindra 2.5 litre twin turbo diesel for a day. I took it up to Break Neck Lookout and also did a bit of mild four-wheel driving on a private property in Pampoolah.

Before I give you my assessment I'll tell you a little bit about the vehicle's heritage. Manindra is a very large Indian company, it has been building farm machinery, cars and 4WD vehicles for many years, and is now seriously attacking the export market.

The Pickup - well how did I feel it came up? Quite frankly it exceeded my expectations. Its road manners are adequate, you have to put it into perspective, this is a rugged work vehicle and excels a lot more in the tough stuff. Fit out is very good. Electric windows

and mirrors ABS, two airbags and airconditioning. The engine is smooth, quiet and responsive, if a little underpowered. Fuel economy is exceptional for a two tonne vehicle. A claimed 9.7 litres per 100k combined cycle. The gearbox is smooth and precise with fairly short throws between gears, the ratios are also spot on. The crew cab has an electric change to move from 2WD to 4WD, also a low ratio selection. The cab is spacious, unlike many other crew cabs where rear leg room is minimal. The dealer network is well spread and adequate. Parts, I'm assured, are not a problem. Anything not available in Oz will be airshipped from India within 48 hours.

Feedback from experienced 4WD enthusiasts on the the Mahindra is all positive. In fact I couldn't get a negative comment. The final crunch comes in pricing. Mike Parsons from Mid Coast

Mahindra tells me the Pickup is \$30,000 drive away. That's \$6000 and \$15,000 cheaper than its main rivals.

The Mahindra is a vehicle you should certainly include in your research for a new crew cab 4WD. My rating 7.5/10

Road Ramblings heard as far north as Mt Isa and as far south as Ballarat, brings you all your motoring news locally every Saturday at 9am on 103.3 2TLP and 10am on 106.5 Rhema FM. Road Ramblings can also be heard worldwide on the web by going to www.roadramblings.com. Safe motoring and God bless

Fuel saver tip

One for the holiday makers. Put your car in mothballs while you're away, and walk. Most of the holiday towns are packed with abundant attractions, most of them within walking distance.



Mahindra at Break Neck Lookout