

## **Latrobe State Forest/Blue Rock Dam - Trip Report**

**Date:** Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2010

**Weather:** Fine, cool, mostly overcast and around 21 degrees

**Track Conditions:** Dry clay base and coarse gravel.

**Trip Participants:** Anthony and family (TL), Ray and Gerda, Evan and Sarah, Spencer and Jo, James, Belinda (TEC.) Nic and Melanie (visitors).

The day started with a meet-up at the local Neerim South Footy oval at around 10:15 am. We were all introduced to our visitors Nic and Melanie who had gladly accepted an invitation from myself on behalf of the Australian X-trail forum. After an introduction from the trip leader it was time to get out on the tracks.

We found ourselves Latrobe River Road and followed this onto Patrol Road; our first track of the day was a short distance away on the left which was Sawdust Heap Track. This dry clay based track was a medium gradient climb together with many conservation mounds. I was the first up and I nearly made it in one hit except for a sharp mound near the top. A different line helped avoid scraping the under body from the previous attempt.

Nic who had never been offroad before had a shot and made it over the first few mounds. He decided to back up and sit it out until others had a go. Evan and Ray just walked up with their higher clearance vehicles, while Spencer took a few minor blows to the underneath in his Adventra and made it to the top. Nic decided he had the confidence to have another go and with a bit more momentum and some pointers he conquered the hill. James and Belinda both drove well and seemed to make it look easy.

Continuing on further we came to a pine plantation and travelled across it on various gravel roads. The views were great from the peaks in this area as little regeneration was evident. Billstones Track was an easy downhill section taking us to a camping area where we some well earned lunch. Patrol and Inglemans Roads linked us onto the last track for the day. Brigg Track was up and down and a nice leisurely drive.

Soon enough we were beside Blue Rock Dam with it's picturesque setting and gearing up for a big catch. With around a dozen lines cast in the lake surely something had to bite. Belinda was the first to catch a prized redfin; she was wrapped with her fishing skills. He was only a little guy so we removed the hook and allowed him to return home. Ray also caught a small redfin, not sure if it was the first one after another feed on worms. It also found it's way back to the large expanse of water.

After a day full of adventure most headed home around 4:30 pm, but I do believe Evan was still trying his luck in the lake until around 6:00 pm.

Thanks for a great day to all who attended,

Regards,

Anthony Johns.