

STEPS SPANISH



Spanish Steps
Saturday 27th August 2016

Trip Participants: Ben Sweetnam – Trip Leader, Karl Stone, Lenny Khor, Dan Plazonic, Taps Sharma, Brad Waters

The day kicked off at the ZigZag carpark and with many other 4WD clubs and motorbike trailers it looked like it would be a busy day on the roads, but other than meeting up with a few bikes and a couple of 4WD groups after coming out onto Blackfellows Hand Trail we were left alone for the day.

The first stop was the wombat holes and seeing that the track was water soaked and the 'tracks more rutted out than ever before' being the standard comment, it was a good warm up for the Steps.

The steps are on No.5 Fire Trail crossing between Sunnyside Ridge Road and Blackfellows Hand Trail. From the eastern side, the steps from can be broken down into four sections. The first is made up of around six steps with two of them being significant and requiring guidance, everyone made it down with the odd scrape underneath. This section leads down to the gate which thankfully was unlocked.

The second section was far more difficult with around seven steps of which many of them had rear bars and fuel tanks scraping. A lot of time was taken to pick the best line with both left and right lines having their share of difficulties. Ben headed off first down the right side which was tricky at the top but lead into a better exit. I was second and watching Ben made it an easy choice to go down the left side which has the benefit of having a wheel on the edge of the track but the line into the



last step made this tricky. All drivers got through with a few scrapes underneath and significant sweat levels in their jocks.

The third section is a pleasant drive around the valley floor with a few small creek crossings, the odd wombat hole plus a large rock escarpment off to our right hand side, reminiscent of the escarpments through Blackfellows Hand.

The final section was the climb out of the valley and while it doesn't have as big or as many steps as the previous sections it was steep and the rocks on the left were wet. We all hugged the left hand side with a lot of wheel spinning on the wet rocks but made it up without problem until the last step at the top which caused a few of us some grief. Taps made it look easy coming up the steep section and we found out he used his lockers, the first time in five years!

We stopped for lunch at a spot off Sunnyside Ridge Road, a place Ben referred to as the airstrip. There was a lot of rubbish and broken glass at the start of the strip but further down past a dam we found a nice spot that also had potential as a campsite. After lunch we explored a few lookouts and ended up at the Birds Rock Trig Point which had great views out towards the Wolgan Valley. After a group photo Karl and I said our goodbyes as we were heading home and the others were camping the night before Ben and Lenny would head off to run a Basic Training course the next day.