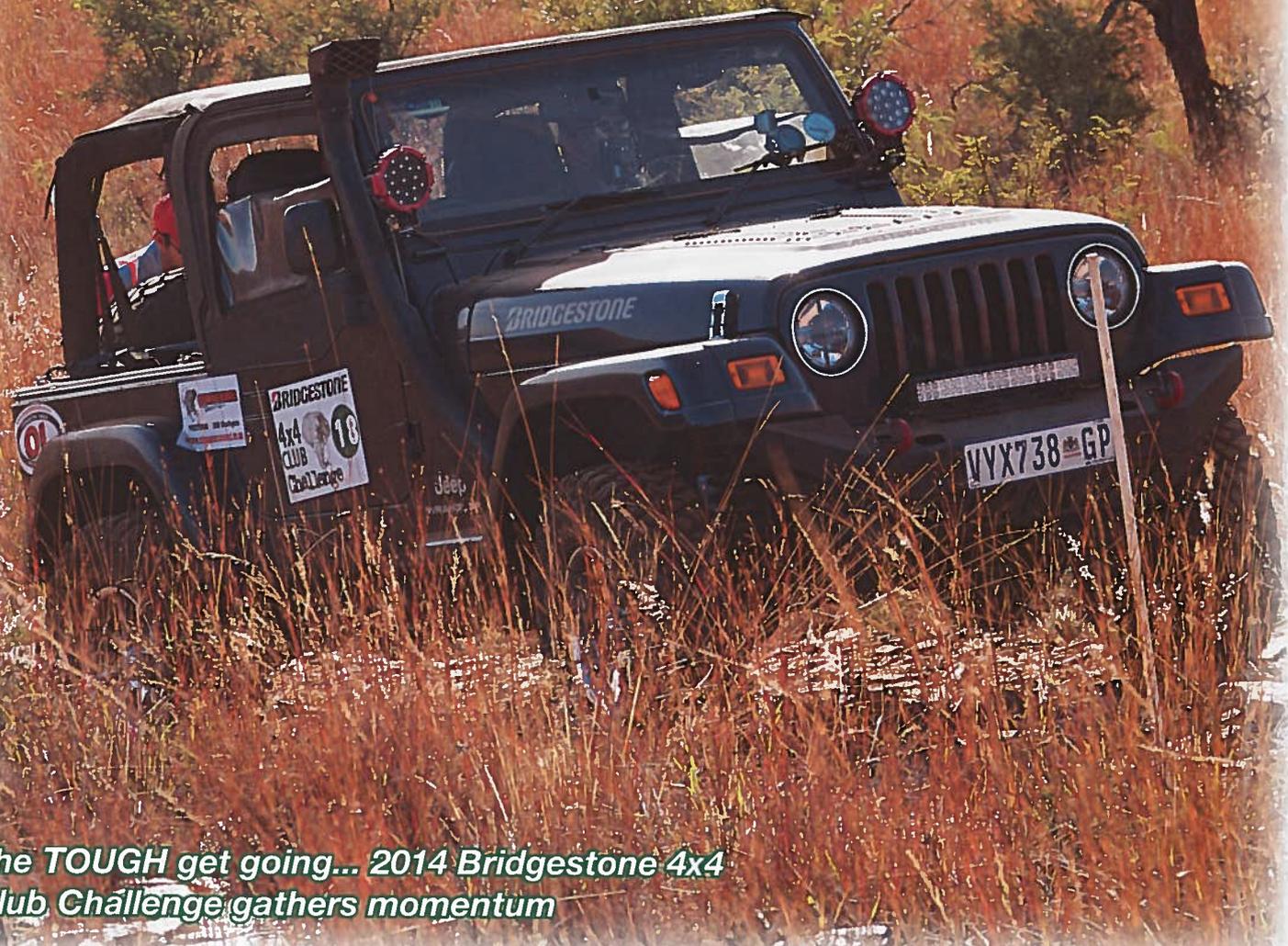


# Going **PLACES**

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Winter 2014



*The TOUGH get going... 2014 Bridgestone 4x4 Club Challenge gathers momentum*

- *Bumper Bridgestone 4x4 Club Challenge edition*
- *Sandstone Estates – A journey back in time*
- *Brake for Wildlife! – EWT's latest initiative*
- *Change your spots... to help Cape Leopards*

**BRIDGESTONE**  
Your Journey, Our Passion



**Text and photographs:  
Danie Botha**



# CLASH OF THE NISSANS

Some were massive, and some were just large. Indeed, round three of Bridgestone South Africa's 4x4 Club Challenge in April drew an all-sorts field of 4x4s, fronted mainly by the Nissan 4x4 Club clan, and the brand's super-duper Patrol wagons.

Hosted by the Nissan club at the 4Wheel Drive Club of SA's Base 4 track near Hartbeespoort Dam, the field of 30 teams consisted mainly of Nissan 4x4 models. These included a bevy of large Patrols, a few Navaras and Pathfinders, a Terrano II, as well as number of Hardbody bakkies.

The field was augmented by a handful of free agents – competitors in other brands who were only looking to have some fun and who were not eligible to qualify for the Club Challenge final in November. This included a Mahindra Thar, two Suzukis, a Toyota and a Mitsubishi.

The competition got underway with an unusual twist. With their 4x4 parked at a peculiar angle on a slope, teams had to remove the right rear wheel and replace it – all inside five minutes. It sounds easy enough, but it certainly proved to be the opposite, as most teams failed to complete the process inside that tight five-minute window.

Obstacle 2 was a more traditional one – a climb up and over some rocks and a precision stop on the crest, where the nose of the vehicle just gently had to nudge a pole, rounded off with a tennis ball perched on top. Hit the first pole too hard, and it would connect a second one, resulting in zero points. Here it was all or nothing for most teams. Some went at it too hard, resulting in no points, while others were too cautious, with too little momentum – also resulting in no points.

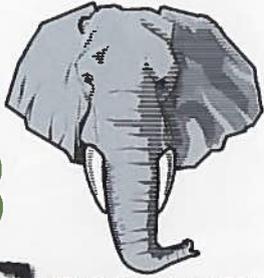
Obstacle 3 was as traditional as you get on a Bridgestone event: a tough climb between the poles, over a few large rocks and boulders,

**Bridgestone  
4x4 Club  
Challenge:  
Round Three**



# BRIDGESTONE

## 4x4 CLUB Challenge



with a sharp turn at the most tricky part. Here it was all down to the correct line and momentum, as well as the nut that holds the steering wheel. Although a few teams fared brilliantly here, others faltered, taking out a few poles along the way.

The next obstacle looked like a drive in the park – but proved to be quite the opposite. Competitors had to steer their way around a tight, flat track, with a tight turn to boot. Sounds easy, right? Except that the co-drivers had to do the driving here, instead of the regular competitors.

Besides being especially tricky for the bigger 4x4s, some of the inexperienced co-drivers, many of whom had never driven the team's 4x4 in a competition, had a really tough time here. Yep, it certainly didn't look difficult at first glance, but the score sheets told a completely different story!

Following on from this seemingly easy test, Obstacle 5 was another drive through some narrow gates, and the teams had to again just nudge a pole with a tennis ball. However, this time they had to do it in reverse, which changed the game completely. Many more points were lost here.

Obstacle 6 was a more traditional 4x4 one... an axle twister, through some wide gates. Some competitors even managed to crack a smile here

again after losing bags of points already. Obstacle 7 followed directly after, and competitors had to perform a reverse stall-start – basic skill when 4x4-ing. With a marshal in the passenger seat, the smiles grew bigger still.

Obstacle 8 was more of a tester – a tricky drive through a donga, over a steep, rocky crest and another tricky stop to finish. Few teams did well here – the combination of the tight track, rounded off with the precision stop at end caught out many crews. Along the way the teams also had to complete two question-and-answer challenges, relating to matters of nature and of responsible off-road driving. Here brains, common sense and a good general knowledge of all things nature and 4x4 were the order of the day.

The last action of the day was Opposite Lock's winning exercise, this time with a winch fitted to a Ford Ranger. As on previous events, many crews found this process – with an experienced marshal on hand to show them the ropes – to be an invaluable learning experience.

To the results then: Third place overall belonged to the Nissan Hardbody V6 of Vaughn Ashford and Liza Williams. They won a set of Light Force Striker spotlights. Second were Tim Klopper and Schalk Viljoen, in a Nissan Terrano II, who were rewarded for their efforts with a set of Opposite Lock spotlights.

Proving to be the class of the field were Christiaan Visagie and Matthew Ritson in a Nissan Hardbody V6 single cab. The duo won a R10 000 tyre voucher from Bridgestone SA.

GP

**RIGHT**, clockwise from top left: Guthrie Blaine (middle) with overall Round Three winners Christiaan Visagie and Matthew Ritson, who claimed a R10 000 Bridgestone tyre voucher; Second overall were Tim Klopper and Schalk Viljoen, here with Opposite Lock's Darrell van Zeil and Jaco Nel; Vaughn Ashford and Liza Williams, driving a Nissan V6 Hardbody, were third on the day. Here they are with Darrell and Jaco; You just can't them down – Wilma Fourke and Danie Tait walked off with the Environmental prize, presented by Darrell and Jaco.

