

# A LAKE OF DISAPPOINTMENTS

**T**ravellers on the CSR around the top end of Lake Disappointment in mid 2016 came across four behemoths; all bogged, some at precarious angles. Was a ratbag at work avoiding tip fees? Maybe it was the equivalent of; we've got the biggest banana. Even that exalted magazine Western 4wdriver's Silly Snaps of Edition 101 had photos.

I've now got the goss; Mike Yarrow hailing from NSW and owner of one of the beasts told me there was a Unimog 1300 (Mike's), a Unicat Mercedes Zetros 1833, a Komatsu WA 500 and a Positrac loader all bogged.

He was travelling with fellow Mog owners Merek and wife in their Unicat, which by the way cost north of seven figures or the GDP of a small country. Approaching one of the flats on the upper reaches of Lake Disappointment,

## THE THINGS YOU SEE!

WITH (TRUTHFUL)  
**PHIL BIANCHI**



Merek set off first. Part of the way across the Mog went down listing severely to one side. It looked like one of those Star Wars creatures rising up from the surface of the lake.

Mike set off to help; his Mog bogged and became Star Wars creature number 2. Now before the experts among us say things like 'They didn't stay on the wheel pad', 'No experience' etc, be aware Unimogs have a wheel track some 8 inches wider than a Cruiser or Patrol and have tyres 17 plus inch wide tyres. Also Merek has travelled extensively in his Mog in Africa, Middle East and Asia.



With the nearest tree being out of sight, they dug a hole 200 metres out, in which they were going to bury a tyre for winching from. Then puffing and blowing they got a wheel to the hole to find it filled with water. Winching from a floatie was pointless.

'Let's use Mike's Mog as an anchor and winch Merek out' was their next idea. It was

attempt a Positrac loader arrived; I'll bet you didn't guess that it also got bogged. Seeing the positive, unflappable farmer, Mike reckoned they now had a number of excellent ground anchors. Using Mike's Winchmax, at the break-neck speed of one foot per minute, the WA

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a struggle getting the cable out, 'That's weird, the winch has just been serviced'. Investigating, they found that the idiot servicing the winch forgot to refill it with hydraulic oil! No winch.

Deciding that help from the outside world was the next option, Merek rang his son in Poland, son rings friends in SA, they rang the Newman Police who in turn rang an Exploration Camp 25 kms away at the top end of Lake Disappointment. Willing to help, John from the Exploration Camp arrived with a Komatsu WA 500, a 34 ton monster loader. You guessed it; it too got bogged; yet another Star Wars monster joining the gathering. John waited for the camp cook to drive out and collect him. Darkness descended, still no driver. John called the camp asking her whereabouts, 'There's been an accident on the way to pick you up, the driver's being helicoptered to medical help.' The next day a 15 ton truck arrived, delivering urgent supplies of gaspers for Merek, a carton of cider and Hydraulic oil. Also to help with the next rescue

500 was out. Celebrations, the first win in five days. By using the WA 500 as an anchor, next rescued was the Zetros. Presumably Merek and wife could now sleep better rather than hang bat-like in their almost toppling over bed. It took five days, but eventually all the vehicles were rescued. Failure to get the vehicles out could have resulted in the loss of \$1.6m plus of equipment. On the positive side the establishment of a theme park was a possibility or making it available as the set for the next Star Wars film or establishing a garden by planting potatoes in the ploughed hectares were possibilities. While winching, a hydrologist told Mike the bottom of the lake was between 100m and 150m straight down. Now that's a lot of goop! Was intrepid explorer Frank Hann way back in 1897 predicting the future when naming Lake Disappointment? Maybe Lake Despair would have been more suited.