

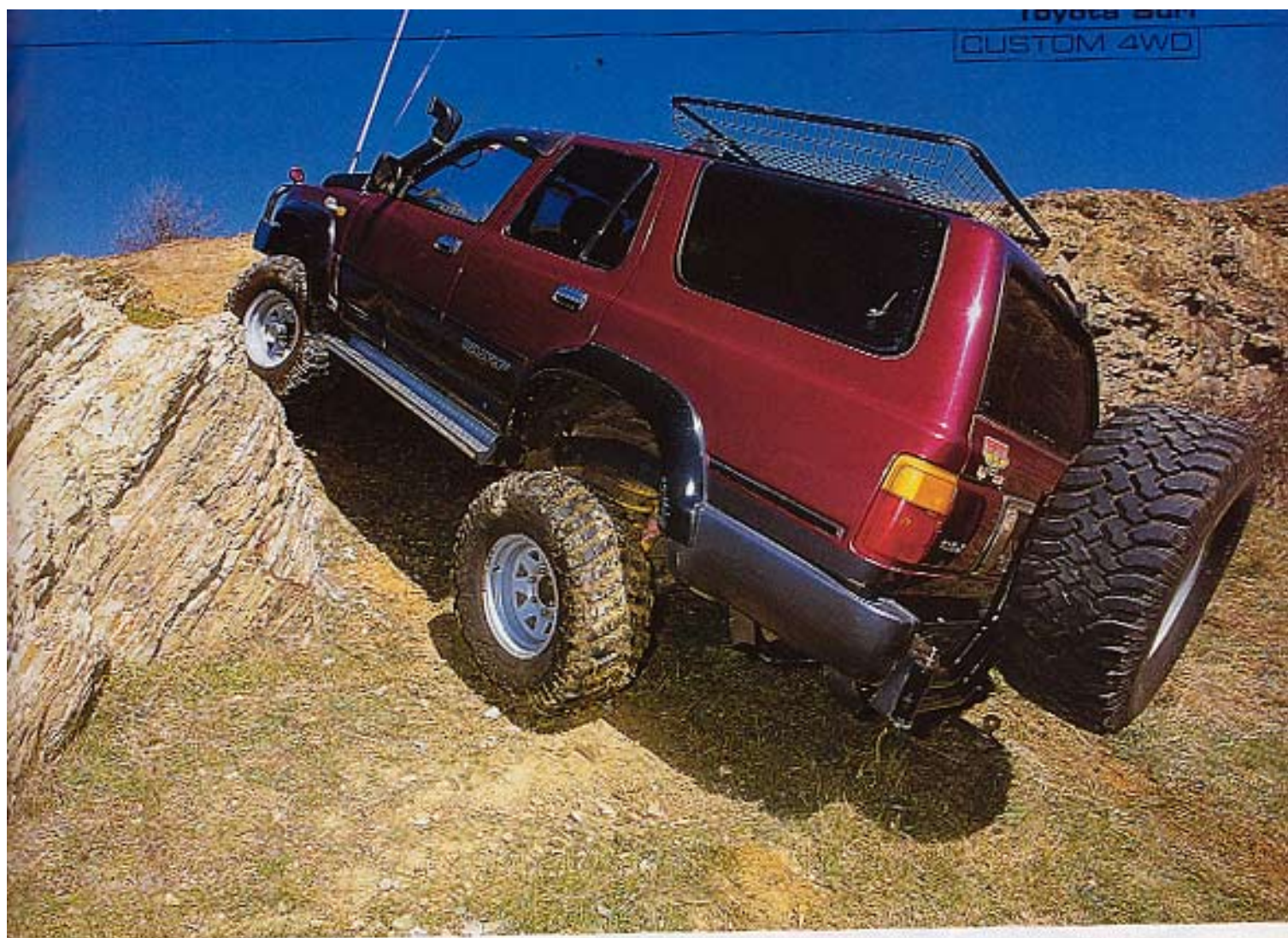
HIGH ENOUGH

We don't often see modified Surfs. This one is lifted just high enough to give its owner a buzz and still make the shopping run easy



Toyota Surf
CUSTOM 4WD





Hailing from Melton in Victoria, the owner of this Surf, Adrian Borg, has previously owned an old-shape Jackaroo and a HiLux Dual Cab. From this to the Surf was a natural progression. The Surf is just an up-spec dual-cab with a station wagon back, after all.

Purchased from importer Tokyo Motors for \$18,000 two years ago, it was in standard Surf trim with 130,000km on the clock. Not a very high mileage, even for a 2.4-litre turbo-diesel, and the price was about right. Looking for something a bit more comfortable than his old HiLux, Adrian thought he'd found the perfect truck - until he took it wheeling with a few mates to Toolangi.

Straight away he knew it needed some modification. It was picking up wheels right, left and centre, spinning, losing traction and generally not making comfortable forward progress. Adrian also realised that his damaged right leg was copping a hiding in the off-road work, as he could hardly stand on it after the trip.

The first thing to be altered was the accelerator pedal. Due to a leg injury sustained in a serious motorcycle accident, Adrian had trouble controlling the brakes - not good in an auto 4WD. So he had a mounting rigged up that enables him to flip the throttle pedal from right to left of the brake. He leaves it on the left for himself, getting the left leg

used to accelerating and braking, and swaps it across to the right whenever he needs a mechanic to drive it.

The standard highway treads were next to go, swapped for a set of Kumho muddies that were, ahem, exciting in the wet. He then removed the swaybars for a bit more off-road articulation, but found clearance was a problem.

Adrian fitted a 2-inch suspension lift kit himself, using Old Man Emu coils and shocks at the rear, with a set of Carrols Enforcer torsion bar springs up front, mated to the standard shocks. He didn't need longer-travel shocks because, although he achieved a bit of lift, there was little or no additional articulation, a problem for torsion-bar-sprung vehicles.

The bullbar came next, an Opposite Lock item that was winch-capable. The winch came a month or so later - bought second-hand - something Adrian swears he would not do again. It had a damaged cable when he bought it, which was removed and kept as a spare cable extension, while the wire rope was replaced with 30m of Plasma Rope.

Adrian cursed later, after he discovered that the flatter space-saving nature of Plasma rope meant he could have purchased 45m to mount on the winch drum. He'll remember next time! For Adrian, especially with his gammy leg, the Plasma rope is a

Reasonable articulation increase over standard



godsend, making winch hauls a snap, even when he's alone.

Luckily, Adrian got a taste for competition, and, in his first event at Cruiserkhana, picked up an Airtec snorkel for the Surf. Bonus! Not long after fitting that, in an effort to get a bit more power out of the little 2.4-litre TD motor, he fitted a 2.5-inch exhaust system.

Realising that there was still more to be done for off-road work and touring, he took the Surf to Brett and Rod at Total 4WD in Melbourne's Epping. They fitted the Long Range Automotive 100-litre auxiliary tank in the rear, giving Adrian a total fuel capacity of 160 litres. They put in a 3-inch bodylift first to get the clearance above the chassis for the big tank.

Previously, ARB didn't make an Air Locker for the front diff on the 2.4-litre Surf, which explains why Adrian only had a rear Air Locker fitted. An upgrade to (now available) twin-lockers and this Surf would be like the Wuliki pipeline - unstoppable.

The compressor which activates the rear Air Locker has been mounted in the rear cargo bay and fitted with the optional tyre-inflation kit for airing up after rock crawling.

Fitted standard with auto-locking front hubs, Adrian has retro-fitted manual-locking hubs from a standard HiLux, which he claims has helped prevent the vehicle blowing CV boots and the occasional axle. Apparently the hubs weren't locking and unlocking properly.

Under the hood, the 2.4-litre turbo-diesel is no powerhouse, but with the turbo wound up to produce 10psi boost, it performs well enough, provided you're not in a screaming rush. The standard twin battery set-up fitted to the Surf was a bonus.

The interior has been kept standard, apart from the cross-over accelerator pedal, which would surely help prevent thieves driving the car away if they broke into it!

A neat package, and a good all-rounder



From left clockwise:
 • A 2-inch lift to IFS, by Adrian, with Carralls Enforcer torsion bars

• The stock 2.4-litre TD with boost up to 10psi

• The centre console features a left-hand shifter, 'import giveaway' radios, and Air Locker operation and compressor switches

• 100-litre auxiliary tank from LRA by Total 4WD, Nitrocharger shocks and coils from Old Man Emu



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A Uniden CB radio sits on each side of the centre console; an AM 501XL and a UH100 UHF set. Fitting both enables Adrian to talk to all his mates, no matter what kind of radio they are running in their vehicles.

A set of IPF 170 driving lights hang off the front bumper above the winch fairlead, which was missing its Warn 9000lb winch at the time of our shoot. Adrian had it removed to service the winch motor and electricals and it's now back in the truck with its 30m Plasma rope ready for action.

As capable as it is, the Surf's IFS front end provides limitations for off-road-specific suspension mods, so Adrian is contemplating selling the Surf

BRIEFLY	
Vehicle:	1993 Toyota Surf
Engine:	2.4-litre, four-cylinder turbo-diesel
Gearbox:	Four-speed auto
4WD Activation:	Part-time, manual-locking hub
Suspension:	IFS with torsion bars. Rear rigid axle with coil-spring
Wheels:	15x8 steel rim
Tyres:	35-inch Mickey Thompson Baja Radial Claw

and buying something more modifiable for rock-crawling and weekend recreational wheeling. We'll keep you posted.



Happy owner Adrian Berg with the Surf truck



ARB AIR LOCKERS FOR IFS



Keeping up with the demand for different versions of its world-renowned Air Locker is a constant battle for Melbourne's ARB. New models with minor upgrades are constantly being released by different vehicle manufacturers all over the world. Finally, there was time in the schedule to develop an Air Locker for the IFS HiLux which, according to a couple of ARB outlets, has now been successfully fitted to the grey-import Toyota Surf. So now Surf owners, too, can be locked-up and independent. Contact ARB on (03) 9761 6622