



Steve's G534WAC

G-WAC Notes

A News sheet for those who are interested in the early Land Rover Discoverys



John's G486WAC

January 2009

A Happy 2009 to you all and let's hope that we can get to a few shows this year.

It is still very quiet and no reports coming in for me to offer to you, but Ian has intimated that he will be starting to put 463 back together soon, so we will be hearing from him.

This month there was a request from Robert, in the USA, for help in finding a G-WAC to import, so I thought you might be interested to hear his story. This was on the Discovery Owners Club forum.

"Hello all,

I was wondering how many left-hand-drive G-WACs were produced. I am looking to purchase a first year Disco preferably a G-WAC (If I can even find one) or if one shows up a 3-door Camel Disco, to restore this summer. Anyone know of any for sale out there?

Thanks, Robert"

Ian Replied

"Hi Robert, according to the lists I have, 51 out of the 86 press fleet vehicles were LHD, at least one of those has been converted back to RHD.

About six of the press fleet went on to serve as Camel Trophy training hacks and these were resprayed in Sandglow (actually they were allegedly not Sandglow but a similar BL colour) one was recently for sale at MRM Landrover Centre Ltd, www.mrmlandrover.co.uk but it had been resprayed white and the guy wanted silly money for it, but it was LHD and it was ex Camel training.

The Camel Trophy event in 1990 did use at least some G-WAC registered vehicles G560WAC & G561WAC were certainly photographed in a publicity shot in Red Square that year. There is a Camel vehicle from 1990 at the Home of the Legend at Solihull.

My records say that the training hacks were:-

C60JKG, G463WAC, G475WAC, G494WAC (RHD), G525WAC, G532WAC, G562WAC, and G563WAC.

Other than these we don't have any other firm information. 494 & 463 are on sorn, 525 (the one from MRM Landrover Centre) is currently unlicensed the others have no recent records and the prototype C60JKG resides in the Dunsfold collection.

Another Land Rover close to the Camel Trophy number sequence G557WAC is currently licensed but it is hard to tell from the DVLA database if this is a Discovery and there is no guarantee that it was one of the Trophy vehicles

Hope this helps regards. Ian"

G463WAC.

On it's way back together soon



Hi All

Happy New Year. Hopefully I will be making a start on 463 soon, so I will be sending a regular update for the notes.

I've just put the feelers out for someone who can repair/repaint the chassis for me to the standard I require, which is proving difficult!

If you remember I had it blasted and if left me with a few holes, which my painter did not notice before he painted it.



A few pictures of where I left off.

Ian

G-WAC Camel wanted in the USA.

The question that I get asked more than ever is, "Why now?" Why this sudden interest in early Discoverys? Why the sudden fascination with the first years of the Discoverys in Camel Trophy?

The answer is that it has never been sudden. It has always been there. That fascination with the Discovery from the first time I saw a picture of one on the 1990 Camel Trophy, to the first detailed article that I could put my hands on, in CAR magazine. It showed, on the front cover, that famous photo of a Discovery flying up through the air in perfect balance.

Then my 99% eureka moment as I finally drove away in my brand new (and new to the United States) 1994 Land Rover Discovery. I was the first in my state to drive off the lot with one. I had a friend in the dealership, and even though he had standing orders not to sell until the next day, he went ahead. We did the paperwork the following morning when sales of the new Discovery began? But I had already driven off into the sunset.

I say 99% because it was not a Diesel, and that, my fellow enthusiast, is why I was never truly 100% satisfied. I was as happy as I could be and that was good enough for me. Unfortunately I never kept the 1994 Disco.

But I am getting ahead of myself, let me take you back a long time ago, when as a small boy of nine I was first introduced to the marque. The story begins near the shore on the island of St. Vincent. My motorcycle refused to start. Bear in mind it was about one o'clock in the morning, and I shouldn't be where I was! But I was there. Out of the darkness emerged two close together headlights of a strange but interesting truck (which I now know to be an SII Land Rover), and an older gentleman stepped out of it., walked to me and helped me walk the motorcycle to the rear of the truck. He swiftly picked it up, threw it in the back, told me to jump in, and drove away

After a brief minute he asked me where I lived, I told him and he took me there. We stopped on the main road, down the hill from the house. He took the motorcycle out of the back of the truck and looked at me. "I am glad I came around when I did", he said. With that said, I shook his hand, thanked him, and walked the motorcycle up the hill. I quietly stepped off to the side of the house, and up I went through the open window to my room.

That was my first ride in a Land Rover, and as you can tell I have never forgotten it. Bear in mind that I had seen Land Rovers before, but as a small boy I never really thought of them. I was too busy thinking of other things. Things nine-year-old boys think of. But this time it left an imprint. I guess, that in a way the Land Rover had saved me from a long push home.

Years passed, I got married, and all through that time, the Land Rover, was the only constant! I still have my first Land Rover, plus many others. Land Rover became a hobby, even my wife says it. "Give Robert a whisky, and a Land Rover, and you have the happiest man in town!" Each year has brought something new to the table. There was my 'I only want SII's' years, then my SIII's, and then the SI's'. Eventually I had my fill of the SI, II, and III's.

I needed something new, so I bought a 1972 Suffix A, Range Rover, why? Because I couldn't find a Velar! I restored it, and right before I thought I was done buying Land Rovers, a 101 came up for sale. So I bought the 101, and restored it. I had this obsession for rare Land Rovers.



But all of these were a stopgap for what I really wanted. I longed for two Land Rovers that I couldn't have. Two Land Rovers that the US Government made sure I would have to wait for a long time (exactly 25 years to the date of manufacture) before I could drive them down the street. The Land Rovers were the same, but each one had its own story, which made them special in my mind. One was the early Camel Trophy Discovery. The other, the first year Discovery 3-door Tdi or as you all know them, the G-WACs.

Both of these Discos are impossible to bring into the United States, because of three government agencies. The Department of Transportation (25 year rule) the Environmental Protection Agency (20 year rule on the engine) and the Department of Motor Vehicles (which Murphy's law states that if you get through the DOT and EPA, the DMV will surely get you!) Even though the Tdi's get almost twice the mileage of the ever-thirsty V8s, they are still considered "bigger polluters" why? beats me, typical US Oil running the system, but this article is not about politics it's about Land Rovers!

So I am kind of taking care of my addiction... but not quite. I still yearn for that original Camel Trophy Disco veteran, and those rare letters... G-WAC. Yet the story doesn't end there either.



The economy changes, and governments morph into the unexpected, and as always I am stuck in the middle of it. So I had to act before things took a turn for the worse. Which they have, and the world is now feeling it. But luckily I acted in time.

I found a stable country to centralize all my businesses. I moved everything from Venezuela to Costa Rica. From all this stress eventually things started to focus, and by sheer luck I picked a country that allows you to bring in whatever type of car or truck you want! Any year, style, and engine. So come summer 2010 the personal move will begin. And from this day on, my mission is to find my original Tdi Camel Trophy Disco (I think I have found a 1991 event Disco in South Africa, and it's left-hand-drive!)

Unfortunately I cannot say the same for the G-WAC, I am a stickler for originality when it comes to these early and rare models. So I have made it hard on myself by only allowing for a G-WAC that is left hand drive and a Tdi.

Now I am okay if the G-WAC was originally left-hand-drive then switched over to right-hand-drive. I will just switch the steering back to the way it was when it left the factory. And now that I am able to have these rare Discoverys, I have become a member of the Camel Trophy Owners Club, and the Discovery Owners Club, which is how I found the www.g-wacdiscoverys.net site (Thank you Roy!).

Well, that is my story for now. My next big project is taking care of some typical rust issues on my 300 Tdi Disco, which I will approach with a smile and a welding torch! Thank goodness for Project Shoestring in the LRM 2007 issues. It is nice to have pictures of someone else doing the rust repairs as a guide! Hopefully this project will prepare me for my future Camel and G-WACs, which I am sure, will have their bit of rust to contend with! Now, I know that I am asking for trouble when I get picky with what I am looking for in the G-WAC, but from what I have learned in life, if it's meant for you, you will find it. It might take a year or ten but in the end I know I will have what I am looking for!



And who knows... I hear scuttlebutt that there might be a Camel Trophy Disco G-WAC, left-hand-drive Tdi... Oh boy! Now that IS wishful thinking.

Robert Blanchard.

Compiled by Roy Preston. If anyone would like to contribute an article for these notes, or receive a copy, please email me at roy@scawdel.orangehome.co.uk or post your address to B R Preston, "Scawdel", Dove Bank, Wormald Green, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 3PU. Phone 01765 677124.

Issue 19 January 2009