



As we left the security of tarmac we all took the opportunity to fit snow chains. Everyone had his or her own ideas of the perfect chain, so this was going to be the perfect comparison test. Square, diamond formatted chains, or wire cables, we had them all.

The snow-covered trail had a hard crust of ice so travelling was relatively easy, as long as you kept the wheels in the tramlines. On several occasions vehicles were seen to make sharp turns off the trail toward stationary targets – trees and ditches.

Having safely reached the cabin, the weekend supplies and personal kit was unloaded, propane gas heater fired up and the open fire stoked.

The expected overnight snow did not arrive, however the clear skies had meant that the temperatures had dropped significantly to minus a lot. Starting the assembled vehicles became an event in its own

right. Numerous V8s and a Series II 88s were groaning to make a reluctant start, even with some assistance from jumper cables, auxiliary batteries and 'damp-start'. Smoke and steam bellowing from exhausts eventually signaled success.

Various additional vehicles arrived early Saturday morning, eager to venture out on the virgin snow-covered trails. Our vehicle count was raised to twelve.

Suitability dressed and stocked with food, snacks and drinks, we ventured off in a single convoy. Our choices of destinations included, 'crows-nest', 'high rocks' or 'mud pond'.

We agreed that an attempted ascent to crows-nest would be the safest option and give everyone enough snow to play with.

Our host, Evan Price led the way in his open Series II 88. A brave man.

As the procession plodded along through the snow, the rattle and chink of chains drowned out the muffled

exhaust sound. You could imagine strangers thinking that a convict chain gang was about to round the bend.

Having negotiated a partially frozen river, the trail started to weave and twist through the trees. Straight open sections became deceptively tricky as there was additional snow covering the trail. Most failed attempts only required the lead vehicle reversing a short distance and ploughing through another 100-200 yards. However, as the later vehicles started breaking through the crust, so winches became necessary.

We were experiencing a lull before the storm as, although the temperatures were bitter and well below zero, we did enjoy clear blue skies and bright sunshine.



Top left: Chains in place

Top right: A winter wonderland

Above: Freezing overnight temperatures saw many vehicles struggling to start in the morning