

JEEP HOSPITAL

Each month Dr Jeep (Tony Whitehead) takes us through the trials and tribulations at his "Jeep Hospital", USA 4X4 Jeep Specialist in Melbourne, Victoria. Over 20 Jeeps are admitted weekly for servicing and suspension work through to differential, transmission and engine rebuilds. Dr Jeep explains the diagnosis, the corrective surgery and future care of these vehicles.



Tony Whitehead (Dr Jeep)

Rhino TJ



Stripped of flares, doors and some lights.



Internal tub area with half top rail still fitted.

At USA 4X4 we sure do get some unusual requests from time to time and this one was a pleasure to fulfill. After taking on the South Eastern Rhino Linings Agency for Melbourne we finally got to do a TJ inside and out. It all started when a customer purchased a green 97 TJ and wanted something different. After we got the job to lift, with supplied bars and camo roll bar covers, we ended up designing a set-up that would make the tub 100% waterproof and the outside 100% carnage-proof and look awesome.

Rhino Lining "Tuff Stuff" is a 2 pack polyurethane product by Rhino Linings USA. It's fantastic gear and the main reason I was interested in taking it on was to do Jeep open tubs and get rid of the moldy Jeep carpets and to do some special external finishes. I have seen many Jeeps and other vehicles with Rhino linings in the USA when attending S.E.M.A, their annual massive 4WD and after-market show. I was keen to do internal and external jobs on SWB Jeep bodies, bar work and even wheels. The mere fact we can do the back of a ute tub was another bonus as that's the main work so far, well other than some K9





The internal area after cup brushing



TJ tub all masked up ready to spray



Drivers door after cup brushing



TJ front masked up



Passenger guard pre-Rhino



A sample of rhino tuff stuff, it's flexible, can be applied up to 5mm thick and is literally bullet proof! Various armies around the world use it to bomb-proof their vehicles and even make fuel tankers bullet proof. Technically a bullet will pass through the surface but it will close over the hole stopping the tanker from leaking when shot at.

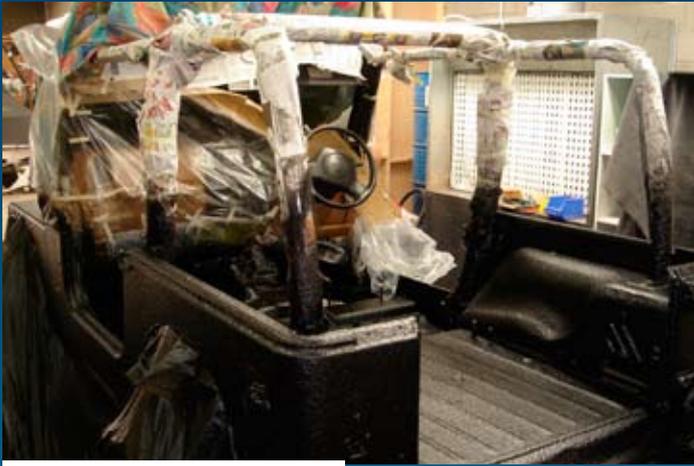
transporters, battery trucks, lawn mowing trailers and a few other odd jobs.

To start with we have to strip out and clean the surface completely, washing it then rubbing it back with a nylon brush on a 9" buffer - this gives the Rhino "tuff stuff" something to purchase to. Then we need to isolate any holes still required to refit seats, belts, the console etc, and externally flare mounting holes, light mounts, handle mounts etc. Next we have to mask off the areas we do not want to get covered using a tape with a super strong fine string on one side we can design the shape of the Rhino lining shape by cutting the tuff stuff before its set hard.

Before we start a job we do a ratio test and when its right the product gels and sets in 30 seconds. As the

Rhino lining heats up and sets, we can go over an area several times to build up the level we want, then when its thick enough we can blow the stipple coat over the whole job.

Normally we do a ute floor to 4 mm thick and the sides to 2mm. In the Jeep's case we went 4mm for the cargo area and 3mm for the foot wells and 2mm up the sides,



Rear cargo area finished off



Front passenger guard refitted



Jeep surgeon Trav prepping his M715 tub floor for a rhino treatment



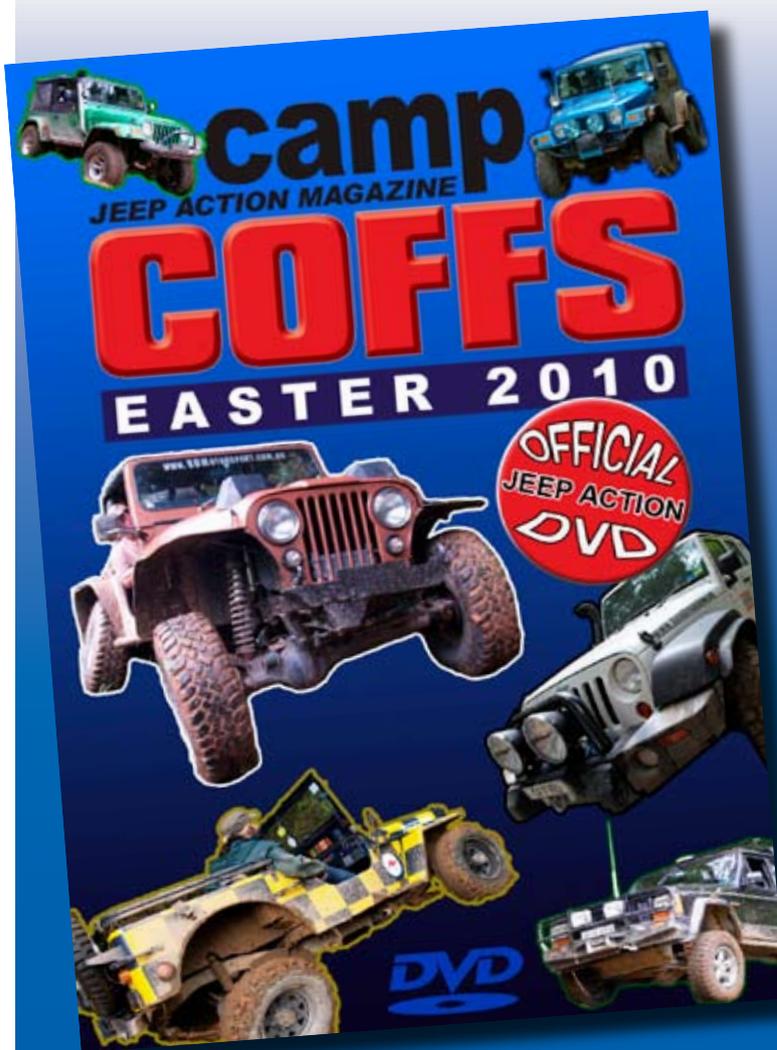
Rear view with Bestop half top back on



Finished job out the front of the shop

on the outside we went to 3mm as well to give the Jeep a bullet proof finish. With Rhino Lining we can finish the final coat with what's called a stipple coat, a fine droplet that gives us a slip proof finish. It can be left super smooth and shiny but the rough coat look is the go. Some of the bonus features of the rhino lining are not that obvious until you drive the vehicle. The sound deadening property of this stuff is amazing, it takes so much drum'n'bass out of the Jeep or ute and is warranted for the life to that owner. It also can be done in other colours but at this stage its like the Ford factory

here, black, blackly or black are the options. The end result was awesome, both us and the owner were wrapped in the finish. We added a set of Bushwhacker flat top fender flares to cover the 33" claws and refitted all the lights and accessories. We only had one hiccup, the doors were done separately and when refitted the doors fouled on the heavy coating we added to the entry area. With the doors off everything was OK but we need to do some tailoring to the door rubbers. So look out there is a rhino TJ on the road!



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