

"Camper trailers have come a long way over the last 10 years and the Tvan from Track is the latest to see the light of day"

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Track Trailers, based in Bayswater, Victoria, has gained an enviable reputation over the years as one of the pacesetters in the camper trailer game. Almost from the start, Allan Mawson, Track's driving force, has set the trends for recent camper trailer development and his small company was responsible for the first coil sprung, independent suspension to appear on commercially available camper trailers.

This was quickly followed by a unique, readily accessible storage system that could be used quickly after stopping and before the camper was even erected. As a result, other manufacturers brought out kitchens and the like on their trailers.

With nearly every manufacturer following the lead and going for independent suspension, Track Trailers' next development was their Type 3 chassis with MC-2 Asymmetric link suspension.

With coil springs, 250 mm wheel travel, improved ground clearance - especially in the middle of the trailer where it counts - monocoque construction and relatively lightweight, the Type 3 chassis was a trailer with cross country ability rarely, if ever,

seen before. Optional air suspension followed, as did a tandem chassis and the ride and comfort of the system was deemed so good that the defence forces chose the MC-2 system to carry some of their most sophisticated computer controlled radar trading gear.

Track Trailers' latest development takes camper trailers into the new century. Starting with a clean sheet of paper, Track has developed a camper like no other, called the Tvan 16. Underneath is its tried and proven chassis and suspension but it's not just the suspension that grabs the eye. With space age looks, the Tvan is distinctively different in both appearance and design.

The main cabin is a solid wall and roof affair that encompasses the main sleeping area, floor space and storage area, much like a fully fledged van does. Under the large double bed there is more storage, while a number of elastic sided pockets inside the hard shell of the camper also add to the internal storage space. The roof has two large, adjustable ventilation hatches, essentially directly over the bed, which provide plenty of air movement

The rear of the trailer incorporates a drop down, folding floor and a lift-up roof. Both these are weighted and/or shock-loaded to make lowering or lifting into place a simple, no stress job.



The fold up roof houses a drop down tent which is easily released from its holding bay, then quickly clips into place around the van opening and around the sides of the floor, making a fully waterproof roomy enclosure.

The tent is fabricated by one of Australia's leading tent manufacturers using first class Aussie canvas, zips and flywire and includes a sewn-in floor so there is no chance of creepy crawlies sneaking in. In the fully erected tent, there is plenty of ventilation and zippered canvas doors/windows, just in case the weather turns foul at any time.

A slide out kitchen - again a more refined and compact version that you'll see on most other campers - is included on the side of the camper. This is easily accessed from the outside which is ideal when you want to stop and grab a quick brew, while an awning gives protection when you are up and cooking.

On the opposite side of the trailer to the slide out kitchen is an internal storage area. Underneath, tucked up out of harms way and mounted centrally just to the rear of the axle, is a 70 litre plastic water tank. Water is fed to the sink at the kitchen by a 12 volt electric pump, backed up by a hand pump.

On the trailer A-frame, you'll find storage for three jerry cans, a spare tyre holder, two 4 kg gas bottles and a deep cycle battery for running the interior lighting. Since tested the first production model of this van, the A-frame area has The coupling is a "Tiger", Track's proven off road unit and it gives good articulation in all directions. On each side at the rear of the trailer, just behind the wheels, there is more external storage for a couple of Jerry cans or other odds and sods.

At the back, on what is the floor, a small rack can be used for carrying firewood, shovels, axes and the like.

Night illumination is via some fancy 12 volt internal lighting. There are a few 12 volt outlets scattered around the camper, handy for fluros and work lights. An optional 240 volt power box module powers the camper from any suitable 240 volt supply and charges the deep cycle battery at the same time.

In Use

Our test took us 5000 km to Birdsville, around Lake Eyre to Coober Pedy and back home. Whether we were towing on good blacktop, second class corrugated roads or on sandy tracks (that in places were nonexistent) the T-Van performed faultlessly with a flat, stable ride, good articulation when required and little or no bump feedback even on the worst washaway.

Dust sealing was very good, the large door (the lift-up roof) sealed effectively by four over-centre catches.

We were pleasantly surprised at how easily the whole camper went up. The first time, we did it was at night and neither of us had seen it being erected before, although we had seen the finished product and had been told how to do it.

From the time, I climbed out of the four wheeler to the time we had the unit fully erected and were ready to hit the hay was less than six minutes! That included, as you'd expect, a bit of ginning around trying to find the right internal pole and figuring out how things were undone or done-up.

Taking it down next morning was quicker and it was then we found a major advantage to this design. On many other campers, when you fold the tent into its storage/travelling mode, it lies on the bed. That means if the canvas is wet, your bed ends up the same way. In the Tvan there's no such problem as the tent is stored well away from the bed in its own compartment.

While you may never have seen a camper tent erect and drop down in the manner the Tvan demands, the system works easily and effectively and is a credit not only to Track but the tent makers.

Another advantage of the whole camper is, if it's a pleasant balmy night you don't even have to erect the tent. We draped some flywire over the large opening to keep the mossies out and slept 'out in the open'. There is now an optional flywire screen available to do just that.



All in all, we were mightily impressed with the Tvan. It's not cheap and is priced competitively with similar top of the line campers. Certainly, you get a bloody good unit that is different to anything else on the market and features some distinct advantages over many others. At the very least you deserve to check the new Track Trailer out.