



Thank you for signing up to receive my newsletters. I hope you've found the previous editions informative and helpful for your vehicle- supported adventures. I trust you will enjoy this month's newsletter. If you have comments, please email me: Bob.Wohlens@discoveroffroading.com. You can access, download, and read previous newsletters on my website by clicking [HERE](#). Look through the

Newsletter Reference for a topic that may interest you, or download them all!

4WD Instructor Course at Merus Adventure Park



In August, I was honored to be invited by Merus Adventure Park to conduct a

4WD instructor course at the venue (see [HERE](#)) – <https://merusadventure.com>. Merus is 6,500 beautiful acres in Northwest Texas about thirty minutes from Amarillo. The private park includes a large portion of the second-largest canyon in North America, Palo Duro Canyon. The adventure park contains over 50 miles of trails that include easy to extreme off-roading and overlanding. Besides vehicle-supported adventures, the park is also ideal for hiking, backpacking, caving, mountain biking, and camping.

With the completion of the instructor course at Merus, the park will soon be offering professional quality 4WD training to park members and visitors. Watch the Merus website for more information on these 4WD courses. If you've not yet visited Merus to drive their magnificent trails, do so! The trails are terrific, and the hospitality is unique, personal, and genuine.



Off-Road Training Association (ORTA) News

As many of you already know, I'm dedicating a large amount of my time to help make ORTA a reality. Work is progressing on the initial formation of the association.

Over the last few months, Dirk van Reenen and I have been in private discussions and talks with industry leaders about bringing ORTA to life. Dirk is the owner of Merus Adventure Park in Texas and Founder/CEO of BERGflow. BERGflow works with business owners and entrepreneurs that own serviced based companies getting them ready for next level growth. At this point, we can share with you that both Dirk and I believe that ORTA is absolutely needed in the off-road industry, and we want to find the right people to be involved in ORTAs development. More ORTA news to come in future Off-Road Safety Academy newsletters.

Adventure Tour News



Off-Road Safety Academy's final two adventure tours for 2023 are full, and there is no longer anyone on a waitlist for either tour. (I've already used all the

waitlisted folks due to prior cancelations.)

Contact me directly if you'd like to be placed on the waitlist (909.844.2583). People do have last minute conflicts and cannot go. This is true for the Applegate/Lassen tour – I have one person that cannot go and if I can find a person to pay and take his place, I can provide him with a refund even though it's after the cutoff date for refunds.



Applegate/Lassen Trail & Black Rock Desert Adventure Tour – September 29 to October 1.

Off-Road Safety Academy is donating the proceeds from this tour to the non-profit Friends of Black Rock High Rock (FBRHR). This tour of the area will include two special guests that will be providing added value with their in-depth knowledge of the region – Stacey Witte, Executive Director of Friends of Black Rock High Rock, and Jeff Rosenfeld – Founder, Wildwood Open Lands Foundation. Both will add valuable and fun details during the tour, plus you can sit around the campfire to socialize and ask them anything about the region. Also coming along is a wildlife biologist and wilderness first aid expert. The Applegate-Lassen Trail is a 130-mile-

long portion of the larger California/Oregon Trails. This three-day/three-night tour follows a portion of the famous historic trail and is an introduction to the larger Black Rock Desert area. This is a 4WD overlanding style tour - you must be self-sufficient as a camper.



Fall Camp on Baja Beaches Adventure – October 22-29.

This seven-night, eight-day tour follows an easy route (with some off-roading) through exceptionally scenic desert landscapes. Evening campsites are literally feet from either the Sea of Cortez or the Pacific Ocean. If you've ever wanted to visit the wonderland that is Baja California, a group tour with Off-Road Safety Academy is how to explore with confidence. This is a 4WD overlanding style tour

- you must be self-sufficient as a camper.

Watch a video of one of my Baja Tours [HERE](#). **Note:** All tours are open to any 4WD vehicle meeting certain basic requirements.

2024 Tours?

Many of you have asked about my 2024 tour schedule. I love your enthusiasm to get a jump on reserving a space or to inquire about new tour destinations and routes. I'm humbled by the hundreds of text messages, phone calls, and emails from valued friends and past customers curious about my tour plans. During the next few months, I will be contemplating whether to conduct tours in 2024. Should I decide to conduct a few tours in 2024, I'll announce them in a future newsletter. Where would YOU like to go? Let me know what your ideal adventure tour would look like.

Off-Road Product Evaluation – GlueTread Kits



In this newsletter I'll give you my thoughts on GlueTread products. But first, some important reminders about Off-Road Safety Academy product evaluations:

1. No Advertorial. Off-Road Safety Academy does not accept any product advertisements on its website, within its books, or during its courses. I never exchange the gift of free or discounted products for positive editorial comments.

2. Real World Evaluations. I try very hard to use evaluated products in such a manner as any off roader would. If there are instructions for use with a product, I follow them exactly as you would in the field. Instructions for consumers are part of my evaluations.

3. Reduced Preconceived Opinions. I'm no different than any other human being. When I initially "see" a new product, I immediately have preconceived notions about how the product may perform. I immediately formulate a hypothesis of how it might work or not work in the field. When I use a new product in the field, I try my best to reduce my preconceived opinions. I believe that I give off-road products a very fair and real-world evaluation.

4. To Product Manufacturers: "I Don't Work for You." I have never accepted one dollar in cash from a product manufacturer to endorse their product. As I tell all those that approach me to evaluate a product, "Let's make this relationship clear, I do not work for you. I only work for my newsletter subscribers, 4WD students, tour participants, and the readers of my 4WD books."

5. I Want Entrepreneurs and Products to Succeed. Many within the off-road product invention and manufacturing space are small business entrepreneurs. In most cases, I admire their ingenuity and desire to solve particular "problems" plus help their customers when off-roading. When I review a product, I don't wish for a product to "fail." I want the product to succeed as advertised, until it doesn't. Either way, success or failure, I will report my personal opinions regarding the use of the product.

6. Buy or Don't Buy – Of Course it's Up to You. I'm not here to convince you to purchase or use a product, I'm simply a reporter of what my in-field evaluations uncover. If I decide to endorse and use an off-road product, it's because it actually worked for me at some level.

GlueTread – Tire Repair Anywhere

This year I've had many folks ask me my opinion of GlueTread products (see [HERE](#)). If you are one of these questioners, you know my initial answer for this product has been:

I've no idea since I've not tried GlueTread products in the field. I will say this however, I REALLY want the product to work so we can save time in the field when repairing a sidewall tear. I have never enjoyed removing a large 4WD-type tires off a rim and patching sidewall tears from the inside of the tire while in the field. Patching a sidewall tear from the inside of a tire is bloody hard work and

requires some specific tools, supplies, plus some very important knowledge and skills.



That was the past, this is now. Last week I worked for almost a day and a half to make a GlueTread patch work on REAL sidewall tear on a Goodyear MTR 35" tire I damaged in Death Valley. The tear in this tire was not a "clean" knife stab cut. My attempts to patch this real-life sidewall tear was generally unsuccessful. Read on.

For those that only glance at my newsletter content, let me quickly say that I do plan to add a GlueTread product to my personal tire repair kit. However, my personal use of a GlueTread patches in the field, from this day forward, will only take place if some very special *conditions* exist. Note that none of my *conditions* are shared with the public by the GlueTread products manufacturer. Read on for my "conditions."

What Are GlueTread Products?

GlueTread products are designed to repair sidewall tears from the outside, without having to (laboriously) remove the damaged tire from the rim to apply an internal

patch. As with most tire repairs in the field, these are only “trail-fixes.” GlueTread products acknowledge this fact. They do not suggest that their sidewall repair patches should be used on paved highways. One product warning on the packaging states: “Intended as a temporary patch, seek professional attention as soon as possible.” Trail-fix tire repairs are only designed to get you out of the remote backcountry and return to the pavement should you not have a spare tire to change to (shame on you) or your spare is already damaged.



COMPLETE TIRE REPAIR KIT

\$125.00 USD



4X4 KIT

\$59.95 USD

At this point in time there are two GlueTread products, or shall we say “kits,” designed for larger full-size 4WD vehicle tires. Those two kits are shown here – their “Complete Tire Repair Kit” (\$125) and “4X4 Kit” (\$59.95). I used the 4X4 Kit to repair the sidewall tear on my tire as I do not feel that the “Complete” kit is worthy of purchase.



Contents - GlueTread Complete Tire Repair Kit

The Complete Tire Repair Kit is a great idea as it includes supplies and tools to perform tread repairs - not just sidewall repairs. In my experience, tire tread repairs are more common. The kit includes tread repair plugs by Safety Seal (I believe the best in the industry) and Colby Valves for quick repair of damaged valve stems in the field. These are great products. Those that have read my in-field tire repair book (see [HERE](#)) know that I strongly endorse Safety Seal tire plugs and Colby Valve stems. However, in my opinion this kit falls short in many important ways.

First, the kit includes a plastic-handled Probe (reamer) Tool and plug Insert Tool. To bad. I absolutely cannot endorse the use of these two tools when performing a tread puncture on the type of robust and thick tires we use off-road. A legitimate and safe Probe and Insert Tool must have metal handles to protect your hand as you push down hard on the tool to determine the direction of the hole (probe tool) and to insert the tire repair plug (insert tool). If as you push down hard on a plastic handle, you run the risk of the plastic handle breaking and the metal portion of the tool being thrust right into your hand. This has happened in the field with cheap tools such as those included in the GlueTread Complete Tire Repair Kit. Ouch. A trip to a hospital will probably be necessary if the plastic handles break.



Getting a patch ready for gluing

My Experience With GlueTread

Now for an outline of my personal experience with GlueTread product's outer sidewall patches. Let me begin by saying that it took me four tries to get a GlueTread patch to hold without leaking on a tire with a REAL sidewall tear – not a sidewall cut stabbed by a knife. Why the caveat? Because all the successful GlueTread repair videos I could find on YouTube and their website were those that “fixed” sidewall cuts made cleanly by the stab of a straight-edged knife. These are not “tears,” they are “cuts” – straight and neat. No “lumps” and no “bumps.” In my opinion, a sidewall “cut” is much easier to patch using a GlueTread product and method. A cut on a tire sidewall doesn't look anything like a REAL sidewall tear you will get when off-roading. Real sidewall tears are made by sharp sticks or rocks. Real sidewall tears in the backcountry when off-roading are typically ugly – very ugly. Most are “V” shaped or unevenly torn. Some real-life tears even have “chunks” of rubber missing or torn away. There's no mention of these facts on any GlueTread video or marketing material that I could find.



Photo Shows Leaking Patch - Forth Try. Followed All Directions. Leak Occurred at only 5 PSI.

Conditions For My Use of GlueTread Patches in the Field

So, what does this all mean and what are my personal recommendations regarding GlueTread products? Allow me to outline what I intend to do:

- I will purchase the GlueTread "4X4 Kit" product – not their "Complete Tire Repair Kit" for the reasons already mentioned.
- I will add the GlueTread 4X4 Kit to my in-field tire repair supplies. However, I will never go off-roading Remote, Solo (no other vehicles with me), and particularly International (RSI) without my Extreme Outback Ultimate Tire Repair Kit, TyerPliers (or Hi-Lift Jack to break a tire's beads from the rim), and TyerPliers brand Deluxe and Standard 23-Inch Tire Irons (all sold on Extreme Outback Products website).
- When faced with a sidewall tear in the field I will first change to my spare, if possible. I will save my damaged tire for repair when I'm relaxed at my next campsite. If the sidewall tear is 1) fairly straight, 2) no larger than a 1.5 inch, 3) no rubber chunks missing, and 4) I'm in a location not too far from the pavement with a tire store nearby, then I'll give a GlueTread patch a try. Why not? If none of these conditions apply to my situation, then I'll go ahead and perform a more robust "internal patch" sidewall repair as outlined in my book, *Raising Your 4WD Vehicle Off Road & In-Field Tire Repair*. See the photos below of what this type of patch looks like. Now I get it, an internal patch-type sidewall repair does require time, talent, and the right supplies and tools. However, this type of repair can be mastered and in my experience it's a long lasting repair.

A Look at an Inner Patch Repair of a Sidewall Tear





The above two photos are of an actual sidewall repair I made in the field when I had two tires go flat while I was in the remote backcountry and off-roading by myself. If you've attended one of my tire clinics, you've seen this sample repair in person. The first photo is of the patch placed on the inside of the tire. Application was exactly as outlined in my book on in-field tire repair. The second photo

shows what the outside of the 3-inch tire tear looks like after the repair with stitching material from the Ultimate Tire Repair kit. I also placed Shoe Goo over the stitching to protect the cord and add some containment of the air I placed in the tire. On this repair I drove my CJ-7 the entire length of the Mojave Road trail, from Fort Piute to Afton Canyon Campground without any leaks or further tire problems.



Organize a Tire Repair Party

Make plans to practice tire repair before you go out on the trail. Avoid “practicing” advanced tire repair for the first time in the field and under duress. Get my book (see [HERE](#)) and the supplies/equipment from Extreme Outback Products (see [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)) and GlueTread (see [HERE](#)). Try GlueTread patches for yourself and perform all the tire repairs outlined in my book. Go to a nearby tire store and secure a “stunt” tire. Most stores will give you an old tire for free, but you’ll have to supply the correct size rim. Call a few off-roading friends and invite them over for a Tire Repair Practice Session. Cool some beers or make cocktails, plus layout some hors d’oeuvres or popcorn. You can thank me later. Have fun!



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