



NOOSA
HILL CLIMB
PICTURE
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torque!

MOTORING TODAY

Competition ups the ante on utes

TWO new utes now in Sunshine Coast showrooms have set a challenge for prospective buyers: they're the same, but different, and some research will be needed to decide which is right for individual needs.

The Isuzu D-Max and Holden Colorado are the result of a joint development project, but they have key differences that may influence owners for work or leisure use.

The Thai-built workhorses wear different bodywork over a virtually identical ladder chassis and beefy leaf-spring rear suspension.

Most importantly, they employ different engines and transmissions that deliver alternative choices in performance, economy and towing ability.

The Isuzu and Holden join the Ford Ranger and Mazda BT-50 as the newest and most sophisticated quartet in the popular one-tonne ute showroom segment.

But they are not the only contenders – the Mitsubishi Triton, Volkswagen Amarok, Toyota HiLux and Nissan Navara also attract thousands of buyers.

Competition for ute sales has forced up the ante on many fronts; whether for work or play, these vehicles approach car-like standards of driveability, comfort and safety.

The Colorado and D-Max both



The Colorado LTZ Crew Cab

come standard with electronic stability control, anti-lock brakes and six airbags across a range of variants that between them totals almost 50.

Both offer various combinations of single-, king- or crew-cabs, two-wheel drive or four-

wheel drive, dual-range manual or automatic transmissions and pick-up or cab-chassis tray backs. From here, their specifications diverge.

The Colorado's main engine choice is a 2.8 litre diesel producing 110 kiloWatts of power and a mighty 470 Newtonmetres of

torque (six-speed automatic version; five-speed manual has 440 Nm). The 4x4 version will tow up to a class-leading 3.5 tonnes and payload can be up to 1.4 tonnes.

Colorados are priced between \$26,990 and \$49,990 plus on-road charges.

The Isuzu D-Max employs a single 3.0 litre turbodiesel producing 120 kW and 380 Nm (five-speed manual) or 333 Nm (five-speed auto). Towing capacity is up to three tonnes.

The price range is \$25,100 to \$42,500.

Drivers battle for top spot honours

MAX PARNELL

The weather gods looked down favourably on the Autobarn Noosa MG mid-year hill climb held last weekend with perfect weather welcoming over 100 competitors from South East Queensland and northern New South Wales.

The cooler conditions didn't stop some very hot competition as four very different makes of cars battled for outright honours.

Regular Brisbane competitor Warwick Hutchison took out the honours in his turbo rotary-powered Formula Ford in a new record time for the mid-year of 52.88 seconds. Second was Noosa Beach Classic Car Club member

and now resident of 1770 Mark Hulst in his historic Brabham BT 36. Less than a second away was Gary Ford from Casino in a beautifully prepared Mark One Escort powered by a V8 Ford engine and he was closely followed by Nic Contojohn from Ballina in a Subaru WRX STi.

All 23 classes were hotly contested with Mark Edwards

from Noosa Beach being a stand-out, edging out a field of nine to complete the hill in 64.63 seconds in his Datsun 1600.

Receiving the trophy for fastest woman on the hill was Chris Knight from Dalby in a WRX which unfortunately came to grief on turn 7 in a late run. Late Sunday wasn't a good time for several drivers as they tried to better their times with

many having a ride in the recovery truck back down the hill after coming to grief on their now least favourite corner! Fortunately no one was hurt due to the high levels of safety required by CAMS and the safety improvements made to Gyndier Drive by the Noosa Beach Club. The next hill climb is the second weekend in November.

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