

The float that rocked

The updated Mitsubishi Triton ute range is here. Cameron Officer recently put the GLS 4WD through its paces, with a well-packed horse float hitched to the back for good measure.

Images by Cameron Officer



The new Mitsubishi Triton range has arrived in New Zealand and on first impressions it looks like it'll give the rivals a run for their money within this increasingly competitive segment of the market.

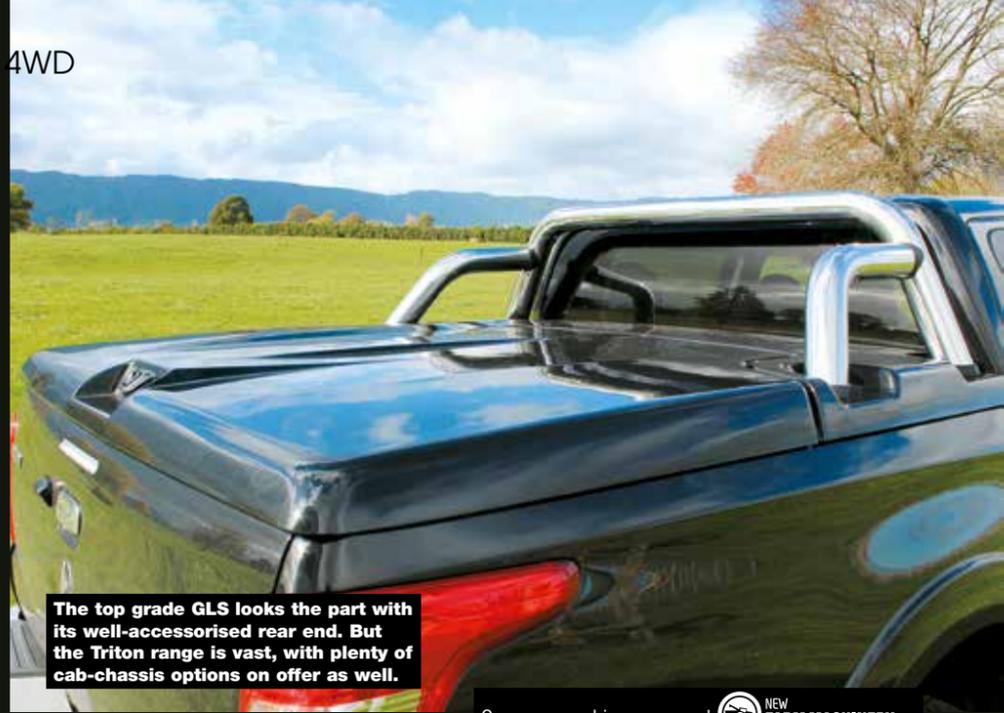
Our time with the top spec Triton GLS was primarily spent hauling some serious hardware; testing its towing abilities with a horse float across some decently waterlogged Waikato pastureland.

Taking the Triton's 3100kg braked tow rating into account, this sounds reasonably straightforward; your average tandem-axle horse float weighs in at anywhere between 500kg and 800kg without an equine inhabitant onboard – perhaps 1.5 tonne with.

Horse wrangling issues on the day meant we didn't have any livestock to put in the trailer, but unbeknownst to me the float's custodian had come up with a true test alternative; all his worldly belongings.

He happened to be in the process of moving house and this week was using the float as a handy covered furniture lugger. With all manner of boxes, chests of drawers and garden gnomes on board, the load weight was estimated at around a tonne; perfect for our needs.

Plenty of rain during the previous few days had left the test paddock very boggy, but using the simple Super Select dial in the centre console and slipping the Triton into 4H (full-time



The top grade GLS looks the part with its well-accessorised rear end. But the Triton range is vast, with plenty of cab-chassis options on offer as well.

4WD) proved enough for the job. Creeping through the gate and into the field proper, a gentle foot on the accelerator to keep up momentum was all that was required. Sure-footed all the way, the ute never felt like it was struggling.

The float was very well packed (to the ceiling even) so the load didn't shift about like livestock might on occasion, but stopping and starting was finessed enough with little in the way of noticeable shunt-and-pull from the trailer's drawbar.

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Mitsubishi Triton GLS 4WD Double Cab	
Engine:	2.4-litre four cylinder MIVEC turbo diesel
Transmission:	Five-speed automatic
Power:	135kW
Torque:	437Nm
Fuel Economy:	7.6L/100km
CO2 Emissions:	198g/km
Tow rating:	3100kg (braked)
Payload:	960kg
Price:	\$59,490 + ORCs

“Backing up to the trailer was a cinch too thanks to the GLS grade's standard reversing camera.”

Backing up to the trailer was a cinch too thanks to the GLS grade's standard reversing camera. With our tester fitted out with a hard tonneau lid, there is a lot of sheet metal to see over, so having a



The hard lid is an extra option, but if you want to keep equipment from the farm safe and secure on that visit into town, then it's worth the investment

camera is a great bonus. Good when you're performing simple backing manoeuvres in town too.

Another standard safety item in the 2015 Triton GLS toolbox is Trailer Stability

Assist, which utilises sensors to detect sway at open road speeds. The system applies brakeforce to the appropriate wheel and adjusts engine power in order to stabilise the sway motion.



You can see how many wheels you're driving with thanks to a handy lighted display in the instrument panel



The four-mode 4WD system in the Triton is fantastic and, thanks to some excellent technology as part of Mitsubishi's MATT traction software system, you can switch from 2WD to all-paw ability on the fly, as well as go full-time 4WD on tarmac



Every Triton also features seven dual stage airbags placed throughout the cabin, an ISOFIX latching system for child car seats in the back, LED Daytime Running Lights outside and a new addition called SmartBrake. In an emergency braking scenario, this system detects if you've inadvertently hit the accelerator as well as the brake pedal and cancels out the accelerator action. It's one of those pieces of technology you hope you'll never need, but it's good to know it's there.

While we put the Triton to the test in the mud, thanks to its Super Select technology, all-paw ability is there on tar seal too.

The four mode system lets you toggle between 2WD for around-town running, 4H for muddy stuff or even if the back road looks a little dicey in the wet, 4HLC high range gearing for dedicated off-road travel and 4LLC (Low Range with Locked Centre Diff), which will get you to wherever you need to go

regardless of whether there's a track under the wheels or not.

In fact Mitsubishi says the low range gearing in the Triton is 25 percent lower than the previous model, so real rock crawling can be done with added confidence. The 2015 model features a new centre differential, providing for 60/40 torque split which works as effectively on road or off with regards to providing better grip and traction.

The various traction systems featured in the Triton come under the heading of Mitsubishi All-Terrain Technology (or MATT for short). This system provides the full gamut of active safety software designed to keep you on the road (or in the paddock), and includes Active Traction Control, a Multi-Mode Anti-Lock Braking system which sends different amounts of brakeforce to individual wheels depending on the situation, and Active Stability Control, designed to combat under- or over-steer.

Sticking with controls in the centre

console, our test Triton featured a five-speed automatic gearbox with sports-shift paddles, although a six-cog manual is available in all grades too. This is pretty impressive given that some rivals only offer a manual 'box on their base spec, tradie-friendly cab-chassis models. Here though double cab GLX and GLS grades also get the option.

One-touch push button start (with keyless entry), handy Bluetooth hands-free phone calling and audio streaming, a big and bright six-inch touchscreen display and dual zone air conditioning all complete the picture inside.

This is one comprehensive ute, bolstered by great looks (the GLS we tested comes with tasty 17-inch alloys as standard) and Mitsubishi New Zealand's hard-to-beat five and 10-year Diamond Advantage warranty programs.

And the fact it'll float across some serious mud while towing your pony to the show without even flinching seals the deal for us. ■

Our test horse float would have weighed in at around a tonne, but the Triton barely knew it was there. And that was across some seriously waterlogged Waikato pastureland too.