



# TOUGH BRAKE

With a big block providing the go, it was time for Galah to sort his Datto's 'whoa'

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTHONY KILNER

I just came back from having an interesting chat with Brian Smith, the national accounts manager of Rotors & Drums Australia, when that strange fur ball Galah popped up out of nowhere.

"Geez Galah, you'll give a bloke a heart attack. What's up now?" I asked. "I just missed you so much Antman. Where have you been?" Squeaked my strange little friend.

"I went to see our mate Brian Smith from RDA, and he has some good ideas about getting the big Datto to pull up a bit better. New rotors and pads seem to be the go."

"Holy bursting brake lines Antman! That's just the 'brake' we need. Geddit? Brake?"

"Unfortunately I do, Galah. Thing is, I think we need to get dirty and tackle this job ourselves. Brian is organising the gear we need, like gold slotted rotors, brake pads and fluid, and when it arrives we'll launch into it. To get a little bit more scientific

than just seat-of-the-pants testing, we're going to do a brake test before and after and check the results."

### LATER THAT DAY

"Galah, behave yourself. I'm off to see Kent Phillips at Glenmount Automotive to do this brake test, and then I'm going to drop in to see Smithie at Smithies Outback. He has some braided brake line kits we might want to look at. Why don't you go and get started by clearing a bit of working space around the Datto?"

"Alright Antman, but hurry back. I'm keen to get started on this."

Will Antman succeed in increasing the big Patrol's 'whoa' factor now that it has more than enough 'go'? Will Galah stop popping up at the most inopportune times and actually make himself useful? Probably not, he is just a mop. Read on and see how the boys fare. ■



Once the centre section of the calliper is unbolted, you can get to the pads. When you remove them, make sure you don't lose the backing plates on the pads themselves. These plates prevent brake squeal and act as a buffer between the piston assembly and the pads



Remove the bolts that hold the hub in place



If you don't have the right tool to remove the bearings, two punches and a screwdriver will enable you to remove the bearings easily



The slotted rotors from RDA come marked left or right to avoid confusion



Following the reverse dismantle order, rebuild the front end and adjust the wheel bearings correctly. If there is no one around to help, a plastic Coke bottle with some clear tubing connected to the calliper is ideal for bleeding the brakes



The rear end is a quick job. Once the calliper is off, the rotor is easily swapped



With the bolts removed, a gentle tap with a soft hammer might be required to separate the hub and disc rotor



Tighten all the bolts evenly to the genuine factory specifications. Every fourby will be different here, so it will pay to check before you bolt things together



The brake fluid reservoir must be drained of old fluid and cleaned before the new fluid is used to flush the whole system



The extra plates on the old pads should be cleaned and fitted to the new pads before they are placed back in the callipers

## CONTACTS AND PRICES

RDA started in 1987 and now caters to over 1350 applications including many grey-import vehicles. On the front end, we fitted the RDA7652G front gold passivated, directionally grooved and dimpled disc brake rotors at \$344 a pair. The rears provided were RDA622G rears that were also gold passivated, directionally grooved and dimpled for \$274 a pair. We fitted EBC DP1279 Kevlar rear pads at \$92 per set, and the front Kevlar pads, EBC DP1280, retail for \$130. The EBC BF307 racing brake fluid we used retails for \$40 per 500ml. To find your nearest RDA supplier check out the website at [www.rdabrakes.com.au](http://www.rdabrakes.com.au) or call 1300 476 867. Greg Smith from Smithies Outback Gear supplied new ADR 7/00-approved braided brake lines to suit the GQ/GU braking combination on the Datto. The hoses will easily suit up to a 4in lift. The brake lines are metal braided with a clear coating to prevent mud and dust from getting into the braid itself, and custom lengths are available. These hoses retail for \$135 each, and they will set you back around \$60-\$80 to fit plus the brake fluid required to flush and bleed the system. For more detailed information on the hose kits, braking upgrades and general fourby mechanical work, call Greg on (03) 5995 4325 or drop in and see him at 30 Cooper Court in Cranbourne, Victoria. To eliminate any bias on behalf of Galah or myself, I tracked down a roadworthy tester – Kent Phillips at Glenmount Automotive in Mt Waverly. Kent has been a mechanic for more years than he cares to admit and was happy to do the brake efficiency tests for us. We carried out the first test to the Datto with no modifications to the brakes and the score came in at 51 percent. After the brake pads and discs were replaced and bled, the second test saw the brakes come in at 53.7 percent. The final test was after the minimum 600km run in had been carried out to bed in the brakes properly. Two long rubber brake hoses were replaced with braided hose and the system was bled again, and this saw the efficiency improve to 60.3 percent. Kent Phillips can be contacted by phone on (03) 9544 4000, or see him at Factory 1, 115 Ricketts Road in Glen Waverly, Victoria.

## WARNING

Antman had professional help on-hand from brake industry experts during this shoot. If you're not confident about being able to set up your brakes properly after you swap the callipers, get a professional to do it for you. The last thing you need is to find there's air in your brake lines at 110km/h.



A nut is used under the wheel nut to ensure the rotor doesn't float around during bleeding operations. The correct procedure for bleeding starts with the left-hand rear, then the right-hand rear, the left-hand front and finally the right-hand front



Greg Smith unclips the top, central, flexible brake line after cracking the fixed-line connection



The new ADR-approved hoses are braided, coated in clear tubing and have the right fittings for each vehicle. Greg can also organise custom lengths as required

