



It has been a busy time in the Thule world and the end of August heralded the official opening of a high-tech towbar testing facility in Pietermaritzburg, where Thule Towing Systems is based. Built at a cost of R7-million, it'll allow towbars to be subjected to massive stresses so that they'll perform better in the real world. Real-time test results and video can be viewed by our overseas Thule partners, and we can also grant access to organisations such as SABS, and our clients.

The opening was an exciting day, and we had representatives from many car importers and manufacturers and also owners of many Thule Fitment Centres present. While Thule in South Africa is made up of two distinct business entities, the event highlighted how integrated the brand is in the local market, which means there's a

Thule solution to any kind of transportation need whether it be carrying a heavy-duty ladder on the roof of a van, or towing a six-berth caravan behind an SUV.

Meanwhile, we're about to roll-out of the Thule Partner programme. As well as setting new standards, it'll also herald the installation of a range of in-store display merchandise which will make it far easier to find the Thule product you need; whether it be bike, watersport or luggage related.

Our objective is to supply a load-carrying interface which does the job safely, easily and in style. The saying goes that getting there is half the fun...we don't agree: the fun only starts when you get to your destination and start doing what you went there to do! So everything we do and all the products and services we supply, is based on providing the desired end result...

Richard Downey and Mark Gutridge

Wet, wet, wet!

It is safe to say Summer's here, and we're ready! In our Thule Fitment Centres and good watersport stores you'll find a range of exciting new products and accessories to enable you to get to the water's edge with your kit in the best shape possible.

First and foremost, there's the Taxi: a carrier designed specifically for stand-up paddleboards, which thanks to its smart, telescoping design allows for a custom fit for boards up to 34-inches (850 mm) wide. It boasts heavy-duty, steel reinforced webbing and spring-loaded locking cams to provide unsurpassed security, while soft padding protects the underside of your board during

transit. Thanks to the Speedlink mounting system attaching the carrier to your Thule bars takes seconds rather than minutes and doesn't require any tools.

We also have the Express Surf Strap in store; a pair of stretchable bungees which secure a wide variety of craft (surfboards, stand-up paddleboards and sailboards) to the vehicle's roof rack. The key feature here are looped ends which slide over the ends of the load bars and are tensioned with a user-friendly tightening system.

If you're a bakkie driver you'll need the Surf Tailgate Pad to go with your new straps, and it wraps around the top of the

tailgate, protecting both the vehicle and the equipment. And if you're in an SUV, the accessory of choice will be the Waterslide. Designed to extend from the rearmost roof rack crossbar, the non-skid underside stays in place once draped over the hatch of the vehicle while the smooth top surface provides first class protection to the surf gear.

Finally, with the Double Decker carrying two boards is easier than ever. Designed to carry a wide range of surfboards sizes one atop the other, Double Decker is an intelligent (it shares many of the design features of the Taxi) solution to secure and stable – not to mention stylish – transportation.



Surf Tailgate Pad



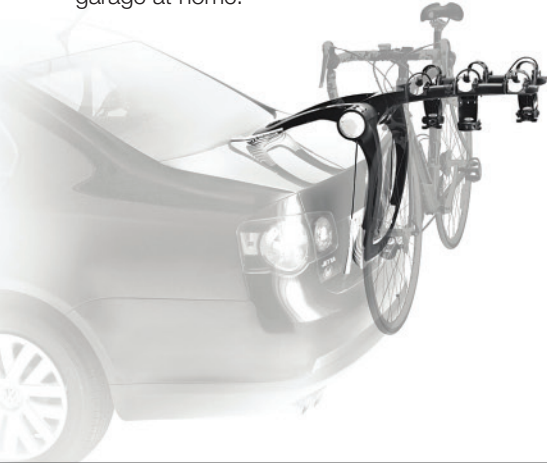
Double Decker



Waterslide

The amazing Raceway

Some things are worth waiting for, and the amazing Raceway rack is now available countrywide from Thule Fitment Centres and good bike shops. Raceway bicycle racks are light and compact, providing an elegantly quick and simple rear-mount solution for cars not fitted with a towbar. When not in use, the Raceway and Raceway Platform fold away for easy storage in the vehicle's boot or the garage at home.



The latter is our first strap-on two-bike rack which utilises a platform, allowing the wheels of the bike to sit in a channel, leaving the upper mount free to simply hold the bicycles upright. The Raceway 3-bike is designed for bicycles with a conventional top tube with the bikes suspended from a pair of horizontal 'cradle' arms and held steady by anti-sway cages.

Both benefit from features such as the patented FitDial system which guarantees a perfect fit for the upper and lower mounting arms; irrespective of whether you drive a hatchback, sedan or SUV, while moulded rubber pads protect against scratches. Once the user has positioned the arms to suit the vehicle, the paired Sure-Tight ratcheting cables tension the rack to provide secure fastening.

Premium materials are used throughout to ensure long life and trouble-free operation, and Raceway and Raceway Platform pass stringent City Crash testing and are sold with a lifetime warranty (terms and conditions apply). Available from Thule Fitment Centres and good bicycle shops for a recommended retail price of R2 999 and R3 499 respectively.

Ain't no mountain high enough...

The Thule 4 Peaks Mountain Challenge, arguably the toughest 24-kilometre off-road run in South Africa, took place at the beautiful Moolmanshoek Nature Reserve on October 1, and in couldn't have ended in a more dramatic fashion.

Just after dawn 200 gutsy trail runners headed up into the Witteberge mountains which ring the beautiful Moolmanshoek valley – it was the start of a nine-hour epic for some and a high-intensity 'sprint' for others.

And it was local hero Isaac Masibuko who triumphed in the last 50 metres, with Bloemfontein newcomer Karabo Mohase (at the age of 22 one of the hottest prospects in the sport) seemingly en route to a spectacular win until he collapsed with cramp within sight of the line. Try as he may his legs simply wouldn't respond and Masibuko, his face a mix of agony and ecstasy, accelerated to the line to take his first win. Spectators at the finish at the Moolmanshoek private nature reserve watched in disbelief as his rival

crawled across the line seconds later, the drama completely overshadowing the third place of Gerhard Uys.

First lady – a repeat of 2009 – was victory for Salomon athlete Susan Sloan, who was also a commendable 16th overall. A total of 186 athletes completed the race, each one greeted at the finish by Mike de Haast of Pure Adventure, proclaiming "You are now a Mountain Runner..."

A weekend of high winds and driving rain which swirled across the South-Eastern Free State topped and tailed the event and caused Sunday's MTB race to be shortened, though for most of Saturday conditions were thankfully dry but with winds which threatened to blow runners off the exposed slopes.

The next big event for local mountain runners is the Salomon Skyrun, of which Thule is an associate sponsor, with the annual 100 km mountain ultra-marathon kicking off in Lady Grey in the wee hours of Saturday November 12.



Picture: Kolesky/Nikon/Lexar

NEWS



Coming soon to a Thule Fitment Centre near you: the Thule Wingbar is inspired by airplane wings and sets a new standard for quietness and safety.

With assistance from experts in aerodynamics and acoustics (including engineers at leading European car manufacturers) Thule recently commissioned a wind tunnel where aerodynamic qualities and sound can be simulated and measured at various speeds. Using these measurements, the product form can be changed, decreasing sound and drag. The Wingbar is a product of this technical expertise and the result is a roof rack which generates 13 fewer decibels than the Thule AeroBar – which means that Thule WingBar only produces six percent of the predecessor's sound energy and is thereby nearly noiseless. It also generates 55 percent less drag.



The G2 Euroclick bike rack is here, a modern two-bike carrier designed to clip in in the same way as a detachable towbar. It works in exactly the same way as what we term a BMA towbar, which means the bike rack and its integrated attaching arm clips and locks straight into the car-mounted connector, which is bolted to the chassis. For a detailed video, visit http://thule.basilicon.se/#/?guid=eu-roclick_g2

The G2 Euroclick is designed specifically for modern small cars (Aygo, Yaris, C1, 107 and new Spark) which are defined as non-towing cars and in our market and cannot be legally fitted with a conventional towbar.

Mountain man

Attorney Adrian Saffy loves sending athletes up mountains, but he's not scared to follow

"I used to be a bit of a 'Breker' in my youth and thought I was invincible. A friend challenged me to enter what was then considered one of the toughest events on the endurance calendar: an 'underground' event called the Wartrail TriChallenge, then comprising a 70 km mountain run, a 140 km mountain bike and a 70 km paddle. I accepted the challenge and when I was surrounded by the remote wilderness the 'Breker' became a lost lamb. I found my soul and true self at that event and since then have had this passion to share the feeling with as many as possible. I now organize the Garmin Wartrail as one of the events in the Pure Adventures stable.

Star sign: Pisces

Marital status: Married

Date of birth: 18 March 1969

Strengths as an athlete:

Endurance. I love pushing the boundaries of one's physical abilities.

Weaknesses as an athlete: Bit heavy to be a mountain goat so not the fastest athlete out there.

Height: 1.8 m

Weight: 86 kg

Claim to fame: Having three of the toughest wilderness endurance events in our country in the Pure Adventures stable and giving so many the opportunity to discover their true being.

Favourite food: Steak (eaten rare)

Favourite drink: Cappuccino, and on the alcoholic side Castle Lite and the odd tequila.

Favourite music: I'm a bit of a techno junkie at my ripe old age (!) so I listen to a lot of House Music and Dance Music while running in the mountains.

Favourite sporting event: ESPN X Games

Sporting role models: Gary Player, and my friends Martin Dreyer and Ryan Sandes. Their humility despite their greatness always amazes me.

Local sporting icon you respect the most: Gary Player

Other sporting interests: Archery, fishing (shore angling and fly fishing), cycling, all multi sports.

Goals for the future: To keep the passion I feel for our events, athletes, sponsors and communities alive and gaining in strength. Possibly making this a full time career and live the dream.

Day Job: Attorney



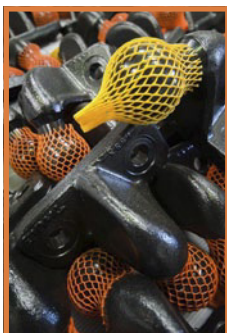
NEW PRODUCT



Thule Towing Systems is proud to be an original equipment supplier to Ford Motor Company South Africa and when the new Ranger light commercial vehicle is launched at the end of October, the towbar fitted in the plant will be one manufactured in Pietermaritzburg. Production just for Ranger is up to 360 units a week, which includes bars for export to Europe.

Thule has worked closely with Ford since 2007 on the project, building a towbar to cope with the Ranger's impressive 3 350 kilogram towing capability. For this reason the towbar has to be immensely strong, and has been tested over four-million cycles – double the legal requirement. Certain Ranger derivatives will be fitted with features such as Trailer Sway Control as part of its electronic stability system, which enables the vehicle to detect the presence of a trailer and adjust certain safety systems accordingly.

Because we work so closely with the automotive industry, we can supply a towing solution for a car as soon as it hits the market. New in our inventory are towbars for the Chevrolet Orlando, Nissan Juke, Hyundai Elantra and Toyota Innova.



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