

OZI BIG DIG

THE BIG KIDS ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME!

Official
launch
Saturday
10am- late

Make the earth move and have some serious fun

FEW people get to play with serious earth moving machinery, and with good reason – they aren't toys, they cost plenty and a host of qualifications are needed.

However, Wagga business Mick Humphries Training Group in Riedell St will be giving people a glimpse of what it is like to be in control of an awesome 11.5 tonne tracked excavator with the ultimate adventure experience.

Just this week I received an offer I couldn't refuse from Mick Humphries' Business Development Manager Will Phillips: "Do you want to take a Caterpillar 311C Hydraulic Excavator through its paces?"

Even if it's not your life's ambition to work full time with heavy earth moving machinery, the chance to sit in the operator's seat and potentially shift soil 800kg at a time did have an irresistible appeal for me, and I would be escaping my sedate office!

After signing in to the site and sitting through an Occupational Health and Safety presentation, I find myself climbing in to what was indeed a hot seat on an oppressive Wagga summer's day.

Bewildered was an understatement – at each side were joy sticks which each moved in four directions to command the tracked monster and two sticks in front made the machine move and steered it.

The initial experience was overwhelming but the tension bordered on sheer terror after I was strapped in and turned to the key at the right side to the seat to bring the beast to life.

I'm a fair sized bloke but all of a sudden I felt very small and significant ... the cab door was closed and my only communication with the outside world was Will's voice through a loudspeaker via his walkie talkie.

The blade at the front of the machine was lowered and its imposing bucket at the end of a long hydraulically-controlled arm was resting on the ground.

I slid a lever and the beast which had been purring started to roar. Following Will's instructions from afar I manipulated the levers and jerkily raised and lowered the arm, manoeuvred the bucket, raised the blade and rotated the cab as the tracks stayed in place.

At the base of the two sticks in front were two foot pads - when I applied equal pressure to both the beast lurched forward on clanking tracks and with some practice 11 tonnes manoeuvred at my unpracticed command.

Okay, I thought I'd had my fun, but it was time to raise the bar. "See that tyre on the ground?" Will said. "Stab the bucket in to the centre of it, angle it back towards you, and then pick up the tyre".



Oz Big Dig will be hosting an open day at 11 Riedell St Wagga from 10am on Saturday and you have the chance to win a free session from their team at Sturt Mall today.

Two metre round tyre dangling, I steered the excavator to a pile of other tyres – feet driving the machine and both hands working overtime on the sticks.

Following Will's constant instruction, I raised the tyre to above head height, extended the tyre above the pile and semi-gently placed it on top of the pile.

OZI BIG DIG is the all new Aussie adventure playground where you get to experience the thrill of operating some of the world's best industrial earthmoving

equipment; this is the first of its kind, not just for Wagga but for Australia.

Official launch is this Saturday from 10am 'til late at 11 Riedell St. Come down and check out the equipment in action or see the team at the Sturt Mall today put your name in the draw for a complimentary 30min session.

■ **Phone 1300 OZI BIG DIG – 1300 694 244 for bookings and enquiries. Go to www.ozibigdig.com.au for more details.**

Mick Humphries Training Group

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"It was an awesome experience! Loved every minute of it! Can't wait to come back!"
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- Individuals or groups
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