

The Ultimate Accessory for the Argo Avenger.

When it comes to getting the work done in the woods the Argo Avenger is the undisputed



king. Nothing gets around the most unforgiving terrain with such ease while hauling a huge payload. The search for the quality hunting that filming a TV show demands means getting far off the beaten path. Moving a moose camp into the wilderness 20 miles is a pretty common occurrence for us at Thompson Center's Outdoor Quest and the Avenger with a tub trailer can move everything

required for a week in the bush including the outfitters tent, food, airtight heater and hunters in one trip. That may not sound like a big deal to some until you think about a couple of things. First off, we need everything you do in camp and about another 75 pounds of dedicated camera/production equipment. The convertible top is priceless for keeping all this expensive gear, clean and dry in transit. Secondly, my very delightful best hunting partner, Sandi, has one rule about our woods forays, she has sworn to follow me any where as long as I keep her warm Fair enough, but that means the 24 inch airtight wood heater and several pairs of spare footwear and extra clean clothes. She definitely does mean more packing but I've realized as I get older that dry clothes, warm

sleeping quarters and a full menu at mealtimes is pretty pleasurable and not to be sneered upon. Especially when I compare it to the pre-Sandi days of sleeping in the rain under a tree, eating what ever I killed (and eating only when I killed!) and a change in clothes meant a fresh layer of dirt or mud on



the only outfit I had with me, the one I had on!

A wander through my photo album documents my 30 years of personal history with Argos. The recent years show how much more I've come to rely on the machines for a quality hunt. Hunting with an Avenger at your back means never worrying about where you are and how you are going to get that animal out if you shoot it. I have floated moose across lakes and beaver dams with



my hunting partner sitting beside me in the Argo. Swamp and muskeg are insignificant when riding the Avenger; in fact, one of my favorite moose calling locals is accessed by crossing a black spruce and tamarack muskeg. Wading hip deep in through black stinking ooze in the dark hoping that you don't miss step and plunge up to you neck is no way to start a morning. Now I drive the Argo across the 'keg and stroll the remaining half mile to my spot in warmth and comfort.



The only Achilles heel the Argo has ever shown me is snow. By the time 12 inches of the white showed up the Argo was done. Tracks were the solution and for years plastic was the material of choice in 13" and 18" wide configurations. Snow was no longer a deterrent and the Argo could go anywhere again. Then some of us started using the tracks in cross over seasons like spring break

up in the north when the world is so wet and muddy even the moose get high centered in the bogs. Eureka! Nothing and I do nothing stopped us. There was nowhere you couldn't go and the machine made it so effortless that it was fun to stop in inappropriate places

with a greenhorn on board and send them out of the Argo on an errand, more than one discovered the true meaning of “bottomless”! There was a downside, the tracks are a series of plastic segments or pads and the segments are held together at each joint with a long steel pin that spans the width of the track. The incredibly filthy environment we were operating in is also extremely abrasive and grit would embed in the plastic joints and wear out the steel pins. A spring worth of adventure and work could mean a total pin replacement on the plastic Super tracks. With the advent of the Avenger Argo brought out a new all weather, all terrain track system made of rubber. Identical to a snowmobile track the big belts are 18” wide and sport aggressive 1-inch rubber grouser bars. The optional track splitter kit makes installation and removal a breeze or you can keep the tracks in a continuous loop with no break. Either way track tension is achieved with tire pressure.



How does the new system work? I ran an Avenger with the track system for all of the 2005 fall hunting season. For most of the fall, I was impressed with how well the machine handled the added work of turning those big skins. The new transmission design and the bigger motor never hesitated. The fall was unseasonably warm and until November, my biggest comments were how the tracks improved the ride by not allowing tires to dip in-between rocks, logs or other obstacles and the added stability of the extra width in the stance. The machine looked pretty cool too! The first real eye opener was when I went to retrieve my whitetail deer. I shot the deer late in the day and by the time; we were finished filming the retrieval was going to be done in the dark. Leaving the animal dressed and cooling for the night, we returned in the morning. Over night,

the temperature plummeted and the swamps I eased through the day before now had ice varying in thickness from 1 to 2 inches. At the edges, the ice would carry the weight of the machine but in the center of the larger pools, the Avenger would fall through. The tension showed pretty clearly on my face when the first time the machine went in. I sat there bobbing for a minute, mentally shrugged and gave the throttle a twist. Like an obedient lab, retrieving a duck the Avenger clawed its way forward breaking the ice as it went. When I hit the thicker ice, the tracks spun, the machine walked sideways a foot and the tracks grabbed purchase and up we clambered on top of the ice. After the first one, it was a grand time and I was quickly impressed with the machine and the tracks all over again. Without the tracks, one of us was going to get wet pulling winch to get out of the hole. The part I hate is I know which one of us that was going to be!



Over the winter, I got the opportunity to use the new tracks in the snow. The rubber construction is not only more durable but provides better traction, the Avenger went everywhere in the snow. Not fast mind you but the low speed was even more impressive as this machine climbed hills and out of creeks by sheer traction. No other machine I can think of would climb the same hills at the same speed the Argo did. Yes, a

snowmobile could in most cases but it would have to be moving a lot faster to do it. Here is a typical scenario; you pick your way over the bank of a creek and work down 20 feet to the bottom, where you have to weave through the willows for another 20 feet and then climb the 45-degree bank on the opposite side. This is a pretty tough trick to do at 30 miles an hour on a snowmobile and forget about having your family riding along behind you.

I see the snow outside my office window is disappearing rapidly today and the water is running in torrents down the street. Bear season starts on Saturday April 1 around here and I think today would be much better spent if I were to take the Argo and haul the thousand pounds of bait stinking up the backyard to my bait sites. The tracks are going to make the trips across the flooded muskeg and the remaining snow a breeze!

Ciao!!

