

# LUISA WEIGAND VS THE BATTLE CREEK

## ROUND 1

Early June. Battle Creek is nearly two feet high. For Battle Creek, this is a Noah's ark situation. That means although they've been up in Cypress for nearly a week, Emma, Hannah, and Luisa have only netted twice. Happily, it seems like the water is going down. Hannah brought her personal car because she does not like nor trust the Red Field Truck (AKA Big Red AKA Clifford AKA AAAAAGGGGGHHH), and her car has made it from Fort Walsh to the field station and back several times over the past two days. So, the girls convince themselves Red can make it too.

Some notes about Big Red, it is:

- Big
- Red
- Manual
- Two Wheel Drive

Some notes about the girls:

- Only one of them (Luisa) can drive manual transmission

Nevertheless, they pile in the truck, Luisa hits the engine, Red starts shaking like a skeleton on a rollercoaster, and they make it across to the other side and up to the field station! PRAISE BE! They can start netting! They can pack all the field equipment! Hannah won't lose her other license plate!

That evening they pile into the truck again, drive down to the creek, Luisa revs up, Red starts rattling like a drum, and just as the front wheels are about to meet the bank, they spin out and the truck gets stuck. Hannah and Emma get out to try to push the truck forward, Luisa hits the gas; nothing moves. Luisa reverses in an attempt to move the wheels. The truck moves slightly before spinning out and creating a deeper rut.

Emma calls Maple Creek Towing (MCT) while Hannah goes to get her car. Maple Creek Towing says, if you get the truck out yourselves that would be great because we've had a really long day.

Hannah comes back with her car. They attach ropes to each car and Luisa gets back in Big Red. She puts it in neutral. Hannah drives, the ropes start to fray, Big Red does not move. They call Maple Creek Towing again.

One hour later no one has arrived and Hannah gets a call from MCT. Their tow truck died at the top of the switchbacks and they are sending someone to get their driver and then they'll go to get Big Red.

It's 10:30 pm. Bill and Darcy show up and get the truck out. Luisa, Emma and Hannah head back up to the field station and get wasted

CREEK: 1  
FIELD CREW: 0

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## ROUND 2

Four days later. Josh has arrived at the field station with Green Truck (exactly like Big Red but Green) and has driven Red across the creek several times. Hannah has convinced Luisa to try driving it again and Luisa agrees. Hannah and Emma cross their fingers when they reach the creek. Luisa revs up, drives through, gets stuck. Hannah calls MCT. She also gets serious about learning manual.

### MEMORABLE EXCHANGE:

HANNAH: "Hi Darcy, I'm calling from the Cypress Hills Field Station"

MCT: AGAIN????

CREEK: 2  
MAPLE CREEK TOWING: RICH

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## ROUND 3

It's been nearly a month since the last creek incident and Luisa has not driven the Red Truck through since. But, the water level is down significantly, plus Hannah has been driving across in both Red and Green and she can barely start either without stalling, so it's deemed safe for Luisa to try again. Also, Emma has to track a bat and Josh and Hannah aren't going.

10am: Luisa, Emma, and Alex (she's new!) leave the field station

10:15: Hannah gets a call from Emma.

10:18: Hannah tells Josh to deal with it.

This time the truck is somehow stuck in the bank next to the creek???? Like the truck somehow knew Luisa was driving and was like IT'S MY TIME and power steering went out halfway across and so the truck got stuck not even in the water but like halfway on the side in the mud????? And MCT can't even get it out because since it's in the bank they'd have to, like, back the truck back into the creek and then straighten it and THEN pull it out of the water???????

Thankfully, Fort Walsh has a tractor, and two of the Fort People™, Harvey (angel), and Kurt (new favorite Kurt), pull Red out.

Emma gets serious about driving manual.

**MEMORABLE EXCHANGE**

Harvey: You know you really need four-wheel drive

Josh: I know.

Harvey: Like you can't get across here without four-wheel drive

Josh: I know.

Harvey: Also I think your belt is loose

Josh: It's not.

Harvey: Wow! It cannot be tighter than it already is

Josh: I know.

**CREEK: 3**

**Luisa: 0** (sorry Luisa, that one's on you)

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**ROUND FOUR**

Given the number of times the crew got stuck this year, at the beginning of August the University of Regina decided to re-gravel the road to the field station and add new rocks to the creek to make it easier to drive. During this process, the field crew was on break in Regina. A few days later they are driving back to the field station in three vehicles: Hannah in her personal car, Luisa driving Green with Alex, and Emma in a white van borrowed from the University (Red died a couple weeks previously, RIP). When they stop for lunch, they receive this email, forwarded from Mark, from the Park Manager to the Supervisor of Mechanical Services at the U of R:

Hi Blair,

I just wanted to send you a quick heads-up in case there are any concerns. Harvey went down to check out the crossing, and he raised some concern about the rock that was put in. I'm not sure just what you ordered, but the rock that was delivered is smooth round cobble rock rather than crushed or angular rock. Our guys were able to get back and forth across the creek with the 4x4 truck without issues, but said it was a bit slippery and thought it might prove a challenging crossing for a two-wheel-drive truck like that used by the students at the research station.

Thanks,

Scott Whiting

And the reply:

Hi - I am not sure who made the call on what rock to use in the creek as I said from the start it was not our call on the creek for environment etc. If the only concern is to get across with a 2 wheel drive then I really don't think that will be a problem. We used to cross with 2 wheel vans / trucks until we started to rent 4x4's for other reasons as well. Two of our trades were there to fix an electrical issue a week ago driving a 2 wheel drive 1/4 ton and it was not a problem crossing [before alterations]. When the creek is high it wouldn't matter because we would not be crossing anyway. Hoping it is all good as the job was nicely done. Thanks guys.

The team agrees that Hannah should drive across first in her AWD car to check how bad it actually is. They get to the edge of the creek and see that it has been nearly completely filled with large river rock, and both banks are about a foot wider than they were before. Hannah takes a deep breath and drives across.

An oft repeated lesson: Bigger is not always better.  
The lesser known continuation: This includes rocks

The creek feels nearly impassable. The rocks are not tightly packed and Hannah can feel her car slipping and nearly spinning, but she makes it to the other side. She takes another deep breath and after a moment realizes there is no way in hell Green will make it across the creek. She calls Alex, No answer. She calls again, still nothing. A minute later, Alex calls her.

"Yeah, we're stuck", she says  
"Yeah," Hannah replies.

It's 5:30 pm, and Fort Walsh is empty, so Hannah calls MCT. She and Alex (probably grateful she doesn't have her license) wait down by the creek for them. Bill arrives with a tow truck and with his mother, whom he brought for a nice evening drive. He backs down the bank, but when he tries to pull forward, his truck wheels spin out in the new rock and HE ALSO GETS STUCK IN THE CREEK.

He tries to use the tools on his ACTUAL TOW TRUCK to pull himself out but still can't move. His mother thinks this is hilarious. Eventually, Hannah and Alex use their white van to pull out the tow truck that then pulls out the green truck, whose front bumper cover has seen significantly better days.

That put an end to both Big Red and Green for the summer, fear not, for both trucks were fixed, and are ready next year to drive again.

Creek: 4  
Somehow, also the Creek: 0

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(BONUS ROUND FT EMMA)

Like a week later, the gravel people came back to "fix" the creek again, somehow made it worse, and when Emma was driving the white van across the creek one of the tires was punctured and Alex and I went down to the creek at 7 am to meet Kurt to drag the van out. But once he got the van out he couldn't get the tire off so we had to wait two days to get the tire fixed because there was a fire in a field and the tire guy is also a volunteer firefighter, and once he arrived he got the tire off in like 2 minutes, and we were like "wow!" and he was like, "who did you say couldn't get the tire off?" and we said, "Kurt!", and he was like "lol" and then \$300 later he left. The end.