

**Off-roader of the Year**

MITSUBISHI PAJERO SPORT

# THE LEGEND LIVES ON

After an iconic Pajero SFX, Mitsubishi's new **Pajero Sport** had some mighty shoes to fill. Say hello to our Off-roader of the Year



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**W**e were a bit skeptical when we first saw the Pajero Sport. The traditional boxy lines had given way to muscles-on-steroids curves. The 92-litre fuel tank was replaced by a 70-litre unit, and we had second thoughts on whether it could tackle drive-to-Ladakh kind of distances that the SFX could. But this is a Mitsubishi, after all. These guys haven't won the Dakar Rally several times over on luck. Plus we automatically take notice every time we hear SuperSelect 4WD. So even though the Sport seems to have lost those characteristic lines that had a cult following, it's still based on some solid mechanicals. To prove the credentials, we took the Sport to hilly jungles in Yercaud, Tamil Nadu. Over the days as we put the Sport through its paces, both on and off tarmac, the Pajero didn't bat an eyelid.

It reminded us why we loved the older SFX and also how well this one addresses its predecessor's shortcomings. The important thing for the Pajero

Sport is the fact that its 4WD gear stays unchanged, which really gives it an edge when the road disappears. The SuperSelect 4WD has been perfected over the years. Plus, this Pajero Sport hasn't gone the docile monocoque route like big brother Montero. A ladder chassis means its ability to take abuse remains unchallenged. And it's not like the Pajero Sport didn't have competition for the award. But it was the Pajero Sport's simplicity that really stood out amongst them all. After all, electronics don't mix with mud, slush and dust.

In this world of dials and LCD displays, the Mitsubishi still retained the old-school manual transfer case. And simplicity means reliability. Ask anyone who's toured the Himalayas and they'll tell you reliability can be the difference between life and death. It's for this ability to take on anything while keeping to its core value of being a reliable sport utility that we've named the Pajero Sport our Off-roader of the Year.

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