



Toyota Corolla Verso Excellent Says Weston At Mobility Show

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Falklands war veteran Simon Weston OBE has added his name to the growing list of admirers of Toyota's new-generation Corolla. "I think it's an excellent car," he said after a fortnight's trial of the Corolla Verso 2.0-litre T Spirit diesel. Simon was speaking shortly before the Mobility Roadshow 2002 when he was available on the Toyota stand to discuss with visitors how disability need be no bar to mobility and independence.

Simon appreciated the capacity of the five-seat Corolla Verso on a recent trip with his wife and three children. "I couldn't believe we could fit in the family and everything we needed, the boot is incredibly deep, so the carrying space is really good. The Verso is just a great load-lugger! The car is deceptively large inside and the rear passenger legroom is fantastic."

Easy access to the driver's seat was a big plus for Simon. "You don't have to get up or down, you simply sit on the comfortable seat – and then just swing your legs round to step out.

"My fingers are slightly short, but I love the fact that all the controls are within fingertip reach while the all-round vision is also very good. The clutch is quite light, fine for people with manoeuvring problems with their feet or ankles, and the gear stick is fabulous. The Corolla has a great turning lock and it's very easy to park."

Awarded the OBE in 1992 for his charitable work, including his youth charity Weston Spirit, Simon writes, broadcasts and fulfills a demanding schedule of engagements. He also finds time to fly light aircraft and race saloon cars, so he knows all about high performance. How did the Corolla Verso shape up?

"I found that it would handle incredibly well at 70mph. Although I'm used to driving big, fast cars I found the Corolla an absolute delight to drive, and so did my wife Lucy. Driving nearly 300 miles we used only about half a tank of petrol, so it was also very economical."

The Corolla Verso Simon drove, with the latest D-4D direct injection common-rail diesel engine and five-speed manual transmission, returns 45.5mpg on the combined cycle. "What disabled people want is something really practical like this," said Simon. Standard features include front airbags, air-conditioning, ABS, remote central double-locking, immobiliser, sunroof, CD player and multiple rear-seat folding options.

"As Simon points out, we cannot underestimate the importance of meeting the requirements of such a large element of the population – an eighth of people have some sort of disability and their needs are

highly varied," said Jon Pollock, General Manager of Toyota Fleet.

"People with special mobility requirements are not concerned exclusively with factors such as access and wheelchair stowage but with exactly the same things as every other driver – cost-effectiveness, reliability, safety, comfort and performance. Toyota is committed to a continuing programme of developing vehicles with user-friendly features and the capability for adaptation where required – and to making those vehicles readily available to everyone."

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Notes to Editors

1. Simon Weston saw active service in Berlin, Northern Ireland and Kenya and was aboard the Sir Galahad with the Falklands Task Force when it was bombed by Argentine aircraft in 1982. His resulting burns required a series of operations, which continue to this day.
2. Motability is the charitable body designed to help the eight million people in the UK with mobility problems. Those who receive Higher Rate Disabled Living or War Pensioners' Mobility allowances qualify for assistance in obtaining new vehicles on contract hire, while some 10% opt to buy new or used vehicles on hire purchase under the scheme. Most Toyota dealerships have Motability specialists trained to advise customers on suitable vehicles and, where necessary, adaptations to controls.
3. Toyota Motability Contract Hire includes the cost of routine servicing and maintenance and fully comprehensive insurance, both for three years, and RAC Membership including comprehensive Roadside Assistance package and Home Start and loss of use cover for the hire period. Under the HP scheme there is no limit to mileage or to the type of adaptations that can be fitted, and RAC membership with comprehensive Roadside Assistance and Home Start is included for one year.
4. Toyota models available under the Motability scheme include the popular Yaris and Avensis as well as the new Corolla and Corolla Verso MPV.
5. More customer information on the Toyota Motability scheme is available from local Toyota dealerships, the Toyota Call Centre on 0845 275 5555 or the Toyota website www.toyota.co.uk