

# Quickie iXpress (with Yamaha JWI motorised hub wheels)

Sunrise medical dist. by GMS trial by Peter Willcocks August 2012

It is essential that anyone considering a wheelchair get advice from an occupational therapist with knowledge of your medical conditions and history of prescribing wheelchairs. I was very fortunate to have had the assistance and advice from an occupational therapist with years of experience and a fully trained rehabilitation engineer from GMS.

I am totally convinced after my trial that the Quickie iXpress (lightweight folding powered wheelchair) will work well for me and my lifestyle. The long-term suitability of the wheelchair is major consideration considering the cost and a part of the assessment an O.T. needs to feel comfortable that the wheelchair will hopefully serve a client's needs for the next seven years. This requirement is one of the criteria to receive financial assistance from the Victorian State-Wide Equipment Program.

The Quickie iXpress is designed for portability and flexibility of use – it can be used as a power chair but also has the ability to be used as manual chair if necessary. If someone requires fulltime support from a wheelchair there are other important health and comfort considerations that would perhaps make the Quickie iXpress unsuitable for their needs, and this needs to be discussed with an occupational therapist that has experience of relevant medical conditions and with wheelchair prescription.

The Quickie iXpress is not that much more expensive compared to other quality power chairs but offers a much wider range of transport options and environmental access. The Quickie iXpress that I trialled with all its attachments weighed less than 35kg. Its heaviest single components are the motorised wheels at 10kg each.

I am managing the late effects of polio. I weigh just over 100kg, have good short distance ambulatory control, wear braces on both legs, have respiratory difficulties and have limited muscular endurance. It was easy for me without assistance to walk the assembled Quickie iXpress up steps. Once I had removed foot plates, cushions, joystick controller and the amazingly light and well positioned battery (1.8kg) and I was able manoeuvre the Quickie iXpress with the wheels attached in and out the boot of my 2008 Honda Civic Sedan.

I trialled the Quickie iXpress for just over a week under a variety of challenging conditions that were more demanding than for my normal and anticipated use. I found the flexibility of the chair exciting and extremely valuable as I visited a wide variety of buildings and places, very few of which are assessable by public transport. I was able to manage getting the chair in and out of the car boot by myself, but I am also considering a lifter or wheelchair carrier on the tow ball of the car. The standard back support of the quickie wheelchair was comfortable, but I would definitely recommend a customised back rest.

The Quickie iXpress chair is very easy to use as a manual chair on good surfaces, is more than manageable on standard carpets such as found in public buildings, but care must be taken with manual use on sloping footpaths due to easy freewheel and the camber of footpaths.



I am not concerned about the reliability of the motors or the design. Only time will tell, but I am assured by the fact that this type of motor is proven technology and the overall design is robust. I was particularly impressed by the level of control that the joy stick provided – it had graduated control and was smooth with its movements enabling accurate stopping and turns for tight manoeuvres as some found in buses and small lifts. The low battery warning was better than anything I have experienced so far – I estimate that from the first low battery warning of “one bar” that there is approx. one hour of careful use remaining and at least two kilometres of travel. I guess that the total distance under my normal conditions of use would be about 15klms. The battery recharge time is simply amazing from completely discharged to full in 2.5 hours. Most of my recharging took less than 1 hour.

I trialled the standard set up and would recommend that you discuss customisation with your therapist. The quickie wheelchairs come with a wide range of options to accommodate different body shapes and user environments. I have received independent advice that the quickie chairs are excellent for heavy users and once personalised offer long time durable support. 15 years ago, there were some delays with parts but now that is not a problem with the support offered in Australia for the Quickie chairs from Sunrise Medical Office's in Sydney.

I would suggest the following modifications and options for most users:

- Custom back for support
- Custom seat cushion
- If used regularly outdoors I suggest larger front wheels and consider pneumatic for extra comfort.
- Walking stick /crutch holder
- Tie down points for use in a maxi-cab
- Bag attached to chair either under seat or on back for personal items such as a laptop



### Some hints for new users

- Listen to instructions / read manual – Don't panic the chair is incredible safe and easy to use
- Don't panic if the motors don't engage you may have tripped the wheel lock lever with your coat. I panicked for a second or as the wheel chair will not move, warning lights flash and the beeper sounds. I was on a bus and thought I was stuck. As the quickie iXpress is easy to use manually, I unlocked the drive from both wheels and wiggled to chair out of the bus aisle. It was then that I realised that one wheel had been in gear and one wasn't. When I first saw the Quickie iXpress wheel locks, I was a surprised at their position, as I had only used the Alber System that has the wheel locks in the hub. The Quickie iXpress has easy to access arms to engage the motors and I discovered that they were very robust and easier to access.
- The motors have plenty of power to climb all safe ramps. I was comforted that when attempting excessive inclines, as can sometimes exist in some private driveways, the controller lights flashed, and sound warnings beeped. I put wheel locks on and got out the chair. If incline is not too steep lean forward slightly to rise over small incline. **DO NOT** lean forward too long without assistance at hand. It is always safer in those cases to walk any wheelchair over/around obstacles. The wheelchair has good anti-tippers but thankfully I never needed them.
- Need to make sure make power control is **ALWAYS** turned **OFF** when exiting chair – I walked Quickie iXpress using the power to position wheelchair into bus and when reseating my coat tripped the power control. Ensuring that the power is off, and the brakes are on is **ESSENTIAL** when exiting / getting into any power chair
- Good idea to carry gloves in case manual operation needed.
- When loading the wheelchair into a car on your own,
  - Make sure that you do this with someone else's assistance for your first time.
  - Ensure that you remove the foot plates, battery, seat cushion, and the joystick controller
- Have fun and take your time.



**Battery weight: 1.8 kg**  
**Rated distance: 17 kms**