

# All Terrain Vehicles In the 70's

By BOB BEHME/Vehicles Editor

TWELVE months ago A.T.V.'s were scarce. There were few production models and fewer dealers. Now the vehicles are available across the country. Abercrombie & Fitch sells Attex; Sears, Roebuck test marketed one vehicle regionally and offered another nationally in May; and Montgomery Ward could have a model by November. Sixty-nine other builders have production or prototype machines.

I visited sixty Canadian and U.S. cities, interviewed two hundred people, drove fifty-six machines, and logged 45,000 miles to discover these and other facts for this exclusive FIELD & STREAM report. I saw new machines and new enthusiasm on both sides of the border. In Montreal, Toronto, Knoxville, Minneapolis, and other cities, builders are predicting the amazing A.T.V.'s will come into their own within the year.

I believe it. In 1969, a handful of races were held in five Eastern and Midwestern States. In 1970 there will be more than a hundred, and a California dealer told me that racing will move west by August. At least five machines will compete in the grueling Baja 1000, and what factory teams learn there can only improve engineering and sales.

Like the proverbial cup, the market runneth over. New entries outnumber established makes four to one. I saw machines with three wheels—the Tricart and Mini-Brute—and one with twelve. With Lockheed designers Bob and John Forsyth, I watched their creation, the Terrastar, walk through Southern California swamps. The Terrastar has a dozen wheels fitted to four triangular arms, and both wheels and arms rotate. I saw Moto Brousse, a vehicle with oversized front wheels and smaller ones in the rear—a combination developed to improve climbing. And I saw the largest newcomers, the 10-foot Busse All Terrain Wagen and the 11-foot Pac-Trac.

There were names familiar in other fields. Camel, a leading manufacturer of tents and tent trailers, developed the Centipeds. Veasly, builders of the Apache tent trailer,



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PLAYCAT



COOT



CENTIPEDE 0★



KID



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ATTEX



STALKER

MUSCATEER 0★



### All Terrain Vehicles In The 70's continued

designed the Trail Boss. Sensation, a builder of garden equipment and mini-bikes, introduced the Crocodile.

Builders in business last year are answering with new choices in bodies, engines, steering, and drive. Attex, with three models in horsepowers from 8 to 20, will offer a new design. Scrambler has both post and steering wheel controls. Coot builds one A.T.V. with con-

ventional front-wheel steering and another on which all four wheels turn. Pug has 2- and 4-wheel drive.

Rough-terrain capabilities are engineered in several ways. Some manufacturers rely on one-piece bodies with multiple wheels, and though not all tires touch the ground at any moment, those that do are adequate for traction. Others use an articulated or segmented

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MOTO BROUSSE



PUG



ROUGH RIDER



TRACKER



JIGER



CROCODILE



LOBO



AMPHICAT



SIDEWINDER



SCATMOBILE



TERRAIN WAGON



TRICART

RENEGADE



body which twists in response to the ground. The body movements of this type are intended to keep all wheels in contact with the terrain. A third concept uses a track because it applies less ground weight per square inch. The reduced pressure means improved mobility in soft, marginal country. Still other builders combine concepts, some offering add-on tracks for wheeled units.

Which is best? In theory one could

choose soft tires for swamps and sand; articulation, reduced wheel base or large wheels for rocky, uneven ground; and tracks for snow. But the differences are not well defined in the field. After thoroughly testing each concept, there isn't one I wouldn't buy.

Another comparison is size. The smallest A.T.V.'s are made for fun, generally weigh 450 to 500 pounds, are 83 to 87 inches long, and can handle about 500 (Continued on page 90)