

AN EXTRA GAS TANK FOR YOUR CAR

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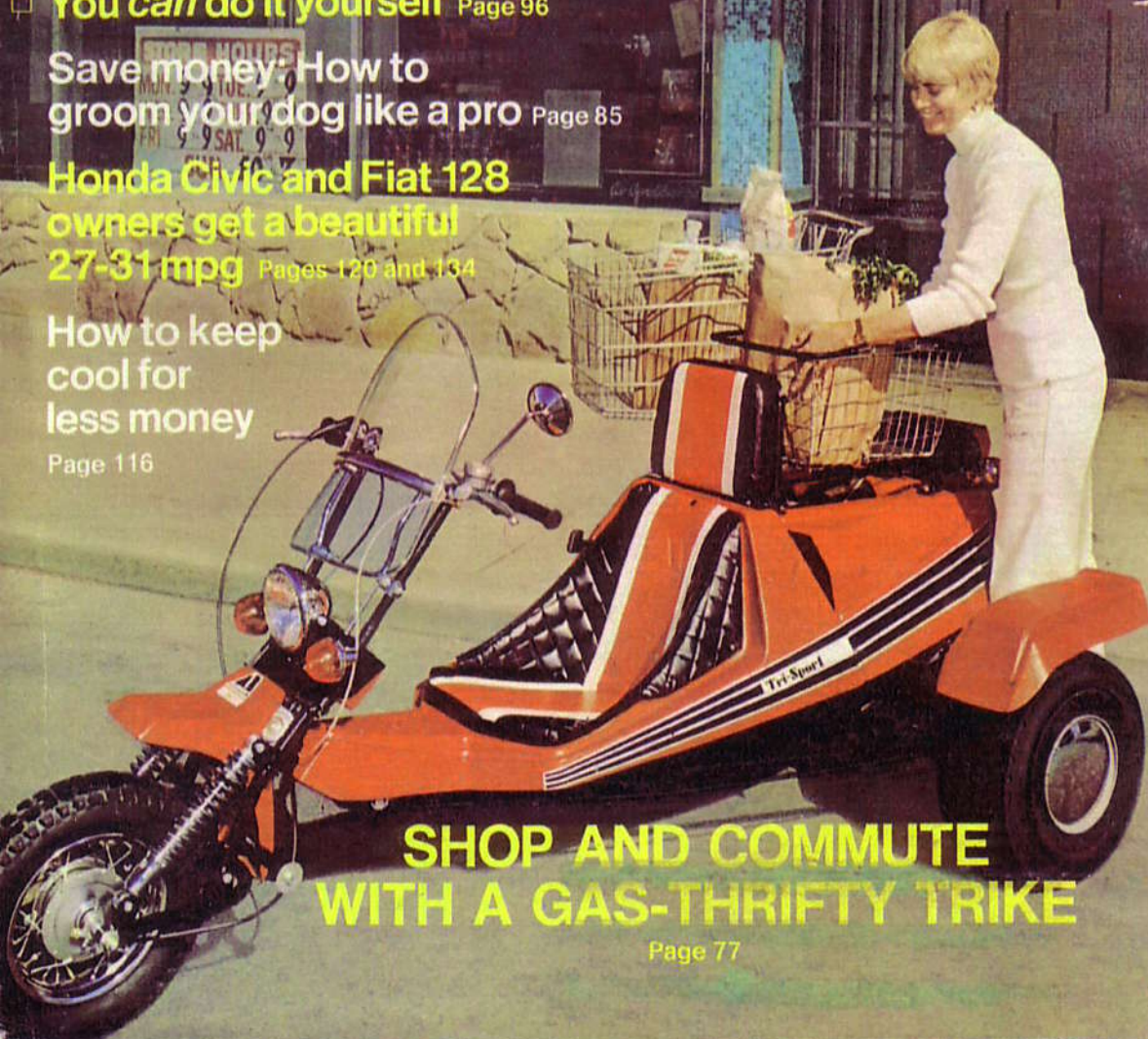
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**SHOP AND COMMUTE
WITH A GAS-THRIFTY TRIKE**

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Out on the street the trike can't take on the big road hogs, so keep to the lanes and byways and always wear your helmet.



Sport trikes go street legal

They started out as fun vehicles, but now they're a good way to do the chores and save gas for the family car!

By Jake Grubb

Tricycles are put aside by most persons sometime before the age of seven. But now there's a tricycle for adults. Motorized trikes are becoming increasingly popular for commuter use, shopping and all-purpose utility. They started as ATVs (all-terrain vehicles) that could scale hills, run over sand, track through mud, crawl over rocks—do anything a dirt-going motorcycle could do but without the risk of tipping over.

Today there is a good crop of three-wheelers to choose from, with more and more being converted by their manufacturers for street use. Several companies are already offering street trikes that reach speeds of over 50 mph and get gas mileage comparable to that of mid-sized motorcycles. Fifty miles per gallon is not unusual. All street commuters presently available are single seaters. Most are modified ATVs that are suitable for both on and off-road use. A small number, however, are specialized road

machines that generally have taller gearing than the ATVs, more power, lower body profile and also extra cargo space that most dirt models do not have. Their prices generally reflect these added luxuries.

Laws governing usage of mini trikes for street transportation to date, are those that apply to motorcycles. Legally these trikes are classified as motorcycles. They must have a high/low beam headlight, taillight, a battery ignition system which allows lights to stay on when the engine is not running, rear-view mirror and in some states, turn signals. EPA noise pollution requirements are the same as for motorcycles (86 dbA until 1976), and the continuing governmental controversy over motorcycle air pollution is currently as indefinite for three-wheelers as for two-wheelers. Suffice at this writing to say that two-cycle engines appear more threatened by legislation than do four-cycle engines.

There have been isolated complications with street legality due to differences in regulations among the states. Alsport's RTS-SL for example, is "street legal in some states"—48 to be exact. Obscure technicalities such as a minimum 23-inch seat height requirement in New Mexico eliminate legality in that state because of its lowered profile. Concerning these problems, sport trike dealers from state to state, at the request of manufacturers, are making special efforts

to become aware of restrictions affecting their respective lines. In rural areas many trikes are being run as "farm tractors" using reflective triangles on the rear!

Basic design of existing three-wheelers can be grouped into two categories: the "sit in" type and the "sit on" variety. The "sit in" format incorporates a low-slung backbone frame, bucket seat set low and in front of the rear wheels and an engine mounted just in front of the rear axle. The "sit on" format is like that of a motorcycle. Most manufacturers have chosen this format because of its carlike comfort and lower center of gravity.

Off-road recreation as the original premise of the sport trike is good enough reason for ownership. But recent applications include uses for business commuting, daily shopping and other errands, plant surveillance and economical weekend travel. Because of their low retail cost, low maintenance, durability, excellent gas mileage and compact size, motorized mini trikes seem to have almost unlimited additional uses for work and play. Here are some of the manufacturers and their products:

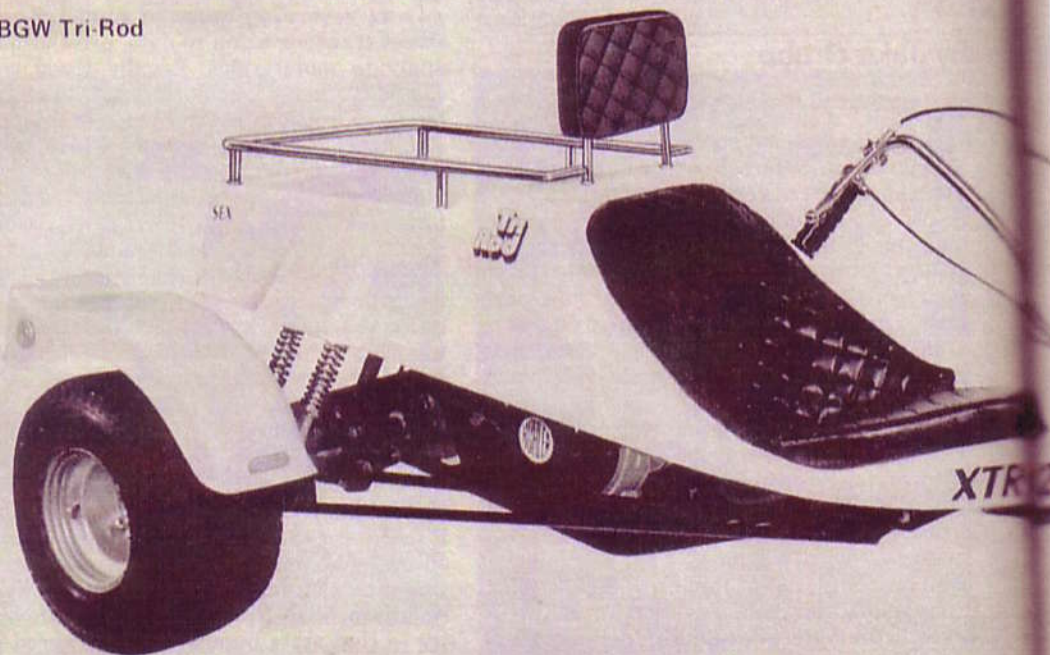
BGW. The RL-20 Mini Pickup features hydraulic disc brakes, headrest, integrated

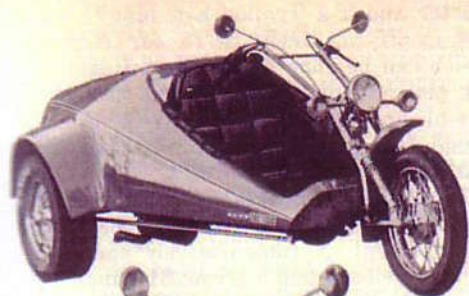
cargo carrier and full independent suspension. Available with choice of four engines, it can be a conservative commuter or a powerful performer. Automatic transmission, calibrated speedometer and optional electric starter round out the RL-20 and also apply to Tri-Rod dirt/street models. Priced from \$600 to \$1200. Contact: BGW Industries, Box 1683, Mansfield, Ohio.

Dunecycle. The Mohave 500E boasts 27-hp from a durable Kohler 295-cc two-cycle engine. Three-way independent suspension incorporates heavy-duty leaf springs and automatic shocks on the rear; hydraulic shocks with "leading link" action at the front forks. Large hydraulic discs, front and rear, make for efficient stopping and an argon-welded heavy-wall tube frame with T-bone structure insures superior strength. Dunecycle is presently nearing completion of a street model based on the 500E. Key differences include tires suited for pavement, a 10-inch spoked front wheel and a fiberglass body encompassing engine cover, seat and gas tank. Price of the 500E is \$1100 (\$1350 projected for street version). Contact: Dunecycle, Box 2967, Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670.

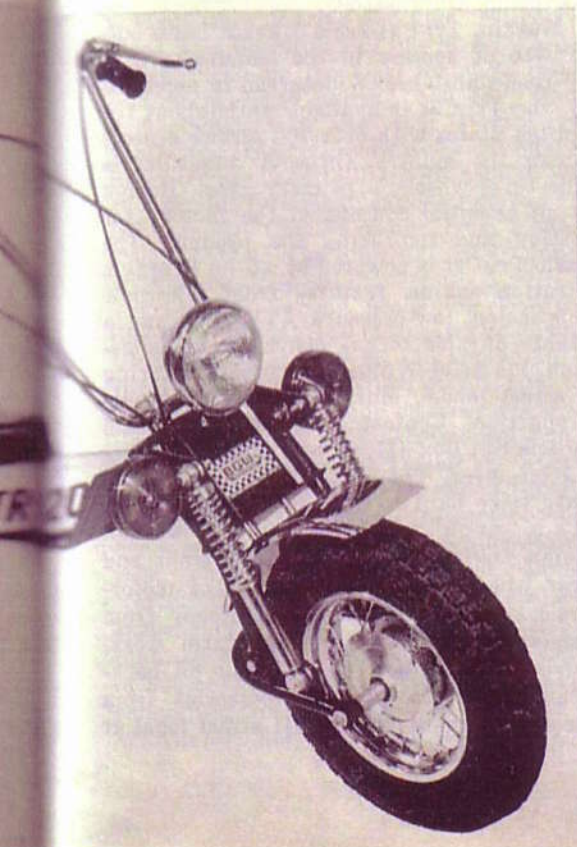
Explorer. Explorer's 800R comes fully

BGW Tri-Rod

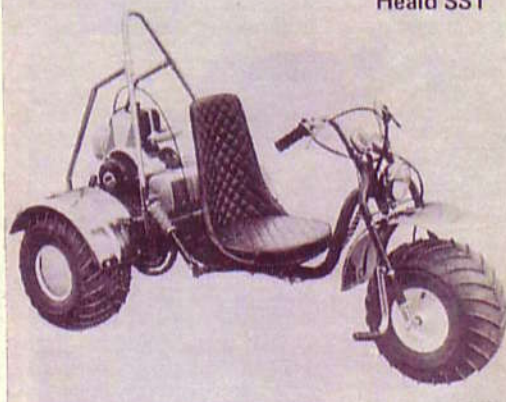




Rupp's Centaur was designed from the ground up as a street machine. It should start coming off Rupp's assembly line as this issue of PM reaches the newsstands.



Heald SST



Explorer 800R



equipped for the highway as well as off-road. With turn signals, mirror, horn, high/low beam headlamp and electric starter, no modifications are necessary for application to commuter use. A four-cycle Tecumseh engine supplies eight-hp to the rear wheels for a top speed of 50 mph. The 800R is capable of getting over 70 miles per gallon. It's \$730. Of seven models in the Explorer line, a 23-hp rotary-engined trike is scheduled to be the newest and most exotic street model. Now under final testing, it is a Sachs rotary-powered luxury mini for the demanding three-wheel cyclist. Contact: Owosso Explorer Corp. Box 177, 1415 West Oliver St., Owosso, Mich. 48867.

Heald. Sold only as kits, Heald ATV trikes are designed for easy home assembly. They are of quality construction at a very fair price. The new Heald SST has a two-cycle 295-cc Kohler engine, Comet torque converter transmission, high flotation tires, six-inch band brakes, thickly padded seat and three-way suspension. Options include a front ski, running-light kit, tote rack, auxiliary gas tank, windshield, electric

starter and T-2 Trailer Kit. Many owners are modifying their SSTs for road use, which can be done by adding a Heald light kit plus standard street legal necessities. It's about \$400 set up for street. Contact: Heald, Inc., Box 1148, Benton Harbor, Mich. 49022.

Honda. Honda's ATC70 is an all-terrain three-wheeler with a straddle-type seating arrangement. A comparatively short 35.2-inch wheelbase and narrow 31.5-inch overall width render it quite small but compact dimensions aid loading and transport. With high-flotation 16-inch ATV tires and a low ground clearance of 3.5 inches, the ATC is a pure off-road vehicle. The \$450 machine is not currently highway orientated. Contact: American Honda Motor Co., Inc., Box 50, Gardena, Calif. 90247.

MTD. The offroad Mudbug is a clean-looking ATV with hefty construction. It comes with a choice of tires and optional accessories to fit the demands of individual owners. The popular Mudbug 722 comes standard with an 8-hp four-cycle engine, leading-link front telescopic suspension, adjustable front headlight, alternator and dual-disc rear brakes. Four MTD models range from \$500 to \$600. Contact: MTD Products, Inc., 5389 West 130 St., Box 2741, Cleveland, Ohio 44130.

Muskin. Tri-Cat from Muskin is an outgrowth of success in the manufacture of off-road minibikes. Widespread in popularity, the Tri-Cat is available throughout the United States with over 700 service centers across the country. Off-road versatility is this three-wheeler's primary asset. Racing is an essential concern at the factory for testing and improving the product. The basic Tri-Cat is powered by a 5-hp Briggs & Stratton engine, features front telescopic suspension, low-pressure ATV tires and a highly durable torque converter transmission. It's \$400. While not presently offering a street model, Muskin is considering its production. Contact: Muskin Corp., 225 Acacia St., Box 311, Colton, Calif. 92324.

Pacesetter. The WR-SP III is a heavy-duty trike built to withstand rough going. It's a "sit-on" type with a 9-hp Wisconsin Robin engine mounted between front and rear wheels. Rear suspension is of motorcycle swing-arm construction. Ready from the dealer for trail triking, farm work, landscape maintenance, hunting or back-country travel, optional accessories from Pacesetter make WR-SP III street legal at

Honda ATC70



MTD Mudbug



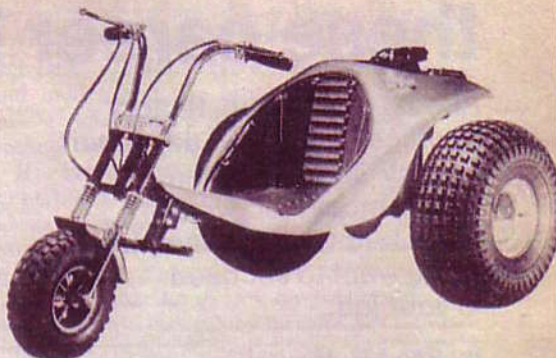
minimal cost. A 7½-horse model is also available. The machines are in the \$700 to \$800 range. Contact: Pacesetter Enterprises Inc., Cascade, Iowa.

Rupp. Well known for its durable, small-displacement minicycles, Rupp Industries now offers the Rupp Centaur, a three-wheel commuter. It is larger, longer and more stylized than contemporary three-wheelers and not derived from an ATV format. The Rupp, designed and built strictly for street use, features an automatic transmission with reverse gear, dual-beam headlights, side lights, fully adjustable automotive rear independent suspension and six cu. ft. of storage capacity with a locking door. A 340-cc Kohler two-cycle engine incorporates capacitor/discharge ignition and Mikuni fixed-jet carburetor. The Rupp's top speed is 55 mph. Windshield, padded headrest, tachometer and other important optionals are available. It's expected to be priced about \$1700. Contact: Rupp Industries, Inc., 1776 Airport Rd., Mansfield, Ohio 44903.

Snowco. Off-road three-wheelers include Super-Scat, Nomad, Tri-Scat, Farm-Scat and Mini-Scat. Of these, Nomad is a rugged cargo carrier, Tri-Scat is for the rigorous boonie rider, Super-Scat shines as a smooth-track performer and Mini-Scat is a tough 2½-hp trike for kids. All can be fitted with Snowco's full line of ATV accessories, including front ski for snow travel, folding overhead canopy, roll bar, tinted front windshield and foot splashguard. While no street three-wheeler is offered, Snowco's head and taillight kit help an owner make his own modifications for road riding. Snowco vehicles range from \$300 to \$800. Contact: The Snow Co., 4350 McKinley, Omaha, Neb. 68112.

Tri-Sport. Variety heads the Tri-Sport line. The 3-hp MTS 30 is an extra small mini for youngsters; 5-hp TS 110 and 14-hp TS 101 are economical off-road performers; the TS 130 is a durable 8-hp workhorse and the RTS 8 is a luxury ATV. Accessories such as the Alsport 2-Passenger Trailer and Alsport Cargo Trailer are items of added versatility. The RTS SL, Alsport's attractive street machine shown on the cover, features cargo rack, engine cowling, headrest, electric starter, tachometer, three-way independent suspension and rear bumper, plus standard highway necessities. Available with 290-cc or 340-cc engine the RTS SL is in the \$1500 range. Contact: Tri-Sport, Alsport, Inc. 84 Whittlesey, Norwalk, Ohio 44857. ★★

Muskin Tri-Cat



Snowco Tri-Scat



Tri-Sport RTS SL

