

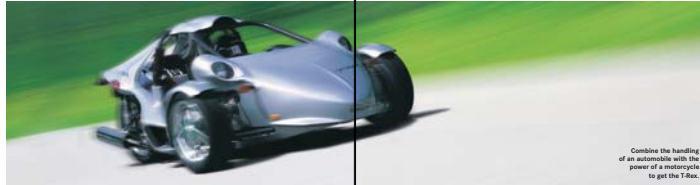
Ben Sherman

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JUST FOR MEN [HOT WHEELS]



Combine the handling of an automobile with the power of a motorcycle to get the T-Rex.

## TRICYCLE

>>>The T-Rex roars onto the scene.

The Grand Prix driving experience is all about speed, handling and the scream of a mid-engine as tires screech around the bend of a curve. It's an adrenaline-pumping, heart-racing match between driver and machine unlike any other. It's also been far outside the reach of the average consumer—until now.

Campagne Motorsports, of Plessisville, Quebec, has produced the T-Rex, a street-legal, three-wheeled motorcycle designed to deliver Formula 1 driving excitement in a styling package that looks like it could dock with the Starship Enterprise. One look at this road sculpture is enough to capture anyone's imagination, but strapping into the cockpit, feeling the rumbling energy of a 1,200-cc engine from behind and the grip on the road just five inches below is an experience not to be forgotten.

The heart of this beast is a Kawasaki inline four-cylinder DOHC engine with ram air fed from an intake atop the roll cage. With enough power to catapult drivers from zero to 60 miles per hour in 4.1 seconds, to a top speed of 140, it cranks out an impressive 12,000 rpm that would blow up most automobile engines. The reliability of this time-tested motor is beyond question, but it's easily serviced by removing the entire fiberglass rear cowling, including the fender.

The close-ratio gearbox, which makes the 147-horsepower engine howl, and the manual six-speed sequential transmission give this tricycle with attitude the torque to back up the implicit claim made by its futuristic look. The double-wishbone suspension with sway bar and adjustable damping system are a perfect match for its speed, making it a serious rival for either Lotus or Porsche.

The T-Rex has two drawbacks that are worth mentioning only to the most daring of drivers. The open-air cockpit causes serious drag at around 130 mph, but an aftermarket windscreen is available for speed hounds. The engine generates 1.9 g lateral acceleration, which

## WITH ATTITUDE

not only makes it possible to know what it's like to sit in your own lap, but it can cause the three-wheel design to drift at high speeds around a tight corner. Experienced drivers have said easing off the throttle prevents drift, but a wet road would not be the place to put that method to the test.

The hybrid design of automobile and motorcycle truly offers the best of both worlds. It handles like the finest sports car but has the soul and power plant of a bike. Its official classification as motorcycle bypasses hundreds of regulations cars must meet to drive American roadways, and licensing and insurance requirements are the same as any other cycle. The driving sensation is quite different though, and its T-shaped configuration, low center of gravity, seatbelts and roll cage possibly make it the safest motorcycle in the world.

The most enjoyable aspect of the T-Rex is the admiration of bystanders gawking at the bodywork created by Paul Deutschman of Callaway Competition fame. The aerodynamic, curved and sloped front end catches the attention of everyone in its path. Some business owners have plunked down the MSRP of \$43,190 just for the privilege of parking it in front of their stores to increase foot traffic. This is a vehicle born to be driven down South Street on a Saturday night.

The unorthodox beauty owes its heritage to the British-built Morgan three-wheeler of the 1930s that maintains a devoted fan base to this day, but it clearly has its own trails to blaze, which it almost certainly will. The closest T-Rex dealer is currently Newton Motorsports of Newton, NJ, but marketing director Martin Rompre had hinted that he was looking for dealers in the Philadelphia region this past summer.

If successful, the new dealership won't be hard to find. Just look for the crowd of people staring with a glazed look of longing in their eyes.

—Brian J. O'Malley



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