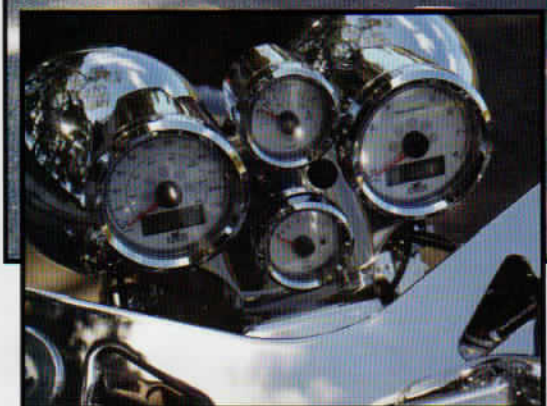
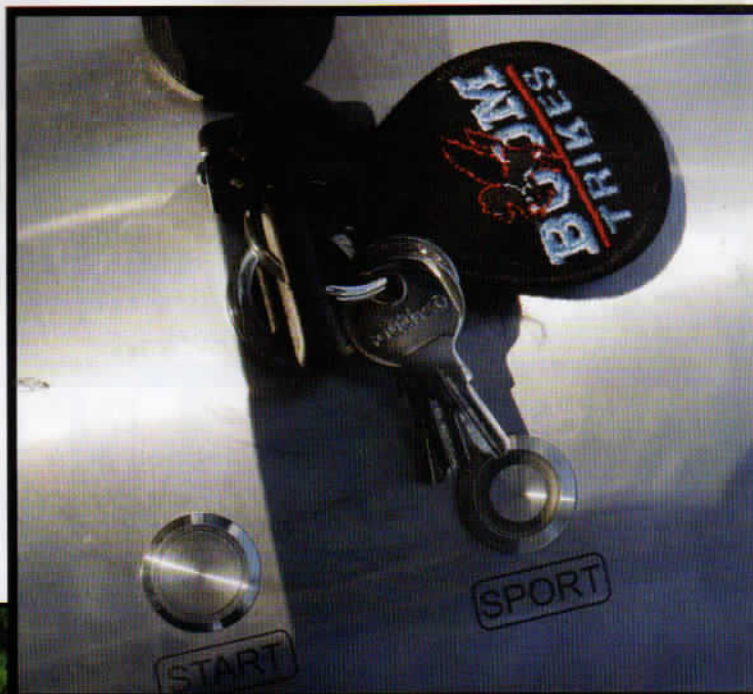


*The overall plan was simple. Ride to Gosford, test ride a trike and write a piece for Ozbike. As with all plans, the Devil was in the detail—I'd be riding Evy's 883 Sportster to Gosford accompanied by Skol with his dog riding shotgun in the sidecar; I'd be testing Boom Trikes' monster 2-litre Mustang ST1 having never ridden a trike in my life (although my mother informs me I used to enjoy riding a peddle powered one wearing nothing but gumboots); and I've never written an article before—what could possibly go wrong?*



**I**T WAS A beautiful Sydney Spring morning as I walked through the park to Skol's house. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. There were, however, a few dark and ominous ones in my head. Some of this may have been caused by my efforts to support the Australian brewing industry, but mostly they were caused by distant memories of crusty

old blokes telling tales of the capricious nature of trikes and how if you tried to go around a corner on one, it would definitely try to kill you. Skol seemed ambivalent about my impending sense of doom, and after a brief discussion on the best way to get out of Sydney, we headed off. I decided it was best to follow Skol, that way, if I did anything stupid, at least he wouldn't see it.

Evy's Sportster has some tasty mods including Fournales air shocks, larger dirt track bars, and a sensational-sounding, high-rise, two-into-one

exhaust. Riding the Sportster was great fun. I really didn't expect to enjoy it as much as I did. The bike handles sweetly on our poor excuse for city streets with enough power to move through the traffic, and that wonderful sound keeping me entertained and letting the cage drivers know I'm coming. I've ridden faster, better handling and better braked bikes than the Sportster but I wouldn't have swapped it for any of them as we rode up the old Pacific Highway towards Gosford.

First stop was the Road Warriors



# BOOM TRIKE MUSTANG THUNDERBIRD ROAD TEST

*Paul Angus*

Café where a cue of people formed to take photos of the dog wearing her goggles in the sidecar. This was a constant theme throughout the day—whenever we stopped, and sometimes when we weren't, people took photos of the dog from their cars while driving.

Back on the bikes and some more bend-swinging following Skol as he used a lot of body language to throw the outfit around the tight corners of the old Pacific Highway. I'm seriously having a ball on the Sportster.

We pulled into OzTrikes and there on the showroom door sat the Boom Trike Mustang all polished stainless and gloss black—and I'm definitely not talking stealth black—this monster is not flying under anyone's radar.

Johann, who started and runs OzTrikes is both enthusiastic and knowledgeable. After a severe spinal injury, he was faced with the choice of playing table tennis in his wheelchair for the rest of his life or finding something more adventurous to do—he decided to built a trike from a kit, and after riding round Europe, in 1993, he came to tour Australia on it and obviously liked what he saw because he stayed to set up OzTrikes.

The OzTrikes showroom stands as a testament to Johann's passion with many variations of older VW-powered trikes, a couple of very bizarre 'urban' trikes powered by scooter engines, a wide variety of American muscle-cars, and of course, the Boom Trikes that I was there to test ride.

Boom is a German company that has been manufacturing trikes for 26 years. When you look at the new Mustang, it becomes apparent that Boom has learnt a lot in those 26 years. The quality of the design and workmanship is evident with just a cursory glance. From the fully stainless

40 litre fuel tank to the exquisitely cast aluminium trailing arm—which is fully adjustable toe-in/toe-out (just like a race car)—this machine has been built by some serious craftsmen. One of the optional extras fitted to the particular trike I was going to test is an LED reversing light set into the stainless steel bumper bar. You really need to see this detail to understand just how well the whole package is put together.

As it was my first time riding a trike, Johan decided it was best for me to sample the top of the range Mustang ST1 Thunderbird equipped with a fully automatic Peugeot 2 litre, 140 HP engine. Whether you are buying or hiring one of these

machines, Johann sends you out for a test ride with one of his team.

The Mustang can be supplied with a single or double rear seats. From



**The Jet Light system accessory allows the spot lights to turn with the steering**





On the trike you have got to keep the front wheel pointing straight down the middle, and it is very important not to cut corners or go in too tight on a roundabout.

As we returned back to OzTrikes, I felt very pleased with myself that



I was aware of how wide the gate opening was and positioned the trike in the middle of it. Skol and Johann were waiting for me, and I thought it was nice of them, then in one of those OMG moments, I realised they weren't waving but telling me to get over to the left to avoid hitting Skol's sidecar wheel. I missed it by the width of a couple of Tally-Ho papers!

Nobody seemed too shaken apart from me, so it was time to take the beast out for my first solo flight.

I followed Skol back down toward the old Pacific Highway. It really didn't take very long to feel comfortable with the Thunderbird. Not only is it very comfortable, it rides like a very sorted

when you open up the throttle, it goes forward very quickly. Really it was easy as that. Just keep the front wheel in the middle of the lane and roll on and off the throttle.

The electronics somewhere deep in the bowels of the beast seem very clever at moving up or down gears, applying liberal amounts of engine braking when needed or hanging on to a gear just a little bit longer. If you want to play a little bit harder, there is a button marked 'sport' which makes everything happen just a little bit faster.

Looking out over all the polished stainless at the front of the Thunderbird, it feels like riding a big motorcycle. However it doesn't lean like a motorcycle, in fact it doesn't lean at all, the rear just sits flat and catapults you out of corners like a race car. Much of

the single passenger seat on the test model, the view is straight over the top of the rider's head. The seat was fully equipped with an armrest and a headrest, and for the quick five minutes I was sitting in it, it was extremely comfortable. The two things that struck me most of all sitting in the passenger seat was the compliance of the rear suspension and the unbelievable acceleration out of slow corners.

After 10 minutes, we pulled over to the side of the road in the middle of



an industrial estate and it was my turn to ride.

You sit very low in the front seat—your arse is literally centimeters off the road. The sense of speed is fantastic.

Before I had left, Johann had really stressed the importance of keeping the front wheel in the middle of the lane, and to begin with, this felt very odd. When driving a car, you sit to the right of the centre of the lane, and even riding a bike you either sit to the right or the left of the centre.



this cornering ability can be attributed to the fact that the two litre engine is mounted forward of the rear wheels just like a race car.

On the tighter sections of the old highway it would be very hard to pull away from the beast. Having said that I really enjoyed just cruising along in the Spring sunshine without a care in the world. If someone had told me I needed to get to Perth I would have been very happy to set off.

As a tourer the Boom Trike Mustang Thunderbird would be phenomenal. It's got a 240 litre lockable boot and more than enough

***Looking out over all the polished stainless at the front of the Thunderbird, it feels like riding a big motorcycle. However it doesn't lean like a motorcycle, in fact it doesn't lean at all, the rear just sits flat and catapults you out of corners like a race car.***

package. It doesn't feel like a 'custom' made special. Everything works beautifully. Nothing rattles.

The firm but very well damped suspension keeps everything under control. When you jump on the brakes, the servo-assisted, four-piston calipers pull the beast up very quickly. Likewise,







for a day or a weekend. The wineries of the Hunter Valley are just round the corner and the boot is big enough to bring back plenty of samples.

If you want to own one of these unique machines prices start at \$46,000 for the 1.1 litre (79 hp) manual and \$52,000 for the 1.6 litre (125 hp) manual. The 2 litre auto I tested adds \$4400 and there is a long list of accessories to tailor the beast to your personal needs. You can even specify the Mustang with



tie down points. It will cover 450 km before you need to refuel. You can even tick the cruise control box option on the accessories list and relax on the freeway. Johann can even help you out with a mini two-person caravan and a tow ball. I think it's in the touring roll that the Boom Trike would really be hard to beat. Every journey would be an adventure, and you'd be able to carry enough gear to make crossing our wide brown land just a little bit easier.

If you've ever thought you might like a ride on a trike you owe it to yourself to visit OzTrikes. You don't even need a motorcycle license—you can ride the trike on a car license in NSW. Johann will hire you the Boom Mustang



eager to knock anything that's a little bit different—people who like to put things in boxes and label them—it makes them feel safe and secure. Boom Trikes Mustang is not for them. It's for people who don't want to go quietly into the night. The beast is for people who want to ride a bike but are unable to for whatever reason. People who want to travel a long way with a lot of gear, in comfort, but still in the world and not locked up in a little metal box. People who enjoy traveling with a significant other or others. People who've always wondered what it would be like to fly a Fighter Jet.

OzTrikes 6 Ainslie Close,  
Somersby, NSW 2250; 02-4372-1100;  
email: [info@oztrikes.com.au](mailto:info@oztrikes.com.au)

a double pillion seat for carrying the kids. My two favourite accessories are the 'jet light system' (four spotties that move with the front forks) and the very dryly named 'adjustable sound exhaust system' (you can hear just how 'adjustable' it is on Johann's personal machine).

Johann and his team can also tailor the controls to your requirements. All the foot bars and controls are multi adjustable and the machine can be supplied set up with either foot or hand control on either side.

There are always plenty of people

