

HOW-TO

# MAKING THE BIG SWITCH

## Adding a 4th wheel

By the 3- and 4-wheeled Staff of DIRT WHEELS



Starts: Jimmy White—"Those nerf bars sure make the guys think they're driving Sherman tanks into the first turn."



### CONVERSION KITS

THREE TO FOUR IN  
A MATTER OF HOURS

#### AVAILABILITY AND PRICES 3x4 BOLT-ON KIT

Machine	Model Years	Unassembled Price
<b>HONDA</b>		
200X*	'83-'87	\$795
250R*	'81-'86	795
250SX*	'83-'87	795
350X*	'84-'86	795
Big Red*	'82-'85	795
185S*	'82 and '83	795
ATC110	'79-'85	714
ATC70	'80-'85	400
<b>KAWASAKI</b>		
Tecate*	'84-'87	\$795
200A*	'81	795
<b>Polaris</b>		
Scrambler*	'85	795
<b>YAMAHA</b>		
Tri-Z*	'85-'86	\$795
225 DX/		
DRS*	'84-'86	795
Zinger	'84-'85	400
<b>Tri-Moto</b>		
200*	'83-'85	795

\* "Baja Kit" available



The 3x4 kit bolts on in three to five hours with basic tools. It comes complete with Bilstein shocks, Tol-O-Matic brakes, Nankang knobblies and sano plastic. Wheel travel is 9.6 inches, and front ground clearance is a full foot.

• Three-to-four conversion kits have been around for years, but a short time ago, when three-wheelers were so hot, these kits seemed way ahead of their time. Now that the marketplace is riding on four wheels, these conversion kits are selling hotter than ever. Could these kits be the writing on the wall, or will loyal three-wheeler riders hold on to their telescopic forks for dear life? Only time will tell. Today, however, we are going to evaluate the kits available from 3x4 and Astro.

Both kits allow you to convert your three-wheeler to a quad in a matter of hours. The big difference in the offerings is that the 3x4 kit is a bolt-on unit, while the Astro kit is a weld-on unit. The Astro kit comes with some high-quality pieces designed to hold up under racing and trailriding conditions. The regular 3x4 kit is geared more toward casual-to-me-



**Cornering: Marty Hart**—“Sweepers are much easier to handle on a quad, but tight turns are a different story. The three-wheelers are much lighter and don't push as badly.”



**Picking and holding lines: Marty Hart**—“I use the same lines on a quad that I would use for a three-wheeler, or even a motorcycle.”

**Rough Terrain: Jimmy White**—“It took some time before I was able to judge how hard I could come to the whoops after getting off the three-wheeler.”

□ It all started innocently with Honda's introduction of the ATC90 in 1970. It was a mild-mannered trike with a fondness for sand dunes. Nobody took the machine very seriously at first, except the accountants at Honda. They were selling the machines like hotcakes. A revolution had begun. The other manufacturers quickly followed suit and brought out three-wheelers of their own. The next great leap forward was the introduction of the ATC250R in 1981. In a short time, three-wheel racing came of age. Factory teams with works machines and highly paid riders circled the country chasing real-life National Championships. Just as three-wheel racing was getting hot and heavy,

Suzuki surprised the competition with its potent four-wheeler, the 250 Quadracor. This machine boasted all the high-performance capabilities that the three-wheelers possessed, plus the addition of a fourth wheel. Race promoters were caught off guard. They stuck the trikes and the Quads in the same races. This controversial format lasted only a short time, because the riders had to use such different riding techniques and lines that the racing became dangerous. The classes were finally split up, with the number of four-wheeled entries continuing to climb.

After a couple years of three-wheel criticism from the general press, multi-million-dollar

lawsuits and governmental intervention, 1987 is suddenly upon us. Several manufacturers have almost dropped three-wheelers from their lineups. Most everyone is jumping on the quad bandwagon; from racers to general recreational riders to the hard-core utility crowd.



◀ Pro racer Mike Bergman has been using his Astro-kitted ATC250R to give the top quad guys some real headaches. The machine is amazingly fast with its lightweight, breathed-on motor and high-quality parts all around.

#### AVAILABILITY AND PRICES ASTRO WELD-ON KIT

Machine	Model Years	Unassembled Price
HONDA		
250R	'81-'86	\$1095
350X	'85-'86	1095
200X	'83-'87	1095
250SX	'85-'87	1095

The Astro kit from Hi-Performance ATV features only top-of-the-line components from Grimeca, Progressive Suspension and ITP. Front-end travel is a healthy eight inches, front ground clearance is 11-1/2 inches. The kit can be welded on in a matter of a couple of hours.

KAWASAKI		
Tecate	'84-'87	\$1095
YAMAHA		
Tri-Z	'85-'86	\$1095

dium-paced trailblazers. The Baja Kit, however, comes with a tough chromoly frame and ventilated discs for the fast guys, and it costs only \$100 extra.

Both companies will sell you the kits fully assembled if you so desire. If you roll your machine into the Hi Performance shop in El Cajon, California, they will give it back to you ready to ride—if you leave them your front end. Also, if you bring them your machine or send them your frame (you pay all shipping and handling), they'll weld on the subframe for free. The folks at 3x4 have also been known to line up customers with people who want to buy the spare parts from their three-wheelers. On some occasions, Hi Performance will even buy your parts from you. Now, check out the available parts, and see which one is for you. •

#### CONVERSION KITS

	3x4 PRODUCTS BOLT-ON KIT	ASTRO WELD-ON KIT FROM HI-PERFORMANCE ATV
Wheelbase	Varies from model to model, not to exceed 50 in.	47 to 51 in.
Ground clearance	12 in.	11½ in.
Wheel travel	9.6 in.	8 in.
Shocks	Bilstein—12½-in. length	Progressive Suspension Baja Magnums—13½-in. length
Added weight (over stock 3-wheeler)	10 to 16 lbs.	20 lbs.
Brakes	Tol-o-Matic calipers and rotors with braided steel lines	Grimeca calipers, drilled rotors and braided steel lines
Frame material	Mild steel	Mild steel
Wheels	Steel, 8x3	ITP aluminum, 10x5
Tires	Nankang knobblies; 20x7-8 or 21x12-8	Choice of Nankang knobby or Armstrong flattrack tire; 21x7-10
Options	"Baja Kit"—same as above with chromoly frame and ventilated discs, \$100 extra	None
Mounting time	3 to 5 hours, depending on experience	4 to 6 hours with welding, depending on experience