

MOTOR CYCLE WORLD

K47746


ROAD TESTS:
TRIUMPH X-75 HURRICANE 750
DUCATI 750 V-TWIN
YAMAHA DOHC TX-500
PREVIEW:
1974 YAMAHA RD 250



**SPECS ON MOTO-MORINI'S
6-SPEED 350cc V-TWIN**



**Riding Impressions of
Kawasaki's 1974 Lineup**



X-75 HURRICANE

TRIUMPH

A cycle by any other name . . .

■ What we have here, friends, is the brand-new, limited-production Triumph X-75 Hurricane. You all remember the Hurricane, don't you? You don't? Well then, how about the ever-popular BSA Vetter Rocket? Surely you . . . Oh? Okay, would you believe a basic BSA Rocket Three with a lot of fancy trimmings?

But enough frivolity. Let us start at the beginning . . . or at least back in 1968.

Those were the days shortly after BSA and Triumph had joined corporate forces, and both the Triumph Trident and the BSA Rocket were introduced to the American public. Both were 750cc Triples and both were pretty good machines. They had this one basic problem, though, the kind of problem guaranteed to cause a bit of concern back in the executive offices in England. They didn't sell.

Consensus: the styling was not right

for appealing to the U.S. market. *Solution:* find an American designer and instruct him to come up with something more in keeping with his countrymen's tastes.

Enter Craig Vetter, professional designer and very American (a Midwesterner, don't you know). He was given a BSA Three and told to go to town.

Vetter, it turned out, had some pretty strong ideas about how a motorcycle ought to look: a motorcycle should be simple and clean, and the chassis and engine parts — the very essence of the machine — ought to be clearly visible. But he was also very taken up with the chopper influence in bike styling, with the customized and very personalized kind of appeal generally associated with the big Harley-Davidsons.

As he saw it, choppers stressed the "animal" nature of the motorcycle, the feeling of raw power. Further, he argued, they were part of a new feeling sweeping the country, a vanguard movement which was challenging the system and elevating the concept of personal expression. In his view, the motorcycle was as much a manifestation of personality as it was a means of transportation. "You can buy your identity if you buy the right motorcycle," he told one reporter in a fit of exuberance.

By 1970, Vetter came up with a preview model, still identified as a BSA 750, which was received with some appreciation by the American press. In retrospect, everyone seemed more taken with the fact that the bike was a radical departure from existing standards—and from the English, yet—than with the basic question of whether or not the bike might function desirably.

At that point, the Vetter model virtually disappeared from the public consciousness. Then, in early 1972, word came that it would be marketed as a limited-production model under the name BSA Vetter Rocket. This was a real coup for the designer, of course, since public credit is rare if not unprecedented. By summer there was a change, reflecting the deteriorated economic fortunes of the two manufacturers. Now, officials reported, the new bike would be marketed under the Triumph name as part of a company-wide belt-tightening measure. That belt became tighter still this past spring when a strike drove BSA out of business entirely. By then, though, the Hurricane was already out and on the market.

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TRIUMPH

Given the length of time between Vetter's prototype and actual production and all the financial machinations, you might logically expect the Hurricane to have been tampered with severely, to have had the concepts and influences of several people built into the basic design. This committee-type approach is almost always a disaster. ("A camel is a horse designed by a committee," goes the old saying.) It didn't happen here, however; the Hurricane is pure Vetter, and he's the man to blame if you consider it a disaster.

And that is probably the most significant aspect of the Hurricane: it is a *controversial* piece of equipment. It can be seen as an exciting breakthrough for the breed or as a laughable expression of bad taste. You pay your money—almost \$2300, as a matter of fact—and you take your choice.

The Hurricane is striking no doubt about that. It comes in a flashy orange color with sweeping yellow trim lines and a trio of wild and impressive exhaust pipes which curve down along the right side in shiny splendor. The overall appearance might best be described as semi-chopper, with long front fork stanchions, extended cylinderhead fins and a custom front fender. Underneath it all, though, hides your basic BSA Triple (or Trident, if you prefer, since the engines are fundamentally the same).

What you've got, then, is a three-cylinder, OHV four-stroke motorcycle. Actual displacement is 740cc and top speed is somewhere over 110 mph. Like the Trident, the X-75 has a five-speed transmission, with the dry, single-plate automotive-type clutch unique to BSA-Triumph. It has a 2.6-gallon gas tank and weighs just under 470 pounds with the tank filled. There is a 57-inch wheelbase with a ground clearance of about seven inches.

Both tires have alloy rims to cut down on weight. Up front is a 3.25 x 19; in the rear is the K-81 Dunlop (4.25 x 18) that was developed for the Trident and Rocket. Brakes front and rear are the internal-expanding drum type rather than the discs you might expect (or want), but they get the job done.

But the Hurricane is not trying to make it on all these technical and mechanical points. The thing the bike offers to the consumer is *style*: a look, a feel, an impression. And that's too bad, 44



Instrumentation is kept to a minimum and the bars are kept as clean as possible.

Those pipes. The essence of the Hurricane, you either love their looks or curse them in tight corners.





Small tank reveals more of the engine's mechanical complexity than on the standard models. Choke has been moved down to the intake manifold.

because it appears that the stylistic touches Vetter has introduced tend to wipe out, or at least reduce, some of the efficiency of the Rocket or Trident which are the Hurricane's ancestors. In simple language, the rider who wants a good, reliable piece of equipment rather

than a traveling billboard would do well to steer clear of the X-75.

Let's take the exhaust system as our first example. Those three swooping stacked pipes create a hell-bent-for-leather feel of excitement for those who are drawn to such things, and they sound just fine. There's even been an improvement over the companies' two earlier triples. On the Trident and the Rocket, the three pipes were run through only two mufflers, which was quiet enough
(Continued on page 61)

TRIUMPH X75 HURRICANE

Price	\$2295 (East Coast)
Warranty	6 months, 4,000 miles
Distributor	Triumph Motorcycle Corp; Balt., Md., Duarte, Ca.
Resale value after one year	70%



Brakes

front	internal expanding d.l.s.
rear	internal expanding s.l.s.
Electrics	Battery & coil ignition 12 V charging alternator

GROSS MEASUREMENTS

Weight	458 lbs. (dry)
Wheelbase	57 inches
Seat height	32 inches
Ground clearance	7 inches
Handlebar width	33.5 inches
Fuel capacity	2.6 gallons

ENGINE

Type	four-stroke, OHV triple
Displacement	740cc
Bore & Stroke	67 x 70 mm
BHP @ rpm	NA/7250 rpm
Advertised c.r.	9:1
Carburetion	(3) 26mm Amal
Overall gear ratios	
First	13.55
Second	9.65
Third	7.35
Fourth	6.25
Fifth	5.26

RUNNING GEAR

Frame	double cradle tube steel
Rake & trail	NA
Suspension	telescopic fork (f) swinging arm (r)
Tires	
front	3.25x19
rear	4.25x18

COMFORT RATING

1. Vibration .....	.9
2. Suspension .....	.8
3. Noise level .....	.6
4. Seat .....	.8
5. Handlebars .....	.8
6. Start mech. ....	.8
7. Controls .....	.9
8. Stand .....	.8
9. Shift mech. ....	.8
10. Switches and instr. ....	.8
Overall rating .....	.80

PERFORMANCE

¼ mile	13.34 sec @ 100.02 mph
0 to 60 mph .....	.5.6 sec.
braking dist. from 60 mph	NA

SUMMARY

Triumph's limited edition chopper. Styling changes impede function: Exhaust pipes cut ground clearance to hamper handling, skimpy fuel tank looks good but limits cruising ability.

GLOSSARY

c.r. —compression ratio
 D.N.E. —does not exist
 N.O. —not obtained
 N.A. —not available
 Overall gear ratio—engine vs. rear-wheel speed
 s.l.s. —single leading shoe
 d.l.s. —double leading shoe

Comfort rating—maximum of 100
 in. —intake
 ex. —exhaust
 trans. —transfer
 Con rod/stroke—the connecting rod length divided by the length of the stroke

other way. That's a testament to the satisfactions of the work, and to their dedication to their craft as well.

"This is my Corvette," says Chuck Schmidt, standing at the door of his shop and looking over the service room. "This is my toy."

Sample Monthly Expenses for Small Service Shop

Item	Expense
Taxes	\$80
Employment security	20
Rent	120
Insurance	20
Bank interest	4
Truck operation	18
Office supplies	20
Shipping fees	230
Refunds	40
Bank note	80
Misc.	40
TOTAL	664

Sample Net Profit for Small Service Shop

During a Six-Month Period

A. Total cash received	\$30,000
B. Purchase for re-sale	\$23,000
C. Gross Income (A-B)	\$7,000
D. Business expense	\$4,500
E. Net profit (C-D)	\$2,500

TRIUMPH

(Continued from page 45)

but generated far too much heat. On the Hurricane, there are three separate up-swept mufflers.

Ah, but there is a price to pay. Try and take the Hurricane around a right turn with any kind of speed at all. Go ahead, try it. Those lovely pipes restrict the lean angle severely, and your choice is either slow down and stay straight up or hit the pavement.

Now consider the front forks. To give the X-75 that pseudo-chopper look, the stanchions are an inch longer than on the average Triple, and the new, specially designed alloy triple clamps are stepped down a half-inch. The end result is a front end about an inch higher than it would be otherwise.

There's more. That lovely fiberglass unit which covers the gas tank and then swoops under the seat is an outstanding piece of work. It is covered totally with a strong coat of epoxy to prevent the paint from scratching, and aside from the unsightly rib down the center where the one-piece unit was joined together, is as nice as anything you're going to come across. But to achieve this bit of

(Continued on page 62)



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By placing an X in square AFTER appropriate phrase, you can help us to know you and your needs

better in putting together upcoming issues of this magazine.

Return to **MOTORCYCLE WORLD** Dept. **RPA**
 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Your age Under 16 16-21 22-25
 26-30 31-35 36-40 Over 40

Your sex M F

Married? Yes No

How long a rider?
 less than 1 year 2-5 years
 1-2 years over 5 years

How long a reader?
 first issue 6 months - 1 year
 2-6 months over 1 year

How many people in the following age categories will read this issue of *Motorcycle World*? 5 or more

	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31-35	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36-40	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 40	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How long do you plan on keeping this issue of *Motorcycle World*?
 a week or less 3-6 months
 1-2 weeks 6 months-1 year
 a month over 1 year
 2 months

What is the highest level of education you have attained, to date?

Elementary <input type="checkbox"/>	2 years College <input type="checkbox"/>
Junior High School <input type="checkbox"/>	College Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>
High School, 2 years <input type="checkbox"/>	Graduate School <input type="checkbox"/>
High School Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	Graduate Degree <input type="checkbox"/>

Do you now own a motorcycle? Yes No

If yes, how many of each of the following engine sizes?

	1	2	3	4	5 or more
50-90 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
91-125 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
126-250 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
251-350 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
351-500 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
501-750 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 750 cc's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Did you own a motorcycle previous to the one you now own? Yes No

When did you purchase your present cycle(s)?

# cycles purchased	1	2	3	4	5 or more
1960 or earlier	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1961-1962	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1963-1964	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1965-1966	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1967	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1968	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1969	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1970	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1973	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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TRIUMPH

(Continued from page 61)

beauty it was necessary to restrict the steel fuel tank underneath to a mere 2.6 gallons, which is good for only about 75 miles at moderate speed between fill-ups. Further, to get down at the oil tank beneath the seat, you have to unscrew the seat from where it's bolted onto the upper mounting of the rear shocks.

There are other little delights waiting for the unsuspecting buyer—it is worth your life to try and get the Hurricane up on its center stand, for example—but there's no need to belabor the point. It is sufficient to realize that this is not a motorcycle designed to fulfill what would appear to be the basic functions of a motorcycle. If your gas tank is small enough to limit you to a 75-mile maximum, your bike surely isn't designed for touring. If the placement of your exhaust pipes created problems on leaning right hand turns, your bike definitely isn't meant for whipping along on curvy country roads. The only thing that's left is sort of tootling around town and having people stare at you, which doesn't sound like much fun after the first time, if at all.

And that brings us down to the basic

issue. The Hurricane is supposed to be a mass-produced "custom" bike. All right, not really mass produced, in that there were only 1,200 in the first run, but the concept is there. Is it possible to manufacture a run of "personalized" bikes, to create a saleable customized motorcycle which lacks the very essence of the custom bike, originality? Past history indicates that any such attempt is doomed to failure.

If you're the kind of rider who is into that sort of thing, you'd rather do it yourself. The bike may look absolutely awful to the rest of the world once you're through, but that's not the point (or maybe it is). It's *your* bike, done *your* way, and the public be damned.

It would appear doubtful, then, that the X-75 can make a real breakthrough in the market for custom bikes. And we've tried to point out here that stylistic demands have cut sharply into the bike's appeal for the serious rider. The hurricane is almost always an ill wind, and in this case it doesn't appear to have done anyone any good.

FREE RIDERS

(Continued from page 37)

bers about was the safety of their machines. "With only a rear wheel brake

What percentage of your cycle maintenance do you do yourself?

0-25% 26-50% 51-75% 76-100%

What percentage of your cycle maintenance is done by a shop?

0-25% 26-50% 51-75% 76-100%

The best regular feature in *Motorcycle World* is

The feature I like least in *Motorcycle World* is

My favorite article in *Motorcycle World* was

My least favorite article in *Motorcycle World* was

Please check the other motorcycle magazines that you read regularly (at least 3 out of 4 issues)

- CYCLE ILLUSTRATED
- MCW'S SPECIAL CHOPPERS
- DIRT CYCLE
- Cycle World
- Cycle
- Cycle Guide
- Popular Cycling
- Modern Cycle
- Cycle Mechanics
- Big Bike
- Choppers
- Super Cycle
- Other

Are you a member of a Cycle . . .
local club
national association

Within the past year, have you . . .
attended a competition event?
participated in a competition event?

If so how many?
Participated in 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 or more

Attended 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 or more

In the past 12 months, were you asked advice about motorcycles and accessories?

Yes No

If so, how often?

every week every 2 or 3 months
every month once or twice a year

Is your advice followed?

usually sometimes
more often than not rarely

How many do you plan to buy this year?

5 or more

1 2 3 4

Mini-bike

Moped

Scooter

Replacement seat

Fairing

Fiberglass

seat tanks

Special instruments

Protective leather

clothing

Protective

non-leather

clothing

Luggage racks

Shock absorbers

Handlebars

Megaphone

Spark plugs

Batteries

Saddlebags

Filter

Pistons

Hop-up Kit

Goggles

Tools (other than those supplied with your cycle)

5 or more

1 2 3 4

Please indicate 1st, 2nd, and 3rd most common use for your cycle.

	1st most common	2nd	3rd
Street	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Touring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you subscribe to *Motorcycle World*?
Buy it on the newsstand

How much money do you estimate you spent on motorcycle accessories last year, and will spend this year.

	last year	this year
less than \$100	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$101-200	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$201-300	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$301-400	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$401-500	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$501-600	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$601-700	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$701-800	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$801-900	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$901-1000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1001-1250	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1251-1500	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1501-2000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$2000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How do you normally purchase accessories?

	Most often	Next most	least
Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dealer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you specify your brand or model?
Yes No

Do you personally own a car?
Yes No

How many cars are owned in your household?
1 2 3 4 5 or more

What are your other interests?

What was your approximate household income last year?
Under \$5,000 \$5,000-8,000 8,001-10,000
\$10,001-15,000 15,001-25,000 Over 25,000

What would you like us most to do?