



SMOOTH AS BUTTER

This Manitoban's three-wheeled conversion kit came from Frankenstein, but it was definitely not a monster to install.

Story and photos by Ron Bruce



Way back in 1979 or so I knew a guy who owned a Harley 45 Servi-Car with NSO rear tires, no fenders, and not much chrome. I thought the trike looked cool, but it was the tires that made the trike in my opinion.

That image is part of what inspired me to build what you see here, a 1975 FLH Harley with a new twist. I started out shopping the net for a rear differential that had the look I wanted and would be dependable. The search led me to Frankenstein Trikes in Pleasanton, Kansas. Once I realized how easy their kit was to install it was a done deal.



The next step was to get some big rubber for the kit. The techs at Frankenstein told me to go as light as possible to cut down the rotating mass weight, which greatly affects acceleration and braking. I went with the Mickey Thompson Sportsman Pros (29 x 18.5-15) pro sportsman with 15x15 Centerline rims.

The fenders took some head banging before I finally found Oldy's Custom Composite in Hull, Iowa, who make fiberglass fenders any size but in blank form. So I ordered a pair of 19-inch wide blanks and a Dragon Tail front fender. The cutting, bodywork, and paint were done by Marval Autobody, in my hometown of Killarney, Manitoba. Brian Fidler did the artwork in Brandon, while my local welding shop made the fender brackets.

It is recommended you install a five-degree triple tree to help eliminate bump steer, which is caused by the rear tire on one side hitting a bump. I am sure on a newer bike this would be a easy find, but for my 1975 shovelhead I had two choices: a cheaper universal



Being on a tight budget, I went with the cheap universal option. Note to self: universal equals more work."

triple tree or a custom-made triple to accommodate my stock headlight and tins. Being on a tight budget, I went with the cheap universal option. (Note to self universal = more work.) With some grinding, drilling and more than a little swearing I made it fit.

The headlight is a Sinister skull containing three 35-Watt halogen bulbs. I bought the headlight in a rough casting form, once again trying to save money. Once I got the headlight I realized there was no way all those wires were going to fit inside. But being the stubborn 51-year-old man I am, I rewired the bike. I think I spent more time polishing, sanding, then polishing, then sanding the headlight than I did rewiring the bike.

But the Frankenstein rear end went in like butter. One hour and it was a trike. I spent far more time on the triple tree than installing the rear differential. In my opinion you can go from bike to trike with little mechanical knowledge if you stick with Frankenstein's complete kit. 

