

Stinger Folding Motorcycle Trailer



GENE RODDENBERRY'S FAMOUS WORDS, "SPACE—THE FINAL FRONTIER..." COULD DESCRIBE THE MOTORCYCLIST'S INCES-SANT QUEST FOR MORE CUBIC FEET IN WHICH TO STORE ADDITIONAL MOTO TOYS...SORRY, MOTO "NECESSITIES."



or three-railer, the footprint of most trailers sturdy enough to carry large street machines is itself the size of a quartet of Electra Glides.

Rod Haskins, owner of metal bender Maintenance & Fab in Richmond, California, isn't a rider himself, but his research indicated a market existed for a sturdily built, full-sized motorcycle trailer that folded compactly when not in use. Learning of a dormant but clever design developed by an agricultural trailer company, Haskins struck a deal, made several improvements and the Stinger Trailer was born.

We recently spent some time with a Stinger and found it to be a clever product. The Stinger arrived folded and secured to a wooden pallet. Assembly was simple, and within 20 minutes we had the 180-pound trailer ready to tow. The trailer is not towable in the folded position—that's for storage only.

A one-car garage, home to our full-sized Chevrolet, couldn't normally house a motorcycle trailer, too. But the folded Stinger squeezed in nicely. Fully extended, it's just shy of 13 feet long and has a load capacity of

A good example of a frequently overlooked necessity is a trailer with which to haul your machine(s). The steady stream of four-wheelers trailering two-wheelers to Daytona Bike Week proves that, for a considerable number of us, Mother Nature's elements are sometimes best enjoyed *upon* reaching our destination, rather than experienced while traveling toward it.

Travel aside, motorcycle trailers are handy, even indispensable, for getting a sickly motorcycle to the shop, or to avoid committing the better part of a day waiting while the dealer installs new tires and brake pads. Finally, we find a trailer is preferable to a pickup truck for motorcycle transport, especially when singlehandedly loading/unloading.

The problem for many of us is where do we find the *space* to park this little-used device? No matter if it's a flatbed



one bike (or one trike on the trike model), with a 3,500-pound load-rated axle. It also includes a 2½-foot loading ramp which folds up during transit. Pull two pins, fold, replace pins and the Stinger becomes about the same size as the 4- by 4-foot pallet it arrived upon. Folded, it's easy to move around and stores vertically or horizontally.

We loaded and towed several different motorcycles on the Stinger and it handled them well. Its low deck height, wide ramp and well-placed tie-down points make one-person loading easy. The Stinger's suspension is described as torsion bar. The trailer's 48-inch stance with large 18-inch-diameter tires made it very stable when loaded, and it tracked just fine at higher-than-legal freeway speeds, and in windy conditions.

Dislikes—just a couple. The Stinger incorporates a proprietary system that replaces the hitch ball with a swivel assembly that bolts directly to the trailer arm. Haskins says it contributes to stability. Granted, but it also means the hitch arm connects at 12 inches or so from the ground. This suits compact cars but requires lowering extensions on taller vehicles, like SUVs. The Stinger must also be attached to your vehicle before loading or unloading a motorcycle.

Stinger Trailers are sold direct and through an expanding dealer network across the United States and Canada. The price is around \$1,500, and Haskins says many customers pick up their Stinger at the factory to save on shipping charges. A Stinger trailer for trikes is now available, too. **James Parchman**

For more information:

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