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Featured Vehicles



A Legend and his creation...Bruce Meyers had fun updating his Manx to 21st century taste. He has fun driving it, too.



The mill is a 2,500cc Type I VW engine that produces 204 hp and 185 lb-ft of torque. It makes this 1,500-pound buggy move over dune or street. Weber 44 IDF dual carbs and a 911-style fan conversion kit are sharp and functional.



The interior is accentuated by its four-seat arrangement, VDO instruments, MOMO steering wheel, and PRP seats. A two-piece fiberglass dash with glovebox and instrument panel is included in the kit.



We can tell it sits on a VW chassis, but we wonder why Volkswagen, which has recently stopped building the Beetle, didn't think of THIS design...perfect for a VW platform and a fun bug to drive.



A fiberglass body and 94-inch VW wheelbase give the Manxter its nostalgic look.

A Legend Return

Forty Years After the Manx, Bruce Meyers Returns With the Manxter

By Mike Blake

Photography: By the Author

Bruce Meyers, the legendary designer of the '60s Meyers Manx dune buggy, is back on the kit car scene with his newest bug incarnation, the Manxter, which was on display at this year's Knott's Berry Farm get-together.

Forty years ago, he created the first 12 Meyers Manxes, with no floorpans at all. They were referred to as monocoques, and only seven exist today. They are the most collectible, restored, and copied of the 6,000 Meyers Manx kits produced. Some 300,000 variables of the Manx have been created from Australia to Africa to Europe.

The original Meyers Manx won the first Baja 1000 off-road race in 1967, and it was the world's first fiberglass dune buggy, created in '60s style with '60s technology. Meyers had been playing around with flotation tires on his VW bus in an effort to drive over sand dunes when the concept emerged. A few sketches, some sculpture, and a fiberglass mold later, the Manx emerged. It bolted easily onto a VW, but he needed something cheaper and better handling; after those first 12 were sold, he modified the body on a shortened Volksie, and an entire craze was born.

The Manx won at Pike's Peak ('66) and even beat Cobras and Lotus 7s in various slalom races--they won 39 of 40 races entered. The body was embraced by celebrities such as James Garner, Steve McQueen, Elvis Presley, and Desi Arnaz and became the darling of Southern California.

However, the dune buggy movement waned, and as VW-based copies flooded the market, Meyers, after creating the Manx SR, left the business in 1971.

Well, he is back...and back with a stylish vengeance. Meyers took the simple Manx dune buggy design and has brought it to the next level--the Manxter 2+2. The Manxter 2+2 takes the original concept into the 21st century with tried-and-true ideas and cutting-edge technology and style.

Simplicity is the keynote here, as the full-length VW-donor chassis ('68-and-later) is left untouched, enabling the four-seat arrangement that fits in well with today's younger buyers and family-oriented market. With the stamped sheetmetal frame, the vehicle has a wheelbase of 94 inches. It employs a VW Type II transaxle and Meyers has removed the antiroll bar. For safety, the car uses Type II VW drum brakes in the rear and Kharmann Ghia discs up front.

The Manxter has improved upon the original with seats for the kids, a triple-hoop rollcage integral with side protrusion bars protecting the entire family, an opening hood, room for an ice box, a locking glovebox, and the removal of only two bolts to disengage the hardtop--making for easy removal of the windshield and exposing all wiring and instrumentation for repair. There is no need for chroming, painting, or welding, as the kit includes polished stainless steel bumpers, your choice of gelcoat colors, and no need for welding.

The Manxter derives its power from a 2,500cc Type I VW engine, with 204 hp and 185 lb-ft of torque. This makes this four-seat beauty scary fast, yet docile. The Bernie Bergmann-designed mill is accompanied by graphite-coated 94mm pistons, Chevy Journal H-beam rods, Engle 110 camshaft, Weber 44 IDF dual carbs, and Bergmann's 911-style fan conversion kit. The gearbox is a 002, '70 VW Bus-type II, which has been heavily beefed up by Stuff Transmission of Oceanside, California.

And this 1,500-pound scooter corners like a go-kart.

With the same internal dimensions as a Maserati 2+2, the seats are by Premier Racing Products, covered in beige vinyl. The steering wheel is from MOMO, the instruments are VDO, and the 17-inch billet wheels were prototyped by Chip Foose in Huntington Beach, California (one legend working with another). They were shod by BFGoodrich All-Terrain tires, and the running gear was provided by Interstate VW.

As Meyers said, "The red Manxter you see here is a reflection of the wants and woes of street buggiers everywhere, such as those



With no need to paint, the Manxter comes in your choice of standard gelcoat colors: Dragon Red (like this one), Just Right Yellow, Orange Sherbet, and Lime Green. It is also available in metallflake gelcoat colors: Apple Red, Canadian Blue, Lime Green, and Golden Orange.



The roof support system is carefully designed to integrate the steel rails to the polished stainless steel bumpers.

members of our Manx Dune Buggy Club. For nine years I have watched and listened to the bragging of those few owners who own real, original Meyers Manxes and the many problems, including leaky gas tanks under the bolted-down hood, the impossible-to-reach wiring under the dash, the lack of room around the engine, and kids having to sit outside the rollbar's protection. This was the price of a simple design.

"The Manxter is a culmination of years of conversations and wrestling with those thought-provoking design problems. And the fun for me was mixing the art with the engineering."

Fun for Meyers was art and engineering, but fun for you will be driving this baby over hill and dale, over dunes and on the street. It is fast, it is light, it is exciting, and it is nostalgic. What else would you want from a kit?

SOURCES

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