

BOOM MUSTANG ST1

LOW-SLUNG AND READY TO TAKE
ON THE WORLD. WELL, WE MIGHT
START WITH THE ROADS AROUND THE
CENTRAL COAST

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MAN, THAT'S A BIG BOOT

The boot is now latched and locked by a single centrally mounted lock but when you lift the lid you still find a massive 240-litre space ready to swallow enough gear for two people for an extended holiday. Without actually measuring, I'd hazard a guess that it's got more boot space than many economy-sized cars. Hell of a lot cooler outside packaging, too.

Near-on two years after my introduction to the joys of a Boom Mustang ST-1 trike, I again found myself saying yes to OzTrikes' boss Johann when he asked if I'd like to have a steer of the latest version.

Memories of the fun I had aboard the first Mustang made it very easy to agree to test the Peugeot 2.0-litre version with the electronically controlled four-speed automatic transmission. Johann explained that he had one sitting on the showroom floor, ready to go.

Walking around the Boom Mustang ST1 while Johann answered questions was the best way to work out what's new and changed from the last one I rode. At first glance, they're almost identical and it's only when you start looking deeper that the changes appear. The major upgrades include the 78mm front-end, fatter than the previous models' spindly 60mm legs. Don't bother looking for the front brake hoses; they're cleverly concealed within the fork legs. The big shiny bits where you put your feet are now made completely from



stainless steel as part of the full stainless steel package that this Mustang ST1 carries. The handlebars now include internal wiring for a much neater finish and bend further back towards the rider. The passenger pegs have been replaced by a pair of passenger foot plates. I didn't try them but they looked as though they'd be just the right angle for long days in the heated seat. Yep, heated seats are now an option, along with cruise control from MC Cruise Motorcycle Cruise



TRIKES AND LICENCES

To operate a Boom Mustang ST1 in NSW, you only need a driver's licence because it is classed as a car-based motor tricycle. All other states require a motorcycle licence. Regardless of state, all motorcycle-based trikes require a motorcycle licence. That includes conversions and purpose-made trikes with motorcycle engines. The rules are a bit of a mess but we're going to have a good and close look at them in the next issue.



LAMS TRIKE

There's only ever been one model in Australia and that's the Boom Fun 500. Powered by a 460cc Piaggio engine, they used a CVT to drive the rear wheels. There have been 12 registered in Australia. Good luck finding one!



Control. I didn't try it but Johann assures us that it works very well. Down under the seats, the 40l fuel tank is also now stainless steel. Moving back further, the boot lid has a single boot lock rather than the two clips on previous models. With a hand on the boot lid, look down at the new reversing lights. Now LED, they're mounted inside the



bumper bar for a neat and tidy finish. In the middle is a tow bar attachment for those folk who really do need to take the kitchen sink. That is if the kitchen sink and attached trailer don't weigh more than 300kg. Personal opinion but I reckon that towing a trailer behind a Mustang ST1 has to be a heap easier than towing one behind a solo.

Rather than just wander around the NSW Central Coast like a bunch of lost tourists, we invited Johann along for the ride and he suggested that we should head up to the Catherine Hill Bay pub for a feed. With my bum firmly planted in seat and feet on foot platforms, the reach to the bars was perfect for me. Working out where all of the

VISION

Sitting so low, you could be forgiven for thinking that forward vision may be somewhat restricted, but from my 183cm body, I had no trouble seeing over the top of the bars and past the easy-to-read instrument cluster. The mirrors also offered a nice panoramic view of the past. Vision to the side was unrestricted and would only be restricted by your ability to turn your head. The driver's seat is also extremely comfortable and offers better back support than most family cars. Very comfortable.

controls were took bugger-all time. Throttle is in the normal spot and so is the foot brake. Your left hand only has to operate the indicator switch or any of the other functions on that switchblock. The left foot was decoration, and bracing yourself when playtime got serious. But more on that later.

With Johann sitting off my rear quarter, the first couple of kilometres were just a tad nerve-wracking. To be expected when you've got Australia's most experienced pilot watching your every move. Before we set off, he'd shown me the new hand controls and new dash as well as how to shift through the four-speed auto electronically or manually. Also how to change between normal and sports mode,

that was as simple as pushing a button on the dash. The red glow around that button tells you that Sports is selected but in direct sunlight, the glow is dim. Figuring that I'd need every benefit and trick I could gather to stay with Johann, the red glow stayed illuminated for most of the day.

Moving off from standstill felt odd at first but within a couple of stops it felt completely normal. There's no clutch lever or pedal. Twist and go, like a postie bike but so much more satisfying. We were soon out on the freeway and lane changing reminded me of just how light the Mustang ST1's steering is. If anything, it could be overly sensitive. I had to tell myself to relax and stop oversteering. Johann suggested



QUICKSPECS

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Model: Boom Mustang ST1

Price: \$55,390 (plus orc)

Engine: Liquid-cooled inline four-cylinder, DOHC, 4 valves per cylinder

Displacement: 2000cc

Power: 140hp

Torque: big heaps

Transmission: Four-speed and reverse, electronically controlled, shaft final drive

Suspension: F: Earles forks with twin shock absorbers.

R: Trailing link axle

Brakes: Brake booster. F: Disc brake. R:

Self-adjusting disc brakes

Tyres: F: 200/50-17 R: 295/50-15

Frame: Two-part tubular steel, bolted together

Body: Wear-resistant GPR

Length: 3370 to 3470mm

Width: 1780 to 1875mm

Length: 3370 to 3470mm

Height: 1350mm

Towing capacity: 300kg

Fuel capacity: 38 litres

Fuel consumption: 14 to 25km/l

Fuel range: 500km

Warranty: 2 years, unlimited distance

Servicing intervals: 10,000km or 12 months

GRINS

Lots of them. These are insanely good fun.

GRIPES

Standard mirrors.



IF IT WAS MY TRIKE, I WOULD CHANGE ...

Massive bloody mirrors. They are actually big enough to create car-swallowing blind spots. I'd also add footpegs to keep my monster feet further off the ground. Electric shift on the handlebars.



pushing myself back into the seat and bracing myself with my arms when the pace increased. Again, more on that later.

Cruising along the freeway on a Mustang ST1 felt as natural as anything else I've ridden. You could easily start out with a full tank of fuel and ride until you need to refill. How far you get down the road is controlled by your right hand and chosen mode. Get aggressive in sports mode and you'll be stopping sooner. Pretty obvious, eh?

In top gear at 100km/h, trying to accelerate out and around slow-moving traffic is quicker and easier if you're in sports mode. Pushing that button results in a definite change in attitude from cruise to aggressive. The Peugeot 2.0 engine isn't lacking power but it weighs in at 738kg plus the equivalent of a rider and passenger means that it's pushing 880kg. In sports mode, the brain box holds third gear until 160km/h so you're perfectly safe overtaking in third.

It didn't take long to feel comfortable enough to start exploring boundaries and that included manual gear selection rather than letting the ECU decide. Flicking the lever manually is fun but the electronic



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control is very good. Also, if you're playing on twisty roads, leaving it in electronic shifting means you can keep both hands on the bars. I've got an electric shifter on my Hayabusa and it has two buttons on the left handlebar — one for up and the other for down — right where my thumb can reach. A similar setup on the Boom would be a good improvement.

Brakes? Handy and useful things, especially when they work as well as the Mustang ST1's linked system. The foot pedal on the right controls all braking pressures through a proportioning valve. You can brake hard enough to pop blood vessels in your eyes. Maybe a slight exaggeration, but not that far off the truth.

Push the pedal and you stop. Speed doesn't come into it. With a pair of 295mm wide rear tyres and a 200mm Shinko up front, there's plenty of rubber to resist locking. When I first rode a Boom Mustang ST1, I was worried about locking the rears or front but that soon passed. Forget your pre-conceived notions, push the pedal and stop. Want to stop quicker? Push the pedal harder. It really is that simple.

The massive front-end is an Earles design where the axle is a fair way forward of the pivot point. Their construction is much stronger than telescopic forks, especially against lateral deflection caused by hard cornering, or when cornering with a sidecar or at the pointy end of a trike. On the Boom

Mustang, they also reduce the 'roll' of the front wheel when cornering and make the steering much lighter. A feature of the Earles front-end is that the front of the bike rises under heavy braking as the mechanical braking forces rotate 'downward' relative to the fork's pivot point — this action could be unnerving to riders used to telescopic forks, which have the opposite reaction to braking forces but is perfectly normal. A simple move of the caliper from the U-arm to a fork leg is a feature of the 2016 models. The front-end will still rise and fall on the brakes but not as much as previous models.

Off the freeway we hit a variety of backroads and that was more of a chance to explore the handling. Johann's personal Mustang ST1 has damn-near every possible option including the louder exhaust which meant I could hear him get on the throttle and copy what he was doing.

Lunch at the Catherine Hill Bay Pub was bloody good. One of the best pub feeds I've had. Heather had to race off and change from super photographer to super mum. Without responsible adult supervision, when we left the Catho Pub, Johann buggered off at a squillion mph

before hitting a freeway on-ramp. Almost as quick as we got on, we got back off and proceeded to carve up a variety of lesser-known Central Coast back roads. Allegedly.

We were pushing relatively hard — well, I was! Johann made it look easy so I dug in and braced myself deep in the seat and chased him down. Playing on someone else's local roads is always tough. Crest a hill and he already knew left, right or straight ahead whereas I had to peek over the top and then decide what to do. As my confidence grew, I found myself braking later into corners and then riding through them harder. I had the back-end feel as though it stepped out an inch or two a couple of times but the front Shinko stayed stuck like glue. Chasing someone who really knows how to ride a Mustang ST1 fast was an amazing experience.

This version is 97kg heavier than the Ford-powered manual and 15 horsepower stronger but that is also a manual. Either will make you smile. Give me electronic shifting on the bars and I'd take the Peugeot version with the four-speed auto. Extra torque is always better!



BOOM TRIKES

In January 1990, the original Boom Trikes opened the doors as a one-man company, which later evolved into the current three-man ownership. Boom Trikes established itself very quickly in the early years and managed to double its turnover every year.

In 1997, Boom became the first trike manufacturer to be certified with the DIN EN ISO9001. Given the very severe standards set by the German TUV, maintaining that certification is an achievement.

European homologation for all Boom Trike models was achieved in 1997 and from that point, sales expanded out of Germany and spread to all corners of Europe as well as Africa, Australia and the USA.

Ongoing development has seen the introduction of the Highway II in 1992, the Low Rider in 1995, the Fighter X11 in 2001 and the Mustang ST1 in 2010, Boom Trike's 20th anniversary year.

