

««BETWEEN THE LINES»»

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STORY BY DAVID VIS

POLARIS UNLEASHES THE SURPRISING SLINGSHOT

The people who've brought us Victory and Indian motorcycles are now giving us something entirely different: the three-wheeled Slingshot.

We haven't ridden—driven—one yet, but Mike Jonikas, vice president of Slingshot, says it is “awe-inspiring.” Normally that's the kind of thing you can expect company executives to say about their products, but the looks and specs of the Slingshot suggest he might very well be right.

The three-wheeler has two wheels in front and one in back—the trike configuration that provides the greatest amount of stability. The vehicle is classified as a motorcycle, which means it doesn't need things like air bags, a collapsing steering arm, bumpers, windshield wipers, heating, a roof—all of which add weight and complication.

The trike comes with GM's 2.4-liter Ecotec four-cylinder engine, good for 173 hp. That power is sent through a manual five-speed transmission with reverse to a transfer case at the back end to a belt-driven rear wheel.

And all this in a vehicle that weighs about 1,700 pounds, fueled and oiled. That's a power-to-weight ratio that puts the Slingshot in the league of a Porsche or Camaro, the more powerful models. And while the company



Power comes from a proven 173 hp, 2.4-liter Ecotec four-banger sourced from General Motors.

hasn't yet stated how fast the thing will go, that kind of weight and power means it will probably hit 60 mph in slightly less than five seconds. So fast enough.

The Slingshot is launching with two trim and price levels. The base model costs \$19,999, and the fancier SL costs \$23,999. The muscular machine has only one possible competitor in its price range, depending on trim level, and that's the Can-Am Spyder. However, you sit *on* the Spyder rather than *in* it.

There are other three-wheelers on the market that offer side-by-side seating for



Up front you'll find double A-arm independent suspension linked to an oversize anti-sway bar.

two—the Morgan and Campagna T-Rex, to name just a couple—but they cost three times more.

The base model comes in silver metallic paint and the SL in red. The SL comes with larger wheels front and back, a back-up camera, and LCD screen on the dash for the media console, Bluetooth, six-speaker sound system, and a windscreen. Both machines share the same chassis and drivetrain, and we can't wait to try one out, so stay tuned. Polaris says the machines will be available for sale this fall.

Learn more at polarisslingshot.com.