

TRIKE

**TERRACRAFT
TILTER**
LEAN MACHINE

**PANZER
STYLE
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BMW R100



STURGIS R18 GOLD WING

GOLD SPICE



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MACHINES
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GOLD SPICE

WE GET BEHIND THE TWIN FRONT WHEELS OF THE ALL-NEW STURGIS R18 REVERSE TRIKE BASED ON THE HONDA GOLD WING GL1800 – AND TO SAY WE’RE IMPRESSED IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT



Leaning hard into a corner, this thing is just gripping. No drama, no fuss – just point-and-go directness. Whereas in most trikes you’d be pussyfooting around the spectacularly twisty roads of our Yorkshire test ride, this machine just is simply dealing with it all.

By the gods of triking, this is fun! Watching the front wheels go up and down. Feeling full

confidence that it’s able to tackle bends at big speeds. Kicking back in comfort. Blatting around with all the torque you could ever need. It’s a sheer delight.

For anyone used to riding traditional-style ‘delta’ trikes with one wheel at the front, the experience of riding with two wheels at the front is likely to come as a revelation.

This isn’t the first ‘reverse’ Gold

Wing-based three-wheeler we’ve featured in Trike magazine, nor even the first from the Netherlands. But the Sturgis R18 is, we think, set to be a pretty significant newcomer. It’s the brainchild of Pieter Lammes, a Honda Gold Wing dealer from Andijk in The Netherlands who set up Sturgis Trikes BV. Why the name Sturgis R18? It’s after the South Dakota town where the huge bike rally happens every year, while



R18 signifies 'Reverse 1800cc'.

It's based on what must be one of the best machines ever for trike conversion: the Honda Gold Wing GL1800. The R18 retains all the things that make the Gold Wing such a sophisticated touring machine, such as ABS, airbag, cruise control, combined braking system and sat nav.

Doesn't it look good? The new glassfibre front bodywork

is seamlessly integrated with the original Gold Wing fairing. Underneath, the engineering is evidently of top quality, as our close perusal of a Sturgis in build confirmed. The conversion consists of a robust cradle, double wishbones and bespoke coilovers with hydraulic shocks that have pre-load and damping force adjustment, so you can set it up just how you like.

The original engine mounts are

used to bolt the new front end to, which means the safety bars in front of the engine are of a new design made by Sturgis. Since the GL1800 engine sucks its air in at the front, the Sturgis features a proper cooling system using a fan plumbed into the front end.

The rear wheel is also standard Honda, but the bike tyre is swapped for a car one. Why? The trike doesn't lean into bends, so ☺

IT'S HUGE FUN TO CHUCK INTO CORNERS; IN FACT, IT'S QUITE POSSIBLE TO DRIFT THE REAR END IN THE RIGHT CONDITIONS



the car tyre is far more suitable – and durable. We're assured that with a bike rear tyre fitted, the rear end would be very lively indeed! There's an updated progressive spring joining the original Honda shock absorbers at the back too, keeping the ride quality very comfortable indeed.

The combined braking system works very much like the original Gold Wing's, too. The big difference is that the original GL1800 dual hydraulic discs are split across two wheels. The braking system works fantastically well – very stable and secure, and very capable of hauling

the trike up in short shrift. A very neatly engineered parking brake is sited by the footboard so you can easily flip it off with your right foot.

There's no power steering because it's simply not needed. The result is not only better fuel consumption but also fantastic steering feel. You can sense exactly what's happening at the front end; yes, there is some body roll, but it feels absolutely stable in a way that will surprise trike riders who are used to a single front wheel. It's huge fun to chuck into corners; in fact, it's quite possible to drift the rear end in the right conditions,



such as entering roundabouts...

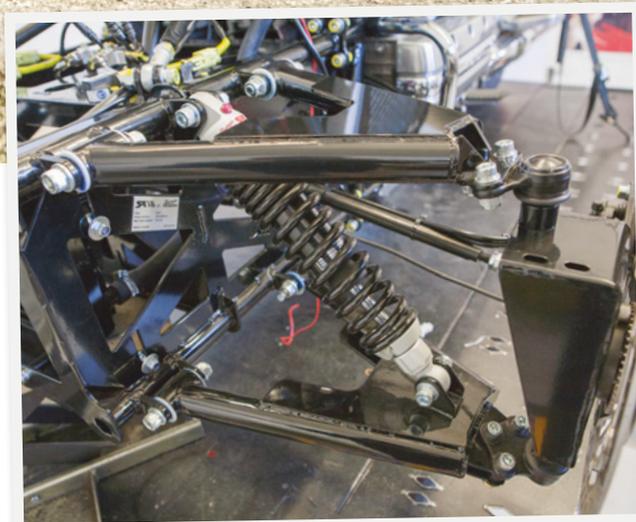
Even though the front track is quite narrow at 1580mm, that superb stability never wanes. The R18 is very easy to ride with one hand, which is great in tight manoeuvres when you need to turn the bars a lot. The suspension set-up is quite soft, to the benefit of cruising.

The electric reverse system works just as it does on the Gold

Wing – slowly but deliberately, and with decent power to it. At 525kg, the R18 actually isn't too heavy to manoeuvre with your feet on the ground. The 525kg weight does mean it's classed as a PLG vehicle for VED tax, rather than a motorbike, but it's still a Class 3 trike so it can be ridden on a car or bike licence.

As you'd expect, the GL1800 engine is perfectly up to the 🏍️

THIS IS JUST THE SORT OF HIGH-QUALITY, SUPERBLY PERFORMING, SAFE MACHINE THAT MIGHT JUST SWING TRIKE BUYERS AROUND TO THE IDEA OF A 'REVERSE' WITH TWO FRONT WHEELS



ENGINE:

Standard Honda Gold Wing 1800 liquid-cooled 1832cc flat-six, manual transmission, electric reverse

FRONT END:

Steel cradle with independent double-wishbone suspension, coilovers with adjustable hydraulic dampers, Honda Gold Wing brake discs and callipers in Sturgis brackets, 17in alloy wheels, 205/45 17 tyres

REAR END:

Original Honda suspension with uprated progressive spring, Honda disc brake, mechanical parking brake, standard Honda 16in wheel with 185/65 16 car tyre

BODYWORK:

Standard Gold Wing with Sturgis glassfibre front end and mudguards

DIMENSIONS:

Length 2650mm, Width 1580mm, Height 1420mm, Weight 525kg

PAINT:

Factory match or custom

PRICE:

£12,999 for complete conversion

job of carrying that weight. There's so much torque, you rarely need to change a gear, and very rapid progress is possible from that super-smooth 'six'.

The Sturgis R18 is on sale now at Colin Appleyard in Keighley, Yorkshire – already known not only as a leading Gold Wing centre but also one of the UK's best-known trike specialists. Colin Appleyard not only imports the Sturgis but also builds the complete conversion, priced at £12,999. It can be converted within a week but the total turnaround time is about three weeks because paint is needed – speaking of which, you can either have an exact colour match to your Gold Wing or a full custom scheme (the next one Appleyard is building is a two-tone). In the first month on sale, they've already doubled the UK sales target for the whole of 2016! Might be time to rethink those targets...

We think Sturgis has done a great job of creating a 'tadpole' Gold Wing trike that looks and feels like it could have come from the Honda factory. Riders now have a very convincing alternative to BRP's Can-Am Spyder. This is the sort of high-quality, superbly performing, safe machine that might just swing trike buyers around to the idea of a 'reverse' with two front wheels. Try it – I guarantee you'll surprise yourself. ✖

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