

TRIPLE DIAMOND TRUCKS



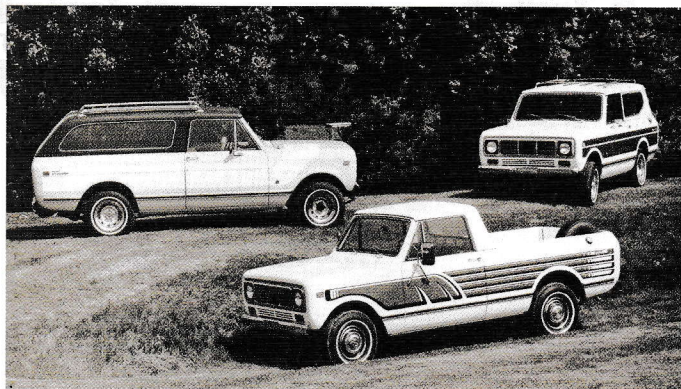
B. Mitchell Carlson



Photo courtesy of Scout Motors.

The Scout Traveler and Terra: Then, Now, and in the Future.

On October 24, The new Scout was introduced at a farm near Franklin, TN; or as stated in the pre-reveal press release: "Located halfway between Fort Wayne, IN (the site of the first factory that started it all) and Blythewood, SC (the Scout factory of the future), a farm and a mountaintop provide a worthy backdrop to unveil the new Scout truck and rugged SUV to the world." While it was a closed event for media and distinguished individuals (so much for me), it was simulcast online. While the overall outline of the vehicles were hinted at for some time, as both an SUV and a pickup, one of the pleasant surprises was the naming. The SUV will be the Traveler and pickup will be the Terra – literally taking over where International Harvester left off 44 years ago. On that note, let's first take a look back at the two models from the 1970's.



The 1976 International Scout line, from a 1976 press release: Traveler (left), Terra, and Scout II.

Then:

When International discontinued the Light Line on April 28, 1975, the company had in essence given up on the half-ton to one-ton light-duty truck market. This was mostly due to the company being keener on maintaining their heavier-duty truck markets, not wanting to make the investments in making the light duties emissions compliant, along with diminishing sales over the last decade.

Without a proper half-ton pickup – and especially with the loss of the Travelall – dealers lamented only having the Scout II to sell – even if it was available at that time in two closed-cab configurations. IHC foresaw this, and developed a long-wheelbase version of the Scout II, introduced for the 1976 model year. With a removable long-roof wagon, it was called the Scout Traveler (readily harkening to the recently



The 1976 Terra getting put to work. Product placement is everything, so the press release photo has an International model 400 seeder, pulled by a Farmall 966, getting filled with a load of seed corn (one wonders if Funk's Hybrids was providing some sponsorship?) from the back of a Terra. I'd be surprised if this wasn't taken on IHC's Hinsdale research farm.



Also from the International press release of 1976, a Traveler has the life of Riley, since it gets to go fishing rather than hauling seed corn. Note the Traveler's use of a full rear hatch instead of a tail gate and rear window hatch.

discontinued Traveler); with a cargo box, bulkhead behind the seats, and removable pickup cab, it became the Scout Terra. Note that these are both not Scout II's, as IHC retained that nomenclature to further differentiate the short-wheelbase variants. Both the Traveler and Terra were on a 118-inch wheelbase, the additional foot-and-a-half all added aft of the front doors.

In the Traveler, this yielded enough room for an optional full-width three-person rear bench seat with full-size rear hatch (unlike the Travel Top Scout II's lift-gate/tailgate configuration). However, the Traveler used the same side doors at the Scout II's, so rear seat access was still a bit convoluted. Knowing how tight the budgets were in the truck division in the 1970's, it's easy to figure that there wasn't money in the development budget to engineer the body for a 4-door configuration or even to stretch the existing doors.

On the Terra, the added length translated into a six-foot long cargo box with a traditional drop-down tailgate. However, at 54.8 inches between the sidewalls, it's narrower than a typical half-ton pickup, and fails the "put a 4x8 foot sheet of plywood down flat" test, with only 42-inches between the wheel wells. A further impediment to cargo hauling was the standard mounting of the spare tire on the driver's side rear corner of the box; yet looking at it today, it's roomier and with a deeper cargo box than most current production "mid-sized" pickups. In addition, the Terra could be ordered with the dealer-installed Suntanner package featuring a vinyl soft-top, yielding the first convertible pickup in the post-World War II era (take that, Dodge Shelby Dakota).

Along with the addition of the Traveler and the Terra, the overall Scout line saw several other changes for 1976. Initial engine choices were all-IHC built: the standard 196 CID slant-four and optional 304 and 345 cubic-inch V8's. A game-changing engine was introduced shortly after the start of the model year – the Nissan-sourced 198 cubic-inch inline-six diesel. On four-wheel-drive equipped Scouts of all types, there were two types of four-wheel-drive transfer cases: a

newly optional single-speed unit which engaged and disengaged by a pulling-out and pushing-in a knob on the dashboard; in addition to a more conventional the two-speed unit with floor-mounted control-lever.

The Traveler and Terra continued to be offered until the end of Scout production on October 21, 1980, when among the final ten Scouts made was the last Terra. It was built with a diesel engine, 4-speed transmission, and in a special ordered color of Montauk Blue, shipped to the IH dealer in Fairmont, MN. As such, it was truly the last pickup made by International Harvester Corporation.

Now and into the future:

Pervious to the October unveiling, Scout Motors made no mention of any naming schemes for the new vehicle(s). Reusing the Traveler and Terra nameplates, to me at least, is a stroke of genius. It literally carries on where IHC left off in 1980. Indeed, another subtle nod to the lineage of Scout at the reveal was that the Terra displayed was in blue – in honor of the general color combination of both FC501, the first production Scout that's now part of the Harvester Homecoming Foundation collection (although lacking its white pickup cab roof), and that final IHC Terra – while the Traveler was in Tahitian Red Metallic, the color of the last International Scout, made for IHC board member Mary Garst and now owned by Mike Bolton of Iowa. The former and the latter were both on site for the reveal, while to my knowledge, the final IHC Terra is lost to time.

Another use of a heritage name was the other major surprise of the reveal. Not only was an unexpected gasoline-engine Extended Range Electric Vehicle (EREV) energy system announced as an option, but it's called Harvester. Originally, the new Scout line was going to be all-EV, internal combustion be damned. However, with EV sales and mandates cooling off (more like consumer push-back to be forced into EV's by bayonet point, even if subtly implied), Scout Motors rolled with the market to some extent by adding the range extender. While they didn't get into detail about it, they did indicate that it will give the Traveler and Terra over 500 miles of range. I'll readily admit to being somewhat critical of a pure EV being a hard core off-roader. You can always carry more fuel for an ICE powered vehicle, you pretty much can't carry more battery. Going off the grid, you're not going to find a current bush to plug into at ten-percent charge. So with a range extender, this is the best of both worlds, and Scout Motors was extremely prudent for adding one.

Like its current closest competitors – the Ford Bronco and Jeep Wrangler – the Scouts will be built with a body-on-frame architecture with solid front and rear axles. Differentiating from those two, the Scouts will have electric drive motors in each axle. As for the bodywork, both will be sold in 4-door configuration



Also from the International press release of 1976, a Traveler has the life of Riley, since it gets to go fishing rather than hauling seed corn. Note the Traveler's use of a full rear hatch instead of a tail gate and rear window hatch.

discontinued Traveler); with a cargo box, bulkhead behind the seats, and removable pickup cab, it became the Scout Terra. Note that these are both not Scout II's, as IHC retained that nomenclature to further differentiate the short-wheelbase variants. Both the Traveler and Terra were on a 118-inch wheelbase, the additional foot-and-a-half added aft of the front doors.

In the Traveler, this yielded enough room for an optional full-width three-person rear bench seat with full-size rear hatch (unlike the Travel Top Scout II's lift-gate/tailgate configuration). However, the Traveler used the same side doors at the Scout II's, so rear seat access was still a bit convoluted. Knowing how tight the budgets were in the truck division in the 1970's, it's easy to figure that there wasn't money in the development budget to engineer the body for a 4-door configuration or even to stretch the existing doors.

On the Terra, the added length translated into a six-foot long cargo box with a traditional drop-down tailgate. However, at 54.8 inches between the sidewalls, it's narrower than a typical half-ton pickup, and fails the "put a 4x8 foot sheet of plywood down flat" test, with only 42-inches between the wheel wells. A further impediment to cargo hauling was the standard mounting of the spare tire on the driver's side rear corner of the box; yet looking at it today, it's roomier and with a deeper cargo box than most current production "mid-sized" pickups. In addition, the Terra could be ordered with the dealer-installed Suntanner package featuring a vinyl soft-top, yielding the first convertible pickup in the post-World War II era (take that, Dodge Shelby Dakota).

Along with the addition of the Traveler and the Terra, the overall Scout line saw several other changes for 1976. Initial engine choices were all-IHC built: the standard 196 CID slant-four and optional 304 and 345 cubic-inch V8's. A game-changing engine was introduced shortly after the start of the model year – the Nissan-sourced 198 cubic-inch inline-six diesel. On four-wheel-drive equipped Scouts of all types, there were two types of four-wheel-drive transfer cases: a

newly optional single-speed unit which engaged and disengaged by a pulling-out and pushing-in a knob on the dashboard; in addition to a more conventional the two-speed unit with floor-mounted control-lever.

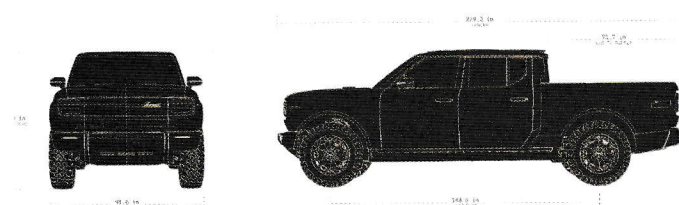
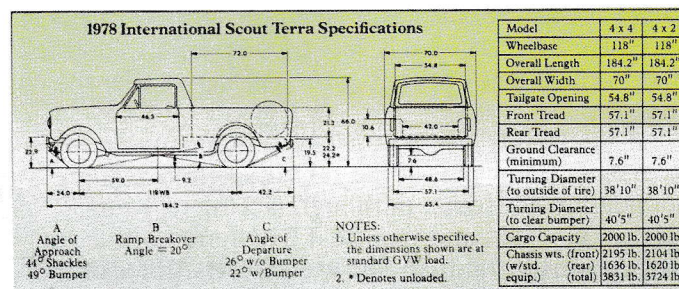
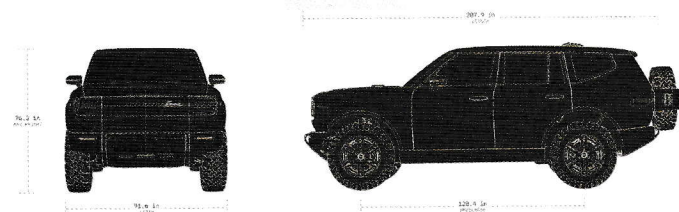
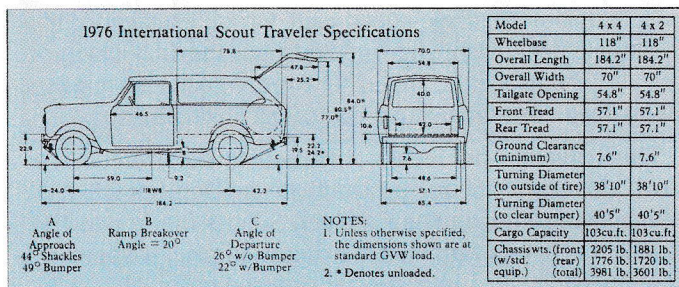
The Traveler and Terra continued to be offered until the end of Scout production on October 21, 1980, when among the final ten Scouts made was the last Terra. It was built with a diesel engine, 4-speed transmission, and in a special ordered color of Montauk Blue, shipped to the IH dealer in Fairmont, MN. As such, it was truly the last pickup made by International Harvester Corporation.

Now and into the future:

Pervious to the October unveiling, Scout Motors made no mention of any naming schemes for the new vehicle(s). Reusing the Traveler and Terra nameplates, to me at least, is a stroke of genius. It literally carries on where IHC left off in 1980. Indeed, another subtle nod to the lineage of Scout at the reveal was that the Terra displayed was in blue – in honor of the general color combination of both FC501, the first production Scout that's now part of the Harvester Homecoming Foundation collection (although lacking its white pickup cab roof), and that final IHC Terra – while the Traveler was in Tahitian Red Metallic, the color of the last International Scout, made for IHC board member Mary Garst and now owned by Mike Bolton of Iowa. The former and the latter were both on site for the reveal, while to my knowledge, the final IHC Terra is lost to time.

Another use of a heritage name was the other major surprise of the reveal. Not only was an unexpected gasoline-engine Extended Range Electric Vehicle (EREV) energy system announced as an option, but it's called Harvester. Originally, the new Scout line was going to be all-EV, internal combustion be damned. However, with EV sales and mandates cooling off (more like consumer push-back to be forced into EV's by bayonet point, even if subtly implied), Scout Motors rolled with the market to some extent by adding the range extender. While they didn't get into detail about it, they did indicate that it will give the Traveler and Terra over 500 miles of range. I'll readily admit to being somewhat critical of a pure EV being a hard core off-roader. You can always carry more fuel for an ICE powered vehicle, you pretty much can't carry more battery. Going off the grid, you're not going to find a current bush to plug into at ten-percent charge. So with a range extender, this is the best of both worlds, and Scout Motors was extremely prudent for adding one.

Like its current closest competitors – the Ford Bronco and Jeep Wrangler – the Scouts will be built with a body-on-frame architecture with solid front and rear axles. Differentiating from those two, the Scouts will have electric drive motors in each axle. As for the bodywork, both will be sold in 4-door configuration



only. Beyond a standard solid roof, multiple available roof types currently include an available Cabana Top, targeted to be one of the largest roof openings of any SUV, and a glass top roof. Of note, no mention was made of a soft top, which are available (and standard, depending upon package) on the two competitors.

Another interesting wrinkle is that it was announced that both models would be available with a full-width front bench seat. While this surprised a lot of folks who thought that the bench seat was dead, the lower trims of Ford's F-150 still essentially have that configuration. Ford's is really a 60/40 split, with the center section that folds down into an armrest; by the looks of Scout's prototype set-up, they are probably going to go a similar route – rather than having a true solid all the way across bench. Also like a full-sized pickup, the Terra will have a 5 1/2-foot cargo box (the same as a short-box F-150 with a Crew Cab). This in addition to a "frunk" up front like the Traveler.

Scout Motors is in the process of building a new assembly plant in South Carolina, and expect the vehicles to go on sale for the 2027 model year. They will be sold directly without dealers (some Volkswagen dealers immediately got huffy over this revelation,

but I interpret it more as feeling left out more for not having a Volkswagen pickup to sell). Eventually, they plan on having "Scout Workshops and other retail spaces (to) provide a test drive, a handshake, and hands-on service when needed."

The website to configure and pre-order a vehicle is now up and running on www.scoutmotors.com. After placing a \$100 fully refundable reservation fee, then selecting their preferred Scout vehicle model and energy system (full EV or with Harvester range extender), you can reserve a spot in line for one. Unfortunately, you also have to plunk down a C-note just to get into the configurator, unlike most other manufacturers who let you build and dream for free. Looking at the new Scout forum online, it appears that the company was extremely prudent for adding the range extender, as it's easily the most popular configuration for the Terra or Traveler.

As for the styling, I find it's quite good. While it follows the retro trend of the Jeep Wrangler and Ford Bronco, it's not as kitschy as the Bronco, yet is more faithful to its roots than the current Wrangler (reminding all who read this that the famed Jeep grille was actually designed originally by Ford for the WWII GPW jeep). It was all but expected for Scout to continue at least some retro styling themes of International Harvester, but doesn't come off as heavily contrived that way. Of the three vehicles, the Scout comes off as the truest to form on how it would look like if there wasn't a multiple decade break in production. While I could give you more of my two-cents worth, I asked Dick Hatch - retired stylist from International Motor Truck Division and Navistar, and former Chief of Styling for the latter - for his opinion. While I was expecting maybe a paragraph or two, I should've know better. Those of you who also read my three-part series about his career two years ago know he's not afraid to express his opinions on styling. As such, his unedited educated impressions (although I clarify one point) of the reveal, the reborn Scout's styling, and EV's in general follow below.

New Scout Reveal – My Opinions on the Vehicles Shown (by Dick Hatch)

One of the most unexpected vehicular occurrences of my lifetime recently took place, and further I had the distinct honor of being among the 300 people chosen to attend. I am referring to the formal reveal of the Scout brand and product which took place near Nashville, TN, on October 24, 2024. While the event itself was quite elaborate and must have cost Volkswagen a fortune to put on, I will confine my remarks here to the vehicles which were unveiled, and create separate write-ups describing the event. Although I spent 13 years in various projects concerned with the styling, or industrial design of the original IH Scout, I will allow myself broader comment here beyond the realm of styling.

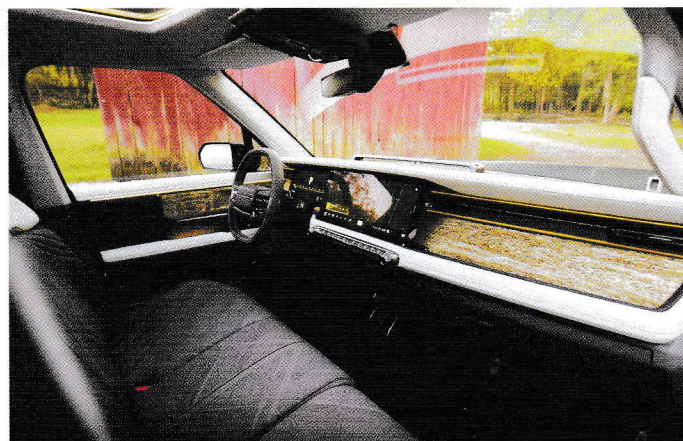


I give it less than a day after the first units are delivered to new customers that a Raymond Leowy IH "man on tractor" logo badge will get affixed to this door.

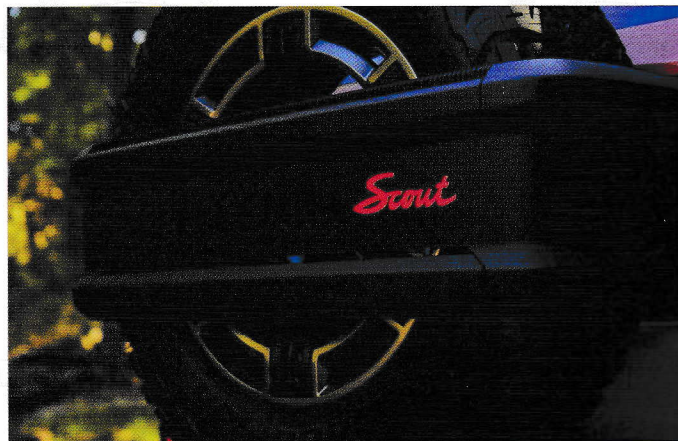
All the following photos are courtesy of Scout Motors.

WHAT I LIKED:

- 1. Good clean lines and simple, well-developed surfaces:** Dave Dickmeyer, retired IH and GM clay modeler was also present and found absolutely no areas of sculpturing that were questionable
- 2. Careful use of details to support/enhance major features:** I have been very disgusted with the styling of most vehicles during the last 10-15 years because of their relentless use of details and nuances which have no purpose and do not complement the major features. But the new Scouts exhibited none of that confusion. All of that messy content is intended for brand or model identity, but only tends to make most brands look alike.
- 3. Homage features and general character, relative to original Scout 800 and Scout II:** VW has some experience with homage vehicles (new Beetle, various Microbus attempts). I feel like they incorporated just enough references to past Scouts without overwhelming the validity of the new Scout as a fully up-to-date product.
- 4. Pickup using practical separation between body and cab:** Ford learned way back in 1961 not to unify a pickup body to the cab, and with Scout's off-road intentions, that "twist" protection is even more important.



- 5. Body-on-frame construction:** Likewise, vehicles that are really meant to work – and last – don't want their bodies and frames unified.
- 6. Decision to pursue electric vehicle (EV) direction:** This was a predictable hard pill to swallow for diehard enthusiasts of past Scouts. But that era ended 44 years ago, and most people who will buy the new vehicle will not be people who owned Scouts before. The EV era is upon us, and after more than a year with my EV, I am a definite supporter. (Note: Dick currently owns a Hyundai Ionic 5 – BMC)
- 7. Further decision to add a range-extender option:** At the same time, this is still a transitional era and, since it was apparently easy to do, Scout's decision to offer a range extender only makes sense.
- 8. Brilliant utilization of "Harvester" name for range extender:** This choice of a name for the feature was a real surprise, and seemed to please everyone. After all, the "Harvester" idea extends all the way back to the 1830's.
- 9. Application of established "Traveler" and "Terra" names for SUV and pickup, respectively:** There are no better names to be found within International or Scout history, and each fits the vehicle to which it was applied perfectly.



10. Careful application of new technology in conjunction with traditional needs and preferences: Any complaints I have about my own EV have nothing to do with its electric propulsion; they are instead directed at its electronic/touch-screen technology. I have to take my eyes off the road four times to change the heat or AC, and if my finger bounces, God only knows where the on-screen visuals will take me. Scout really read the market correctly in providing buttons and knobs for important functions.

11. Optional bench seat: This is something I never thought I would see again as long as I live. I wasn't even sure that it was legally possible, but this option is right on target for the intended market for Scout models.

12. Move from original 2-door to more flexible 4-door configurations: There is almost no place these days for a 2-door vehicle. Rear doors offer easier, safer access to rear seats and child safety seats.

13. Expectation that prices will be "low;" realm of \$60K mentioned as starting point: The original Scout barely hung onto its intended market because the cost of building such a capable vehicle continually increased, much of that owing to new-at-the-time safety, emissions, and fuel economy requirements, all of which kept changing. Let's hope that the new vehicles can remain in affordable territory – at least for base models.

14. Details in the design and integration of the spare tire carrier; but see below: The visual and functional aspects of the spare tire treatment were highlighted, and are worthy of praise for their execution. But read on.

WHAT I LIKED LESS:

1. **The decision to have an exterior-mounted spare tire**
 - a. The Scout 800 had an exterior spare, but the Scout II carried the spare inside
 - b. The popular angled rear side window was created to hide the internal spare, but now that visual feature is carried over as essential to the Scout look while the exterior spare dominates



the rear aspect of the vehicle. Note that in no way am I proposing that the spare should have been retained inside, particularly for looks. The Scout II had too long a rear overhang, partly to enclose the spare, and the new Scout has much better proportions.

- c. Note that most vehicles now have no spare tire period – if it is believed that this specific category of vehicle still needs a spare, then, fine
2. **The particular interior choices shown on the Traveler model did not appeal to me: a very cool white textured fabric used adjacent to a very warm tan leather.** While most current vehicles have far fewer interior and exterior color/material choices than vehicles from the original Scout era, I'm assuming there will be more choices than those shown at the reveal.

WHAT I AM STILL WONDERING:

1. **What are the plans for sales and service for Scout vehicles?** Some reference was made to being able to order a new Scout within 10 minutes or so. At the same time, effective and widely available service will be needed to keep these rough and tumble vehicles on – or off – the road.
2. **What additional variants (model line expansion) would make sense?** When the original Scout era began, most brands of cars and trucks had numerous series and models. The "series" idea has largely disappeared, but the multiple model idea, all with extensive (and expensive) sheet-metal and mechanical differences has only expanded. For instance, Ford and Chevrolet pickups come in multiple duty ranges, numbers of seats and doors, cab lengths, bed lengths, bed styles (step-side vs. flair-side), dual rear wheels, etc. Beyond that, even expensive styling differences abound among the several models. GMC and RAM do a little less, but what is the right amount of choice for Scout, going forward?
3. **How will the Scout brand be evolved once the present versions become well established?** Early in this write-up, VW's experience with New Beetles

was mentioned. But remember that the first-generation New Beetle really captured that lovable and powerfully remembered sense of the original car. But when the 2nd generation New Beetle came along, more years had passed and that final attempt set out on its own more masculine

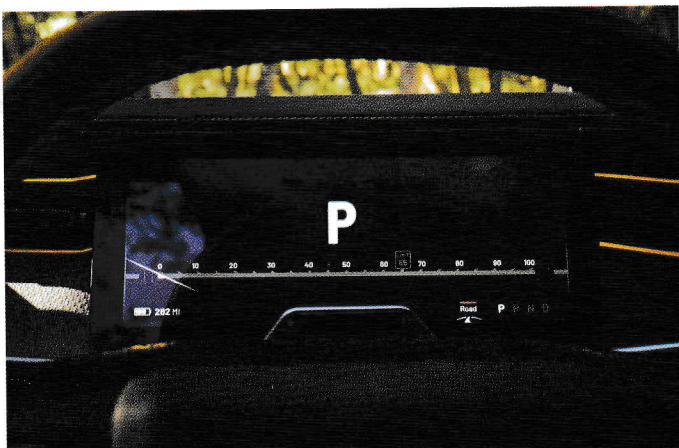
yet more mainstream course. There was no 3rd generation New Beetle. With Scout, it will be important to establish its "now" character and build on that, while memory of the old vehicles largely fades.



The drone's-eye view of the optional Cabana Top on the Traveler.



"Look ma, no motor up front. It must be a Vee Dubbya Beetle." Actually, the frunk (front-trunk) has plenty of room for a few bags, and while Scout Motors is part of Vee Dubbya, it aint got no motor hangin' in the back – but it has one integrated with each front and rear axle.



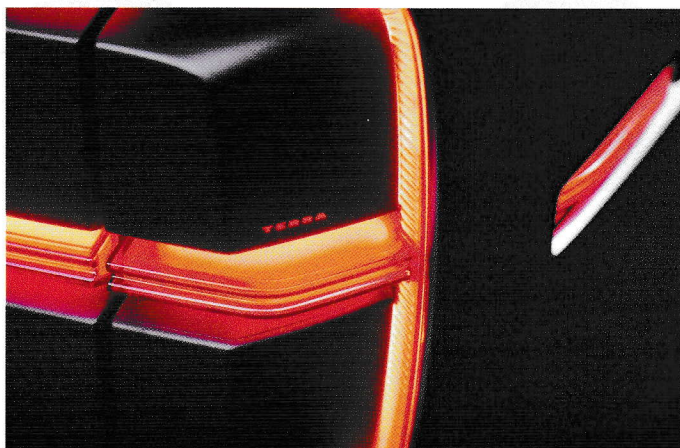
Growing up with a 1972 Travelall, I appreciated the retro touch of the horizontal sweep speedometer – even if it's on a digital screen. I wonder if the Speed Limit notation changes for the specific road you are on – and if it goes away when off-road?



Part of the multi-function rear door of the Traveler is a shelf that pulls out when the lift gate is open – making it easier to sit in the back, protected from the rain, when tail-gating.



No dimensions were given to see if the Terra's cargo box passes or fails the "put a 4x8 sheet of plywood between the wheel wells" test.



The Terra logo is subtly cut into the tail light housing.



A unique touch is grab handles on the back corners of the cab.

WHAT I WANT TO DISPELL:

Some write-ups I have read since returning home from the reveal claim that the new Scout vehicles are more than 91 inches wide. That is entirely false. Not only did they appear proportionate, and not grossly inflated beyond Scout II dimensions, but a 91-inch width would be illegal – without cab marker lights. My guess is that the 79-inch dimension which I have read in other reports is correct. The wider figure may have included the mirrors – which are not counted in vehicle width limitations.

Thanks once again to Dick Hatch for his insights.

