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## The Lomax: Is this British oddity a car, a motorcycle, or both?

By Trey Palmisano  
Special to The Examiner

English vehicles aren't the first thing a red-blooded American car collector considers adding to his collection. After all, American classics drag raced, and English cars, well, they insouciantly trundled a countryside swollen with hills. At least that's the popular image.

So what attracted Harry Kraemer, a confessed muscle car enthusiast, to a three-wheeled car called the Lomax 223, a kit car made by a little-known car manufacturer from across the pond? It wasn't the size of the engine.

The Germantown resident who owns a Russian Ural and a 1952 MG said he was actually looking for the famous KR 208 three-wheel bubble car made by Messerschmitt after World War II. But the price tag for these extraordinarily rare vehicles played far outside his budget, so Kraemer was intrigued when he discovered the more affordable Lomax.

"I ran across it in a magazine. I liked the styling. I liked the classic English headlights and the low-cut doors. All of that kind of appealed



TREY PALMISANO/EXAMINER PHOTOS

Harry Kraemer came across the Lomax in a magazine. The car's engine comes from a Citroen 2CV.

to me."

Kraemer, who became the second owner in the United States, was happy to learn that the first owner was able to tag and title the car as a motorcycle. But while motor builds and technical concerns are often the primary issues plaguing classic car owners, Kraemer's greatest hurdle was the ability to find an insurance carrier — simply because no insurer could classify his Lomax based upon its standard criteria.

### CHECK OUT MY RIDE



"Everyone was turning me down. It didn't fit all the things a car was supposed to have 'cause it only had three wheels. I called collector bike places, but since it had doors and a car shifter and steering wheel, they wouldn't insure it. It didn't fit into the trike category either."

Eventually Kraemer found a willing insurer. The frustrating experience has inspired Kraemer to create an Internet group for people interested in the laws and insurance issues affecting owners of three-wheeled cars.

As far as parts are concerned, Lomax said a company in Washington state supplied all the mechanical components for his Citroen engine. Finding body panels and wheels, however, is slightly more difficult. Cradley Motor Works, a United Kingdom company, took over the manufacturing of Lomax kits after the original Lomax Motor Co. shut its factory doors. Kraemer has put

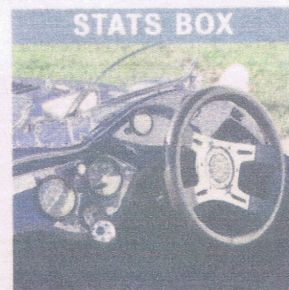
in numerous calls to the company, but has yet to receive a response.

If the automotive support structure leaves a lot to be desired, the social network is virtually nonexistent. Kraemer said it has been particularly challenging to find others who own Lomax vehicles in the United States with whom to share stories and valuable information. Nevertheless, Kraemer keeps himself open to opportunity and rides the information highway in search of other owners as regularly as he drives his own vehicle on the asphalt ones.

**What do you drive?** A 1975 Lomax.

**Why do you drive it?** I like that it's unusual and gets attention. But the other thing is that it is really fun to drive. It's got a classic sports car feel to it. It's certainly not a fast car, but I like the right-hand drive feature.

**What makes it special?** This is one of about 10 of them in the States. So it's pretty rare. I personally know of mine, a guy's in Pennsylvania and a guy on the West Coast who has two for sale. I have not seen a registry or Lomax club in the United States.



### STATS BOX

- » **Engine:** Citroen 2CV 602 cc
- » **Horsepower:** 29
- » **Weight:** 990 pounds
- » **Other:** Citroen tubular space frame and fiberglass body

**What is your most memorable driving experience?** Probably the first drive. It was shipped up here from Florida in January. I started it and would move it up and down my driveway. It wasn't running very good. I had to tinker with it. In the spring, I got it running right and took it out to the countryside.

**What was the first vehicle you owned?** The first car I ever owned was a 1972 Z28 Chevrolet Camaro. That was back when I was 16. I ended up doing a lot of engine work and racing it at local racetracks.

**What music are you currently listening to in your car?** It doesn't have radio. I really can't find much on how they were equipped. I've found pictures of some that have radios in the instrument panel. But I don't know how they were offered.

**And your first ticket? What was it for?** Probably a speeding ticket in my Camaro. I think my last ticket was back in the '70s or '80s.

Got a custom car you want to show the world? E-mail Trey at [trey@palmisano.com](mailto:trey@palmisano.com) or [trey@palmisano.comcast.net](mailto:trey@palmisano.comcast.net).



The Lomax's three-wheeled configuration made it tough to find insurance.