

# NIMROD '72:

## BACK TO THE BASICS

A new design concept emphasizes some old-fashioned virtues

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WHEN A manufacturer calls to tell us about a new product, our enthusiasm for it doesn't always match his, because what's new to him may in reality have been around long enough to leave everyone else stifling yawns of boredom. So in answer to an invitation to see Nimrod's all-new tent-trailer line, we flew off to the company's facilities in Hamilton, Ohio, recently, feeling—if not skeptical—at least non-exuberant, until we saw the new line.

We came away enthusiastic over the looks of Nimrod's new tent trailer, but more than that, we were highly impressed with the concept behind that trailer: a simple, quality-built unit stressing practicality, serviceability, and economy. Nimrod's attempt to fill a void in the current tent-trailer market with a good, basic unit offering a limited number of options reminded us of the now-classic Apache Eagle, in demand in the used-trailer market even today. Coming at a time when many tent trailers are tending toward a less functional, but more elaborate design—with prices to match—the changes taking place at Nimrod are indeed news.

The company itself experienced a change recently when, late in 1971, three Nimrod executives acquired that division of Nimrod/El Dorado Industries to form Nimrod, Inc. The change in management sparked a change in Nimrod's product concept based on an extensive study of market trends and consumer needs. The same study, incidentally, turned up a group of relatively sophisticated consumers whose members were highly opinionated in their likes and dislikes of tent trailers. They indicated a demand for spaciousness and convenience, for example, but were totally opposed to the rising costs of these features on late-model tent trailers, a criticism reflected in the downward trend in tent-trailer sales in the past year. This same



Spaciousness is an important factor in the Nimrod's "new look." The unique eight-sided tent allows for a large window area, creating a bright, open interior.

group also demanded a unit that would be safe and easy to tow, simple to set up and close, and—though as service-free as possible—completely serviceable.

Keeping these conclusions in mind, Nimrod established the criteria for a new tent trailer based on simplicity of design and operation; reliability and ease of maintenance; and an improved living area, or what the company called the creation of a "true camping environment." Attention, then, focused on body design, serviceability, and the trailer interior. In each of these areas, we noted a number of innovations:

- **Size.** Nimrod claims the distinction of having designed its trailer from the inside out, tailoring the exterior to the living area inside; but the nucleus of that design is an 11-foot body—a foot longer than other tent trailers in the Nimrod's price range.

While the increased length contributes to additional living space inside the trailer, the Nimrod's 78-inch width and 45-inch height, less than most other trailers, should simplify towing.

- **Construction.** Use of steel in the Nimrod body was all-important. The base rests on an integrally welded, four-inch box-steel frame assembly and includes all-steel double-wall sides. The sides, incidentally, consist of screw-on panels which are easily removable, reducing minor repairs—such as pounding out the inevitable dent—to a do-it-yourself level. Even the most careful of drivers will appreciate this feature.

In an attempt to make the body as leakproof as possible, doors and holes were kept to a minimum. This idea was carried on into the design of the roof, a vinyl-covered, insulated panel which fits into an extruded aluminum perimeter frame. The frame also holds the



canvas and drapery racks, making them an integral part of the frame to facilitate setting up the trailer, and again, to discourage leaks.

- **Lift mechanism.** The entire lift system consists of a 3000-pound stainless steel cable, a winch, and four springs which serve as flexible lifting shafts—a mechanism intentionally kept simple to insure trouble-free operation. Setting up the Nimrod involves just cranking the upper section into place with a handle positioned at standing height.

- **Serviceability.** Also at standing height, and conveniently centralized behind a panel at the rear of the Nimrod, are the trailer's utilities and a service area. The louvered panel drops down to provide access to the ice chest and storage section when the trailer is folded for travel. The gas, electric, and water systems are easily accessible, too, should repairs be required.

- **Floor plan.** One of the features of the floor plan Nimrod was most enthusiastic about was the convenience of a single-unit kitchen area located across the rear of the trailer. While the kitchen didn't seem as convenient as Nimrod would have us believe—primarily because of a lack of storage space—we did appreciate its being positioned directly in front of a large expanse of window. Another feature we liked was the entrance, located at the front corner of the trailer, which permitted an open, uncluttered traffic flow to the rear and provided an unobstructed access to the beds.

- **Sleeping arrangements.** The beds in the Nimrod open—uniquely—off the sides of the trailer, rather than off the ends, eliminating the "tunnel effect" of most RVs. Both side beds unfold on simple, door-type hinges, and once unfolded, brace open the side wings of the tent. Each bed measures a roomy 76 x 48½ inches, and a third bed—72 x 48½ inches—off one of the ends is optional on all trailers in the Nimrod line.

- **Dinette.** Located in the corner of the trailer opposite the entrance, the dinette can be converted from a two-sided to a U-shaped seating area simply by pulling up a nearby storage bench. The 80-inch table is long by any standards and raises and lowers much like an ironing board. It is completely portable and can serve as a fourth bed, 80 x 45 inches in size.

- **Spaciousness.** Nimrod showed an imaginative use of canvas inside the trailer with a novel eight-sided tent configuration which makes good use of natural light. In addition to providing extra storage space in each of the eight corners when the trailer is set up, the octagonal shape permits a large window area—that "true camping environment" mentioned earlier.

Each trailer in the Nimrod line is also equipped with a 12 v. dome light to supplement the natural light on dark and overcast days.

ALL OF the above-mentioned features are standard equipment on every one of the units in the Nimrod line. The entire line literally is based on a single body size, with each model differing from the others only in the number of options available. The Series One is designed as a basic camper without kitchen appliances, while the Series Two includes a range, water tank and pump, city water hookup, ice chest or optional gas/electric refrigerator, electrical outlet, and storage space for canned goods and utensils. The Series Three adds a 12,000 BTU furnace, a 110-12 v. power converter, and electric brakes. A large family room, which zips onto one entire side of the trailer, is an option that can be added to any model in the line at any time, as can the aforementioned optional third bed. A side bed effectively separates the family room from the rest of the trailer, and when folded, can be used as a work area and serving bar.

As for cost, the Nimrod line is priced competitively with most 10-foot tent trailers, starting at about \$1155 for the Series One model and ranging upward to about \$1655 for the Series Three.

In the February BETTER CAMPING, we made the statement that tent-trailer manufacturers seem to be lagging behind others in the camping industry where technology is concerned. We feel, however, that Nimrod has taken a positive step toward closing that "technology gap." The real test will



Use of simple, door-type hinges reduces unfolding the beds on the 1972 Nimrod to a one-man—and one-hand—operation.

come, of course, when the Nimrod is tested out on the road and in the campground. Gen and Jake Turk will be testing one in the near future, and we'll be interested in what they have to say. For more information on the Nimrod, circle No. 101 on the reader service card in this issue. ✓



By locating all utilities behind a panel at the rear of the trailer, Nimrod has made them serviceable as well as easily accessible when the unit is folded for travel.