Nothing but tires

by P. J. Thomey

WHILE SORTING THE mail one morning this past June, I came across a post card which stopped me cold. Being an ardent A.T.V. buff from the day one, I took a double take at the picture on the front. The whole underside was tires, wall to wall, corner to corner.

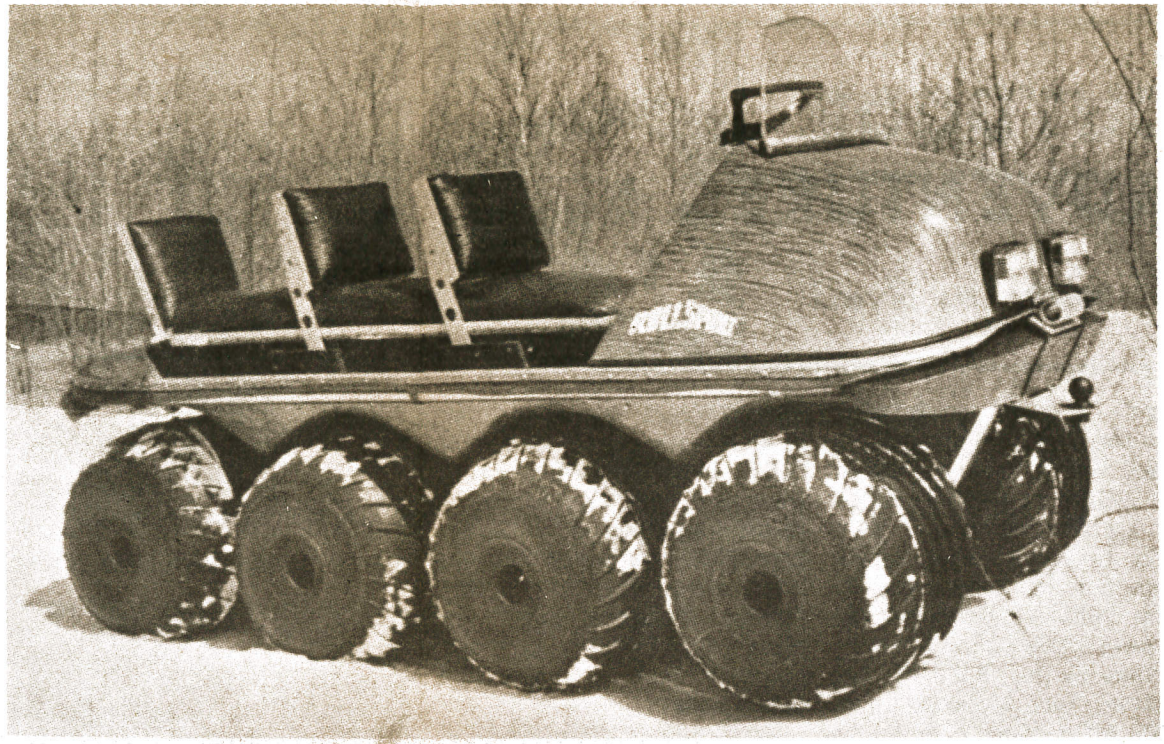
I flipped the card over and it said, "At last a true winter-summer vehicle. Here's why . . . The massive flotation of the eight specially designed tires plus a revolutionary principle of continuous power with steering; plus a noarrow 4 inch center means it stays not in, but on water, mud, snow, slush, muskeg, quicksand, etc. making it virtually impossible to mire or hand up at any time in any type of terrain.

If interested or curious: Write, phone or visit the designer C. R. Summers, Rollsport Ltd., 411 Dudley St., North Bay, Ontario."

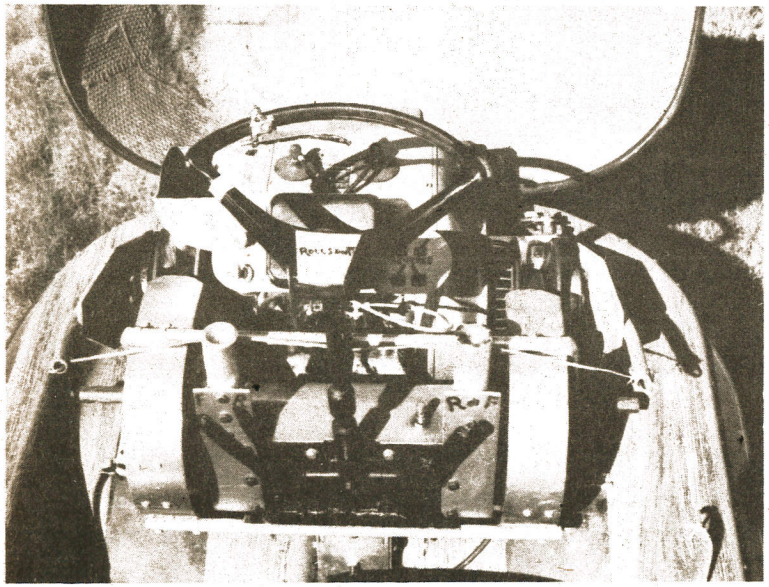
The last paragraph sounded inviting so I got on the phone and called the man who invented the Sportspal canoe, Cedric Summers of North Bay. He invited me up the following day to have a look at the Rollsport.

Early the next morning, camera in hand, Peter Sticklee in tow, we arrived in North Bay.

Cedric Summers turned out to be the only cigar chomping guy in the north who drives a birch-bark finished, front wheel drive Eldorado Cadillac. The man is not the type to get all dressed up for work and wears a checked shirt and a pair of unlaced Kodiac boots.



The Rollsport A.T.V. is a new concept in A.T.V.'s. It's virtually all tires on the underside to make the machine ride on top of the elements not in them.



If it's what's up front that counts this buggy has a lot going for it, all 26 horsepower.

About the first question I asked him was "What ever got you involved in A.T.V.'s."

To which Cedric replied, "I bet manufacturers of A.T.V.'s have spent 50 million dollars on them and they haven't built one yet that will do the job."

I queried him a little closer on that point to which he said, "I hunt and fish all year round and in the past there wasn't one machine that would run on land, water and snow. I know because I've owned a half dozen different kinds. I couldn't buy one so I decided to build one.

I had time on my hands since I sold my active interest in Sportspal Canoes a couple of years ago and then I started thinking about it and analyzing what was wrong with the machines I had owned. It boiled down to one basic fact. They couldn't operate under all conditions all year round.

All the A.T.V.'s I owned had a belly area that when in heavy contact with mud or snow the drag overcame the traction of the wheels and I was stuck."

Cedric's basic approach to life is that there are basic principals in any design. Define laws that govern the problem and then work within these laws.

The principal on which a successful all terrain all season vehicle must work upon in Ced's opinion is that you must have more traction than drag at all times under all and any conditions.

The worst conditions we have to contend with are deep mud, slush and snow. If you sink into one of them and they make contact with any non-driving parts of your vehicle, you create friction or drag and become mired.

The whole trick is to stay on top of the elements and not in them. This is what he had done with the Rollsport. The huge tires completely separate the body of the vehicle from the surface except for a four inch wide strip down the centre.

He chose Fat Cat (made by Goodrich) rather than tracks because they float. He also