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The Three-Wheeler that Nobody Wanted to Have

As also in other West European countries, the Dutch population quickly required a different means of transporter after the end of the war.

In 1947, the engineer van der Groot came to the conclusion that a small vehicle could be sold well over the next few years. He committed himself to an extreme microcar, that he saw it rather as a “covered moped” instead of a car. Arnold van der Groot had a working experience in the aircraft industry. For that reason his idea of a small automobile was also shaped by an extreme lightweight construction. He designed a three-wheeled version with a steered front wheel axle and a solitary rear wheel, held by a light monocoque frame. In view of its classification, van der Groot was also using 8-inch motorcycles wheels. The track width was only 1,70 meter and the length was only 1,10 meter and therefore extremely short. The complete three wheeler should only weigh 200 kilograms. The steering and the front suspension on a full-floating axle were

exclusively concealed under the bonnet. The two-stroke engine, sized at 228 cm³ and a performance of 8 hp, was mounted in the rear on the right side and was developed by van der Groot. The engineer, van der Groot, was spending a lot of time to develop the three wheeler with an own engine for serial production. In 1953 he was so pleased with his work that he could start with series production in 1954. As a benchmark for the final series production, he was planning a development of 20 three wheelers. He was financially supported by government agencies and private investors. Van der Groot was choosing the name “Shelter” as type designation.

In the meantime, the requirements of the buyers significantly changed and at the planned start of production in 1954 the three-wheeler was no more in the focus of the broad mass. Until 1958 he could only sell four types in total. Some other sources are mentioning seven types, however this was

also so little, that nobody could talk about series production and the three-wheeler was considered as an economical flop.

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