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MILITARY ATV POLARIS

Why the Special Forces Are Falling in Love With ATVs

"Drop a grenade on it, and walk away."



By Eric Tegler

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You might not be surprised to learn that Marine and Army tactical ground units have been using lightly militarized all-terrain-vehicles (ATVs) for years. But you might raise an eyebrow at the way Marines think of ATVs. While personal four-wheeler might be a treasured possession, the military is ready to blow up its ATVs at any time.

In a recent video demonstrating Marine training with the Polaris RZR-SW at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina a civilian safety instructor says (at 1:10):

"If things really get bad, they can turn around, drop a grenade on it, and walk away."

Drop a grenade on it?

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It's a sensible notion when you consider the alternative of letting an enemy seize the equipment. Remember the headlines from this summer about ISIS driving Humvees around Iraq? Islamic State reportedly captured more than 2,300 Humvees worth \$1 billion in Mosul, where they were left behind by retreating Iraqi forces.

Also, more ATVs are going into military service. The Marines, the Army, and U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) are all ATV users. In fact, Polaris has been selling ATVs to the military since 2004 and its vehicles have been used in Afghanistan. In June 2015, SOCOM awarded Polaris Defense a contract for more than 2000 ATVs: 1,750 of the Minnesota-based company's four-seat MRZR-4s, and 300 of its two-seat MRZR-2s.

The military likes these vehicles because they can be transported inside the Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey, Boeing's MH-47 special operations helicopter, and Sikorsky's MH-53 Pave Low, and dropped from the air. Special forces, in particular, like ATVs because of the extra mobility they provide, allowing smaller units to get to a combat area or conduct reconnaissance patrols quickly. Plus, they keep Marines or troops who would otherwise move on foot fresher.

The Marines featured in the above video are from the Force Reconnaissance Platoon, 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, and were training with Polaris RZR-SW, which is a military version of the company's consumer RZR 800 ATV. Thus far, the Corps is using the RZR-SW as a training and utility tool, though in the future units like the Force Recon platoon may deploy with ATVs. Various U.S. Special Forces have already done so.



Polaris MRZR-4

Polaris

The two-seat RZR-SW began selling in 2009 as the first RZR customized for military use. It uses a 760cc twin-cylinder engine mated to an automatic transmission and all-wheel drive system. Its four-wheel independent suspension offers 12 inches of travel. Weighing about 1,200 pounds, the RZR-SW will do approximately 65 mph over mild terrain and can carry 1,000 pounds, including two Marines. Features include a roll cage, cargo box with 500 lb. capacity and litter mounts, and a 7.25-gallon fuel tank.

The RZR-SW's big brother is the MRZR, a fully militarized two or four-seat ATV with a more mission-flexible modular design, greater payload, and folding roll cage. Both of these ATVs offer ground troops enhanced mobility and responsiveness.

There's one other advantage: With a unit price of just \$16,599 for the RZR-SW, the military can afford to just toss a grenade and way away when things go south.

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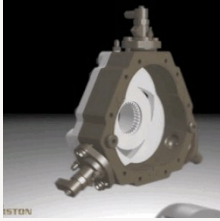
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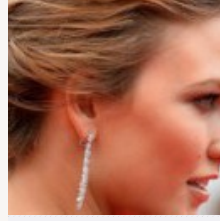
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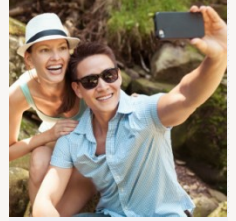


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