

Podkowa 98 motorcycle

AUTHOR



TIME AND PLACE OF CREATION

Time:

1939

Place:

, Poland

TECHNICAL DATA

Dimensions:

height: 880 mm, width: 670 mm, length:

1950 mm

OTHER

MIM 837/II/70

KEYWORDS

międzywojnie, motocykl, przemysł, ropa

naftowa, transport indywidualny, ulica

DESCRIPTION

The Podkowa 98 is a light motorcycle of the sub-100 cc class that was extremely popular before World War II. It was produced by Zakłady Przemysłowe Podkowa SA. From 1921, the company was a renowned and esteemed manufacturer of caulkins (studs on a horseshoe that improve a horse's balance and grip). However, demand for caulkins began to fade in the late 1930s, so the company owner, Józef Folman, sought other sources of income. In 1937, after a thorough market analysis, preparations began to manufacture motorcycles. Contacts were established with different companies, including James, Villiers, and Royal Enfield. The products were to be distributed by the Zorel company of Warsaw. The first motorcycle was presented in 1938. In terms of engineering design, the Podkowa 98 was a version of the British Baker motorcycle manufactured under a licence and fitted with a Villiers 98 engine. The vehicle has design solutions typical of the 1930s: a trapezoid suspension and a stiff link for the rear wheel. The Podkowa plant's flagship product –

caulkings – were used as spacers between the frame structure and the tank. The elegant and sturdy classic design, coupled with the excellent Villiers engine, ensured good performance and high reliability. Thanks to the attractive price of 860 zlotys, many rallying successes, and good press reviews, the Podkowa 98 attracted a lot of interest on the market. The great popularity of vehicles of its class on pre-war Polish roads also stemmed from the regulations at the time, which relieved adult citizens riding them from the need to hold a driver's licence or make annual contributions to the National Road Fund. It was assumed that 1000 units would be produced by the end of 1939. Further plans also envisaged the launch of a 150cc version of the vehicle, as well as a licenced Royal Enfield 250. The initial problems with starting up mass production, followed by the outbreak of war and the destruction of the factories, prevented the plans from becoming reality. About 21 vehicles remain to this day, out of the approximately 130 that were manufactured.