

FIS speedway motorcycle

AUTHOR

TIME AND PLACE OF CREATION

Time:

1957

Place:

, Poland



TECHNICAL DATA

Dimensions:

height: 1140 mm, width: 800 mm, length:

2050 mm

OTHER

MIM 1880/II/162

KEYWORDS

PRL, przemysł, ropa naftowa, sport motorowy

DESCRIPTION

In 1953-1954, two Polish designers, Tadeusz Fedko and Romuald Iżewski, designed an engine on the basis of the British JAP design (a late 1940s model). Fedko and Iżewski were associated with the motorcycle division of the Stal Rzeszów sports club: the motorcycle's name, FIS, is acronym of Fedko-Iżewski-Stal. The Polish design contained a series of improvements on the British model: different materials were used, and the cam sizes, valve diameters, and valve timings were modified. The first tests demonstrated that the engine was no worse than its model. Initially, the engine was built into the frame of the British Excelsior speedway motorcycle. In May 1954, the first test rides were held on the track in Rzeszów, which confirmed the initial favourable impressions of the engine. In the following year the Excelsior frame was replaced by a frame built on the model of the British Rotrax speedway motorcycles. The resulting motorcycle was put into mass production, which began at the Polskie Zakłady Lotnicze in Rzeszów. Frames were produced in the Wytwórnia Sprzętu Komunikacyjnego in Mielec, and wheel rims were initially imported from the United

Kingdom and later produced in the steam engine workshops in Ostrów Wielkopolski. The first mass-produced motorcycles were built in 1955. For several years, the FIS speedway motorcycle became the main vehicle of the Polish national speedway team and Polish sports clubs with speedway divisions. In 1958, 300 contestants competed in three speedway leagues, 90% of them on FIS motorcycles. The motorcycle was favourably received, but in the opinion of contestants and of the speedway community it needed further improvement. Unfortunately, collaboration between the clubs and the manufacturer was far from seamless. In the meantime, in Divišov in Czechoslovakia, Jaroslava Simandl's ESO (later known as Jawa) motorcycle designs were being developed and prepared for outstanding future successes. In the end the production of the FIS was halted in 1959 and the Polish design was replaced with imported motorcycles. Today just a few examples remain of the only speedway motorcycle model produced in Poland – one can be found in the collection of the Museum of Urban Engineering in Kraków.