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FACTS & STORY

Beutler Spezial Cabriolet (Switzerland, 1953)

SPECIAL EDITIONS

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As Karmann Won the Bid

Early after World War II the Swiss brothers Ernst and Fritz Beutler realized as one of the first that there was a big demand for the design and the production of car bodies. Under the name Gebr. Beutler & Cie they offered their services to the automotive industry. In 1947 the manufactory, based in Thun (Switzerland), got the contract to design a car body for Bentley and from 1948 Porsche ranked among the range of customers. The customer list read like the “who is who” of the European automobile manufacturers. Fine and smooth lines characterized the car body designs of the Swiss brothers.

In the early 1950s the brothers Beutler worked among other things on different redesigns of the Volkswagen Beetle. In the course of this work a design that should emphasize the sportive touch of the four-cylindere Beetle came into being. Comparable to the, in cooperation of VW and Karmann built, Karmann Ghia, the Swiss manufactory also tried to set a sportive VW-offspring on its

“wheels”. In contrast to the Volkswagen-Karmann cooperation the Swiss confederates also took a boost of the driving performance in consideration, in addition to the new sportive look. The engine performance was raised to 40 hp through a supercharger of the brand Judson, which in turn speeded the 900 kg heavy Beetle up to 135 km/h.

In the end the management of Volkswagen rejected the Beutler version. Probably they wanted to protect their own cooperation with Karman by avoiding unnecessary competition, which would have been inevitably emerged.

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