

scale 1/43

#11004

release

10/2018

limited edition 333 Stk.



Knight in a shining streamlined armour

Wreckers, regardless of whether for passenger cars or trucks, were mainly built on the chassis of standard vehicles. But of course there were also some exceptions and for a particularly smart version of such a wrecker we have to look to Australia or more precisely into the Queen Street – Northern Bay in the capital city of the State Queensland, Brisbane. The company Barnes Auto & Co, established in 1900, was based here.

On the threshold of the 1930s the advertising slogan “We never sleep” was created and stated that the in-house wrecking and recovery service was available twenty-four-seven. With the takeover by Luton J. White, the idea to set a specially designed wrecker on its wheels came up. This idea was put into action and the company purchased a brand-new 2-ton Dodge from 1938 with a 78 hp engine and designed as a cab over engine. The vehicle featured a special 4-speed gearbox with an extra transmission for heavy terrain. Thus the vehicle was also capable to master

the Australian outback. Jack White created the aerodynamic and roundish shape of the car body, which also featured all the needed towing components. With two cable winches, with a length of 660 feet each, two vehicles could be rescued, one more could be fixed at the rear and at the same time theoretically a fourth vehicle could have been towed off at the front apron.

The Australian company Watt Brothers, based in Wollongabba, was commissioned with the realization of White’s designed car body. The body makers shaped the silhouette in an elegant arch from the driver’s cab to the rear end and fitted three-part window sections on both sides. Until the 1950s the 6-ton wrecker was in service for the company as it made way for more modern wreckers.

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