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FACTS & STORY

Mercedes-Benz 500 K Deutschlandfahrt (Germany, 1934)

RACING

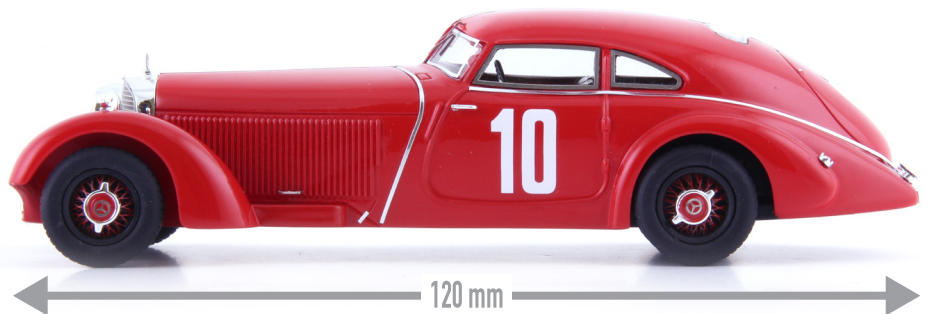
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Feudal Appearance

Although, to all appearances, the long-distance race with the self-explanatory name “2000 km through Germany”, which initially took place in 1933, was proclaimed as a sporting competition, the idea behind was to demonstrate the capability and the potential of the German automotive industry. In 1934 the event was led by Corps Leader Adolf Hühnlein and the industry was motivated to intensify their commitment. The sporty debut of the new Mercedes-Benz Type 150 with six vehicles is well known in this context.

But this was not enough for the Swabian company. Additionally, a total of six cars known as ‘Fabrikwagen’ (factory cars) were also built for the long-distance race. All cars were based on the new model ‘Typ 500 mit Kompressor’ (Type 500 with compressor). The effort to adapt the vehicles to the long-distance race was focused on the alternation of the car body, since the standard body of the Type 500 was actually not designed for such a sporting driving mode. Of the for the race used vehicles, there was both, a convertible

version and a version with a closed car body. The latter one, the coupe version, can be found in literature under the designation ‘Sport-Roadster’ and was built by the young Rudolf Uhlenhaut.

Additionally to the streamlined design, the car body of the adapted Type 500 also featured various minor changes compared to the standard model. However, the major and most complex difference was the streamlined car body design, whose aerodynamic silhouette was probably based on a substructure of steel and wood. The rear area was very aesthetically designed. It featured a small folding window and a stylish cover which hid the spare wheel. How the performance was interpreted in the Swabian plant is just as little known as the fate of the six race cars. The only thing that is certain is that none of the cars knowingly survived to this day.

AutoCult GmbH

Äußere Further Straße 3
90530 Wendelstein
Germany

Tel. +49 / 9129 / 296 4280

Fax +49 / 9129 / 296 4281

info@autocult.de

www.autocult-models.de