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FACTS & STORY

Mercedes-Benz C101 (Germany, 1969)

PROTOTYPES

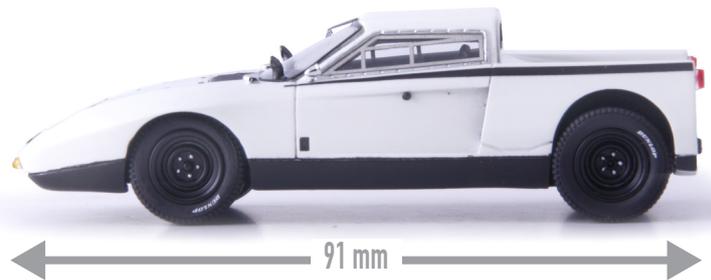
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A Step into a new World

The story begins in 1961. At the management level of Mercedes-Benz, the new engine concept of the rotary piston engine came more and more to the fore. Numerous discussions about the pros and cons of the new engine concept, based on the idea of Felix Wankel, were probably held in those days. Ultimately, Mercedes Benz decided to conclude a license agreement with Felix Wankel that allowed the use of his engine. Parallel to the research and development of the rotating combustion engine, the first thoughts came to fruition internally as to which cars, labeled with the star, should be equipped with the Wankel engine in the future. Although the Mercedes technicians mastered a number of technical hurdles and developed forcefully, they did not succeed in handling the major difficulties - ostensibly the high fuel consumption and the poor exhaust gas values.

At the end 1968, the decision was made that the new engine should be tested for the first time in a small sports car. The project name was the abbreviation C101. The car was powered by a three-disc engine with a displacement of 600cc each and a total output of 280 hp. For the first test

drive, the Swabian crew travelled to the Hockenheimring on July, 15 in 1969. Presumably, it was already clear on this day that this was test drive was the first step to public for the until then secret development - as there is no other way to explain why a professional photographer from 'Leica-Studio Wörner' came to the race track on this particular day, who took "first-class" photos of the brand-new Swabian prototype!

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