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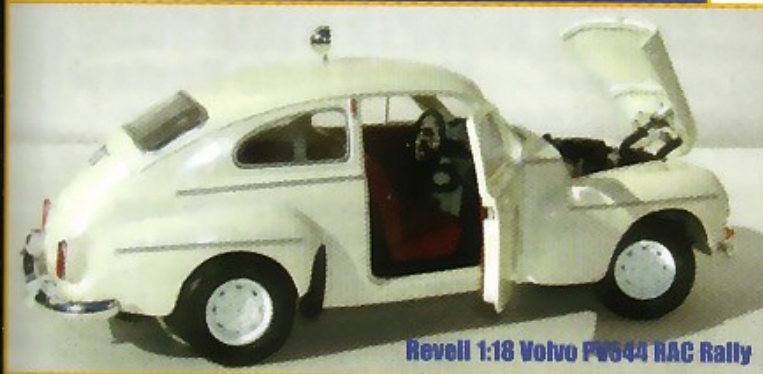
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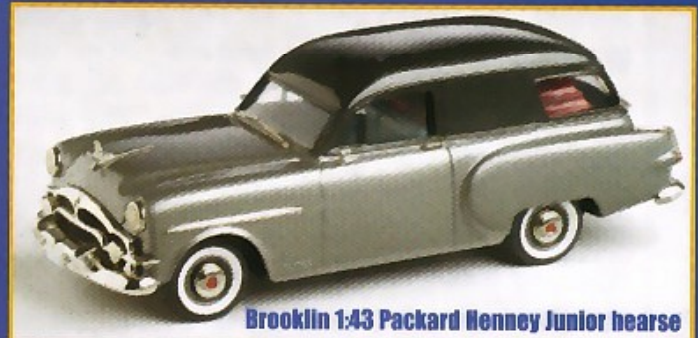
Minichamps 1:43 Opel Blitz 'Opel'



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Norev 1:64 General Motors Futurliner



Dingler 1:200 Dornier Do-K 1929

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ENZMANN 506

... A Roadster Made in Switzerland...

By Daniel Beck • Photos overleaf on page 40

MANY special cars have been designed on the base of the VW Beetle. A beautiful example is the Enzmann 506, a sporty roadster slightly resembling the Porsche 550, built in Switzerland between 1956 and 1968. Nowadays brand-new Enzmanns made from the original moulds are available once again, and you can also find some interesting models of this unusual car.

The story of the Enzmann 506 begins in the early 1950s. Emil Enzmann, a doctor from Schüpfheim near Lucerne, whose family owned a hotel and a garage, designed an affordable sports roadster on a Volkswagen chassis. In 1956 his prototype was shown at the *Comptoir Suisse* fair in Lausanne, and in the following year the car was presented on stand number 506 of the Frankfurt Motor Show. 506 then became the definitive name for the car.

In 1958 production started in a small series. The roadster had a glass fibre body and some very modern features for a 1950s road car, such as bucket seats, safety belts, an integrated roll-bar and a safety paddling in front of the passenger. But the most striking characteristic was the absence of doors, the driver and passenger had to climb over the side walls, using the steps inserted in the niches on each side of the car. The advantage of this unusual design was high stability and low weight: The complete car weighted only 550 kg.

Most Enzmann customers didn't choose the standard VW engine, but preferred tuned engines by MAG and Okrasa, and sometimes even more powerful Porsche engines, which made the light car very competitive. A special version prepared for mountain races was equipped with the 130 bhp Porsche Carrera engine. The road car was sold either as a *Spider* with small windscreen or as a *Cabriolet* with larger windscreen and optional soft top.

A retractable hardtop was also available. About 100 cars were built until the early

1960s. Then the company got into difficulties because Volkswagen had decided that the Enzmann 506 was competing with their own Karmann-Ghia, and stopped supplying chassis. Some body kits could still be sold, but production ended in 1968. This wasn't the end of the Enzmann story, however.

In 2001 Karl Enzmann, Emil's son, presented the first *New Enzmann*, produced from the original moulds and based on a modernised Volkswagen Beetle chassis.

New cars can now be built to order.

THE MODELS

The Enzmann 506 has never been modelled by any diecast manufacturer so far, but there are several handbuilt models, all made by Swiss companies. A 1:24 scale model has been released recently by **Renncenter.ch**, a slot car racing centre in Uzwil in the Eastern part of Switzerland (website: www.renncenter.ch). The model is very attractive, with an accurate body shell made of PET, like the slot cars made in this scale by companies such as White Point. It is available either as a slot car or as a detailed static model, and like the original car it is only made to order, so every buyer will get an exact copy of his favourite Enzmann car.

My item is a static model of the first *New Enzmann* released in 2001, a yellow 506 Spider with a small windscreen.

The other Enzmann models are all in 1:43 scale. **Swiss-Mini-43** released a 506 Cabriolet in 1996. This model was made of resin and was rather simple, without any photo-etched parts, but the finish was good. The most common colours are orange and red. **PE43**, another Swiss manufacturer who usually specialises in Borgward models, offers special versions of the Swiss-Mini-43 model in mint green or silver with white wall tyres. Finally a 1:43 scale white metal model of the 506 Spider has been made by **Emmy Models** from Berne. It was originally released as a road car in 1998, then later also as a race car in red or blue.

Aerotech 1:32 Supermarine S4

avia → mini



ABOVE: The real Enzmann 506 (photos Karl Enzmann). Below left: 1:24 Renncenter model with 1:43 Swissmini. Below right: Emmy 1:43 model (blue) and below that another shot of the red Swissmini model.



See page 39 for Daniel Beck's feature on the Enzmann 506



BIZARRE 1:43 from China for Macau: 221 Nissan 240RS 84 Safari #2 Mehta-Combes, left.



IXO 1:43 diecast in China: Delahaye 135S Le Mans 1938 #15 winner, above right.



NOREV 1:43 diecast in China for France: MG SVR, left.



BEST 1:43 diecast from Italy: 9329 Alfa TZ2 Misano 1973. (Right, via Hans-Georg Schmitt).

IXO 1:43 diecast in China: Lotus Elite LM61 #38 Allen-Taylor class win, below

IXO 1:43 diecast in China: JCB Dieselmax diesel powered record car, below

