



THE LEGE MOTORCYCLES

BAVARIA: 1923.

Folklore has it that they gave Max Friz a stove to take the chill out of his office. And in return Friz gave them the design for a new kind of motorcycle engine.

"They," of course, were the owners of the Bavarian Motor Works in Munich, Germany. And Max Friz was their chief engineer.

The stove he received was considered to be, in the office politics of 1923 Germany, a major status symbol. And the engine he created as a token of appreciation was to become the foundation of all BMW

motorcycle design.

The horizontally opposed twin. Ingeniously simple. Perfectly balanced. Possessed of an extraordinarily low center of gravity.

PARIS: LATER THAT YEAR.

The first motorcycle to sport Friz's revolutionary engine was unveiled at the prestigious Paris Motor Show of 1923.

It was, not surprisingly, the rage of the exhibition.

Not solely because it cradled the opposed twin-cylinder engine however. For this machine bore another breakthrough by Friz that demanded

an equal share of the limelight.

Running from its crankcase to its rear hub, you see, was the first fully refined drive shaft ever seen on a motorcycle.

This remarkably advanced bike was dubbed the R32. And in the words of the motorcycle historian L.J.K. Setright "it injected a measure of civilization into an activity that had always shown a tinge of barbarity."

AMERICA: 1982.

While the times have drastically changed, the opinion that aficionados have of the BMW motorcycle certainly has not.



NDARY OF GERMANY.

Cycle Guide writes: "Overall it is perfectly tailored for your basic civilized, discriminating, blue-blooded rider who understands the difference between a one-dimensional motorcycle and one with character."

It has never been the mission of BMW engineers to build unguided missiles:

Motorcycles that thunder down the straightaways only to turn into millstones through curves. Or into jackhammers over bumps.

It is their goal instead to build complete machines.

Motorcycles that can sustain high speeds, not merely attain them. Whose ability to hold the road corresponds, to the closest possible degree, with their ability to whisk over it.

To this end, there is no engine configuration in existence that is more desirable than the horizontally opposed twin.

Still ingeniously simple. Perfectly balanced. Possessed of an extraordinarily low center of gravity. And the recipient of continuous refinement by generations of BMW engineers for the past 58 years.

The price of all this refinement? Predictably high, ranging from \$3,600 to \$7,300, excluding local shipping charges and state taxes. But the evolution of the BMW has been so thoroughly impressive that according to the historian Setright:

"The modern BMW is not a motorcycle. It is an inheritance."

An inheritance bequeathed by Max Friz. An engineer with a particular genius for designing motorcycles.

And, of course, a tremendous appreciation of warm stoves.

