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Press Release:

Original bikes at the Bremen Classic Motorshow

The Special Motorcycle Show 2019 displays US bikes from the 20th century

These bikes are different: In our minds, they are heavy, long, bulky and gleaming with chrome. And tradition plays a role as well when it comes to motorcycles from the US – after all, Harley-Davidson has been on the market for 115 years. But is that really what US bikes are like? Or is that just our imagination running wild? "Our special show 'The Century of Coolness – 100 Years of US-American Motorcycles' provides answers, entertains and shows exceptions to the rules" explains Frank Ruge, project manager of Bremen Classic Motorshow. About two dozens of original bikes will reveal the variety of the US-American motorcycle industry at Messe Bremen from Friday, February 1, to Sunday, February 3, 2019.

The brands Harley-Davidson and Indian once dominated the US scene. In Bremen, exhibits of the two great and formative brands will illustrate the "Century of Coolness" as well as fascinating bikes by other manufacturers that have achieved less fame in Germany.

The USA are a country of large dimensions and long distances, so the bikes had to be able to cover long ways without problems right from the start. The single-cylinder bikes from the early days evolved into twin-cylinder bikes: The shape of the frames and the desire to achieve a compact crankcase resulted in the obvious layout of the classic V2. Since fuel was inexpensive and tax barriers such as the European cubic capacity tax did not exist, the large motorcycle was all set.

The US brand Indian Motorcycle Co. in Springfield was the largest and most innovative motorcycle plant in the world until the 1920s. The Indian Twin from 1913 is clear proof of this fact. The competitor, Harley-Davidson Motor Co. (H-D), gained incredible momentum shortly thereafter with the E models and outperformed USA Indian at the legendary Cannonball races and at other races throughout the United States. Two versions of the 10E from 1914 will be displayed in Bremen: the Cannonball racing version and the Concours version.

Unlike in Europe, automobiles had been affordable for many people in the USA starting in the 1920s. That presented manufacturers with the challenge of building fascinating bikes for real fans and robust machines for the authorities. After the First World War, in-line four-cylinders complemented the US brand's portfolio. The "Fours" by Ace, Indian and Henderson offered the smooth action and drive of a car, combined with the abundant power of a large motorcycle. In Bremen on display will be: an Indian Ace from 1928, a Henderson KJ from 1930 and an Indian Four Upside-down from 1937.



Even in the late 1920s, cops were already chasing speeders on US bikes, young athletes competed on hillslopes or dirt tracks, and motorcycle clubs went on tour with their US bikes. The typical V twins became better and better: The racy H-D Knucklehead, for example, is part of the Special Show, because it did not only outrun the Indian Big Chief as of 1937, but also competitors around the world.

When English brands in the 1950s and Japanese brands in the 1960s conquered the US market, only Harley-Davidson remained. New layouts tried to attract young customers. H-D with its custom bikes produced in series became a trendsetter, offering choppers and low riders that took inspiration from the movie "Easy Rider". Two jewels of the 17th Bremen Classic Motorshow served as inspiration for other manufacturers: the speedy sportster and the reliable Electra-Glide. But even the first custom bike, the Super Glide, has often been copied. Conclusion: The company has made it safely into the third millennium.

The Bremen Classic Motorshow runs from Friday to Sunday, February 1 to 3, 2019 in all halls at Messe Bremen and in the mobile hall 8. The halls are open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. A day pass costs 16 Euros.

More info at www.classicmotorshow.de

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