

Contrary to the widely held belief that the KR201 was developed by FMR, it was first announced at the 1956 IFMA International Bicycle and Motorcycle show by RSM Messerschmitt Werke. That was a full three months before the founding of FMR. In August 1956, dealers were notified about the development via a newsletter but there had been some press releases that caused some consternation in Regensburg. They would have liked more time as they had not yet finished the development, calculations, and testing of both the car and the hood.

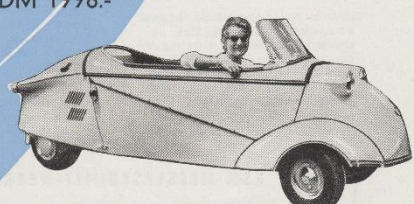
On 21st October 1956 the third IFMA International Bicycle and Motorcycle show in Frankfurt opened their doors for eight days. Motor Compagnie, a local firm under the direction of Franz A. Guillaume was responsible for the show stands. Contemporary manufacturers including Goggomobil, BMW Isetta, and Zundapp all had large central stands in Hall 2, while Messerschmitt exhibited on a small stand numbered 125-126 against the wall in Hall 3. Displayed were the KR200, Kr200 deluxe (with gold- folding top introduced as a special accessory) and the Mokuli. Next to them were two examples of the new Roadster with the description of Me201. At a price of Deutschmark (DM) 1998.00 it was the first KaRo under the magical price of DM2000. The folding 'scissors' hood frame was offered at an additional DM150 and the fabric soft-top with cover was a further DM40. According to the press release it was "macho, sporty, and racy" with the characteristics of a well-engineered Messerschmitt. With a price around DM400 less than the KR200 de Luxe it was hardly more than a well-equipped German-manufactured scooter. A Durkopp Diana, Zundapp Bella, or a Triumph Comtessa were priced at DM1795 while the Maicoletta was DM1870 and the Heinkel Tourist was DM1895. It is not known why the new KaRo was displayed with the prefix 'Me' other than perhaps tradition. Possibly Messerschmitt wanted to associate it with the well known aircraft type following the Allied-approved rebuilding of the former aircraft plants. Willy Messerschmitt announced in the spring of 1956 that, in any case, vehicle building would continue. Perhaps Regensburg also wanted to signal that the 201 was a further development of their administration as the KR201 went into series production.



Roadster ME 201

Der sportlich-rassige Messerschmitt-Roadster ist wie sein Bruder, der Messerschmitt-Kabinenroller, ein wirtschaftliches und schnelles Fahrzeug. Dazu der sensationelle Preis:

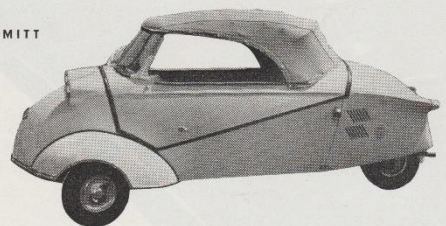
DM 1998.-



RSM MESSERSCHMITT-WERK REGENSBURG

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**MESSERSCHMITT
ME 201**



Gebläsegekühlter SACHS - Einzylinder-Zweitaktmotor. Rascher Anzug, verblüffende Bergfreudigkeit, große Dauerleistung. Besonders hohes Drehmoment im niedrigen Drehzahlbereich. Gummigelagerte, vom Motor getrennt aufgehängte Hinterradschwinge mit Kraftübertragung durch Kardanzwischenwelle. Bohrung: 65 mm; Hub: 58 mm; Zylinderinhalt: 191 ccm; Verdichtung: 1:6,6; Leistung 10,2 PS bei 5250 U/min. Bing-Startvergaser mit Naßluftfilter und Ansaugergeräuschdämpfer.

Vierganggetriebe mit Ratschenhand-schaltung. Geräuschlose Schaltung durch Teleflexzug. Elektrisch geschalteter Rückwärtsgang.

Im Oldbad laufende Kette auf Hinterrad.

Fußgas, Fußbremse, Fußkupplung, Fuß-abblendschalter.

Innenraum: Zwei hintereinanderliegende schaumgummigepolsterte Sitze. Vorder-sitz verstellbar und hochschwenk-bar, rückwärtige Sitzbank geteilt und hochklappbar, ganze Breite des Fahr-zeugs. Großer hinterer Sitzraum: Platz für 1 Erwachsenen und 1 Kind.

Bereifung: 4,00×8" oder 4,40×8", sämt-liche Räder untereinander auswech-selbar.

Maße: Länge 2820 mm, Breite 1220 mm, Höhe 1187 mm, Radstand 2030 mm, Spurweite 1080 mm, Bodenfreiheit 160 mm, Eigengewicht ca. 223 kg, Nutz-last 200 kg.

Tankinhalt: 13,5 Liter Benzin-Öl-Gemisch, davon 2 Liter Reserve.

Kraftstoffnormverbrauch: 3,5 Ltr./100 km.

Geschwindigkeit: Spitze über 100 km/h.

Elektrische Ausrüstung: 12-Volt-Lichtbat-teriezündung, 90 Watt. Zwei 35-Watt-Scheinwerfer. Zwei hintereinanderge-schaltete 6-Volt-Startbatterien, 12 Ah. Seitliches Blinklicht mit Kontrolllampe.

Scherendach, Seitenscheiben, Schutz-hülle für zurückgeklapptes Scheren-dach, Persenning, Innenverkleidung, Heizungsbauteile, Gepäckträger, Schi-halter, Sonnenschutzblende, Radio und vieles andere als Sonderzubehör lieferbar.

5 Serienfarben: pastellgrün, sand, rubin-rot, polargrau, hellblau.

Änderungen vorbehalten!

RSM MESSERSCHMITT-WERK REGENSBURG
Händler und Kundendienst an allen größeren Orten

Front and back of the RSM ME201 launch brochure IFMA international bicycle and motorcycle show Oct 1956

A contemporary press release from RSM (Messerschmitt Werk) announced that the bargain price of DM1998 was only made possible because of the "high demand from Overseas markets" and although this was the explanation, the evidence was lacking at that time. However, we can now see from MFGB archives that the burgeoning British market had indeed provided a much-needed boost to RSM sales. With this promotion pricing Messerschmitt sought to hide the miserable sales figures that threatened the future of RSM. According to KBA (Kraftfahrzeug Bundesamt equivalent of British DVLA or American DMV) sales in the first half of 1956 were just 2084 KaRos (KR200 & KR175). Compare this to the figures for BMW Isetta (15,043) and the Goggomobil (12,596) then it looks like a disaster!

Based on the then current KR200 Sport, (a version of the KR200 – not to be confused with the later, and extremely rare open top 'sport'). the KR201 had a frameless windscreen with aluminium covers on the support brackets. At DM.1998, the 'scissors' folding hood and flexible plastic side-screens were not included but could be ordered as extras. The KR201 was advertised with five new standard colours, Pastel Green, Ruby Red, Sand, Polar Grey, and Light Blue. During the initial FMR launch in 1957 it was offered in just white or red.

The KR201 as displayed at the IFMA show differed from series production in several ways; it did not then include the elegant leathercloth and imitation snakeskin upholstery and seats or the perforated hub caps with Rudge type spinner/retainers. Also missing were the chromed gear-change lever, wing lamps, chromed rear lights, and ventilation 'portholes' in the rear engine cover. Still to come were the different rear view mirrors from Kontakt replacing the Albert Spiegel manufactured units. As displayed, the Me201 had just one rear view mirror.



This MFGB archive photo originated from H.W. Bönsch and shows a pre-production RSM version of the KR201. It has most of the features from the later series production with differences in the trim. Note the ignition key is in the earlier position on the right. Lighting switch is also an early type with high beam lens incorporated in the actuator arm. A radio aerial is fitted together with the speaker fascia. 'Coconut' mats are fitted (these were an optional extra on all cars). Special wing lamps as used on early British KR200 are visible. Retaining nut for the early type mirror is visible behind the right screen support.

Despite the great interest from both press and public at the IFMA show, it was already too late. Dealers were advised just one month later - on 29th November 1956 that Messerschmitt production would cease. All the IFMA expense and promotion brochures was to no avail. For two months the Regensburg production line was halted, and workers laid off until a way forward became clear. What luck then, that the British and French Governments embarked on the disastrous Suez campaign that resulted in a humiliating withdrawal as the USA declined support. Fuel rationing in the U.K. brought about by the blockade of the Suez Canal by President Nasser created huge demand for economy cars that could use the allocated ration tickets for larger vehicles. RSM had the capacity to exploit this and the support from the new import agent Cabin Scooter Assemblies who had taken over imports from the recently bankrupt Beulah Hill Motors.

On 17th January 1957 RSM Director, Friedrich Goy, announced that the newly formed Fahrzeug und Maschinenbau GmbH (FMR) would reinstate production under the new Directors, Fritz Fend and Valentin Knott. It would be a further six months, and in time for the summer season, beginning in July 1957 that the new KR201 went into production. An announcement that it would soon be available and dated 5th July 1957 was circulated to dealers. However, FMR could not sustain the advertised price which was increased to DM2200. Added to that was a further DM195 for the 'optional extra' folding hood, side screens, and cover making the new Roadster the same price as a KR200 de Luxe.



This FMR brochure from 1957 shows the launch version for the German market with Heidi Hoffmann (Fend's Secretary) in the driving seat and her husband FMR production Engineer, Helmut Hoffmann in the rear seat. FMR logo is the 'circles' type but the car has the Augsburg Eagle nose badge with whisker trim. Although not essential for the German market, early wing lamps are fitted (as used on British KR200s to late 1958). From 1957, all German Messerschmitts had side flasher lamps with rear number plate lamp. Orange brake light was eliminated with brake lights in the tail lamps.

Analysis of history and chassis numbers for the KR201 Roadster

by Heiko Zimmermann with additional archive information from MFGB and David Garner

With the easy availability of replica parts, identification of genuine original examples is especially difficult as the creation of replicas has not significantly influenced the premium prices for these vehicles. While the VIN plate always identifies the vehicle type as KR200 there is little documentary evidence to identify a genuine Roadster. As a small company with limited production numbers, RSM and later FMR could not justify the cost of creating a separate type approval for a new model that was essentially a modified KR200. Unlike more conventional open top cars where essential chassis reinforcement is required when eliminating the roof, the KR200 chassis did not require any modification that would have made a new type approval obligatory.

Special equipment for KR201 initial model launch 1957

- Two 'portholes' at each side of the rear engine cover
- side lights as fitted to early British KR200
- chromed gear-change lever with white knob,
- hub caps with extended apertures and Rudge type retainers,
- chromed rear lights.
- 'snakeskin' interior finish
- special 'Roadster paint finish' in red or white
- special mirrors by Kontakt.
- British cars with chromed 'torpedo' rear lights.

Many enthusiasts regard these items as significant for identification of genuine Roadsters. Although some do not accept that, especially for the British market, some KR201s had the later side lights, 'Albert' mirrors, and standard non-chromed gear lever. British registration documents (the old buff logbook) sometimes recorded the KR201 designation but it must be recognised that this never agreed with the VIN plate that clearly stated KR200. In Germany it was even less clear as the registration number does not stay with the vehicle for life as in the UK. A new document and registration number is issued at each change of owner so unless a copy is taken at the time of transfer, there is no evidence available.



Front trim changes 1955-58, 1958, and 1959 onwards - all 4 front trim variations can be seen in this photo.

Right Front - 1960 KR201 (replica) – Note the standard mirrors, later sidelamps. UK specification. FMR 'diamonds'.

Right Rear - Red 1958 KR200 Cabrio – Note the whisker trim with FMR 'circles' badge and early side lights. Front flashers were red during this period. UK specification.

Left Rear - Rubinrot (red/black two tone) 1956 KR200 with RSM 'eagle' badge. Front flashers 55-57 German spec.

Left Front – Yellow 1957 KR200 with RSM 'eagle' badge. Front flashers. (Blue tint dome was not available in 1957)

1958 specification changes

General changes to colour and trim were made from chassis number 67971 with the first revised UK spec. KR201 Roadster Chassis number 67973 leaving the Regensburg plant on 20.05.1958. Many KR201 examples after this date were not fitted with all of the earlier embellishments such as chrome rear lights, and chrome gear change lever with white knob. Snakeskin trim was still used on all examples with both red and white piping. There were further cost saving measures in this period with the elimination of the dash panel radio/speaker aperture, but the panel retained the embossed outline that was used for the optional clock. This was the FMR 'circles' badge era but retaining the 'whisker' trim that was used with the 'eagle' badge. 'Kontakt' special mirrors were replaced with the standard 'Albert' mirror for some UK examples, often having just one mirror on the right headlamp housing.

Motor and electrical equipment changes

Dealers were notified by a general newsletter 5 dated 6 April 1959 that Messerschmitts built from chassis number 68644 would be fitted with Bosch electrical equipment. This included changes to the Sachs Motor crankshaft and crankcase dimensions. Well before that on 26.08.1958, the first Bosch-equipped vehicle, a blue KR 200 (chassis # 68661, engine # 2938191) left Regensburg. By that time, the German market was in severe decline as evidenced by the number of registered cars at the German KBA records office.

Although the new Bosch 'Black Box' was almost identical to the Siba unit, there were changes inside with a different Bosch voltage regulator that incorporated thermal compensation and better voltage control. Reversing relays were identical but a new Bosch embossed aluminium cover gave a different appearance. Bosch ignition coils carried a yellow sticker with the company logo and text stating 'Fabrique en Allemagne'. A yellow KR200 (chassis # 68521, engine # 2938097) left Regensburg bound for England on 31.07.1958 and the first KR201 with the Bosch motor followed on 26.08.1958.

German market (estimated total 250 KR201)

A description of this vehicle type can be found in the ABE (Allgemeine Betriebserlaubnis für Fahrzeuge or type approval) Nr. 1812 of 2. August 1957. There are four endorsements relating to condition, noise emissions, lighting, and brakes that are included in the Kraftfahrzeug Brief (equivalent to the British registration document or American vehicle title). Type approval number 1812 was cancelled on 26th November 1965. Chassis number series is specified as commencing with chassis number 64000 and 65188 is the earliest known example located in Switzerland. In 1977 all the available data from the Kraftfahrt-Bundesamt (KBA) in Flensburg, (German equivalent of DVLA in the U.K. Or DMV in the U.S.A.) was purchased. RSM and later FMR were allocated a series of registration documents by KBA that were issued to each vehicle produced at the factory for the German home market. This system is different from the U.K. as documents were issued by the local authority where the car was sold. KBA listed all chassis numbers commencing with KR200 66435 from 21st November 1957 and all previous data was destroyed. Unfortunately, the numbers of German registered KR201 cars could not be specifically identified from the data. The earliest chassis number in the KBA list is 65906 of 12th September 1957 and this is included in the total of 197 vehicles in the number series of blank registration documents issued to the factory. (9 318 401 to 9 318 598) from 12.09.1957 to 19.05.1958. A further series of 45 was issued to FMR (9 761 801 to 9 761 846) 19.05.1958 to 05.10.1959.) and of those there were only isolated entries are identified as KR201 therefore numbers indicate in the region of 250 KR201 types registered in Germany. There were 233 KR201s registered on 1st July 1959 making the previous figure plausible as a total especially since there is no data before chassis number 65906.

Switzerland (estimated total 34 KR201)

Incomplete data is available for Switzerland compiled from customs documentation that identifies 34 KR201 Swiss imports. Chassis number 65188 is the earliest known example located in Switzerland. Data from Ralph Bollag:

1957: 10 cars imported: 6 red and 4 white

1958: 18 cars: 10 red, 5 white, 1 blue, 1 yellow, 1 rose

1959: 4 cars: 1 grey, 1 rose, 1 yellow, 1 light blue

Netherlands (No available data)

In the Netherlands, where large numbers of Messerschmitts were imported, there is unfortunately no remaining data. That does not mean that none exist but we cannot confirm without evidence.

France and Belgium

No data exists but there is a very small number of KR201 examples in both countries.

Sweden & Finland

With a low population for these relatively large countries, they make a surprising contribution to the Messerschmitt fraternity. Chassis 67639 is restored to top condition and 67764 is also a genuine roadster under restoration. We can estimate less than 10 in total but there are 2 'replica' cars. No known KR201s exist in Finland.

United Kingdom (certified and documented total 134 KR201). First production goes to British market!

British imports were the first to leave Regensburg with the first recorded chassis number 65184 despatched on 28.06.1957 and it is interesting to note that this is earlier than mainland Europe (65188 in Switzerland). In the U.K. more precise data extracted from factory invoices held in Messerschmitt Foundation archives indicate 134. This delay is most likely to be related to the type approval derogation that was appended to the KR200 documentation. Testwood Motors received 7 201s (all red) that were despatched on 13.07.1957. Despite our inclement weather, the UK has always had a significant following for open top cars and was the largest export market for FMR. As with all Regensburg cars, they came to the UK without wheels and batteries thus avoiding the high purchase tax on imported vehicles. In the U.K. the KR201 was not sold with the 'optional' folding hood and side screens but always as a complete car and initially in an exclusive red and this is confirmed by each invoice that also shows the colour. The red used on the 201 was unique to that model, not used on any other Messerschmitt. It was called Signalrot, or Signal Red. The bright Signal Red was a refreshing change from the darker Rubinrot, or Ruby Red which was used on the KR175 and KR200 contemporary with the 201. It was a bright, warm red, not the orange Korallenrot, nor the blood red typical of Italian racing called Monzarot. Both Coral and Monza came after the initial promotional 201 version ended, beginning in late 1958. In a copy of "Motor Cycling" of 25 Aug 1960 a list appears on Page 531 (following an article announcing the Sport - "deliveries to commence this month") of current Messerschmitt prices. Included is the "KR201 Sports Convertible" (at £332-10-9d), the same price as the KR200 Sports Saloon & KR200 Sports Cabriolet.



This rare English brochure was prepared for Cabin Scooter (Assemblies) by the Hurd International agency. Heidi Hoffman is pictured in the car with the 3 agency models looking on. In September 1957, *Scooter and 3 wheeler magazine* tested a press show car, registered as RHO771. The same car was tested by *Motor Cycling* in their February 1958 magazine. Claimed power output was 12BHP achieved with a high compression head, (raising the compression ratio to 8:1), and sports silencer that extended the length behind the car.

With the nature of online communities there is a possibility that, if repeated often enough, inaccurate information can become the new "fact". Some have claimed that the "KR201" ceased in '58 but this seems to be based on the cost-saving measures that eliminated the hub caps with spinners, chromed gear change lever with white knob and in some cases, special mirrors. There is very clear documentation that confirms the official designation KR201 was available right up to the last car produced in 1964. For British versions from late 1958, many did not have the chromed rear lights but in any case, there is evidence that FMR was not consistent in fitting them.

One of our British marque specialists has a 1961 Messerschmitt, chassis number 76614. The date of first registration was 21st February 1961. It is a KR201 Roadster, bought new from Testwood Motors of Southampton. Luckily, the history of this car is well known back to the original owner. Photos survive of the car taken when it was virtually and our correspondent acquired the vehicle with just 11,000 miles on the clock.

This car still has its original KR201 upholstery; black vinyl trimmed with snakeskin and red piping and remains in exceptional condition. The car also has portholes in the rear section from new, proving that 3 years later than 1958 the defining features of a KR201 were still available and incorporated into the vehicle. This car has, like the example shown in the later factory photo, FMR diamond hub caps and vent holes in the rear section. It is important to note that in this official FMR literature captions the picture as the "Messerschmitt Roadster KR201", so it is clear that the KR201 carried on in production, albeit in much reduced in numbers as the KR200 Cabrio, introduced in 1958, was surely an easier and cheaper soft top for FMR to manufacture.

United States of America and Canada (estimated total 32 KR201)

A detailed database compiled by Ralph Hough lists 19 USA based KR201s. Most KR201 types were delivered to the West Coast in packing cases for local assembly. Agents: Brown & Edwards, 3010 13th Street, Gulfport, Mississippi.



Very original 1957 KR201 USA import with 'towel rack' bumpers added before sale. Photo: Jim Garbo



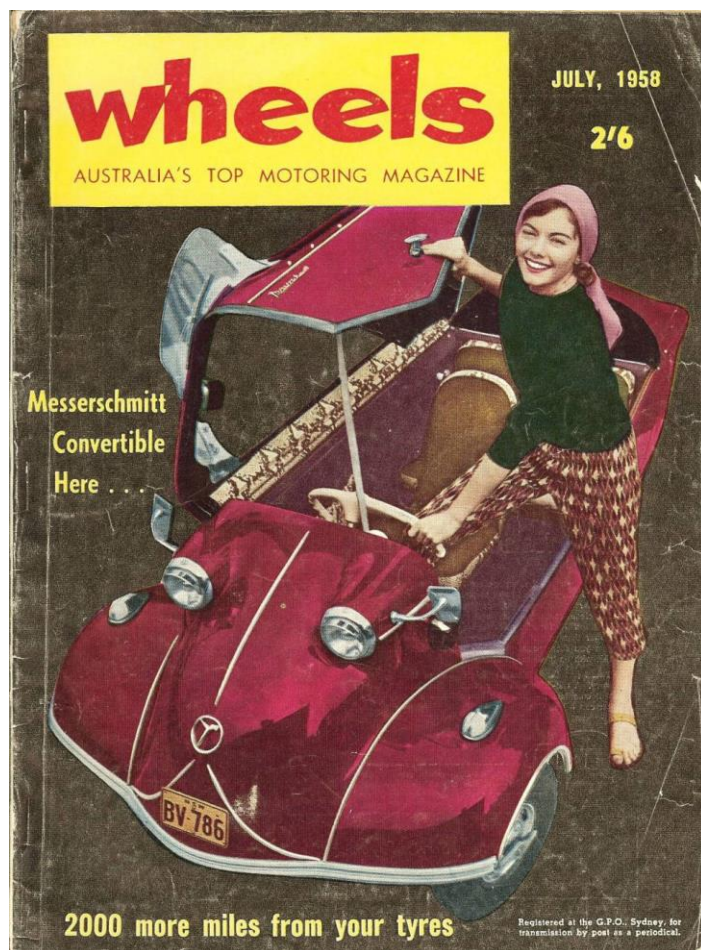
Note that there is no brake light in this rear view and the lighting is the late 1957 German specification with rear/side flashers, brake lights within the rear lights, and a locally sourced number plate lamp. The license plate bracket was installed at the port of entry (or the delivering dealer) it is the exact same bracket that was used on a 1955 Chevrolet front bumper!

A side note: all the port of entry or dealer installed items on U.S.A. cars were installed with American size fasteners, not metric.

Importer from 1955: Gordon Motors Corporation, 93 Nassau Street, New York 38.

Australia (certified and documented total 34 KR201)

According to statistics produced by the Australian Automotive Chamber of Commerce and in conjunction with the Bureau of Statistics, Messerschmitt sales figures in each of the Australian states and territories from 1958 to 1962, have been published in the form of year-books. Fortunately, and unlike other countries, the data is recorded for both KR200 and KR201 types. KR200 (dome top) total: 189 KR201 (Roadster) total 34
KR200 Cabriolet versions are not mentioned so it is unlikely that they were imported.



Australian Dealer Network

1. A.P. North Pty.Ltd. 62-66 Wentworth Avenue, Sydney. NSW
2. Messers. M.S. McLeod Ltd 176-180 Pulteney St., Adelaide. South Australia
3. Riverina Motors and Motorcycles, 472 David Street, Riverina, Albury, NSW.
4. Milledge Bros. 287 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Victoria.
5. Messers. Winterbottom Motor Co. 199 St.George's Terrace, Perth, WA
6. Linford Motors Pty.Ltd. 212 Murray Street, Hobart, Tasmania.

WHEELS magazine for July 1958 clearly shows a genuine KR201 but it appears to be 'Rubinrot' that is a darker shade of red compared to the Signalrot, or Signal Red that was applied to the initial production for the U.K. market.

There is some evidence that Australian imports missed some KR201 details such as the 'porthole' rear end.

From our records we can see that a large consignment was sent to Australia in August 1958 and probably arrived in Perth in early October. Another Messerschmitt owner, Zig Pasznicki from Perth, Western Australia, is the owner of a KR200 68586 and a KR201 68588. They were both sold new in Perth in 1959 by Winterbottom Motors Pty Ltd.



Photo left:

Interior of Australian 68628 also built in August 1958. From our database, it appears a significant batch went for export in this period. Note the perfect original interior that does not have the chrome gear lever with white knob. This series does not have the cut-out for the radio or cut out for the clock on the left. Dash panel is embossed for the clock aperture, but the panel is solid. This is the FMR 'circles' badge era.

Argentina

An Argentinian washing machine manufacturer trading under the name of PANAMBI located in the city of Lomas de Zamora near Buenos Aires was granted a licence to build Messerschmitts by FMR in 1957.



Photo of 2 Argentinian built KR201s at the 2010 Expo Classica event. Photo: Benjamin Krochik



Local sources have stated that up to 1000 KR200 and KR201 examples were built in Argentina from parts imported from FMR and from locally manufactured parts. Photos of the assembly line in Lomas de Zamora show a well equipped factory that would certainly be capable of assembling large numbers of Messerschmitts. Fend visited the Factory in 1957 and there is a photo of him driving a completed KR200 off the assembly line.

Photo left shows some of the Panambi team including Sr. Olivera and Sr. Krochikin

Panambi was listed in the 1959 dealer network list but not in later FMR publications. A fragile political situation may be the reason for this during the period 1958 to 1966. However, a strong following for Messerschmitts still exists there.

Japan



Fend's 1957 export drive extended to Japan and the dealer advert (left) featured in the FMR publication *Karo Extrapost*.

Import Agent: Fuyo Trading Company Ltd. Shimbashi, Minato-ku City, Tokyo.

Dealer locations: Fukuoka City, Hamamatsu, Hanno, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Nishi-Ku, Osaka (3 locations) Shimizu City, Tokyo (5 locations)

The end of Messerschmitt production in Regensburg

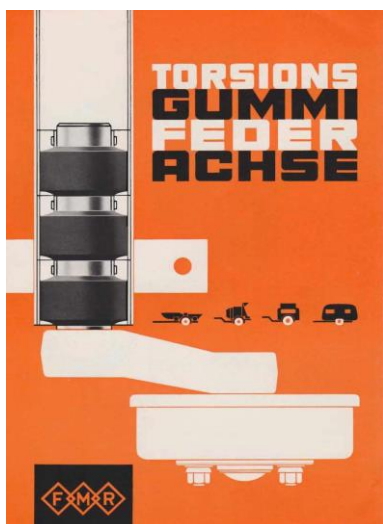


*This is how the last one looked – German spec with side flashers. Kontakt mirrors were not normally fitted by then
Photo: FMR publicity original.*

The Roadster body style was available right to the very end of production in 1964. In fact, the second last Messerschmitt produced, formerly belonging to Dr. Hans Dopjans, was a white Roadster Chassis number 80286. It was later displayed in the Bruce Weiner museum and sold off when the collection was dispersed. This body style, with the folding scissors-type hood frame and removable soft transparent vinyl snap-on side windows, was also available on the Tg 500 to the end of its production. This official FMR factory photo shows the late 201 version for the German market. Notable features are FMR 'diamonds' badge and three trim strips above it, later Hella (British market) type wing lamps, FMR embossed push-on hub caps, and Kontakt mirrors.

A peak of Messerschmitts registered as roadworthy in Germany came in 1960 with 15,378 recorded at the KBA (German equivalent of DVLA in UK or DMV in the USA). A sharp downturn came soon afterwards that ended Tg500 production in 1962 with many Tg body parts and engines left unsold. Meanwhile, the British market remained strong even though the Austin Mini presented stiff competition priced not much higher than a Messerschmitt. One reason for that was the driving licence system that allowed many former motorcyclists to move to covered transport with a familiar gear-change and two-stroke engine. Road tax was also less than half the cost compared to conventional cars and allied with low fuel consumption, this was an attractive proposition. `

In Germany, a fast growing economy brought a sudden end to the post-war austerity that was very harsh indeed for the defeated nation. Messerschmitts were seen as part of that austerity period and quickly fell out of favour as cars like the four-seater Goggomobil came to the market from 1957 with a small engine that could be driven on a motorcycle licence. By 1962 improved earnings and a wide range of conventional small cars made it almost impossible to sell Messerschmitts that were perceived as rather old fashioned. Production numbers fell to less than 100 a month and the assembly line was adapted to build not just vehicles such as the Mokuli and Kultimax, but also drink vending machines and washing machines. This flexibility allowed Messerschmitt production to continue much longer than it might otherwise have done. On 24. February 1964, Director Valentin Knott notified the remaining dealer network that Fritz Fend had already left FMR. In announcing that Messerschmitt production was coming to an end, Knott invited dealers to place their final orders. Sweden and the U.K. network placed orders for the final cars with chassis numbers in the series 80XXX series with final deliveries to Cabin Scooters in London completed by the end of May 1964. Some late KR200 models were sold with KR201 trim – probably to use up old stocks and there is at least one fitted with the Tg500 nose and large headlamps. Initially, this was an expensive optional extra that could be specified for the KR200 but after 1962, a number of standard KR200 models were built using up old stocks of the Tg500 nose and headlamps.



FMR remained in operation at the Lilientahlstrasse factory until 1978 as a subsidiary of MKE making axle and trailer components.
(MKE is the symbol on the Messerschmitt wheel hub – Maschinenbau Knott Eggstätt).

Other FMR products continued for some time including Kultimax agricultural equipment and vending machines.

Spare parts for the KR200/201 continued to be produced up to the early 1970s



Lilienthalstrasse today – a leafy suburb with no trace of the former FRM plant

Following an analysis of all the production data from worldwide sources that is given in the above text, we can estimate that around 450 Kr201s were produced. Thus the KR201, after the Tg500, is the among the most sought-after Regensburg products. Whether original or replica, the KR201 offers a completely different driving experience and is especially enjoyable in warm weather without the hood. For the rear seat passenger exposed without the protection of the screen, it is however not a pleasant experience. Winter is also problematic as the hood does not seal completely at the top of the screen creating a cold draught at the centre of the forehead.

KR201 replica parts have been available from the 1980s and while that has helped restore many original examples, the marque is diluted by hard to detect replicas. Establishing the provenance of genuine cars is a challenge for all except the UK where factory invoices exist. With excellent parts support and a keen following across the globe, the authors expect strong enthusiasm for the Kr201 continue into its seventh decade.

Additional information by David Garner