

Porsche, Switzerland and the

little silver 356

Story and color photos
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Porsche and the beginning of the Swiss importation

As many already know, at the beginning of the Porsche era, some Swiss people played an important role as supporters. The first was Rupprecht von Senger who helped Ferdinand Porsche with financial investments, commitments on the first cars and who provided supplies. Another one was Bernhard Blank with the project to import and sell the 356 in Switzerland.

Like in the past, today Switzerland is an important market for Porsche. This achievement is due thanks to different sources mentioned before as well as, of course, the official collaboration between Porsche and AMAG (Automobil-und Motoren Aktiengesellschaft), Zürich which dates back to 1951.

Hans Stanek, who was Sales Director in the beginning of the 1950s and General Director of AMAG later, convinced Walter Häfner (AMAG's owner) to invest in the Stuttgart sports car. At the beginning Mr. Häfner was skeptical about Porsche cars (he was more VW-oriented), so it took some time for Mr. Stanek to bring home an agreement between Porsche and AMAG.

Finally, on the evening of March 14th 1951, during the Geneva Motor Show an accord between Ferry Porsche and his Commercial Direc-

Hans Stanek's racing career included stints behind the wheels of what were, at the time, front-line Porsche racers including Glöcklers (left) and a 550 (below). He also raced a Speedster and took part in both road races and hillclimbs.



tor Prof. Albert Prinzig on one side and Walter Häfner and Hans Stanek on the other side, was signed. The document regarding the official import of Porsche cars into Switzerland was signed on April 5th 1951. The agreement provided the delivery of the 1,3 Liter Coupés and Cabriolets for the Porsche and the placing of 50 cars until the end of that year for the AMAG. Surprisingly, in the first nine months of collaboration already 78 cars were sold.

Hans Stanek (1916-2009)

In the 1950s, Hans Stanek was well integrated into the Porsche world. Professionally he was the General Director of AMAG and supporter of the official importation of Porsche cars into Switzerland. During his free time he successfully raced, among others, Glöckler-Porsches as well as Porsche 550 cars. During his driving career, Hans Stanek won many road and hill climb races worldwide as well as the championship in Switzerland. His cars were distinguished by the Swiss racing colors red and white.

From 1951, the following quantity of cars were sold through AMAG (source: *AMAG gestern - heute* book):

1951: 78 cars
1952: 126 cars, cum. total 204
1953: 144 cars, cum. total 348
1954: 176 cars, cum. total 524
1955: 186 cars, cum. total 710
1956: 176 cars, cum. total 886
1957: 195 cars, cum. total 1,081

In 1954 Mr. Stanek was one of the founding members of Porsche Club Zurich and its first president until 1962.

In autumn 1957, Ferdinand Porsche went to Schinznach-Bad (the AMAG headquarters) to personally deliver to Hans Stanek the keys of the 1000th imported Porsche 356 into Switzerland. It was such a huge achievement that it needed to be celebrated. On that occasion Ferdinand Porsche not only delivered to Hans Stanek a couple of keys and the title to the celebration's car (Porsche 356 A) but, also something more personal and unique - the little silver 356.

As praise for his professional achievements and the results obtained for racing Porsche cars, Hans Stanek received a unique gift directly from Ferry Porsche: a handmade silver 356 model car with this script.

"Hans Stanek mit Dank für sportlichen Einsatz und zum 1000. Wagen – Ferry Porsche".

This model car measures 35.5 cm in length, 17 cm in width and 12 cm in height and it is handcrafted in silver 835. The model car reproduces the lines of a 356 Pre-A while it is clearly visible that it has been created by hand. The exact manufacture date is unknown but, it is assumed that it was made shortly before 1957.

Back in 1952/3, the driver Mario Dalla Favera (source: Cristophorus #4) received a similar silver 356 model car and in 1962 and 1963 two more recent model cars (356 BT6/C) were given to Gerhard Koch (Meistertitel 1962) and to Herbert Linge (Rundstrecken-Meistertitel 1963).

Not many know about the existence of the aforementioned model car. In fact, this model car has been treasured safely and with care in the Stanek Family for 57 years.

This is for sure an interesting piece of Porsche history in Switzerland.



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Located in the paddock at Miller Motorsports Park



Air Power Racing builds high performance 356 engines. We use the best materials and technology available to produce strong, reliable power plants for all 356s and 912s. We specialize in large displacement 356 street, rally and race motors up to 1925cc. Our engines are assembled to factory standards and then correctly tuned on our dyno. We can build one for your baby using your engine or one of our cores, just let us know your goals and we can make it happen. We also race GT3 Cups in the Pirelli GT3 Cup Series, come see us at a racetrack near you!