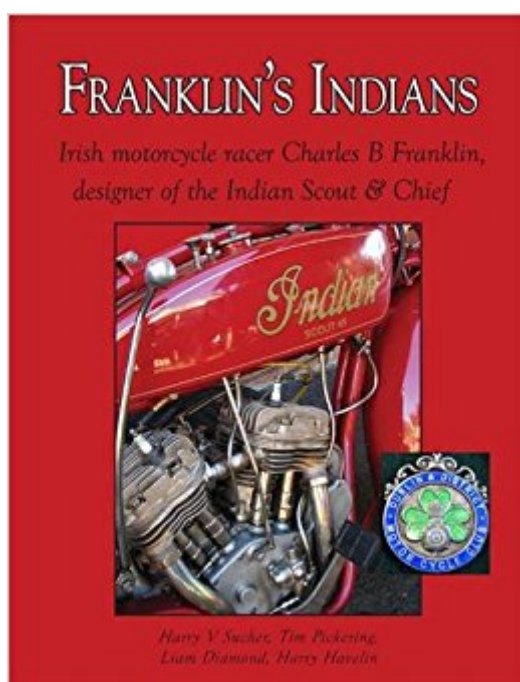


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Franklin's Indians: Charles B. Franklin, Designer Of The Indian Scout And Chief & Irish Motorcycle Racer. Harry V. Sucher ... [Et Al.]



Synopsis

The Indian Scout and Chief are two of the best known and best loved of all classic American motorcycles. The man who designed them, Charles Franklin, was responsible for many advanced design concepts including remarkable improvements in side-valve combustion chamber design that pre-dated the work of Ricardo. He championed an holistic approach to design that popularised new features such as the semi unit-construction 'powerplant', helical-gear primary drive, double-loop full-cradle frames and a host of other improvements to the early motorcycles. This book not only chronicles his life but also sheds much new light on the often turbulent history of the Indian Motorcycle Company itself. Franklin was born and raised in Ireland where he quickly became involved in motorcycle racing during the pioneer years. He rapidly established himself as Ireland's first big star of racing and was the first to represent Ireland in international motorcycle competition. In the Isle of Man TT he consistently finished in the top eight, and in 1911 claimed second place, a remarkable achievement in itself. But it was when he moved to Indian in the USA, where he became the Chief Design Engineer, that his genius really flowed. His designs catapulted Indian back into the forefront of motorcycle design in the 1920s and '30s and his racing engines and motorcycles won much glory for Indian against stiff opposition. The Indian has been the iconic image for American big V-Twins down the years, due in no small measure to the motorcycles designed by Charles B Franklin. This is a much needed book for all Indian fans and all who love the history of the classic American V-Twins. An enthusiast's dream of a book!

Book Information

Hardcover: 352 pages

Publisher: Panther Publications (August 1, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0956497551

ISBN-13: 978-0956497550

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 0.8 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.5 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,224,228 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #112 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > Motorcycle Racing #860 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Automotive > Motorcycles #11308 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation

Customer Reviews

It is a very interesting book on the development of Motorcycles in general and also the Indian Motorcycle. I know a little more about CB Franklin now but not a lot. It is definitively a great read for anyone interested in the development of motor cycles in the early 1900's and there is some great references in the book. I bought the book and thoroughly enjoyed it and would recommend it to any motor head or motor cyclist interested in the history of motorcycle development in the early 20th century.

This book is a history of the life of Charles B. Franklin, an Irishman and Brooklands racer who came to the US to become chief engineer of Indian. But for me the most interesting revelations are two;1) The advanced but never produced prototype overhead-valve Indians of the 1920s are described.2) Franklin's discovery of how to avoid detonating combustion by means of squish led to "amazing" victories of Franklin-built flat-head Indians over the supposedly superior overhead-valve engines of other makers. This discovery was independent of the development of squish by British engines pioneer Harry Ricardo.

Amazing research on a too-little-understood era of American motorcycling. Indian was at the forefront of American motorcycle technology, and Franklin's 'Scout' changed American motorcycling, and racing, for the next 40 years. The work it must have taken to assemble all this information is staggering, and it's a very readable tome. If you're interested in Indians, or American motorcycle history, this is a far better book than just about anything else on the subject.

I'm not a big reader of Motor books but this one was great. A good mix of personal story of the individual and company history. Very enjoyable and recommended.

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