



The Wankel Rotary Engine: A History

By John B. Hege

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Conceived in the 1930s, simplified and successfully tested in the 1950s, the darling of the automotive industry in the early 1970s, then all but abandoned before resurging for a brilliant run as a high-performance powerplant for Mazda, the Wankel rotary engine has long been an object of fascination and more than a little mystery. A remarkably simple design (yet understood by few), it boasts compact size, light weight and nearly vibration-free operation.

In the 1960s, German engineer Felix Wankel's invention was beginning to look like a revolution in the making. Though still in need of refinement, it held much promise as a smooth and powerful engine that could fit in smaller spaces than piston engines of similar output. Auto makers lined up for licensing rights to build their own Wankels, and for a time analysts predicted that much of the industry would convert to rotary power.

This complete and well-illustrated account traces the full history of the engine and its use in various cars, motorcycles, snowmobiles and other applications. It clearly explains the working of the engine and the technical challenges it presented—the difficulty of designing effective and durable seals, early emissions troubles, high fuel consumption, and others. The work done by several companies to overcome these problems is described in detail, as are the economic and political troubles that nearly killed the rotary in the 1970s, and the prospects for future rotary-powered vehicles.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Definitive...readable, technically accurate, and very comprehensive...a must-read...all levels" -- *Choice*

"Excellent...educational...a good read" -- *SAH Journal*

"Hege has thoughtfully penned a complete history...guaranteed to delight" -- *Old Cars Weekly*

About the Author

John B. Hege is an automotive technician in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who has followed the Wankel rotary since his and its early days.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sharon Self:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important take action, like looking for your favorite reserve and reading a e-book. Beside you can solve your condition; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled The Wankel Rotary Engine: A History. Try to stumble through book The Wankel Rotary Engine: A History as your close friend. It means that it can to get your friend when you feel alone and beside those of course make you smarter than ever. Yeah, it is very fortuned in your case. The book makes you much more confidence because you can know every little thing by the book. So , let us make new experience along with knowledge with this book.

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Lucille Yang:

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