

Laurin & Klement Slavia Type B (1899–1904)

- › **The Slavia Type B was the first Laurin & Klement motorbike to be raced for promotional purposes**
- › **The 240 cc single-cylinder engine generated a maximum output of 1.75 hp**
- › **Weighing just 55 kg, the Slavia Type B reached a top speed of 40 km/h**

Mladá Boleslav, 12 October 2026 – The lightweight Slavia Type B, powered by a 1.75 hp engine, was the first Laurin & Klement machine used to promote the brand through racing. It competed in hill climbs such as Exelberg, Semmering, and Ries, as well as in the Paris–Berlin and Paris–Vienna long-distance races.

Production of the Laurin & Klement Slavia Type B began in 1899. It made its public debut alongside the Type A on 18 November that year at the cycle racing track in Prague-Bubny. Its air-cooled, four-stroke, 240 cc single-cylinder engine was mounted transversely low in the frame to improve handling and stability. The engine produced up to 1.75 hp, and the motorbike's light weight of just 55 kg helped it reach a top speed of 40 km/h.

Early motorbikes did not have gearboxes, so a flat leather belt drove the rear wheel directly from the engine, giving the Slavia Type B a single fixed gear ratio. Riders therefore also had to use the pedals and a conventional bicycle chain to start the engine and provide additional propulsion. The motorbike had a wheelbase of 1,325 mm.

The Slavia Type B holds a special place in Škoda's history as the first Laurin & Klement machine entered in an international motor race. At the time, the long-distance Paris–Berlin race was considered the toughest event in Europe. Fewer than half the competitors completed the three-day, 1,196-kilometre race, and the Slavia Type B was the only motorbike to reach the finish.

Between 1899 and 1904, Laurin & Klement built 540 Slavia Type B motorbikes in Mladá Boleslav. The example on display dates from 1901 and is the oldest known to be still in running order. It is on loan from a private Czech collection.

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- > effectively exploits the potential in important growth markets such as India, Vietnam and the ASEAN region;
- > currently offers customers 14 passenger car model ranges: Fabia, Scala, Octavia, Superb, Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Epiq, Elroq, Enyaq, Peaq, Slavia, Kylaq and Kushaq;
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