The Parilla story

Over the years Parilla has been a prolific maker of kart engines that have always been at the forefront of karting. The marque has not only been successful at International level but also in both National and one model events with a variety of engines at various prices. This article looks at the first 20 years.

V11 – 1961

This was the first Parilla kart engine and was a badge engineered version of the Saetta V11. Apart from the colour of the fan cowl – red for the Parilla and black for the Saetta there is no difference. This engine first appeared at the British round of the World Championships held at Shenington in 1961. Results from the day show that the Komet K12 was a more successful engine and certainly had a better design. The inlet port on the V11 which turned through 90deg into the Rotary valve cover can't have helped the breathing.

S12 - 1962

This is a very rare version of the V11 that came out in 1963. It is like the V11 but with a more conventional intake position.

S13 – 1963

This was the last of the Parilla fan cooled models and was introduced shortly before the launch of the Tecno kart. With its ground breaking offset seat and side mounted engine this kart rendered fan cooling unnecessary and made these engines redundant. Most S13s then had their fans and cowl removed and for 1964 the engine was re-homologated with the head turned though 90 deg to improve cooling. This gave the engine a new lease of life in the lower priced Sport class in the UK. For 1966 the engine was downgraded to Class I modified B (equivalent to 100 National) and proved very popular explaining why there are so many of these still about today.

GP15 – 1964

This was a ground breaking engine designed specifically for the Tecno kart and saw the introduction of the familiar radial finned cylinder head and finned crankcases. Initially this engine departed from the regular 53.8mm stroke and was launched with a shorter 53mm stroke. This was quite short lived and very few 53mm engines were produced. This engine was designed for exceptional performance rather than longevity and had a two-piece crankshaft with the drive side crankhalf integral with the crankpin. This enabled the driveside crankhalf to be heavily chamfered lowering the intake port to give a better intake shape. However, the major disadvantage was that if the big end pin was damaged or worn then the crank half needed replacing. GP15Ls come up for sale occasionally and many have scrap cranks. So successful was the Tecno Parilla GP15L that 8 out of top 10 finishers in the 1964 World Championships used this combination. Tecno Parilla won the World Championships again in 1966, this time at the hands of Suzanna Raganelli, the only woman to ever win the World Championships.

TG14 – 1964

This engine combined the unfinned crankcases and robust three-piece crank from the S13 with the GP 15 Head and Barrel which gave it improved cooling. Initially launched in the Class I Super class alongside the GP15 it was not popular until it was later downgraded to Class I Sport. It has since had many new leases of life in the UK and France in National classes.

BA 13 - 1965

This engine was meant to replace the S13 by providing a similar design but with much improved cooling. It was designed as a National engine for more affordable classes. It has a unique Barrel and head design not shared with any other Parilla. The crankcase and three-piece crank is identical to the S13. In 1965 the engine was introduced in Class I Sport where it competed against the superior Komet K77. For 1968 the BA13 was downgraded to Class I modified where it was much more competitive against the Komet K33.

MK16 – 1966 (1968 UK)

The MK 16 was introduced in late 1966 for International racing but was rejected for the UK as it was above the Class I Super price limit. This was resolved by the following year. The engine is a development of the GP15L but has wider spaced head and barrel stud pattern making these two parts unique to the MK16 and the later HF17 models. The MK16 retains the two-piece crankshaft of the GP15L. This was the first Parilla to have the wider fins around the exhaust port to improve cooling. The engine was said to suffer from vibration problems due to the slim drive side crank half. Despite this Parilla retained the World Championship in 1967

HF17 – 1969

This was a development of the MK16 but is almost identical in appearance. There are minor changes to the crankshaft and porting to improve balance and gas flow. In this form Parilla returned to International success with François Goldstein winning his first of many World Championships for Parilla. He won again in 1970 using Parilla HF17 power.

SS20 – 1971 (1972 in the UK)

The introduction of the SS20 for the 1971 World Championships, bought an end to the use of the two-piece cranks in international Parillas. This engine uses a three-piece crankshaft like the S13, BA13 and TG14L and saw a return to the standard cylinder stud pattern used on these earlier engines. This engine still retained the machined face to take a Dellorto fuel pump. This was a real game changer in terms of durability. Many of these engines are still running today. The 1971 and 1972 World Championships went to François Goldstein.

TT22 – 1973

This engine is identical to the SS20 in external appearance with the only difference being the TT porting. It seems likely that the 'works' Parilla that Goldstien used in the 1972 World Championships was a TT22. All previous Parilla engines had a 3rd transfer port fed via a window in the piston but the TT22 deleted the window and fed the 3rd port directly from the crankcase. However, this was the era of the second generation Komet K88 which also added TT porting, and it was not until 1978 that Parilla gained another World Championship.

TT23 – 1978

This engine was the first engine to delete the machining for the Dellorto fuel pump and adding fins to the front of the crankcase. Sharing the same 53.8 stroke as the other Parillas, the TT23 has larger diameter crankwheels. These are 87mm rather than 86mm on the other 3-piece crank models. It was with this engine that Lake Speed joined the history books as the first American to win the World Championships.

TT26 - 1978

This engine is identical to the TT23 but with a 98mm con-rod. This was presumably Internationally homologated so that it could be developed and used if found to perform better than the TT23.

TT27 – 1980

The TT27 which is identical in external appearance to the TT23 reverted to the smaller 86mm crankwheels common with other three-piece crank Parilla engines. In all other respects, it is the same engine. Dutchman, Peter de Bruijn won the 1980 World Championship. It would be the last time a Parilla would win the World Championships for another 11 years

TT25 – 1980

This engine was the first reed valve Parilla. Apart from the crankcases this engine shares common parts with the TT27

TT31 – 1983

This is identical in external appearance to the TT27 but has a unique shorter stroke of 52mm and a 98mm con-rod.