

CLASSIC DRIVER



1936 Delahaye Type 135

Lot sold	USD 170 696 - 210 087 GBP 130 000 - 160 000 (listed)	Lenkung	Links
Baujahr	1936	Zustand	Gebraucht
Chassisnummer	47191 (see text)	Standort	
Zahl der Sitze	2	Kraftstoff	Benzin
Antrieb	Zweirad	Außenfarbe	Sonstige
Losnummer	309	Motornummer	47191 (see text)

Beschreibung

From the estate of the late Graham Galliers
1936 Delahaye 3.6-Litre Type 135S Replica Sports
Registration no. 945 XUE
Chassis no. 47191 (see text)
Engine no. 47191 (see text)

Based initially at Tours and from 1906 in Paris, Delahaye built its first automobile in 1894 and soon diversified into commercial vehicle manufacture. As one of the oldest French marques Delahaye enjoyed an excellent reputation for quality, but by the Salon of 1932 its cars were not selling well and had an "old fashioned" image.

The Delahaye management instructed their recently appointed chief engineer, Jean François, to design a range of cars for the 1933 Paris Salon incorporating the latest technical features. The new cars were the 2.1-litre, four-cylinder Type 134 of 112" wheelbase and a 3.2 litre six cylinder type 135 of 124" wheelbase. These were the first Delahayes with independent front suspension, which was mounted on a new chassis of welded construction incorporating box-section side members with cross members, central tube and floorpan providing excellent torsional rigidity. The Type 134 engine shared its 107mm stroke with the 3.2 litre six which, although designed for car use, had first appeared in a Delahaye commercial vehicle. Equipped with triple Solex carburettors, the 3.2-litre, six-cylinder, overhead-valve unit produced 113bhp.

To promote the new image Delahaye started a competition program competing in major rallies with special cars using the six cylinder engine in the four cylinder chassis and breaking records at Montlhery, where a monoplace saloon broke all international class records up to 10,000 kilometres

A 3.2-litre Type 135 finished 5th at Le Mans in 1935 but for other events with looser regulations Delahaye had used a non standard 84mm bore engine of 3.6 litres and for 1936 it became available on production cars. Cars fitted with the 3.6 litre engine were thenceforth known as "Competition" Delahayes.

For 1936 the formula for Grands Prix in France was for sports cars and with the backing of millionaire Lucy Schell Delahaye decided to compete strongly at the highest level and Francois designed a purpose built sports racing car. A new shorter and lower chassis was used with a narrowed and lightened rear axle with stronger flanged axle shafts, special steel brake drums lightened crankshaft and cylinder block and a new cylinder head and camshaft which changed the order of the ports. Triple Solex 44HD racing carburettors were used and the exhaust manifold was fabricated with six branches. The steering box and column were lightened and given a higher ratio. The 4 speed gearbox featured an attractive remote control. They were bodied in lightweight alloy and not only were very functional but also graceful, aerodynamic and reliable.

It is believed that only 14 short-wheelbase Delahaye 135 Speciales were built, of which fewer than ten remain today.

With 160bhp and an all up weight of 18cwt, the new 3.6-litre Type 135S was soon making a name for itself, taking 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th places in the 1936 French Grand Prix and winning the Monte Carlo Rally in 1937 and Le Mans 24-Hour Race outright in 1938. Prince Bira won the 1938 Donington 12-Hour Sports Car Race in Prince Chula's example and the same car owned by Rob Walker won the Brooklands' 'fastest road car in England' race against formidable opposition.

This Delahaye 135S replica was constructed over many years by marque specialist Ian Polson contemporaneously with his long term and painstaking rebuild of chassis number '47190', an original 135S now in the Mullin Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. The chassis has been given the number '47191', the identity of an original 135S that no longer exists, but makes no claim to be that car. All components are correct Delahaye, converted in much the same way as the works did in period, with a proper Delahaye racing cylinder head (purchased from Rob Walker), correct racing Solex carburettors (remanufactured), racing water pump, etc. During Graham's ownership Hartford friction dampers were substituted for the correct Raxof. These are offered with the lot.

The interior trim was done by John Foy, acknowledged as one of the best coach trimmers in the country. The Delahaye had been purchased in 2003 as a project for circa £40,000 (£25,000 plus an Austin-Healey 100 valued at £15,000). Work commenced immediately and was completed circa 2006 at a total cost of around £250,000. Restoration invoices and photographs are on file and the car also comes with current HTP FIA papers and a V5C registration document.

Following the car's completion, Graham found that he could not fit in it comfortably; he was unwilling to alter the car's lines and so used it sparingly. To get the Delahaye sorted, he asked Bonhams Motoring Department specialist John Polson to race it for him in VSCC and other pre-war sports car races in 2012. With its few minor teething troubles quickly sorted, the car formed part of the winning team in the VSCC Relay Race at Pembrey in 2012, and elsewhere proved competitive with short-chassis 8C Alfas, etc, just as the real thing was in period but no replica has ever managed.

The gearbox is currently being rebuilt, but will be completed by the time of sale. Delahaye manual gearboxes were notoriously unreliable in racing, with breakages a frequent occurrence in period. This led to many cars being fitted with Cotals in period or with Hotchkiss/Riley gearboxes in historic racing today. Sure enough, John Polson had encountered gearbox problems while racing the Galliers Delahaye. Since Graham did not want to depart from original specification, the decision was taken to have stronger gears made and ex Borg-Warner and Cosworth transmission engineer, Cecil Schumacher, was commissioned to redesign them to withstand the engine's massive torque without altering the Delahaye gearbox's fundamental design.

A perfect 'tool room copy', '945 UXE' is indistinguishable from the real thing and undoubtedly a potential winner in any pre-war sports car race, as well as a fast and exciting road car.

Bonhams 1793

Bonhams

AUCTIONEERS SINCE 1793

Titel Herr

Vorname Jamie

Nachname Knight

101 New Bond Street

London

W1S 1SR

Vereinigtes Königreich

Telefonnummer +44-2074685801

Fax +44-2074477401

<http://www.bonhams.com>

<https://www.classicdriver.com/de/car/delahaye/135-m/1936/235712>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.