


# CLASSIC DRIVER



## 1949 Talbot Lago T26 - T26 Grand Sport SWB par Saoutchik

T26 Grand Sport SWB par Saoutchik

Lot sold	<b>USD 0</b> EUR 0 (listed)	Lenkung	Links
Baujahr	1949	Innenfarbe	Sonstige
Chassisnummer	110109	Zustand	Gebraucht
Losnummer	46	Standort	
		Kraftstoff	Sonstige
		Außenfarbe	Sonstige
		Automobiltyp	Sonstige

### Beschreibung

Unregistered

- Extremely rare and genuine SWB T26 Grand Sport chassis
- A chef d'oeuvre of French coachbuilding
- Commissioned by Saoutchik directly from Talbot
- Shown at multiple Salons in period
- Never shown at any modern concours
- Ex Geneva Show 1950, Ex London Motorshow 1951

Talbot Lago T26 Grand Sport chassis 110109 was delivered on November 5, 1949 to the Carrosserie Saoutchik at no. 46 rue Jacques Dulud in Neuilly-sur-Seine. Only 29 short wheelbase (265 cm) race-derived Grand Sport chassis were constructed by Talbot between 1948 and 1952. T26GS 110109 is one of these very rare and extremely desirable chassis.

On the Talbot build sheet, which is reproduced in the book Talbot-Lago Grand Sport - The Car From

Paris by Peter M. Larsen and Ben Erickson, "Saoutchik" is written into both the carrosserie and the client fields. This indicates that Saoutchik ordered chassis 110109 directly from the Talbot-Lago factory to be bodied at his own expense for show purposes. It should also be noted that engine 118 is the correct engine number installed by Talbot in this chassis. The number discrepancy between engine and chassis number is due to the internal numbering system used by Talbot-Lago. This is evident on the build sheet for 110109.

Saoutchik fitted chassis 110109 with an exquisite fastback coupé design which had first been shown at the 1948 Paris Salon. A total of six Grand Sport chassis received this swoopy body. The first two had a low roofline. When it was discovered that the car was difficult to drive, a new version was developed with a slightly higher roofline. Four of these "high-roof" coupés were built, and 110109 is one of these four cars.

This coupé design with its complex and sweeping lines is regarded by many as one of the most beautiful closed cars ever built and as the chef d'oeuvre of postwar French coachbuilding. Since Saoutchik was building this car to show off his talents, 110109 received virtually every styling enhancement on the rather comprehensive Saoutchik "menu". This included lovely chromed scallops on the fenders and an exciting sweep-spear on the body side. In order to make the many chromed embellishments stand out, 110109 was painted a single royal blue color with a lighter contrasting interior. It received an elegant three piece-grille treatment, and most of the brightwork was substantially wider, thicker and longer than on the five other coupés built to this design.

To round off this flamboyant concoction, Saoutchik gave 110109 Buick-inspired teardrop-shaped "portholes" on the side of the hood, an item which Pierre Saoutchik reserved for his most sumptuous designs. 110109 is the only T26 Grand Sport Saoutchik coupé to feature these portholes. 110109 was registered 8-RS 3, and Saoutchik commissioned promotional photos shortly after its completion. With a chic Parisian fashion model striking various elegant poses around the car, 110109 was shot on a location in the Bois de Boulogne, which had been the scene of previous Saoutchik photo shoots.

Well-known Talbot-Lago historian Pierre Abeillon regarded 110109 as a lost car, stating that "even the Club Talbot did not have a clue where it is currently located, that is if it still exists". Fortunately, 110109 is not lost, although a good deal of its history remains unknown. Being a Saoutchik "workhorse", the car was displayed at several of the important Salons when new. First, 110109 went to Switzerland, where it was shown in Geneva in March 1950. Painted in a single color as in the Bois de Boulogne photo shoot, 110109 was displayed there with enough potted plants around it to make the setting look almost tropical. After the Geneva show, 110109 went back to France. In June 1950, it received the Grand Prix d'honneur at the Gala d'Été de la Presse (Summer Gala of the Press) in Charbonnières close to Lyon. The car carried the number 8 and was presented by the Dumont Frères, who were the Talbot concessionaries in Lyon.

Dumont Frères were not able to sell 110109, and it seems that the car then entered into a series of transshipments between several Talbot dealers. 110109 was most likely still owned by Saoutchik, who refrained from showing it at the Paris Salon in October 1950, displaying Talbot-Lago Grand Sport 110119 instead. Next outing for 110109 was the Brussels Show in January 1951. Guerret, the Belgian Talbot concessionary, had taken a large stand, where he also displayed 110120, the third Grand Sport convertible by Saoutchik. For this show, 110109 had been freshened with a two-tone paint scheme: the fender inserts were now painted a lighter contrasting shade, perhaps matching the interior. The final contemporary airing of 110109 was the London Motor Show in March of 1951.

110109 did not sell at the London show and went back to France. It was originally fitted with a LAGO chassis plate which indicates that Saoutchik intended to export the car, as cars for France were badged TALBOT. There is no further history or photographic material which can help document the ensuing decades. It seems that in the end, the car spent its entire life in France and never again left the country, although the rare LAGO plate remains on the firewall. 110109 was eventually acquired by Roger Baillon, where it has remained part of the Baillon collection until now.

Before his death, Baillon revealed that he purchased 110109 about 35 years ago in the east of France, which would date his acquisition to around 1980. Already then, 110109 was in barnfind condition and had been rear-ended, or had an accident to the rear. However, since it is known that

Roger Baillon bought most of his classics prior to 1968, and 110109 was located for untold years next to his Hispano-Suiza by Million-Guiet and Delahaye by Faget-Varnet, there is the distinct possibility that 110109 was acquired earlier than 1980.

Baillon was a hoarder of fantastical automobiles. He placed 110109 in a lean-to shed in his collection alongside a Delahaye 235 Chapron coach, which did not provide much in the way of protection against the elements. There, this gorgeous coupé rested for more than three decades. It is now coming to auction as one of the most important barnfinds of the decade. Irrespective of whether the coming owner desires to preserve 110109 as a cultural artefact or bring the car back to its former glory, the opportunity to acquire this unrestored crowning achievement of French coachbuilding will never be repeated.

110109 is destined to be the unique centerpiece of any prominent collection.

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