

CLASSIC DRIVER



Henderson motorcycles De Luxe

Stafford, 17. Oktober

Lot sold

USD 24 776 - 33 035
GBP 18 000 - 24 000 (listed)

Motornummer

12087A

Zustand

Gebraucht

Standort



Motorradtyp

Straßenmaschine

Farbe

Sonstige

Beschreibung

c.1924 Henderson 1,951cc Deluxe Six

Engine no. 12087A

- * Rare six-cylinder version
- * Three-speed transmission
- * Restored condition

One of the most charismatic names in American motorcycling history, Henderson produced nothing but four-cylinder motorcycles in the course of its 19-year existence. Founded by Tom and William Henderson in Detroit in 1912, the firm passed into the control of Chicago-based cycle maker Ignaz Schwinn, owner of Excelsior, in 1917. Schwinn shifted production from Detroit to the Excelsior factory in Chicago and the Hendersons soon moved on. Tom left the industry but William went on to found the Ace motorcycle company - later taken over by Indian - and thereby had a hand in the design of all the major American-built fours.

Although early models featured an unusually lengthy frame extending well forward of the engine, the Henderson, like the contemporary Indian and Harley-Davidson, was an advanced design for its day. Displacing 965cc initially, the air-cooled cylinders were arranged longitudinally in the frame and employed mechanically operated 'F-head' (inlet-over-exhaust) valve gear. There was single-gear transmission but the Henderson outclassed its rivals for convenience by having a clutch and a hand-crank starter instead of pedals. A shorter frame, folding kickstarter and three-speed sliding-gear transmission were all Henderson features by 1917.

After the take-over, Schwinn soon abandoned the Henderson's original design, which was replaced by one drawn up by Henderson engineer Arthur O Lemon. Introduced for 1920, the all-new Excelsior-built Henderson Model K boasted a 1,301cc sidevalve engine equipped with forced lubrication, a twin-downtube frame, strengthened front fork and enclosed rear chain. Modifications to the Deluxe (introduced for 1922) mainly concentrated on improvements to the gearbox. Top speed was a guaranteed 80mph and with the optional alloy pistons installed a Deluxe could touch 100mph, an astonishing performance for the time and one matched by few contemporary cars.

It seems that during the 1920s and 1930s (and possibly later) a number of Henderson fours were converted to six cylinders, a process that required extensive re-engineering of the engine as well as modifications to the frame. It is not known how many of these six-cylinder Hendersons were made and by whom, and the identity of this one's creator remains a mystery. There are no documents with this Lot.

Bonhams 1793

Bonhams

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