

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## [Driven: Aston Martin DB5 - Upcoming Bonhams Sale](#)



**Purchased at the inaugural Newport Pagnell Sale in May 2000, this DB5 is one of the highlights of this year's catalogue. We drove it this week; a moving testament to £170,000 spent with Works Service...**

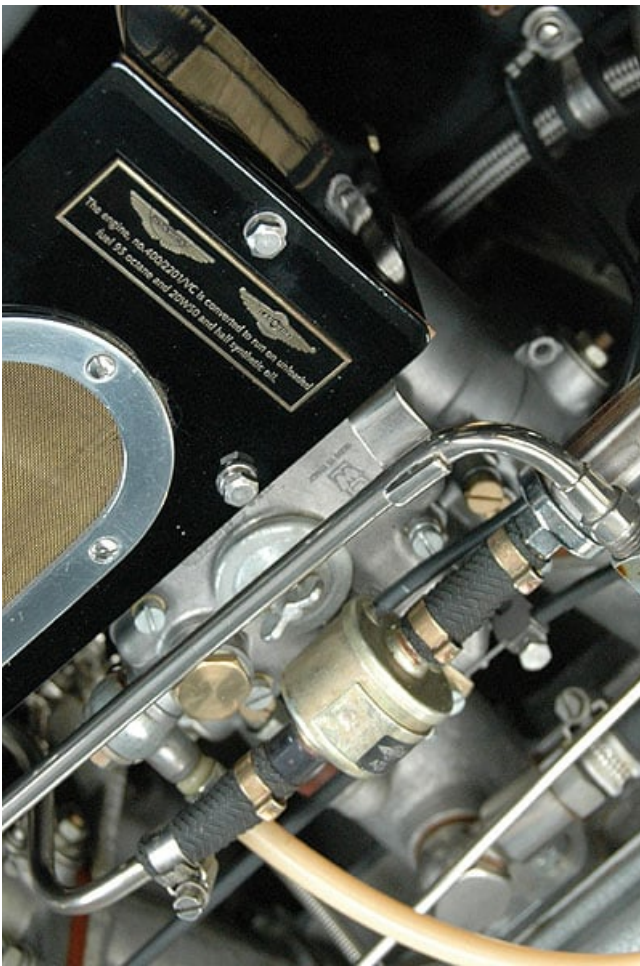
Sitting outside **Works Service** in Newport Pagnell, the **1965 DB5** looks a picture. Not a picture you could take, unfortunately, due to April 'showers' of almost deluge proportions. Nevertheless, resplendent in its classy Aston racing green livery, the immaculately finished car is everything a **David Brown**-era Aston Martin enthusiast could wish for.

Three sizeable folders accompany the car, listing in incredible detail all the bills (many), MOTs, tax discs, original scanned registration documents, estimates and all the other minutiae of long-term classic car ownership. The present, lady, owner had entrusted the car to **Kingsley Riding-Felce's Works Service** team for an extensive programme of work. It was not a 'body-off' restoration – but was all but.



Clearly, somewhere along the line classic rallying had been intended for the car. It features period-correct **Marchal** fog lamps, subtly widened rear wheel arches to allow more-offset and large wheels greater travel, and suspension engineered by **Rhoddy Harvey-Bailey**. Having been involved with **Harvey-Bailey Engineering** (HBE) and racing Aston Martins in the 1980s, take it from me: this chap knows his stuff and his more extreme set-ups were virtually unbeatable on the tracks at the time.

The car runs with almost imperceptibly lower ride-height at the back as a result of Rhoddy's ministrations. But please, please, don't consider this some sort of a track or competition car - it's not, as a drive on British A-roads proves.



Inside the Aston, it's as you'd expect from a machine with a history of **Works Service** care and attention. The beige leather is either new or well-patinated and cared-for, while the seats carry headrests, carefully colour-matched with special, 'soft' leather. Kingsley carefully explained to me how these had been incorporated into the seatbacks in the same way as the (rarely specified) 1960s originals. There's air-



conditioning, an original **Motorola** radio converted to FM with a 3-CD set-up in the boot, and – for the co-driver – a **Retrotrip** historic rally tripmeter and a reading lamp in the glovebox.

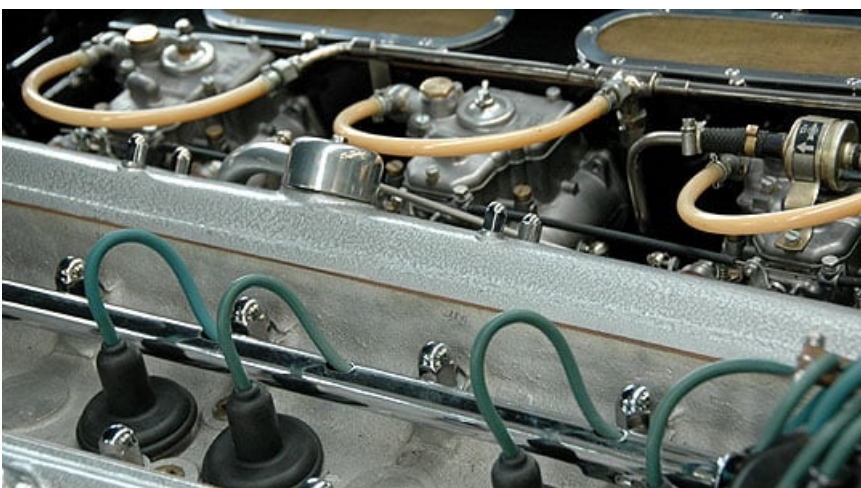
**Tim Schofield** of **Bonhams** was my navigator for this trip so, buckling on the correct-pattern seatbelts, we set off into the Buckinghamshire countryside. Naturally, the engine has been totally rebuilt: to 4.2-litre specification and featuring triple **Webers** and **Vantage** cams. The result is gutsy performance available from 2-3000rpm right up to a self-imposed maximum of around 5500rpm.





As a 1965 car, it's fitted with the dependable ZF 5-speed transmission that gives relaxed cruising in fifth, with third and fourth available for strong acceleration. The most impressive aspect of this particular DB5, however, is not the way it goes on the straights: it's the ride and handling.

Aston Martin got it so right with the DB4/5/6 series of cars. The seats are comfortable for really long trips, the visibility is superb and the studded, woodrim steering wheel sits easy in the hands. Steering is a *little* heavy when parking, but on the move it's as light as you'd want.



With the extensive list of work carried out on this car, you'd expect it to drive like a new car. Well, it does – but that's no criticism. These were great cars when new and this one rides bumps and copes with corners, braking and accelerating very much as would one straight from Newport Pagnell 44 years ago. Just a little better, that's all.

During our drive I said to Tim that I could "happily drive this car to the South of France". Okay, maybe that was a comment on the English weather, but it was heartfelt and genuine.

Now, where's my Michelin map...

The [1965 Aston Martin DB5](#), chassis 2194/R, will be sold as Lot 340 at the **Bonhams May 9 Sale of Aston Martin and Lagonda Motor Cars and Related Automobilia** at Works Service, Newport Pagnell.

To see all Motor Car entries in the Classic Driver car database, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see our preview of the forthcoming sale.

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