
1924 Hispano-Suiza H6C

Lot sold	USD 463 848 - 530 112 GBP 350 000 - 400 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1924	Condition	Used
Chassis number	11024	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	338	Engine number	320098

Description

The ex-Captain J E P Howey

1924 Hispano-Suiza H6C 8.0-Litre Short Chassis Sports

Chassis no. 11024

Engine no. 320098

The choice of European royalty, Indian maharajahs, Hollywood film stars and industrial tycoons, the legendary Hispano-Suiza was superbly engineered and imitated unashamedly by some of the world's leading car manufacturers. Although the marque was of Spanish origin, it was Hispano-Suiza's French-built cars that established it in the front rank of luxury automobile manufacturers following the end of WWI. During the conflict, Hispano engines had powered some of the Allies' finest fighter aircraft, and post-war the marque would adopt the stork emblem of French 'ace' Georges Guynemer's Escadrille des Cicognes, whose SPAD biplanes had used Hispano's V8 aero engine.

Not surprisingly, the first post-war Hispano drew heavily on this expertise, being powered by a Marc Birkigt-designed, 6,597cc, overhead-camshaft six derived from one half of a proposed V12 aero engine. A seven-bearing design enjoying the benefit of pressure-fed lubrication, the latter was built in unit with the three-speed gearbox and featured aluminium-alloy pistons running in steel cylinder liners screwed into the light-alloy block. Maximum power was a heady 135bhp produced at just 2,400rpm, and the almost flat torque curve afforded walking-pace-to-85mph performance in top gear. A handful of prototype H6s was made at the company's Barcelona factory - King Alfonso XIII

taking delivery of an early example in April 1918 - before production proper commenced at Bois-Colombes, Paris.

Sensation of the 1919 Paris Show, the H6 featured a light yet rigid four-wheel-braked chassis that matched its state-of-the-art power unit for innovation. Indeed, so good were its servo-assisted brakes that Rolls-Royce acquired the rights to build the design under licence. The H6 combined performance with flexibility, comfort with good handling, and safety with reliability in a manner which enabled Hispano-Suiza to compete successfully with Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Bugatti, Isotta Fraschini and the United States' luxury marques. Large enough to accommodate formal coachwork, it was also fast enough to appeal to the more sportingly inclined: aperitif king André Dubonnet won the Coupe Boillot at Boulogne in 1921, while Europe's coachbuilders vied to build their finest coachwork on this genuinely thoroughbred chassis. The finish of the Hispano-Suiza was superlative and the car's inherent glamour was such that it was featured in two popular novels of the early 1920s, *L'Homme de l'Hispano* and *The Green Hat*.

The original H6 had been superseded in 1921 by the H6B, which retained the original 6.6-litre engine, but at Dubonnet's behest a version was produced bored out to 110mm for a capacity of 7,982cc, and this more powerful unit was adopted for the successor H6C model, introduced in 1924. The world's most advanced automobile at the time of its introduction and for many years thereafter, the H6 was catalogued until 1933, by which time 2,158 chassis of all types had been completed.

Manufactured in 1924, this car is one of the early H6C known as the 'Type Sports 110x140'. Chassis number '11024' was invoiced to Hispano-Suiza's London agents on 16th January 1925, thus establishing it as a short chassis or 'Type Sport' model according to the invoice listings (copy on file). On 18th January the car was sold to R B Howey and fitted with a close-coupled four-seater boat-tailed body. It was then delivered to his brother in Scotland, Captain J E P Howey, who drove the car in a West Kent MC meeting at Brooklands on 11th July 1925, winning the race in which it was entered (programme on file).

The Howey brothers had property interests in Australia including Howey Court in the heart of the Melbourne Central Business District. John Howey, who brought the car to Melbourne, was a well-known amateur racing driver and decided to attempt the Sydney to Melbourne record. However, he was hampered by numerous punctures and was stopped by the police and warned he would be prosecuted if he continued. A record attempt from Melbourne to Adelaide was made also but this failed due to a holed petrol tank, the repairs of which can still be seen today.

John Howey returned to England in 1929 and his accountant sold the Hispano for £650. Some time after this the car fell into disrepair and disappeared until the late Jumbo Goddard rediscovered it in Alice Springs. He purchased the car on behalf of his friend and Hispano enthusiast, Stuart Middlehurst. Graeme Quinn, a friend of Stuart's, then bought the car, which was missing its original engine. Graeme had previously purchased a correct large-plate 8-litre engine (number '320098') from Tim Hewison.

Some years later the car was sold to its present owners who undertook a 10-year ground-upwards restoration, which was completed in 2005 at a cost of \$400,000 (Australian). The mechanical work was carried out by Ron McCullum and the bodywork and trim by Peter Leech in Tasmania. In 2007, the car was invited to compete in the Malaysian Concours d'Élégance where it won both 'Best Vintage Car' and the Prime Minister's choice for 'Car of the Show'. At the Malaysian Grand Prix, it performed demonstration laps with Giancarlo Fisichella as passenger and then successfully completed a 1,500km rally through Malaysia. In 2008 it completed the 1,200km Cyril Poole South-West tour from Perth, Western Australia and in 2010 it was exhibited at the first Motorclassica in Melbourne.

Offered with restoration invoices, '11024' represents a rare opportunity to acquire a legendary model from one of the world's most prestigious makes, fully restored and possessing the additional cachet of in-period Brooklands history.

Should the vehicle remain the EU, local import taxes of 5% will be applied to the purchase price.

Title Mr

First name Jamie

Last name Knight

101 New Bond Street

London

W1S 1SR

United Kingdom

Phone +44-2074685801

Fax +44-2074477401

<http://www.bonhams.com>

<https://www.classicdriver.com/en/car/hispano-suiza/h6c/1924/235740>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.