


CLASSIC DRIVER



1948 Harley Davidson Panhead

Stafford, 17 October

Lot sold	USD 18 361 - 23 607 GBP 14 000 - 18 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1948	Location	
Engine number	48EL3361	Motorcycle type	Street
		Colour	Other

Description

1948 Harley-Davidson 1,000cc EL 'Panhead'

Engine no. 48EL3361

- * Dating from the first year of Panhead production
- * Restored condition
- * Italian registered

When Harley-Davidson revised its Model F's 74ci overhead-valve v-twin engine in 1948, the new rocker covers gave rise to the unofficial nickname 'Panhead'. This particular line of OHV Harleys had commenced with the introduction of the 61cu in (1,000cc) Model E 'Knucklehead' in 1936, overhead-valve engines having been seen only in singles and racing twins prior to that date. New from the sump plug upwards, the E, and especially the high-compression EL, brought a new level of performance to Harley's roadsters and was immediately well received. Nevertheless, it was not long before H-D was exploring ways of improving its new offering, going down the familiar route, already trodden with the 'flat heads', of increasing engine capacity to 74ci (1,200cc) in the models FS (medium compression) and FL (high compression). Introduced in 1941, the new 'Seventy-Four' incorporated a host of improvements enabling the engine to cope with the increased power, which was now up to 48bhp in the FL's case.

By the late 1940s the Knucklehead was beginning to show its age, prompting Harley to engage in a wholesale revision for 1948 in the form of the Panhead. While the engine's bottom end remained fundamentally unchanged, the top end gained aluminium cylinder heads and those distinctive rocker covers. Oil lines were internalised and hydraulic valve lifters adopted, an innovation that greatly

reduced tappet noise and simplified maintenance. Maximum power went up to 50bhp in the 74ci FL, but the main advantage of the many improvements was greater reliability.

The 'Panhead' featured a new 'wishbone' frame incorporating bowed front downtubes, and in 1949 gained an hydraulically damped telescopic front fork, becoming the 'Hydra-Glide', though this name was originally applied only to the fork and did not become an official model title until 1952. The advent of rear suspension in 1958 saw the Panhead renamed 'Duo-Glide', while with the addition of an electric starter in 1965 it became the 'Electra Glide'.

This restored EL 'Panhead' is offered with Italian registration papers.

Bonhams 1793

Bonhams

AUCTIONEERS SINCE 1793

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