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## This Mercedes 560 SL 6.0 AMG hammered away the businessman's blues

08 April 2016 | Alex Easthope

*Think Mercedes AMGs of old, and the powerful, imposing 'Hammer' saloons probably spring to mind. But the tuning house also worked its magic on the SL, and this ultra-rare 6.0-litre example is arguably the greatest of them all. For boardroom credibility and absolute punctuality, look no further...*

It's ironic that, for a car boasting a name rooted in motorsport history, the R107 generation Mercedes SL was so sedate when it was introduced. Over the course of its impressive 18-year production run (during which some 237,000 were produced, with 62% heading Stateside), ever warmer versions of 'the most sensible dream car in the world' emerged from the factory, culminating in the 227hp, V8-powered 560. This car was designated solely for the North American, Japanese and Australian markets, but stricter emissions regulations meant the car was actually less powerful than the lower-capacity 500 model sold in Europe.

### **Skin-deep modifications**



Prior to Mercedes' acquisition of AMG in 1991, the Affalterbach tuning house worked in a semi-official capacity, lending a broad selection of cosmetic and performance modification options to a significant proportion of the model range, including the SL. These were available to customers on request, and naturally proved particularly popular in the 1980s – an era when tuning your car was as fashionable as shoulder pads and Duran Duran. Oh, and when taste knew no bounds...

## **Ultimate iteration**



For the understated enthusiast who was keener on shaving tenths off his commute to the office rather than drawing attention outside of nightclubs, an AMG-fettled Mercedes was the perfect tool for the job. Which brings us nicely on to the car you're looking at here - what is arguably the ultimate iteration of the R107 SL.

While it might not look drastically different to the standard SL, there are numerous hints to this car's signature AMG performance credentials, not least the '6.0' badging and the Monoblock wheels, wrapped in bulbous and wide low-profile tyres. It's refreshing to see the typical AMG monochromatic colour scheme in blue, and not black or grey. This particular hue is a tasteful and versatile shade, and the lashings of chrome only serve to accentuate the car's soft styling.

## **A seven-times World Champion's choice**



Under the bonnet is where this SL shines, though. It's allegedly one of just three cars fitted with AMG's potent M117 6.0-litre V8, developing upwards of 330HP. To keep a rein on this extra power, a limited-slip differential was fitted at the rear, and the whole package was clearly very impressive, as [its current Monaco-based vendor DG](#) states that a certain Michael Schumacher is listed as an owner on the history file.

## Primal scream





In recent years, the car underwent an extensive restoration carried out by Panagiotis Avramidis, the former AMG engineer responsible for reviving engine-tuning specialist MKB Power. For the sake of practicality, a rear bench seat has been fitted to the sumptuous new, bodywork-matching navy leather interior, along with the airbag-equipped steering wheel from the later E55.

The fact that those cars breathed on by AMG were commonly held as Mercedes models in their own right is testament to the company's skill and engineering prowess - look at the AMG brand today, and the fundamental principles have barely changed. This SL560 is both one of the earliest and rarest 'pre-merger' AMG-tuned Mercedes in existence, not to mention the ultimate 1980s SL. Though its sensible status has diminished somewhat, we can think of few better sports cars to drive on a daily basis. Even if you'd had an awful day in the boardroom, stepping into the SL for the drive home would be bound to alleviate the blues.

*Photos: Rémi Dargegen for Classic Driver © 2016*

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