
1970 Honda Motorcycles CB 750 Four

Stafford , 23 April

Lot sold	USD 27 277 - 40 915 GBP 20 000 - 30 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1970	Location	
Engine number	1015034	Motorcycle type	Street
		Colour	Other

Description

The ex-Honda press fleet
1970 Honda CB750 'K0'
Registration no. YLY 70H
Frame no. 1015262
Engine no. 1015034

First owned by Honda UK
Featured in contemporary motorcycling magazines
Used for the CB750 brochure
An older restoration
Well documented

'Seldom has a road-test model attracted such a wide interest and appreciative comments from bystanders. That it justified the praise goes without saying. No manufacturer has come nearer than Honda to producing an ideal roadster.' - Motor Cycle, testing 'YLY 70H' in 1970.

Forty-plus years on, it is hard to imagine the impact the Honda CB750 had on the motorcycling world when it was unveiled to a stunned public at the Tokyo Show in October 1968. True, there had been plenty of four-cylinder motorcycles before, but these had been built in relatively small numbers and aimed at the wealthy few. Here for the first time was a mass-produced four within the financial reach of the average enthusiast, and one whose specification - overhead camshaft, disc front brake, five-speed gearbox, electric starter, etc - made the opposition look obsolete overnight.

Bike magazine summed up Honda's achievement thus: 'Like BSA/Triumph's parallel twin and Ducati's desmodromic single, the Honda inline four is one of those engines which created a standard out of an ideal. The list of Honda's technical achievements is impressive but the appearance of a production four-barrel roadster at a Mr Everyman price was probably their greatest coup.' A trend-setting design of immense significance and one of the truly great classic motorcycles, the CB750 is highly sought after by collectors.

The Honda CB750 made its United States debut at Las Vegas in January 1969 and was first shown to the UK public at the Brighton Show in April '69, having been sampled by the motorcycling press at Brands Hatch a few days previously. Deliveries were slow to arrive, but Motorcycle Sport was fortunate enough to ride a CB750 around the Isle of Man TT course during the summer, as reported in its August 1969 edition. By the time the first batches began to arrive in the UK over the winter of 1969/1970, a revised version had been introduced, known retrospectively as the 'K0'. The latter differed mainly by virtue of its die-cast crankcases, this casting method being better suited to mass production than the sand-casting process used for the earlier machines completed prior to September 1969.

The Honda CB750 'K0' offered here is one of the earliest delivered to this country, and was retained by Honda UK for use as a press demonstrator. First registered on 25th February 1970, 'YLY 70H' subsequently featured in articles published in Motor Cycle (April 1970 edition) and Motorcycle Mechanics (June 1970 edition), copies of which are in the history file. It was also used for the official Honda CB750 brochure in the UK, appearing on the front and back covers (copy available).

In October 1970, Honda UK sold 'YLY 70H' to the vendor's company, Arrow Film Productions, and it was registered in his name on 28th November 1970 (see letter on file). The machine was used for a television advertisement with a 'modern man, modern home' theme, which required a modern motorcycle. As the actor couldn't ride, the owner did the riding sequences himself.

In January 1973 the CB750 passed to its second private owner, and following several subsequent changes of ownership was reacquired by the vendor in July 2000 from a private museum collection having been restored previously (date unknown). Thus the first and current private owners are one and the same. Additional accompanying documentation consists of copies of the original logbook (showing Honda UK as first owner) and subsequent registration documents, an old MoT certificate (expired 2005), and current UK V5C. A wonderful opportunity for the Honda enthusiast to acquire an important piece of the company's UK history. Re-commissioning is advised before returning this machine to the road.

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