


CLASSIC DRIVER

1957 OSCA Tipo J

Lot sold	USD 585 100 - 936 160 EUR 500 000 - 800 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1957	Condition	Restored
Number of seats	2	Location	
Drivetrain	2wd	Fuel type	Petrol
Lot number	33	Exterior colour	Red
		Car type	Other

Description

French title

Chassis 1187S

- Real barchetta designed by the Maserati brothers
- Interesting racing history
- High quality restoration

O.S.C.A. a genuine Maserati !

In 1937, Maserati was on the brink of bankruptcy and the brothers sold their company to the Orsi family while staying on in the business. On 1 December 1947 they wanted to regain their independence, but, as they were legally not allowed to use the family name again, the new marque became known as O.S.C.A. (Officina Specializzata Construzione Automobili). O.S.C.A.s are widely recognised as genuine Maserati today. There is, however, still some confusion over the different models and engines. To clarify: apart from the 4.5-litres (3 engines built), the Formula Juniors (with 1100cc pushrod Fiat engine) and the 2-litre six-cylinders, there are three different O.S.C.A variants - the MT4, the Type S and the 1600 GT.

The MT4 : The initials standing for Maserati Tipo, the MT4 was the first series to appear in 1948. The tubular chassis had independent front suspension with wishbones and the rear axle was rigid with semi cantilever. It had a 4-cylinder engine with a five bearing crankshaft, which was soon fitted with a twin overhead cam cylinder head. The engine was available as 1100cc or twin-ignition 1500cc. The MT4 is the best known O.S.C.A., having clocked up multiple class wins in the Mille Miglia and won at Sebring outright in 1954, raced by Stirling Moss. In September 1955, a 1500cc version achieved 12 world speed records including 261.38 km/h over 10k (this car is on display in the Mulhouse museum today).

The Type S : the model in the sale. This model benefitted from an evolution of the MT4 chassis. It had the same front axle but the chassis was widened to lower the centre of gravity. The real innovation was the redesigned engine. It was still a twin overhead cam 4-cylinder unit but was lighter, more compact and very powerful. The engine was built in different sizes : 750 cc, 1100 cc (the S 273 in the sale), 1500 cc and 2000 cc. In the car on offer, chassis n°1187, the engine has a cast iron block and aluminium cylinder head with two twin-bodied Weber DC03 carburetors, and magnesium oil sump. The number 273 corresponds to the unit cylinder size of the four-cylinder 1100cc engine. Producing 95 bhp, this aluminium barchetta of 480 kg was capable of 200 km/h.

There is another O.S.C.A Type S with a Tipo S 273 engine stamped n° 1137 that wears the identity of chassis 1187. We believe this to be a genuine O.S.C.A Type S chassis with the wrong identity. This barchetta was exhibited at Rétromobile in February 2001 and Pebble Beach in August 2008.

The 1600 GT : This was the final series equipped with a completely different engine to the MT4 and

Type S, resulting from an agreement with Fiat. The cars are principally FISSORE and ZAGATO berlinettas. This was essentially the same engine as used in the Fiat O.S.C.A 1600 S. Apart from certain distributors and Weber carburettors the 1600 GT engine shares none of the parts of the MT4 and Type S.

The O.S.C.A chassis 1187 in the sale is an extremely rare car. Just six Type 273 1100cc engines were built. It was sold new with engine n° 1137 on 7 September 1957 to Gianni Manelli (born in Turin in 1914), who lived at 15 Via Castelmarrone in Milan. His first event in the car was in France, in the Faucille hillclimb on September 1957, where he finished 4th in class. The following year he won 2nd in class in the Mont Ventoux hillclimb. Manelli also took to the track in 1958, winning his class in Monza in December of that year. In 1960, an old hand at Mont Ventoux, he won the class. In September 1961 the barchetta finished 4th in class in what became the car's home circuit of Vallelunga. On 27 March 1962 the car sold to Auto Corsa Italia in Vallelunga, and was raced by Carlo Alberto Del Bue. In 1964, the OSCA engine was replaced with an Alfa Romeo Giulietta engine and gearbox prepared by De Sanctis. At that time it was part of the fleet used by the driving school at Vallelunga. The car was subsequently acquired by Leandro Terra of Francavilla al Mare, who kept the car for over 30 years. In 2003, chassis 1187 and its body were discovered by Emillio Comelli, missing its OSCA engine and gearbox. Hervé Ogliaastro then bought the car through Christophe Pund (Galerie des Damiers) and had a correct engine fitted, Tipo S 273 n°1140, along with a ZF gearbox conforming to the Type S. Ogliaastro completely restored the barchetta, with the expert help of Francis Courteix.

Christophe Pund

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