


CLASSIC DRIVER

1932 Wolseley Swallows Hornet Special

- Lot sold
USD 32 072 - 41 575
GBP 27 000 - 35 000 (listed)
Year of manufacture 1932
- **Chassis number** 5148APUS
- **Number of seats** 2
- **Drivetrain** 2wd
- **Lot number** 524
-
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Fuel type** Petrol
- **Exterior colour** Other
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Description

Sold in the aid of the Animal Rescue Centre, Ghent
1932 Wolseley Swallows Hornet Special
Coachwork by Swallow
Registration no. TY 8478 (see text)
Chassis no. 5148APUS

In the early 1930s Wolseley occupied the front rank of British sports cars alongside MG, Riley and Frazer Nash. The single model responsible was the Wolseley Hornet. Introduced in 1930, the Hornet saloon deployed Wolseley's overhead-camshaft, six-cylinder engine in a lengthened Morris Minor chassis equipped with hydraulic brakes. Its power-to-weight ratio was exemplary among contemporary 1.3-litre cars, the smooth and flexible six pulling from walking pace to more than 60mph.

Increased performance was offered by the Hornet Special chassis, which came with 12" brakes and remote-control gearshift. The Special used the shortened engine equipped with twin-carburettors and an oil cooler, in which form it produced 45bhp, good enough for a top speed, depending on coachwork, of around 75mph. The Special chassis rapidly became that of choice for the multitude of independent coachbuilders already using the Hornet as the basis for a sporting two-seater.

Carrying two-seater 'beetle back' coachwork by Swallow, this rare British sports car is believed to have stayed in England for most of its life. Apart from an old UK tax disc (expired 1951) when the car was registered as 'KGT 342', no trace of its early history survives.

In 1992, the Hornet was rediscovered carrying the registration 'TY 8478'. At that time the car was finished in red with a beige interior, and was in need of restoration. The Hornet moved to Holland with its new owner, a Mr Fruytier of Groningen, who had it completely restored over the course of 1992 and 1993, which naturally included overhauling engine, gearbox, and mechanicals (see restoration photographs on file). The rebuilt

Wolseley was registered in December 1993 and was featured in publicity for the 'Oldtimerkrant' in 1995. This Hornet Special was taken to many events and stayed in Holland up to 2008 when it was purchased by Roger Schepens in Brussels, Belgium.

The Hornet was kept at Roger Schepens' garage in Ghent where it was discovered more than a year after he passed away. The car had been untouched since Roger's death, but a Bonhams representative was able to start it straight away! Accompanying documentation consist of Hornet Special Club leaflets (1993, 2009); magazine article featuring a Swallow-bodied Wolseley Hornet Special; some owners notes about recommended oil; an original Wolseley Hornet instruction manual; and Belgian registration papers. Prospective purchasers should be aware that there is no UK registration document for the number quoted above.

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