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## 1961 Kart Automatic

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Lot sold		Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1961	Condition	Used
Chassis number	N/A	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	201	Car type	Other

### Description

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By a happy coincidence, although the simple explanation tells us that karting in the UK began on the US airbases, in actuality the publicity given to this new motorsport activity in American magazines such as Motor Trend, Rod & Custom, Hot Rod and so on had already interested their UK readers to the extent that between April and July of 1959 there were already four kart "producers" - Ecurie Minima, Motor Karts, Skeeta and Speedex - at work in Britain. In addition, Peter Agg of Trojan, who imported Lambretta scooters, had seen karts demonstrated when he visited the Clinton factory in the States, and also decided to give it a go. After considerable pestering, in July Mickey Flynn received permission from his Top Brass to hold a British race meeting at the end of the year, and in August, Silverstone car park was the venue for a karting demonstration. Peter Agg had imported a few Simplex karts from the US which he renamed Trokart, though, strangely, Mickey Flynn was turned away from this event with his five Go-Karts! This Silverstone event prompted the RAC to hold a law-making meeting in September 1959, at which the eloquent Ben Browning of Villiers was present. This meant the logical over-riding emphasis on non-gearbox karts was balanced by a voice from the gearbox brigade, and thus the class-structure rules that resulted from that meeting treated the two power transmission designs equally. A further promotional event was held in Croydon in October, where locals Trokart, Azum, Progress and others were joined by Fastakart, a newcomer from Bromyard near Hereford. The, somewhat simplistically, named 'Fastakart' was the brainchild of Frank Williams, Barrie's dad and proprietor of Bromyard Engineering Ltd. in Rowberry Street in Bromyard and whose father, Edmund Williams, had been involved with cars and bikes for many years, owning

Edmund Williams Garage in the centre of Bromyard. It's not clear what prompted Frank's interest in Karting but he was certainly involved from the early days as can be seen from some of the fascinating documents in the history file. Son Barrie was equally enthusiastic and saw himself as Number 1 driver from the start. The file contains a Track Test for the Fastakart published in Karting Magazine on April 1st, 1960 which details the technical spec, a photo of the cover of the inaugural 1961 RAC Karting Championships programme featuring a Fastakart advert, and two pages from the 17th August 1960 Aintree Kart Meeting programme, the cover and the entry listings. Barrie won his class that day driving Fastakart/Villiers number 128 with dad driving Fastakart/Villiers number 127. 1960 was an explosion of activity. There were usually multiple meetings up and down the country every weekend and as well as temporary circuits laid out with straw bales, events were held on banked concrete cycle tracks, shale-surfaced speedway tracks, grass-tracks and so on. Equally explosive was the speed of technical development. Classes I / II used American ideas, and by the end of the year, the now widely-accepted three or four-rail chassis layout had made an early appearance. In Class IV the flexible tea-tray Fastakart had proved consistently superior to the rigid car-based spaceframe design common at that time. Although the Fastakart/Villiers was a very competitive machine and Barrie was enjoying a number of wins, his first outing in a car race was at Rufforth in 1960 and, presumably that turned his head, as it marked the start of nearly six decades of racing and rallying. Also in the history file are a photo of Frank Williams with the Fastakart, a photo of Edmund Williams Garage (Barrie's grandfather), and details of a YouTube clip of Barrie's Fastakart at Race Retro in 2016. We understand that Barrie's kart is fitted with a Villiers 197cc gearbox engine and, in period, according to RAC regulations, it would have been eligible for 'Class 4' (Karts fitted with Motor Cycle gearbox engines). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBuVZ78KQBw>

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