

CLASSIC DRIVER

1959 FMR / Messerschmitt Tg500 Microcar

- Lot sold
USD 130 158 - 173 544
GBP 120 000 - 160 000 (listed)
Year of manufacture 1959
- **Chassis number** 20655
- **Number of seats** 2
- **Drivetrain** 2wd
- **Lot number** 308
-
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Fuel type** Petrol
- **Exterior colour** Other
-

Description

1959 FMR/Messerschmitt Tg500 Microcar
Registration no. not registered
Chassis no. 20655

Introduced in 1953 as the 'Fend', after its co-designer Fritz Fend, the Messerschmitt Kabinenroller microcar was soon being marketed under its manufacturer's name, the change coinciding with a switch from the original's 148cc Fichtel & Sachs engine to a 174cc unit. Sited at the rear, the single-cylinder two-stroke produced a modest 9bhp, enough nevertheless to propel the lightweight and aerodynamic KR175 to around 55mph. The Plexiglas canopy, so reminiscent of those of Messerschmitt's wartime aircraft, hinged sideways to enable access for the two occupants who sat one behind the other, tandem style. Tandem seating and handlebar controls were retained for the 191cc KR200 of 1955, which featured revised bodywork, an improved turning circle and a floor-mounted accelerator and clutch. By reversing the electric starter the KR200's engine could be made to run backwards, thus providing four reverse gears and the hair-raising possibility of 60mph going backwards! Later models carried the diamond-shaped FMR badge, standing for Fahrzeug und Maschinenbau GmbH Regensburg. Production ceased in 1964 after some 30,000 KR200s had been made.

Derivatives included the KR201 Roadster and Cabriolet soft-tops and the fearsome four-wheeled Tg500 sports model, known unofficially as the 'Tiger'. As its nomenclature suggests, the Tg500 was powered by a 500cc engine: a twin-cylinder air-cooled two-stroke designed by the firm of Fichtel & Sachs. Unlike that of the single-cylinder KR175 and KR200, the Tg500 unit came with a reverse gear in the 'box. The basic monocoque bodyshell of the KR200 three-wheeler was retained, albeit modified at the rear to accommodate two wheels and independent suspension. The front track was extended slightly, and with the 10" diameter wheels placed at its extremities, the low-slung Tg500 possessed excellent handling characteristics. Tandem seating and a

hinged Perspex canopy were other KR200 features carried over, and the Tg500 likewise was manufactured in hardtop and open Roaster/Cabriolet variants. With 19.5bhp on tap, the Tiger was capable of reaching 78mph, and to cope with this increased performance came with hydraulic brakes as standard instead of the KR200's mechanical stoppers.

This example of one of the rarest and most desirable of Kabinenroller variants was purchased in 2005 in distressed condition and semi-restored, albeit poorly. The owner then embarked on a long-term restoration, commencing by stripping the vehicle completely and restored the engine and gearbox, renewing all the bearings and bushes. He also replaced the piston rings and all gaskets using original materials. Electronic ignition was fitted in place of the original contact breakers (included in the sale).

All aluminium parts were restored to 'as new' condition and the bodywork stripped back to bare metal, with any rust removed. The body was then treated and re-sprayed professionally. After assembly, all the aluminium trim items, beading, and rubbers were replaced with original new parts, while new sliding windows were made using the original knobs.

All the indicator light lenses and stop lamp lenses were replaced with new, and all chromed parts re-plated. New handmade rear view mirrors were fitted and all fasteners replaced with stainless steel, where available, or electro-plated anew.

The engine's supporting sub-frame was stripped back to bare metal, with all rust removed, and then powder coated, as were the wheel rims. All suspension bushes were replaced, new engine mountings installed, and all the wheel bearings renewed. New brake shoes were fitted on all four wheels and new brake cylinder rubbers installed throughout, including the master cylinder. Matching the originals, new copper and rubber brake hoses were installed and all control cables renewed. The wheel nuts were electro plated, and replacement hubcaps installed. Original-size Michelin tyres were fitted together with new inner tubes and then balanced. The interior has been professionally re-trimmed, including new carpeting, and a new leather hood made to the original pattern. Restoration bills are available.

Completed in 2019 and road tested to make sure it is in full working order, the vehicle is described by the private vendor as 99% original and as close to new condition as is possible to achieve. An exciting opportunity to acquire a fully restored example of this ultra-rare high-performance Kabinenroller. Low rate import duty of 5% will be added to the hammer price if the car will remain in the EU.

Bonhams 1793

Title Mr

First name Bonhams Collectors' Car department

101 New Bond Street

London

W1S 1SR

United Kingdom

Phone +44-02074685201

Fax +44-02074685802

<https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/25454/>

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/car/fmr-messerschmitt/tg500-microcar/1959/693087>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.