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## 1960 Tornado Typhoon

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Lot sold	<b>USD 56 150 - 64 339</b> EUR 48 000 - 55 000 (listed)	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1960	Condition	Used
Country VAT	IT	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Red
Lot number	23	Car type	Custom

### Description

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- One of (maybe less than) 300 examples made.
- Classic British sports car, light and nimble.
- Thoroughly restored.
- Exceptional example of fiberglass car mania.

#### The Fiberglass Cars

In 1949, a historic motoring event took place in the USA; it was almost unnoticed at the time, yet proved to be of great significance to the specialist car industry, especially in the UK: the world's first automotive body made out of a revolutionary new 'wonder material', was conceived and made. The material was called glass reinforced plastic (also known as GRP, fibreglass or glass fibre). The GRP car in question was the Glasspar G2, a fibreglass sports car body created in 1949 by Californian-based Bill Tritt, based on a recovered chassis and fitted with a powerful engine. The car production benefits GRP offered, be it for low-volume specialist self-build cars or mass-built components, quickly spread around the world. In France, for example, Citroën innovated GRP for the large roof panel of its revolutionary DS in 1955. A world apart is the Chevrolet Corvette in the United States, since 1953. Numerous British specialist sports car body makers sprung up in the 1950s, such as TVR, Ginetta, Elva and Marcos, with both Rochdale and Colin Chapman's Lotus pioneering the first GRP monocoque bodies by the end of the decade. Over the subsequent years, plastic bodyshells not only formed the

backbone of a thriving kit car and specialist sportscar industry, but also moved into the motoring mainstream, with a wide spread of car makers selling GRP-bodied models. These ranged from the Reliant Robin and Bond Bug, through to early examples of the Ferrari 308 GTB, as well as the BMW M1, Saab Sonnet, Ford RS200, Daimler SP250 'Dart', Renault Espace, Lancia Strato's and the Studebaker Avanti, to name but a few. Despite the subsequent development of alternative hi-tech production materials such as Kevlar and carbon fibre, GRP still remains the favoured building base of many of today's specialist low-volume car makers, especially within the successful UK self-build car industry, as you can see at the annual Kit Car Show at Stoneleigh. Founded in 1957 by Bill Woodhouse and Tony Bullen, Tornado Cars was based in Mill End, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, England. It was a classic small British manufacturer of fiberglass-bodied sportscars. Offering initially the Typhoon Sports as their first model available either as a kit to fit on Ford 8/10 chassis or as a fully built sportscar on a Tornado designed and manufactured chassis to which a range of engines and transmissions could be fitted. The Tornado was a good alternative to more expensive and complex motorcars. Particularly remarkable was their Talisman model series, a lively 2+2 which got positive reviews by the press and had a good fortune as a racing car. In 1964 the Company was put into liquidation with production ceasing immediately.

### The Model

This 1960 Tornado Typhoon is an example of an extremely limited production. Only 300 units of Typhoon were originally produced by Tornado in England. However, results of recent research would lead to the conclusion that, very probably, the real production was significantly lower. The heart of the car is a small but lively 4-cylinder Ford engine with 1172 cc side valves, powered by two SU carburettors. The Ford Sidevalve engine was born in the UK with the Ford Model Y from the 1930s and was built in two displacements, 933 cc or 8 HP and 1,172 cc or 10 HP. The Sidevalve engine was used in many of the smaller Fords as well as in agricultural, commercial and marine vehicles. The Sidevalve engine was also used in the German Fords, up to the Ford Taunus 12M. Engine production was discontinued in 1962, replaced by the Kent motor in Britain and the V4 engine in Germany. Many measures were adopted to increase the power of the standard engine, as in this example of the Tornado Typhoon, in particular the special exhaust manifolds, the twin carburettors, the harder valve springs, the thinner cylinder head gaskets and the modified camshafts. The car has a tubular frame and fiberglass body; is surprising for its good performance and agile and fun driving, thanks to the lightness of the whole. A decidedly original car in appearance, its lines respect the canons of the sports cars of the time. The front part, due to the proportions of the long bonnet and the streamlined headlights (unusual detail in this type of car) recalls Italian sports; perhaps also due to the lively red colour, which underlines the sporting determination. The cockpit is barely protected by a minimal windshield with a low and harmonious line. The rear fenders, with a "cut" right behind the doors, are raised in two aerodynamic fins around a tail that resembles those of the AC. The air intake on the bonnet and the side vents are carefully shaped. Racing details such as hood fasteners and mirrors add to the overall grit. Perfect, in their essentiality, the simple and wide steel rims, typical of the era. The interiors are absolutely Spartan, as in any "die hard" sport, but the embossed aluminum dashboard has an attractive appearance thanks to a rich instrumentation (Smiths, of course) with an unusual layout, with tachometer and rev counter overlapped and, on both sides, the smaller instruments. The anatomic seats with four-point belts surround the passenger and driver, which is located in front of a small sports steering wheel and, close to the steering wheel, the short gearshift lever. Seated at the bottom, the fenders look really impressive. This Tornado Typhoon recently underwent a complete restoration, is in excellent condition. Fiberglass also appears to be of good quality and, under the hood, the engine has been completely disassembled and overhauled in every part. The restoration took place in the Netherlands. Designed precisely at the height of the fiberglass sports car boom, between the late 1950s and early 1960s, there were literally dozens of similar models built around the same time. The Tornado Typhoon stands out, however, as one of the most beautiful models, and the sound of the Ford engine and the constructive attention to lightness give it an aura that closely resembles the first Lotus.

State of the art

Full restoration. Excellent conditions.

## Litterature

- Martyn Morgan Jones, Winds of Change, The Tornado Cars, Bookmarque Publishing, UK 2008.
- Iain Ayre, The Kit Car Manual, Haynes Manuals Inc., Newbury Park, US 2003.
- Steve Hole, A to Z of Kit Cars: The Definitive Encyclopaedia of the UK's Kit-car Industry since 1949, Haynes Publishing, 2012.

## Certificates and statements

ASI Targa oro.

## Documents

Netherlands registration and plates (EU).

## Elegibility

- Giro di Sicilia. Eligible.
- Targa Florio. Eligible.
- Goodwood Revival. Eligible
- Coppa d'Oro delle Dolomiti. Eligible.
- Coppa delle Alpi by 1000 Miglia. Eligible.
- Winther Marathon. Eligible.
- Nürburgring Classic. Eligible.
- Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. Eligible.
- Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. Eligible.
- Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille. Eligible.
- Concorso d'eleganza Villa D'Este. Eligible.

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