
1932 Wolseley Hornet

Lot sold	USD 47 852 - 54 688 GBP 35 000 - 40 000 (listed)	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1932	Condition	Used
Chassis number	576-65	Location	
Lot number	599	Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other
		Engine number	582-65
		Exterior brand colour	Red

Description

Based on Wolseley's redesigned and extended 1930 Morris Minor chassis Powered by a 1271cc overhead-camshaft, twin-carb, six-cylinder engine Fitted with a John Charles of Kew bespoke body designed by Freddie March Subject to a full, no expense spared, restoration including an engine rebuild Superbly restored, delightfully presented and real provenance Although its image in later years became ever more difficult to distinguish from that of other makes within the British Motor Corporation, 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 1271cc overhead-camshaft, six-cylinder engine in a lengthened Morris Minor chassis equipped with hydraulic brakes. Its power-to-weight ratio was exceptional amongst contemporary 1.3-litre cars, the smooth and flexible six pulling from walking pace to more than 60mph. The model was revised for 1932 with a shortened, chain-driven overhead-cam engine (repositioned further forward to improve cabin space) and a four-speed 'silent third' gearbox. Increased performance was offered by the Hornet Special chassis, which came with 12" hydraulic brakes and remote-control gearchange. 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. The Hornet Special was soon making its mark in competitions, one noteworthy

achievement being the victory achieved by a team of three Eustace Watkins-bodied Hornets (two EW Daytonas on the Special chassis, one EW International on the standard chassis) in the 1932 relay race at Brooklands at an average speed of 77.57mph. Kevill-Davis and March Ltd. of Bruton Street, Mayfair marketed a number of Wolseley Hornet specials from early 1932 onwards and one of the most successful was a pretty little open two-seater, as we have here, with a body supplied by the coachbuilder John Charles of Kew to a design by Freddie March. There is a strong claim that these March-designed bodies were the first to feature fully swept front wings, a styling cue that was to become a design hallmark of British thirties sports cars. Offered here from The Anthony Hamilton collection, a Hornet enthusiast himself, is a beautifully presented example of one of the seven March-bodied 'Specials'. This fabulous little car has been subject to a full, no expense spared, restoration including an engine overhaul with the larger stud modification. The engine bay is an absolute delight with vitreous enamelled manifolds, fully rebuilt carburettors, a chromed rocker cover and new wiring loom. Every part was either properly refurbished or replaced. The small cockpit (by today's standards) is dominated by a large sprung Blumel's steering wheel and a 100mph speedometer and a 6,000 rpm tachometer (both a tad optimistic for 1932) feature prominently. There is a small brass plate on the dash displaying Kevill-Davies and March. The rest of the car appears to have been restored to the same standard and the overall result is a very striking Hornet with a beautiful raspy engine note only available from a small capacity six-cylinder. There is an invoice in the file from Denyer Classic Cars dated 7/06/2018 for a service (engine oil change, oil filter, fuel filter and six new spark plugs) and, at the same time, the rubber fuel hoses in the engine bay were replaced, a new battery was fitted and the Wolseley was MOT'd. This is one of the best looking of the 'Hornet Specials' and would have turned a few heads when Frederick Charles Gordon-Lennox, Earl of March and Hugh Somerset Kevill-Davies popped out to lunch in Mayfair in their newly created special. Superbly restored, it will continue to provide all the fun of a Thirties sports car with the added cachet of Lord March and Anthony Hamilton provenance. You can now book a one-to-one appointment (up to one hour) to view this lot at our central location between 16th and 30th July. Please contact Lionel on 07831574381/lionel@silverstoneauctions.com to secure your appointment or to discuss the car in more detail. The health and safety of both our customers and team remain the utmost priority, we are therefore operating to strict COVID-19 guidelines and full instructions for arrival and inspection protocols will be given when making your appointment.

Silverstone Auctions Ltd

Title Mr

First name Guy

Last name Lees-Milne

Silverstone House

Kineton Road

Gaydon

Warwickshire

CV35 0EP

United Kingdom

Phone +44-1926691141

<https://www.silverstoneauctions.com>

