
1937 Lagonda LG 45

Lot sold	USD 225 820 - 282 275 EUR 200 000 - 250 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1937	Location	
Chassis number	12178/G10	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	23	Engine number	M45 160

Description

1937 Lagonda LG45 Rapide Replica Tourer

Chassis no. 12178/G10

Engine no. M45 160

Having established its reputation by winning the Moscow - St Petersburg Reliability Trial of 1910 with a 30hp six, Lagonda concentrated mainly on the production of light cars before reverting to sporting and luxury models in the mid-1920s with the introduction of the 14/60. This four-cylinder, 2-litre model was joined in 1929 by the first of Lagonda's own sixes - the 3-Litre - but by the mid-1930s the Meadows-engined cars were seen as the way forward. Introduced at the 1933 Olympia Show and based on the preceding ZM 3-Litre model, the M45 deployed Meadows' 4½-litre, twin-plug six to good effect, saloons being capable of reaching 90mph and tourers the 'ton' under favourable conditions.

Shortly after the M45's introduction, The Autocar got its hands on one. "A short run on one of the first of the 4½-Litre Lagonda models, with an open four-seater body, left a vivid impression not only of brilliant acceleration and sheer performance, but of a car delightfully silent and easy running in a way that can be achieved to the fullest extent only by a big-engined machine working well inside its limits."

A team of three specially prepared short-chassis cars (effectively the soon-to-be-announced M45 Rapide) prepared by Lagonda main agents Fox & Nicholls performed creditably at the 1934 RAC Tourist Trophy at Ards, and the following year one of these TT cars driven by John Hindmarsh and Luis Fontes won the Le Mans 24-Hour endurance classic outright.

Under W O Bentley's technical direction the big Lagonda became more refined: the M45's successor -

the LG45 - gaining synchromesh gears, flexible engine mounts and centralised chassis lubrication among many other improvements. Endowed with such an impeccable pedigree, the 4½-Litre Lagonda quickly established itself as a favourite among the wealthy sporting motorists of its day.

In its road test published on 10th April 1936, The Autocar declared: "The 4½-Litre has always given a fine performance; in its latest form it provides all the performance that anyone can reasonably require, and at the same time has been silenced, smoothed out and made a much more comfortable car, so that in comparison with the earlier versions it is hardly recognisable on first driving it. It can only be said that the appeal of the car has been considerably widened, for the people who today set great store by noise and a harsh suspension are greatly outnumbered by those to whom refinement in a fast car is far more desirable."

One of only 278 LG45s produced during 1936/37, this example was originally fitted with a Saloon de Ville body. According to information supplied by the Lagonda Owner's Club the car's first owner was a Mr Jennings in Truro, Cornwall. The car subsequently passed through two further Cornish owners before being discovered in 1994 by Ivan Forshaw as restoration project. A faithful replica of the famed Rapide body was commissioned from noted restorer Rod Jolley who produced a beautiful and accurate reproduction. The car is fitted with an M45 engine from early 1934. Chassis 12178 has belonged to the current vendor since July 2006 and comes with an old-style UK V5C Registration Certificate for the registration number 'DLP 936'. During his ownership the car has been maintained by renowned Lagonda specialists LMB Racing in Belgium and regularly serviced by a local specialist in Cagnes. The car has completed rallies and tours across France, Portugal, and Sicily. The Lagonda is currently registered in France and has a valid French Contrôle Technique.

Bonhams 1793

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