


# CLASSIC DRIVER

## 1938 Fiat 508

- Lot sold  
USD 0  
GBP 0 (listed)  
**Year of manufacture** 1938
- **Gearbox** Manual
- **Lot number** 138
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- **Drive** RHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Exterior colour** Other
- **Car type** Other
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### Description

"The charter establishing Fiat was signed in 1899 and a year later the factory opened and produced 24 cars in the first year. By 1908, Fiat had expanded throughout Europe and the United States and when World War I began production focused on supplying the army. After the war, during Mussolini's rule, the company's international presence was scaled back. By the early 1920s, production methods could not keep pace with the demand for automobiles. A new five story factory, the largest in Europe, opened in 1923 with a test track installed on the roof. The Fiat 508c was introduced as a small family car in 1937 as a replacement for the 508 Balilla. Under the new body, the 508c had a more modern and refined mechanics to include independent front suspension and an enlarged overhead valve engine. In 1939, it was updated and simply renamed the Fiat 1100, according to official figures the top speed was 110km/h or 68mph. The main body style for the 508c was a four-door pillarless saloon which was imported to the UK, the rest of Europe had a choice of a long wheelbase, four-door, six window saloon or a four-door convertible saloon, a four-door Torpedo, a two-door cabriolet, a two-door spider and a two-door Berlinetta.

This Fiat 508c New Balilla Spider is a replica of a car built by Jack Tuson for Brooklands and the late 1930s Tourist Trophy races. Fiat England only imported the saloon version of the New Balilla, whereas a large numbers of the two-seat sports car version were produced in Italy. Tuson persuaded Fiat England to import a bare chassis on which he built his car. Other new features included an aluminium cylinder head and independent front suspension. It was in this car that he had a number of successes at Brooklands in 1938.

The current owner rescued two derelict cars in the early 1970s. The bodies were rotten, so all the mechanical units,

engines, gearboxes, axles and suspension were removed and kept. One chassis was too badly corroded but the other with registration JK 7465 was more than usable and was the basis of the recreation of the Tuson Brooklands car. Based on a set of notes written by Tuson which explained how to build his two-seat race car, they also showed that the vendor had all the material to build the replica. The engine has a number of modifications to improve performance, a late type crankshaft and con-rods were installed together with a three branch exhaust of Tuson design, a special camshaft with inlet and exhaust valve timings overlap of 40 degrees was also installed. This New Balilla, finished in black with red interior has VSCC eligibility and has competed in handicap and ODM races for nearly 20 years starting in 2000 with some success, particularly in the 1100cc class. It is supplied with a V5 registration and a file containing drawings and photographs of the restoration, magazine articles and a large number of invoices.

Interested parties should note that this car is running but requires a new battery and starter motor.

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