

Legends



1964 MGB Works

£145,000.

An exceptionally original and fastidiously presented Works example of the iconic MGB.

A successful entrant at this year's Goodwood Lavant Trophy.

The story of this special MGB Roadster begins on the 13th August 1964. This was the date that BRX 854B was first registered having been painstakingly built by Den Green and Knobby Hall in the MG "Comps Shop". The story continues as BRX 854B was campaigned through the remainder of 1964, a handful of times in 1965, and again by a small number of private owners in the 1970's before, in 1975, being garaged in Essex for what would turn out to be a 32 year break from competition. Now, back from obscurity, BRX 854B has undergone a meticulous and sympathetic rebuild to bring the car to the exacting standard at which it is now offered for sale. MG Historian, John Baggott, has been involved with the find and believes it to be the final genuine works car in existence - a very important motor vehicle.

The most famous Works MGB until now has been DRX 255C which took second in class at Le Mans in 1965 being crewed by Paddy Hopkirk of Ireland and Andrew Hedges of Great Britain. BRX 854B, one of two Works MGB Roadsters built in 1964, the second being BRX 853B, undertook minimal testing before being shipped to its first competitive trial in late August 1964 for the Spa-Sofia-Liege rally where it made its maiden appearance as "Works Entry No. 81". The history file with the car includes the original Team Instructions Manual for David Hiam and Julian Vernaev who piloted the car in this event. Disappointingly, the car was retired from this rally citing transmission problems. Later in 1965, BRX 854B appeared at competition once again. This time, "Works Entry No. 177" started the RAC Rally in November, crewed by John Fitzpatrick and John Handley, however, sadly the car was forced to retire after a head gasket failure. It raced on four further occasions in 1965 by its new owner, Ken Tubman, and navigated by George Stefanoff. These events were the Tulip Rally (Retired due to an accident), The Acropolis Rally (Retired to avoid possible car damage), Geneva Rally (Retired out of time) and on to the Castrol Danube Rally in September of that year where BRX 854B posted a pleasing result of Third in Class, and 13th Overall. Following the success of MGB race cars on track, perhaps in hindsight it was too much to expect a sleek, low slung sports car to excel on rallying trials in the face of the toughest roads and weather conditions that were thrown at it. Through private ownership, BRX 854B has travelled extensively throughout Europe, taking advantage of its long range fuel tank. It was on one such journey to Scotland that mechanical failure forced BRX 854B not to return home, and the result was that this wonderful vehicle disappeared into enclosed garaging for some 32 years.

As can be seen from the photographs, the restoration of this car has been undertaken with the most emphatic attention to detail, and overseen by one Barry Sidery-Smith. The restoration has been hugely sympathetic, where possible existing parts have been restored and replaced, failing this, period parts have been sourced with no expense spared. The outcome speaks for itself, however the following paragraphs detail just some of the detail of the finished restoration. The bodywork is original steel MGB monocoque with aluminium wings, door skins, bonnet, boot lid and works hard top with Mini Van roof tent. Finished in Tartan Red / Old English White with white roundels on each side and centrally on the bonnet. The enclosed cockpit boasts professionally restored seats and dashboard with all auxiliary switches as fitted in 1964. The passenger door is fitted with map pocket and protective knee foam. Period features such as quilted finish to transmission tunnel, inner sills and original BMC Competitions Department rear roll hoop hark once again to the detail of this car. The engine is (the original experimental unit stamped EX235-2) 4 cylinder BMC B Series with 3-bearing crankshaft fully balanced. Original Leyland Special Tuning 770 camshaft with vernier timing gear. Special Tuning AHT 100H cylinder head, gas flowed with big valves. Twin 2-inch SU carburetors fed via Filter King to accurately meter fuel flow, by twin SU pumps. In turn, the transmission is a 3 Synchro, helical close ratio box with competition overdrive. MGB Banjo axle, 3.9:1 ratio with limited slip differential.

Suspension is with front up-rated and lowered coil springs, up-rated lever arm shock absorbers. ¾inch anti roll bar. Rear competition leaf springs, specially re-manufactured Armstrong Adjustaride lever arms and up-rated bushes throughout. The wheels are bespoke Competition 72-spoke 14 x 5½ J wire wheels from Motor Wheel Services, and are running on Dunlop 5.5 x 14L section racing tyres. The electrical system is run off a 12-volt (single battery) system with heavy-duty dynamo. Included in the car is a hand built wiring loom to accommodate auxiliary equipment, switches and fuses, which are in the cockpit. Extra items include flexible map reading light and foot operated horn switch for navigator. Five Lucas driving lamps, two SFT 700, 7-inch (bottom mounted), two SFT 576, 5½-inch (bottom mounted) and one SFT 576, 5½-inch (back mounted) adorn the front of the car. The history file of the car includes a complete dossier compiled by the motor sport historian John Baggott. A letter from the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust in April 2008, confirming that Chassis number G-HN3/45748 was allocated to the BMC Competitions Department, Abingdon in August 1964. The Abingdon Experimental Register states that Competition MGB, issued with the department engine number EX 235/2 was prepared for the 1964 Liege Rally. Further documentation confirms that this car is MSA papered and is offered with correct HTP (now out of date) will be eligible for such prestigious events as Le Mans Classic, Goodwood Revival, Monaco Classic Grand Prix and other pre-65 races. In 2008, BRX 854B campaigned in the Le Mans Classic with Barry Sidery-Smith co-driving.

For the 2022 Goodwood campaign It's now set up as a circuit racer with full cage, 800 lb front springs, ¾ roll bar, 3 bearing engine, four speed (no overdrive) gearbox and a 3.9 ratio differential. Importantly, all fresh original engine and gearbox components are crated. Alternatively the car can be converted back to rally spec giving BRX 854B a diverse scope of eligibility.

Lovely period images on file.

This sale represents an opportunity to acquire a comprehensively documented Works MGB in remarkably original condition.

Properly priced, please contact.

Exchanges: Modern / Classic / Motorcycles



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