



1953 Aston Martin DB2/4 Proto-type



[**<< return to results**](#)

Introduced at the London Motor Show in 1953, the new Aston-Martin DB2/4 added two small bucket seats behind the driver and passenger and a side-hinged rear window. This latter detail made the car arguably the first "hatchback" and certainly the first one on a luxury gran turismo.

Both saloon and drophead coupe configurations were offered from inception. A drophead, chassis LML/515, the car offered here, was built for David Brown's personal use - the then-owner of Aston-Martin as well as the tractor company that bore his name.

The car was registered in his name even though it was used by the Aston Martin Experimental Department from 1953-1955 in the development of the next generation DB2/4, the Mark II. Among Brown's special touches were a notchback hardtop that contrasted distinctly with the fastback design of the DB2/4 saloon and foreshadowed the notchback fixed head coupe body that would be fitted to 34 of the 199 DB2/4's built. His DB2 also had quarter windows, wind wings and a revised bonnet design with fixed panels behind the wheels that was tried here for the first time and eventually adopted in production. The coachwork was by Mulliner rather than Tickford whose services were acquired by David Brown in 1955. In 1955, David Brown and the Experimental department relinquished LML/515 turning it over to Aston Martin Factory team racing driver Peter Collins on July 13. It was re-registered from its factory VMF 123 number into Collins' name on registration 9 FMP. Its history with Collins is recounted in Chris Nixon's famous book "Mon Ami Mate" about Collins and his pal Mike Hawthorn. In that period it was also featured in Aston Martin advertising. The Aston Martin factory chassis and service records indicate that it was serviced in 1956 with racing camshafts and modified restrictors - which in factory speak indicates low restriction mufflers. In June 1958 it was fitted with the upgraded engine, factory big-valve L type cylinder head at the factory - an example of the advantages which Peter Collins had in being one of the premier British drivers of the day. Following Peter Collins' death, this car eventually made its way into the collection of King Hussein of Jordan and later became part of the breathtaking Aston Martin collection of J.S. Draper.

It has been restored twice, first by Bristol Cars, Ltd. and later by Aston-Martin at the factory in 1994-1995 at a cost of £90,000. It is one of the most important and significant of all postwar Aston Martins, a car that not only has an important place in the evolution of Aston-Martin's production models but also figures in the history of some of the most significant figures in British sports car history, as mentioned, Sir David Brown, Peter Collins and King Hussein of Jordan, himself an enthusiastic driver and supporter of sports car competition. An impressive package of documentation from the Aston-Martin Factory and copies of the British registration document in King Hussein's name accompany it. This is a distinctive factory development Aston-Martin with important design features and an ownership history, which is unsurpassed.

An irreplaceable Aston-Martin, LML/515 combines unique coachwork, history, performance and design in a wonderful combination that is beautifully restored and carefully preserved. There are few automobiles that can come close to its combination of attributes, history, style and presentation.

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[**<< return to results**](#)

