



Item Search



Sales

Departments

Locations

Services

Log in

**Sale 11094 - The Goodwood  
Festival of Speed, 25 Jun 2004  
Goodwood House, Chichester**

[Back to catalogue](#)

Prev. Next  
Lot Lot



**Lot No: 725**  
**The ex-Works,**  
**Horsfall/Johnson, Spa**  
**winning**  
**1948 Aston Martin 2 Litre**  
**'Spa Replica'**  
**Registration no. THX 259**  
**(see text)**  
**Chassis no. SPA 48/8**  
**Engine no. SPA4/48/8**

Following the sensational victory of 'Jock' St. John Horsfall and Leslie Johnson in the 1948 Spa 24 Hours Race, Motor Sport magazine illustrated their 2 litre Aston Martin on the front cover in August 1948 and reported: "This convincing victory by the new British high performance car puts Aston Martin right on the map again in a sphere of competition activity in which this make has always excelled. How impatiently private sportsmen will now await delivery of the latest 2 litre Aston Martin."

The arrival of David Brown at Aston Martin provided the impetus and the financial wherewithal to enable the company to take up motor racing again post-war. Claude Hill, a link with the Fenwick & Bertelli era, had quietly been developing an all-new pushrod, overhead valve, 2 litre engine at the Hanworth Air Park factory, and, egged on by Freddie Dixon and Tony Rolt, David Brown gave the green light to building a new car to complete in the 1948 Spa race. Time was short and the new car SPA/48/1 was finally completed just days before the race.

The Horsfall/Johnson car had a 'vintage' look to it with



[Flash version](#)



[Help](#)

Copyright © 2002-2010 Bonhams 1793 Ltd.,  
Images and Text All Rights Reserved

narrow coachwork flanked by Delahaye-style mudguards. Its victory over 1,729 miles at an average speed of 72.07 mph - first place on its first outing by the first model of its genre - can only be described as remarkable and the car was duly feted upon its return to England, making a celebration demonstration run at Shelsley Walsh that year, amongst other appearances.

Commercial reality prevailed and the 'noble warrior' was re-bodied by the Works for display at the London Motor Show, marketed on Stand 138 as a 'Spa Replica' with a massive price tag of £3,109. The fact that the car remained in the hands of David Brown Junior until 1950 suggests there were no immediate takers. In 1952, following an accident, the car was rebuilt by the Works with a new chassis.

The chronology of the chassis/engine numbering appears to be that in its development stage the chassis was numbered AM/C/48/1, re-numbering taking place presumably for Spa, as SPA/48/1 and yet again for display at Earls Court in 1948 as LMA/48/1. The replacement chassis in 1952 was numbered SPA/48/8, the number it retains. The original engine number SPA 48/1 was replaced prior to the 1948 Show and the engine now fitted is SPA4/48/8, a similar unit.

In the 1988 Aston Martin Owner's Club Register SPA 48/8 was described as "the car that MUST be found", recognising its important place in Aston Martin history. The car had in fact been acquired from a French owner for the Lips Collection in 1972.

It is now presented in its 1952 'Spa Replica' form with 'inboard' headlamps and cycle wings, liveried in black with some original upholstery. Invoices on file record engine work and cooling system repairs in recent years but at the present time no fuel tank is fitted. It is hoped this may be located prior to the sale. Although no English registration documents come with the car, we feel that an

application to recover its original registration will be sympathetically considered. This historic and well-documented car comes with F.I.V.A. identity papers and we feel will respond to careful recommissioning following museum display.

Sold for £40,000 inclusive of Buyer's Premium



**About  
Bonhams**

**Site  
Map**

**Terms &  
Conditions**

**Contact  
Us**