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# 1955 JAGUAR D-TYPE SHORT NOSE

## 1955 Jaguar D-Type

- Customer D-type with U.S. privateer race history
- Special 3.8L wide-angle "5-series" Cunningham engine
- Important restoration by CKL with full report
- Appearances at Goodwood and Salon Prive
- Current FIA HTP papers valid through 2033

An excellent short-nose D-Type, the subject of fascinating and well-documented restoration works by marque experts CKL, poised for a fresh return to events after sixteen years in a discreet private collection.

XKD 523 was dispatched from Coventry on 22 November 1955, exported to the United States and distributed through Max Hoffman of New York. Initially retailed by Jack Pry Limited to Roberts Harrison for \$7,950, she was shortly thereafter resold to Walter Huggler of St. Davids, Pennsylvania, beginning her U.S. privateer history with a win in her debut race at the Convair Field of Allentown, Pennsylvania, in August 1956.

Also racing at Watkins Glen and Harewood Acres, she was entered with Huggler in the glamorous Governor's Trophy at Nassau in 1956, alongside the likes of Alfonso de Portago, Phil Hill, Carroll Shelby, and Stirling Moss – a colour photograph survives showing XKD 523 in race number 96 with Moss in his Maserati 300S.

According to a letter on file, next owner Joe Grimaldi acquired XKD 523 from the garage of works Cunningham racer John Fitch, with the engine apart after an act of sabotage at Nassau. A drag racer before he turned 21, Grimaldi recounts further adventures in U.S. club racing at Bridgehampton, Lime Rock, Meadowvale and Watkins Glen, among famous personalities like Briggs Cunningham, Alfred Momo, Augie Pabst, and again John Fitch, who did some laps in the recommissioned D at Lime Rock.

After damage to Grimaldi's race engine in a speed record attempt at Daytona Beach, Grimaldi had a Chevrolet V8 installed, competing occasionally in "regionals" through 1960. After getting married and with "no money at all," Grimaldi's racing petered out and XKD 523 was sold to Jeff Millstein in 1965, who worked in advertising at a Madison Avenue firm and apparently enjoyed significant clout with Jaguar. Millstein carried out one of the earliest D-Type restorations anywhere, sourcing new parts from Jaguar itself on favoured terms, according to fascinating documentation on file, including a letter from Jaguar Chairman William Lyons himself. Crucially for understanding her history these works also included a new factory front subframe to replace the original modified to accept the V8, and reinstatement of a Jaguar engine.

On a D-Type, this of course was the distinctive arrow-shaped tubular frame secured to the front and rear bulkheads of the monocoque and mounting the engine and front suspension like an aircraft nacelle – importantly stamped with the chassis number. So while the continuous history and the vast majority of original components remained with the Millstein car, in the 1970s the original front frame stamped XKD 523 was sold away by a later owner, and eventually built up by Lynx into a tool-room copy in the 80s. While it might have been "Alright in the 70s", these events were temporary and only set the scene for a heroic reunification, when the mirror image would snap back into one.

In that fascinating endeavour, the present very committed owner acquired both the U.S. XKD 523 and the tool room copy, and in 2008 commissioned CKL to reinstate the original front frame in an otherwise very original D-Type. These works were documented extensively in photographs by CKL, and in an article by author Paul Skilleter, and invite comparison with other highly significant "reunion restorations" such as that of XKSS 701 at CKL, or indeed the 1957 Le Mans winner XKD 606 held by the Louwman Museum. The accompanying CKL report details XKD 523's pleasing originality and completeness, from major

components like the original monocoque and bonnet down to ancillaries like the Marston Excelsior radiator and oil cooler, superb original interior trim from another D, and of course, once again the original frame stamped by the factory with the chassis number XKD 523.

Also highly noteworthy and discussed in the CKL report, the engine is one of a small number of special "5-series" 3.8 litre engines, being the very first 3.8s to be produced, featuring 10:1 high-compression pistons and the wide-angle head, as fitted to the Works cars for Le Mans 1957. Numbered E5003-10, according to CKL this engine was prepared by the works for Sebring in 1957 and is thought to have been fitted to long-nose XKD 506 loaned by Jaguar to Briggs Cunningham for the August 1957 Virginia race meeting. In another Cunningham feature the wide-angle head is also notably machined for twin-plug ignition. With XKD 523 for decades and (as not uncommon) re-blocked in period, the Cunningham connection of this engine is intriguing and desirable, aside from providing an exhilarating boost in performance.

Once again a D-Type of very favourable originality compared to many other examples, XKD 523 has lived relatively discreetly under the current long-term ownership, apart from appearances in 2014 at Salon Privé and at the Goodwood Revival in the Jaguar D-Type high speed demonstration. Under new ownership she would be fresh to the historic and competition scene, and certain to be welcome at all of the best events. Maintained by CKL and with freshly issued HTP papers valid through 2033, she would be suitable for historic competition at Goodwood and other race circuits.

**SOLD**



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