



14 QUEENS GATE MEWS, LONDON, SW7 5BQ
PHONE +44 (0)20 7584 3503 E-MAIL CARS@FISKENS.COM



1955 JAGUAR D-TYPE

1955 Jaguar D-type #XKD-518

- Chassis number XKD 518: the famous ex-Peter Blond car
- Extensive period race history in the UK and continental Europe
- Presented with original body and matching-numbers 3.4-litre engine
- Continuous ownership history from new

The 1950s were a halcyon period for sports car racing, with great marques such as Mercedes-Benz, Maserati, Ferrari and Aston Martin going into battle everywhere from Sebring and Dundrod to the Nürburgring and Targa Florio. But the most important single race on the calendar was the Le Mans 24 Hours – and that was a Jaguar stronghold.

The British company won the French classic five times that decade, twice with its C-type, and then three times in a row with its fabulous D-type. Designed by Jaguar's brilliant aerodynamicist Malcolm Sayer and introduced in 1954, the D-type carried over its predecessor's ground-breaking disc brakes, but its construction was all new.

Sayer came up with a strong, light monocoque tub, then added a front subframe that housed the 3.4-litre six-cylinder engine. He clothed it all in fabulous low-drag bodywork that was ideal for the long Mulsanne Straight at Le Mans.

Jaguar not only raced its new car itself, it also sold the D-type to private owners. These 'production' cars were dispatched all over the world and remained competitive into the 1960s. In more recent years, their blend of competition pedigree, advanced specification and sheer beauty has made them extremely sought-after.

This particular car is chassis number XKD 518, and is famous not only for being raced in the UK by Peter Blond, but also for being supplied in a striking red livery with matching interior, one of just 2 cars to leave the factory in red. It is thought that this car was painted red as an attempt to capture the Italian market. The car was dispatched from the factory on 29 December 1955, and sold new to British racer Peter Blond early the following year via a young Bernie Ecclestone, who owned a London-based dealership at that time.

Blond later recalled paying £3,500 for it and said that it was 'the best road car that I ever owned'. It also proved itself to be a very effective racer, and their first outing together was at Oulton Park in April 1956 for the British Empire Trophy. The D-type was part of a stellar entry that included factory Aston Martins for Roy Salvadori and Noel Cunningham-Reid, plus Archie Scott Brown in a Lister.

Blond went on to compete all over the country, from Aintree and Silverstone to Goodwood and Snetterton, before selling XKD 518 in the summer of 1957. The new owner was his cousin, Jonathan Sieff, who continued to race the D-type and occasionally travelled further afield to events on the continent.

One of his more high-profile outings came in the 1958 RAC Tourist Trophy at Goodwood, where he shared the car with fellow D-type owner Maurice Charles and finished ninth overall. By that time, it had been fitted with a full-width windscreen.

In 1959, Sieff sold XKD 518 to Monty Mostyn of Speedwell Garage, who in turn sold it to John Houghton. Then, in 1960, it was acquired by Jean Bloxham, who had become well known for racing Aston Martins. She bought the D-type on the advice of Jaguar's 'Lofty' England and raced it at Goodwood and Silverstone, remembering it as being 'smooth, powerful and with a superb gearbox.' Bloxham sold it back to Houghton in 1962, and five years later it passed to the famous Jaguar dealer and race entrant

John Coombs, who bought it jointly with stockbroker Dick Wilkins. Subsequent owners included Clive Lacey and, from 1977, Peter Grant – the manager of rock band Led Zeppelin.

In 1982, the D-type was sold to George Stauffer in Wisconsin, which marked the beginning of a long period in American ownership. It was bought from Stauffer in 1996 by renowned collector Chris Cox and was later acquired by Roger Willbanks and Bill Jacobs.

XKD 518 has been owned by a well-known British enthusiast since 2021 and has been fully restored by Brazell Engineering in exquisite detail. The tail-fin that was added at some point in its past has been removed, but the full-width windscreen has been retained and the car is now presented as it was when it contested the 1958 Tourist Trophy.

Jaguar's D-Type is the quintessential poster car of the 1950s, with its aeronautical-inspired body, and being one of the all-time great race cars. A rarity among D-Types, retaining both its matching numbers engine and original body, XKD518 is offered fresh from an extensive restoration back to her original specification, and is accompanied by an FIA Historic Technical Passport valid until 2034, making it an ideal contender to take part in all of the great events the world of historic cars has to offer.

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