



Imperial War Museum, Duxford (206)

Wed, 22nd Jun 2022

Lot 42

Estimate: £55000 - £65000 + Fees

1962 Austin Healey 3000 MkII Roger Byford's all-conquering competition BJ7 - '32 EXT'

Registration No: 32 EXT

Chassis No: HBJ7-21357

MOT: May 2023

- A well-known historic competition car, with more than 40 years of European success
- Highly-developed, with a 200bhp works-specification engine and all-aluminium bodywork
- A highly credible 7th place finisher on the very first RAC 'Classic Marathon'
- Approximately £30,000 in recent expenditure with marque specialists 'Orchard Restorations'

When it comes to rallying royalty, the Austin Healey 3000 and success of its legendary BMC Works Rally programme is heavily documented. Already a fine road car, relentless development by the backroom boys of the BMC Competitions Department, culminated with a machine that crews referred to as the "biggest gun on the field". If you were already a top driver, you needed a car you could win with and in the big banger sports car class, the Works Austin Healey 3000 was just that car. In the right hands, these sensational machines with their opposition crushing low down grunt, could storm Alpine passes in 2nd and 3rd gear, when the rest of the European competition were chugging around in 1st and 2nd. BMC with the Austin Healey 3000 dominated and won many International Liege, such as the gruelling Liege Sofia Liege and the Alpine. Driven by heroes like Timo Makinen, Pat Moss and the Morley brothers, the Big Healey's were the always the cars to beat. Inspired preparation and meticulous planning meant they mostly retired from crashes, not mechanical failure. Even the organisational might of Mercedes, Ferrari, Porsche and Alfa Romeo, were usually left in the dusty wake, of the red and white cars from Great Britain. By the mid-sixties development peaked, with the now classic combination of the triple Weber 200bhp, 3 litre, 6 cylinder engine, coupled to a (almost deafeningly noisy) straight cut Tulip ratio gearbox and gear lever operated competition overdrive, which could snap in so fast, the rear wheels would momentarily spin. To many, the Big Healey is simply the definitive rally car of all time...

The hiatus of that development is represented by the evocative long distance and rally-ready machine for sale here now. Purchased in 1981 by the well-known Austin Healey duo of husband and wife Roger and Maggi Byford, '32 EXT' was converted to fast road / competition specification soon after and pressed into service for club racing, rallying and timed speed events. Constantly updated and developed throughout this decade on a no-expense-spared basis; this 'BJ7' was ready for its first International event in 1988. Finishing a staggering seventh overall, Maggi and Roger were joined by 143 other entrants in the first ever 'RAC 'Classic Marathon''. Following a mishap on the Oddicombe Hillclimb during the 1992 RAC Rally, Byford set about a full and comprehensive chassis-up rebuild to 'full works specification'. This included the construction of all aluminium panel work, side-exit exhaust, and a limited-slip differential. Fitted with a newly rebuilt engine, '32 EXT' was returned to the race circuit once more, competing in the Healey Drivers International race

series. Recording a highly commendable sixth overall and multiple class wins, '32 EXT' shared the track with motor racing royalty, namely John Chatham's 'DD 300' and Denis Welsh's much-admired 'Bulldog'. Other successes included finishes on the 1999 Lands End to John O'Groats, 1991 RAC Historic, 1990 Circuit Retro (Ireland), the infamous all-Healey race at Montlhery, 1998 Classic Marathon 'Dash to Marrakech', Yorkshire Rally and many, many others.

Always capable of a front running pace, it has over the last forty years, become one of the most well-known and admired machines both at home and overseas. More 'Mountain Legend' than freshly restored rally replica, it's the nearest thing there is to a £400,000 works machine and has the all-important contemporary history and equipment to back up such a claim for a very modest outlay. In 2019, '32 EXT' was entrusted to marque specialists 'Orchard Restorations' for a thorough rebuild and has seen little to no use since the work was carried out. Almost £30,000 was invested and included the stripping and fully rebuilding of the engine to 'fast road / rally' specification (200bhp on dyno sheet provided). Benefiting from some other highly-desirable competition upgrades including a rear disk conversion (all brakes renewed recently), spare wheel bulge to boot and period competition lamps to both the front and rear. Inside the cockpit, you'll find full harnesses, race seats, roll cage, overdrive on the gear knob for 3rd and 4th and a Halda Speed Pilot.

Behaving faultlessly on our recent photography session, the car is said to "drive superbly", with our consignor also stating that "the gearbox and axle are quiet, with no clonks or rattles". Offered with V5C UK registration document and an impressive history file including photographs, invoices, results lists, event entry paperwork and much more. Not currently with FIA-papers, but easily attainable, our vendors feel the car is a little on the noisy side for current rally regulations and would benefit from larger silencers if the new owner decides to proceed down that route. A straight-cut gearbox is not currently fitted, however, can accompany the car if required.