

SALE

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A Sale of COLLECTORS' MOTOR CARS and FINE AUTOMOBILIA

at LE MUSÉE INTERNATIONAL de L'AUTOMOBILE, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

on 12 MARCH 1997

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*The Ex-Cavaliere Benito Mussolini***1935 2.3 litre ALFA ROMEO 6C 2300 SPORT SPIDER
COACHWORK BY CARROZZERIA TOURING, MILAN**

Chassis no. 700635

Engine no. 700635

Il Duce, Benito Mussolini, presided over his Fascist regime in Italy from 1922-1943. He performed his role in part by seeking to build the Italian state's prestige worldwide, and - like his German counterpart Adolf Hitler - he perceived high-performance quality motor cars and motor sport success as potent tools in that programme. Mussolini favoured the products of Alfa Romeo of Milan and this striking Alfa Romeo 6C 2300 *Spider* is offered complete with a copy logbook recording its original owner as none other than *Sua Eminenza Cavaliere Benito Mussolini*, address simply 'Roma'. Photographs exist showing *Il Duce* both as passenger and driver in this car.

This *Sport Spider* is one of a small number of original-series 6C 2300s built to special order, with engine tuned to a specification developed by Scuderia Ferrari during the 1934 competition season. Its body is believed to be the only *Spider* produced by Touring of Milan for the model and of the six 6C 2300s which ran in the 1936 Mille Miglia this very car was the only open one. Mussolini was a great believer in the propaganda potential of the round-Italy race and had been instrumental in ensuring that the inaugural Mille Miglia in 1927 had received official sanction. This car was actually entered by Mussolini to be driven by his personal chauffeur - seconded from Alfa Romeo - Ercole Boratto, accompanied by factory mechanic Mancinelli.

Due to the Abyssinian Crisis' International sanctions, that year's Mille Miglia publicized alternative fuels, this car allegedly being tuned to use alcohol fuel from a tank in the dickey seat, which is still with the car, but a two-way tap on the cockpit floor permitted the regular petrol tank to be used. It appears that while the alcohol tank provided a political gesture as the car was being fuelled, its engine actually remained in normal pump grade tune. Boratto/Mancinelli finished 13th overall and 3rd in class in this handsome *Spider*.

Mussolini retained it until November 1939 when it passed to a lesser party official who painted it army green, and ultimately hid it late in the war. It survived unused until his death, passing to a relative in the late 1960s, from whose family it was eventually acquired, complete but neglected, in 1972 by a respected historian/collector who had spent years tracking it down.

He had the car sympathetically restored with the accent upon 'restoration' not 'replacement'. Both the original upholstery and hood were retained, and after more than 50 years in obscurity it was eventually sold to the current owner in the early 1990s.

It is now a veteran of a successful outing in the Mille Miglia Retro - it is the only known 6C 2300 Sport with original Touring *Spider* bodywork and it has its unique and intriguing Mussolini history...an important car, offered with Italian papers.

Cette 'sport spider' est une de la petite série des 6C 2300 fabriquées à la demande et fut construite pour 'Il Duce' Benito Mussolini. C'est probablement le seul spider fabriqué par Touring. Elle fut inscrite par Mussolini pour courir les Mille Mille conduite par son chauffeur personnel Ercole Boratto, et termina 13eme. Mussolini la garda jusqu'en Novembre 1939. Elle fut alors peu utilisée et fut revendue au début des années '90. Elle a participé depuis aux Mille Mille historiques. Une voiture importante, fournie avec papiers Italiennes.

Voiture non-dedouanée en Suisse.

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