

1953 JAGUAR C-TYPE

The Jaguar C-type is one of the most significant racing cars in Jaguar's history, its streamlined form and pioneering engineering defining a golden era of endurance racing.

When the first C-types arrived at Le Mans in 1951, success was immediate: Stirling Moss set a new lap record by six seconds, while Peter Walker and Peter Whitehead won by nine laps. Yet Jaguar's ambition extended beyond outright speed. Working with Dunlop, it developed disc brakes to combat fade over long-distance races. In 1952, Moss drove a C-type to victory at Reims at 98.18mph – the first international motor race won by a car with disc brakes.

In 1953, the evolved C-type took on Le Mans. Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt secured the win at an average speed of 105.85mph, making Jaguar the first manufacturer to win the race at an average exceeding 100mph. C-types also took second and fourth places, prompting a telegram of congratulations from Her Majesty The Queen.

On display here is one of just 53 C-types built. The penultimate customer car, constructed alongside the 1953 Works racers, it was originally delivered to Norway in black. Not long after, it was raced in Finland, wearing the country's national blue and white colours, and across Scandinavia at Hedemora, Skarpnäck and Kanonloppet.

Rediscovered in New Zealand in 2024, after more than a quarter-century out of circulation, the car returned to Britain for a meticulous restoration. Specialists responsible for the C-type continuation cars praised its accuracy, describing it as a 'datapoint car', and it was shortlisted for the Royal Automobile Club Historic Awards' Restoration Award.

Following Second in Class at the 2025 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, the C-type returned to the UK for the Royal Automobile Club Concours. Displayed in the Woodcote Trophy category, it was awarded the coveted Best in Show.

Brief Technical Specification

Engine: straight-six cylinder, 3,442 cc

Top speed: 140+ mph

Maximum power: 210 bhp

Price when new: £2,327

On display Tuesday 22 September to Monday 5 October.