

S.S. 90 - "Captain Black" Revisited

Dear Graham,

I am happy to send you my part of the story of the S.S.90 "Capt. Black" as a follow-up to your story in the April 2020 issue of Classic Marque.

I have had the jaguar virus for over 30 years. The S.S. 90 is definitely the most historic car in our small collection, which includes a very late, unrestored XK 140 (chassis 813'264, dispatched 4 days before the disastrous fire in Coventry), an E-Type 4.2 litre Series 1 (Kjell Qvale Lightweight Tribute Car), a pre-launch XJ-S (Body no. 5W 1009), an XJ6 3.4 litre saloon (series 2) and an XJ-R Sport (X351, 2017).

My friend and mechanic Georg Dönni called me on a Sunday in February 2019. He asked me if I had heard about Christian Jenny wanting to liquidate his Jaguar Sports Car Collection. Which I had, indeed... Georg knew of my interest in the SS 100. During the conversation we both consulted Christian's book "The Jaguar Sports Car Collection, a Personal Endeavor" about his collection. And my interest in the S.S. 90 was awakened.

In fact, there might very well be a SS 100 on the market every now and then. But an S.S. 90? Although an S.S. 90 had by then not been part of my financial plan, I began to taste blood.

Christian chose his buyers. He wanted his vehicles to be "in good hands". After some negotiating, the deal (via James Mitchel of Pendine) was done.

Christian and I are in close contact. We are both convinced that the history of vehicles is extremely important. That is why we are currently working on a practice-oriented interpretation of the Turin Charter.

The vehicle has a brilliant history. AVC 318 is the first S.S. 90 that became registered for the road! Thus, the first ever SS/Jaguar two-seater sports car, which was to ring in a major chapter in Jaguar history.

At the time, SS was not able to produce complete cars. They therefore resorted to custom-made, rolling chassis produced by Standard. The first owner of my car used to be Capt. John Black, then CEO of the same Standard Motors!

The mere 23 units of the S.S. 90 differ in details from the SS 100. In addition to the



Philipp Husistein with his beloved 1935 S.S. 90. The car is known as "Captain Black" and was the first production sports car ever sold by S.S. Cars Ltd. The first owner was Captain Sir John Black, joint managing director of Standard Motor Company.

side-valved engine, these are the design of the rear (which is itself different to the prototype), the installation of André Telecontrol shock absorbers, smaller headlights and a special radiator grille with the "SS One" badge. In fact, the S.S. 90 chassis was a SS-One chassis manually shortened by 15 inches. The weld seams can still be seen!

This vehicle means a lot to me. I see myself as the custodian of a cultural asset. The vehicle represents a milestone in the history of Jaguar. It is fascinating how contacts are made because the circle of S.S. 90 owners is so small. For example, with reference to Australia, I met Terry Mc Grath at the Paris Retromobile 2020, who I have been in contact only over FB.

I have been driving the vehicle extensively for the last two years, also doing rallies in the Alps. And I can say that the flathead runs wonderfully and delivers enough power to keep up with it.

In the meantime, we have fixed minor mechanical issues. We revised the kingpins, renewed the ignition wiring, replaced the hose clips (we haven't quite got the right ones yet), revised the gearbox and replaced the Ripaults bonnet locks.

The car is currently in hibernation. I'm sure times will change and give us opportunities again to pursue our hobby more easily.

With best regards from snowy Switzerland

Philipp Husistein

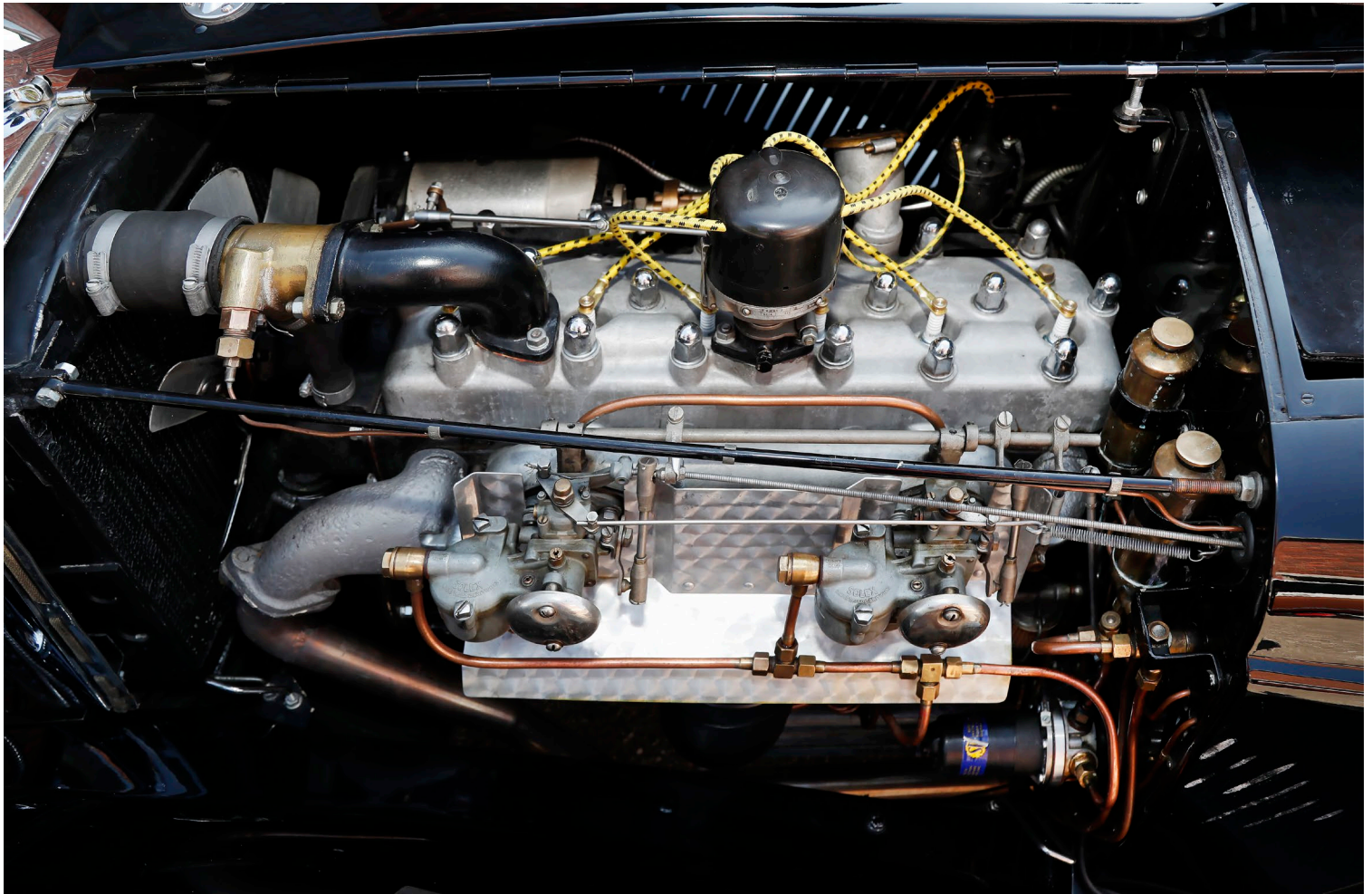
The photographs in this story were taken as part of a shooting for a Swiss automobile magazine. Credit: Vesna Eskola, auto-illustrierte.

Editor: Thank you Philipp for contacting our club and sharing this wonderful story. It is pleasing to know that this S.S.90 is in safe hands for the future.

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