

CLASSIC DRIVER

A streamlined NSU once owned by racing royalty

Lead
Although it may look like a two-wheeled sculpture, this stunning NSU Sportmax has lived a full life and passed through the hands of some interesting characters...

Fairing well



Built as a racing bike for the road, the Sportmax was a lightweight, maneuverable, and powerful steed that was a ferocious performer on track. When commandeered by the greats, such as Hermann Paul Müller, Mike Hailwood, Sammy Miller, and John Surtees, the Sportmax was a regular on the podium, even landing a World Championship title in 1955. [This highly original example](#), to be sold by Artcurial at its Rétromobile sale on 10 February, has been cherished by a varied number of accomplished caretakers, including two- and four-wheel Grand Prix legend John Surtees. The engine was rebuilt by one of Mike Hailwood's original mechanics a few years ago, with the rest being authentically recommissioned at the request of Arai Europe founder Freddy Brouwers. Now owned by renowned fashion photographer Mathieu César, whose eye for beauty no doubt fell in love with the chic curves of the Sportmax, the bike has been used sparingly. Understandable, really, as we can certainly imagine wheeling this work of art into our living room rather than saddling up for a ride...

Photos: Mathieu César / Artcurial

Gallery

