

Classic Holden to go under the hammer

Tim Dornin • aap Published: Saturday, 31 July 2021 8:02 AM AEST



The Holden HSV SS Commodore is said to be a timepiece in Australian motor sporting history. Credit: AAP

A limited-edition Holden Commodore is up for auction with bidding set to push well into six figures, continuing a recent trend of high prices paid for Australian muscle cars and other classic models.

The 1990 HSV VN SS Group is one of 302 built by Holden and has travelled 36,358 kilometres.

The four-door sedan has had two owners over the past 30 years. It is powered by a 5.0 litre V8 engine matched to a manual transmission and has had limited modifications.

While Holden built just 302 of the VN SS Group, the consideration of Australian Motorsport granted an exemption for them to compete in the 1991 and 1992 championships.

By Friday, the top bid for the car had reached \$341,000 but this was expected to be easily exceeded before the auction closed on Saturday.

The likely high sales price comes after a Commodore once owned by racing great Peter Brock went for more than \$1 million.

The 1985 VK Group A car was the one Brock drove during the build and release of the now highly collectible VK Group A series.

It was later sold to a family who drove it only on special occasions before putting it up for auction.

Bidding for the car rose from a modest \$3759 before peaking at \$1,057,509.

But it's not just Holdens attracting big dollars with a sharp rise in the value of a range of classic cars partly fuelled by the COVID-19 pandemic and growing awareness of the money to be made in the emerging asset class.

Cars not necessarily loved or considered the peak of automotive excellence when released are now selling for many times their original cost as savvy investors look to cash in.

In some cases, vehicles that would have sold new for a few thousand dollars in the 1970s, 80s or 90s are now attracting well over \$100,000.

Even the likes of a Holden Kingswood can fetch around \$50,000, a Ford

Cortina \$70,000 and a Ford Escort around \$30,000.

Vintage four-wheel-drives are also attracting big dollars, with something like a 1971 Toyota Landcruiser FJ40 worth almost \$120,000.

Saturday's Lloyds auction will also feature a 1977 Jaguar XJS once owned by media magnate Kerry Packer, Glenn Seton's V8 championship-winning Ford Falcon, a 1971 Holden Torana LC GTR and Russell Ingall's 2000 Castrol V8 Supercar.

Mr Hames said the Packer Jaguar was a one-of-a-kind with its twin-turbo configuration the result of Mr Packer's inquiry to Bathurst winner Kevin Bartlett to "make it go" after a day driving at Sydney's Oran Park racetrack.

From there the British Racing Green XJS V12 automatic underwent major mechanical modifications.

But during one of its many trips to the workshop, a fire broke out in the building and completely gutted the car.

It was then purchased by Gary Walker and rebuilt from the ground up finishing with a top speed of 320 km/h.