



# 1972 Ex-works Mk1 Ford Escort RS1600 'RWC 456K' | Historic Rally Car

PRICE £115,000



## ABOUT THIS CAR

Few rally cars are more evocative than the Mk1 Ford Escort, which was launched in late 1967 and dominated British rallying throughout the early 1970s. It was driven by some of the greatest names in the sport's history, including Hannu Mikkola, Roger Clark, Timo Mäkinen and Björn Waldegaard, and fired the imagination of countless enthusiasts who lined special stages around the world.

Early rally Escorts were equipped with the 1558cc Lotus-Ford Twin Cam engine that had powered the Lotus Cortina, but in 1970 Ford introduced the first of its legendary 'Rallye Sport' models – the RS1600. Built at the new Advanced Vehicle Operations site in Essex, it was powered by Cosworth's 16-valve BDA engine, which gave 120bhp in roadgoing form. The RS1600 was followed in 1973 by the RS2000, which was powered by Ford's 2-litre Pinto engine.

Not only was the Mk1 Escort successful in shorter stage rallies, it proved to be equally suitable for endurance events. The most famous of those was the 1970 London to Mexico World Cup Rally, in which Hannu Mikkola took victory in a car that had been fitted not with a BDA engine, but with an 1850cc development of the Kent crossflow unit. That success led to the introduction of the famous Escort Mexico production car.

From 1972 onwards, Mk1 Escorts won the RAC Rally three years in a row, but by 1975 the new Mk2 had been introduced. This picked up where its predecessor had left off, and won the RAC Rally on five consecutive occasions.

The Mk1 Escort being offered for sale here is RWC 456K – an ex-works car with a fabulous history that includes being part of a five-car factory entry on the 1972 East African Safari Rally. It would be driven by Timo Mäkinen and Henry Liddon on the gruelling long-distance event, which started and finished in the Tanzanian city of Dar es Salaam and covered more than 3000 miles.

Of the 83 starters, only 18 completed the rally, which was won by Hannu Mikkola and Gunnar Palm in one of the other works Escorts. Their only real opposition had come from Mäkinen/Liddon, but sadly RWC 456K was delayed by mechanical problems and eventually finished eighth.

Later that year, the Escort was entered by the works team for the RAC Rally, where it failed to finish in the hands of Scottish ace – and future Mitsubishi rally boss – Andrew Cowan. It did, however, have a more successful outing on the 1972 Ypres Rally, taking overall victory with Gilbert Staepelaere and Andre Aerts.

In more recent years, RWC 456K was given a full nut-and-bolt rebuilt by Motoscope and prepared for historic stage rallying. This included – amongst a great many other things – fitting an FIA-spec, 2-litre, 250bhp BDA engine, ZF gearbox, AP twin-plate clutch, and AP four-pot brake calipers all round.

INTERESTED IN PURCHASING THIS CAR? GET IN TOUCH +44 (0)1993 358009 OR EMAIL: [MAIL@RPSRALLY.COM](mailto:MAIL@RPSRALLY.COM)



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Having been sold to the current owner in 2018, the Escort was given a thorough re-work and prepared for long-distance events, a process that involved removing the BDA engine and fitting a Sherwood 2-litre Pinto engine along with many subtle changes required for endurance events. RWC 456K was then used on the HERO-ERA's New Zealand Classic in 2020 and completed the more recent 2024 Road to Hanoi.

Now being offered for sale with an extensive spares package that includes the BDA engine and ZF gearbox, plus a huge file with a wealth of period photographs, it represents a rare opportunity to acquire an ex-works Ford Escort Mk1. Not only is it a joy to drive, but it is also perfectly set up for historic endurance events and longer distance events such as the Peking to Paris rally, where its new owner can follow in the wheel tracks of Timo Mäkinen and Henry Liddon when they tackled the East African Safari.

The car is currently with Rally Preparation Services sister Company, the RPS storage facility and available for inspection. All viewings and test drives welcomed through direct contact with Rally Preparation Services.

All email enquiries please contact us on [mail@rpsrally.com](mailto:mail@rpsrally.com) or telephone +44(0)1993 358009

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## SPECIFICATIONS:

- Date of original registration 06/03/1972
- Sherwood 2.0 pinto Engine
- Freeflow exhaust
- Alloy radiator
- Twin coils
- Twin fuel pumps
- Tractive Type 9 Gearbox
- ZF LSD with 4.6 CWP
- Works spec semi floating Atlas with alloy hubs
- Watts linkage and short four link system
- AP forest 4 pot front callipers, AP 4 pot twin callipers on rear
- Gartrac billet front struts
- Cooper Gravel Tyres
- Minilite wheels
- Twin spare wheels
- 74 Litre alloy endurance spec fuel tank
- Steel bubble arched shell
- Roof vent
- Alloy door skins
- Alloy bonnet and boot lid
- Perspex rear windows
- Motorsport loom
- Heated screen
- Odyssey battery
- 4 Piasa spotlights with stone guards
- Stack instrumentation
- Brantz Tripmeter with drivers display
- RaliClok stopwatch
- OMP Seats (out of date)
- TRS Seat Belts (out of date)
- Drink bottle holders
- Stilo intercom
- Fire extinguisher – hand held
- ARB Compressor
- Storage compartments / pouches
- Full Substantial Endurance rally spares kit
- Safety equipment

### Spares separate to car:

- FIA specification 2.0 litre Alan Sherwood BDA, producing 250 BHP
- Direct top ZF box
- Extra wheels

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