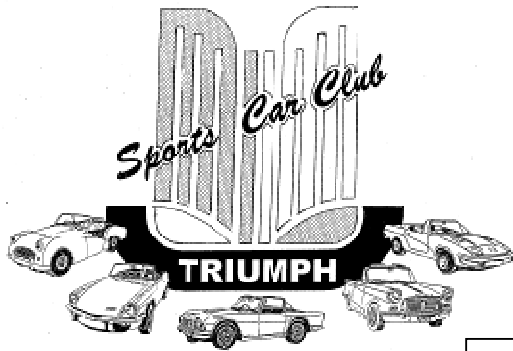


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NEWSLETTER – November 2009

Chairman's Chat

We are almost at the end of the year, the AGM is around the corner, and hopefully we can motivate members to stand for next year's committee to make the load a little easier. This year's AGM will be very important so please make every effort to attend, there are several important issues that we need some feedback on, and we want to make sure the decisions reached are fair and representative.

One of the most important ones is whether or not we re arrange the schedule of club meeting times, particularly the noggins. For many years we have had the noggin on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, yet slowly but surely attendances have dropped so that sometimes we barely make double figures. We have got some very good speakers, but still few people bother to attend. The club has a slot on the last Saturday of the month, at the recent noggin we did a quick straw poll on whether people would like to change to a Saturday for the noggin during winter. There seemed a majority in favour of this but what surprised us was that several people said they would prefer the Saturday date all year. This would mean that the month end run would probably be the 2nd Sunday of the month which also has advantages in that many other clubs use the last Sunday so hopefully we may get more cars on a run.

These issues of dates are critical for the future of the club, please do every thing you can to be there on the 18th or let us know what your thoughts are. I really want to avoid a situation where people who didn't make the meeting start chirping to next year's committee that the decision was unfair or undemocratic! If you didn't make any effort to help decide the club's future, then don't complain, talk to some one that cares!!

In closing I would like to thank those members that have really come up trumps in helping to keep the club running smoothly, especially those that have organised month end runs or speakers. Their efforts have been very much appreciated and provide a huge amount of encouragement when sometimes it is difficult to be positive. I am not



standing again as Chairman for next year, we really want to get moving on our Hermanus project, and therefore it will be very difficult to give the time needed for the club. So please understand why and a very big thank you to all of you for your input, I will still be involved with the newsletter editor's job.

A very BIG get well soon to Nic Paxinos, Nic has been in the wars again and broken his shoulder. Margaret has been to visit him but he is not too mobile so will probably miss the next few meetings until he returns to good health. Nic, we miss you, get well soon!!!

Editor's desk

The idea of putting letters in the newsletter seems to have gone down very well, we had a lot of positive comment regarding Mike Napoli's letter on concours, and even Johannesburg seemed to read it and comment!

Dennis (delirious) Cook has put a letter in this month's issue, take the time to read it and absorb what he is saying. In life what you put in is generally what you get out, think about what you can do for the club in the future!!

On a personal note, even if we are living a distance away, the wonders of modern communications keep us in touch so I am happy to continue as editor until deposed by someone who wants the job more! Many of you like the format, we definitely will NOT be having a reduced newsletter when Sabrina is published, I have been told (I hope jokingly) that it is more than my life would be worth to have a single page format!

Letters to the Editor

- *Letter 1*

Dear Editor,

With the AGM is coming up soon I hope you will permit me to express a few thoughts to share with the members of the Cape Town centre. Although I am away from home, I have served on the committee of both Johannesburg and Cape Town from as far back as the late 70's, and although I am not currently on your committee, I do feel that I have earned the right to express my views.

It is that time of the year when the club earnestly seeks a few willing people to keep the Triumph flag flying and to keep the members informed and entertained. Like last year and that before, there will undoubtedly be insufficient volunteers to even fill the essential positions. It is no secret that Jamie has wanted to step down for some time and he deserves a sincere motion of gratitude for the dedicated way in which he has soldiered on. Although he would have preferred not to have been the chairman this year, he has not only fulfilled the job effectively, but is also the editor of the newsletter. It is people of dedication like this who have kept the Triumph Sports Car club going for more than 30 years.

For those of you who have not served on the committee, and who may find fault with the organisation and the events, I want to tell you that each and every member of the committee gives up large chunks of his own time, often neglects his family, and often has to dip into his own pocket during his tenure; such as spending money for fuel to do reconnaissance and organise events. The club should be grateful to those who serve and the members should support their chairman and their committee.

Anyone who has been a member of the club for more than a few years, and has not served on the committee, should earnestly examine his conscience and should now make an attempt to give back something in return for the enjoyment that he has experienced in belonging to the club.

It cannot have been easy for Jamie to continue to run the club with enthusiasm during the worst recession that we have experienced in our lifetime; yet he and his committee continue to offer interesting noggins and exciting events. I wish I could be home during November to participate in all the events that will be going on. Thanks Jamie- if you feel you need a break, you sure have earned it.

This is a call to you all- don't leave the job to just a few diehards; do your bit. A Committee of 3 struggles; a committee of 8 only has to do just a little each.

Regards to all, and best wishes for a successful AGM.

Dennis

• *Letter 2*

Dear Cape Town Triumph Sports Car Club member,

We blink our eyes about 84,000,000 times every year. Because it happens so fast, we see just about everything that falls within our field of vision. However, there are many more facets to the Triumph Sports Car Club than meet the eye.

From the Chairman - Jamie - and his dedicated committee to you, our invaluable member, we are separately and collectively proud of our efficient club and would like to see it grow beyond believe in 2010. It has been said before "a club is just as strong as its members" which is exactly what it is.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 18 November 2009 at the club house and I request that you please attend this very important meeting, and not only attend, but to put your hand up and assist our club in achieving our goals, which is to preserve the Triumph Marque and have fun with like minded fellow Triumph club enthusiasts. Jamie and his committee is really trying to put a program together that caters for all our members and for all our different needs and wants. The events of the past year were surely great, diverse and should have catered for everyone's needs, my only concern is that some events were poorly attended.

I would also like to encourage you to attend the national gathering that will be held in the Drakensberg from 23 to 27 April 2010. We have had only three registrations for the event and I would really like to see many more members attending. It is an event that gives you the opportunity of having a great road trip in your vehicle with fellow Triumph Sports Car friends and to get to meet fellow members from the over the country and to see how others do it and how they treat their cars and what they do to have fun with it!! We had 24 Cape Town members attend the Port Edward gathering in 2004, about 50 members at the Hermanus gathering and 16 last year at Maselspoort. Please would you support it and our efforts in making this the best single marque car club in South Africa?

I hope you will accept my invitation and share our vision. We want you to see us up close and personal.

Kind Regards,

Gerhard P. Vorster
Chairman
Triumph Sports Car Club - South Africa

Forthcoming Events - Please diarise!

Cape Classic car Show, Parow clubhouse 15th November (Sunday)

This is the big event of the Multi Motor club and looks to be a great one. They are hoping to attract some 1000 motor vehicles. We have booked 26 places at the show for members, including one from George, so please let Jamie know as soon as possible if you are coming as we would like to be able to book even more!! This is the major fundraiser at the club this year, your active participation will mean that our levies to the CMMC will be pitched at an appropriate level for next year. Good response equals either reduced or the same levy, bad response is an increased levy and maybe an increase in our subscriptions!!

For those exhibiting, cars must be parked inside the demarcated Triumph area before 9h30 (please arrive early to avoid the last minute rush), gates for exhibitors open at 7h00 and vehicles are not to be moved before 16h00. Please note that a one way flow of traffic will be in operation inside the venue, so please adhere to the posted signage.

The show runs from 10h00 – 16h00 and entry for non exhibitors is R30 for adults and R10 for children.



AGM at the clubhouse, 18th November at 19h30

This is your opportunity to contribute to the running of the club, either put up or shut up. There are some very important decisions to be made for the club's future meetings. We are always looking for better ways of doing things and your feed back is vital to the club's future. Even better, come and take an active part in the club's running by standing for the committee, we are always looking out for new blood!

November month end run Calabash Bush Pub 22nd November

Ronan is organising this run via Bain's Kloof pass for our Christmas get together. The Calabash offers a lamb spitbraai for Sunday lunch for a very reasonable R120 per head. The venue has a restaurant, pub, swimming pool and much more, so it promises to be a great day. Please wear a Christmas hat for the run and lunch. Please note the date is the 22nd and NOT the last Sunday as is the usual case. This is to avoid clashing with the Toy Run the following Sunday. Please let Ronan know (0824433704) if you are coming on or before 19 November!!

Meet at the north bound Engen 1 Stop on the N1 at 10 am for a 10.30 departure.

Should you wish to check the facility, it can be viewed on the internet at <http://www.calabash.za.net>.

Reportback

Weekend away at Struisbaai

We had a wonderful weekend away with Nick and Denise Joubert in Struisbaai. We met at the new BP garage in Somerset West which once the N2 roadworks are finished will be a really good place to meet. We then drove on a really spectacular day via the coast road to Hermanus, and then via the Akkerdisberg pass from Stanford to meet Nick and Denise for lunch in Napier. Wonderful roads and really great for enjoying those TR moments that make us part of a unique clan! The Fox at Napier was a wonderful place to meet and the food was excellent. Trying to catch Nick in his TR3 on the road to Struisbaai had its moments, watching the 3's rear end bouncing around was spectacular but speed was undiminished!

After catching up with Gordon (plaas jaapie) Waring at Nick's place, the Harts and Dougan's dropped off suitcase and cars at their B&B before making their way up the hill to the Joubert's house literally above the B&B. Here Nick and Denise really went to town and we had a really wonderful braai washed down with plenty of vino!

Next morning, after a sumptuous breakfast, Nick hurried us along, before the wind picked up, as he had organised us to go to his local airfield where his friend, Andrew, has an ultralite aircraft to take us whale watching. We took it in turns as the plane has only 2 seats but what an experience! The girls went first and came back excited, when it was my turn I could see why! There were 4 sets of whales with calves in the bay, plus seals in the waves; it really was spectacular. Even Lieutenant (Ret) Waring was impressed!!



TR's on show with ultralite

After the flight Andrew showed us his office and museum, there were lots of items of memorabilia which had us fascinated. He really has a piece of heaven!

At this point we said farewell to Gordon plus Neil and Bernie in their honorary TR for their trip home and Nick took us to the nature reserve for lunch on the beach. A bit of a mission to get there, via dirt roads, but a lovely place once we had arrived. The only problem was the wind was picking up so we found a suitable rock to hide behind and had cheese and biscuits washed down with a suitable tippie. The residue in the glasses wasn't poor wine making, more the contents of the beach!



Bernie alighting after her flight



Gordon showing keen interest in the memorabilia



Whales in the bay



Hiding from the wind!

The weather was becoming worse as the afternoon progressed so we ended up having a lovely braai with toasted sandwiches before heading home to our B&B. The weather in the morning can only be described as atrocious, the drive home would have been bad in a plastic but in a TR6 with ventilation gaps it was a problem! Going through Hermanus it was as if some one had emptied a bath on us, certainly the worst conditions I have ever driven my 6 in. Thanks to rugged British engineering, we made it via Clarens drive in conditions that seemed hurricane force but finally made it back home!

A very big thank you to Nick and Denise for organising what was a superb weekend, and to Andrew for taking us in his ultralite. For those of you that came, glad you enjoyed it, for those that didn't, you missed out big time!

[Talk on shock absorbers by Ian Glass - September noggin](#)

Ian gave a really interesting talk on shock absorbers at the September noggin. His talk arrived a bit late for last month's newsletter so here it is.

Thank you for allowing me to talk at your club meeting. My name is Ian Glass and I'm here to talk to you about the Black Art of suspension with specific focus on shock absorbers. I have my own business called GT Shocks which specialises in custom made shocks. I have a business partner named Richard and I have been in the shock industry since 1983. That gives me 26 years of experience of which 15 years was spent at Gabriel Shock absorbers. Some of you might have heard me talk previously but hopefully you have forgotten all that I told you so this will all be new and exciting.

Is there anyone out there who has absolutely no idea how a shock works and in fact wonder why the motor manufacturers bother to fit them at all. Nobody needs to admit that but let me tell you until I started at Gabriel Shock absorbers in 1983 I had no clue on how shocks worked. So here briefly is what they do – if you compress a spring and release it, it will rebound and compress a few times before it comes to rest. Some of you might remember the Pogo Stick. Now if you fit this setup to a vehicle and hit a bump the spring will bounce up and down until one of your passengers gets sick down your back. Apart from the vehicle been unsafe to drive faster than about 30Km/hr it would be very uncomfortable for any passengers brave enough to drive with you.

Now the shock's job is to damp out the spring's oscillations as soon as possible and maintain the tyre's contact with the road. This allows vehicles to be driven at speeds over 300Km/hr which is a big improvement over 30Km/hr. The damping rate chosen also gives the vehicle its feel. A good example would be to compare the current VW Golf 5 range where the base 1.6 against the GTi feels like two different vehicles. They use the same body shell but by changing spring rates and shocks the base model is transformed into the performance GTi – engine and tyres aside.

So here we go... All vehicles that we end up rebuild need shock absorbers. These can be bought as original spares from the vehicle manufacturer spares outlet – if you are lucky. You could also obtain aftermarket replacement shock absorbers made by one of the shock absorber firms such as Gabriel or Armstrong. This is all very well when the rebuilt vehicle is less than twenty years old. For older vehicles there might be a listing of shocks in an older catalogue. If no listing can be found the only other option is to remove the shocks and measure them up and see if any of the current range from the big shock companies matches your sample. If you are still out of luck GT Shocks could build you an exact equivalent.

Now you may ask what types of shocks you could expect to find on your rebuild? The oldest vehicles used friction dampers that are relatively easy to refurbish. The next type was the rotary damper that looked like a pot with an arm attached to the centre. The end of the arm was then attached via a linkage to the suspension. Most of these types of dampers are now at least sixty years old and it is a testimony to their design that they are still going today. Most of these units just need to be flushed out and refilled with the correct oil. Sometimes the shaft seal needs replacing. The next type of shock was the Lever arm shock. These can be found on some of the older Triumphs and mainly on the rear. These are a development of the Rotary Damper with the shock consisting of two chambers with a piston in each. The pistons are connected by a rocker arm which connects to the output shaft. As with the Rotary Damper cleaning, rebuilding, replacing the output shaft seal and filling with the correct viscosity oil gets them performing like new again. Often when Lever Arm shocks are used at the front of the vehicle they form part of the wishbone system. This makes changing the front suspension to a modern telescopic damper very complex and costly but more of that later. After the Lever Arm shock comes the Telescopic Damper. This was a step backwards in some respects as these dampers do not last as long as the Lever Arm shocks but are a lot cheaper to fit from new and to replace a few years down the line. So once again we see how the Motor Manufacture passes cost onto the vehicle owner!!! Now the Telescopic Damper is not a structural part of the suspension meaning that the damper can be removed and the vehicle can still be driven – but fairly slowly.

The next major step was the MacPherson Strut which combines the damper and suspension arm into one. In this way vehicle manufacturers were able to make vehicles that were cheaper and faster to assemble. To refurbish a MacPherson Strut you would have to buy an Insert or have a special made up – by us!!! The down side is the MacPherson Strut is a structural part of the suspension so the vehicle is definitely not mobile after the MacPherson Strut has been removed from the vehicle. A Strut is easy to identify as it usually has a large diameter spring on it and the bottom end is connected directly to the stub axle. A variation of the Strut is the Mini Strut that has the basic design of the MacPherson Strut but the lightness of a Telescopic Damper. The reason it can be made lighter is because some of the side loads that a standard MacPherson Strut experiences are reduced by the use of extra links. A typical example of this type of suspension can be found on the front of a Honda V-Tech. Other suspensions use a Telescopic Damper and place a spring around the outside of the damper. It also has a suitable lower spring cup to support the spring. A typical example of this set-up would be on the rear of the VW Citi Golf.

Previously I mentioned how damping rate can affect the feel of the vehicle and the example I used was the 1.6L VW Golf 5 verses the GTi Golf 5. A typical road vehicle would have a Recoil (extension) to Compression (collapsing) damping ratio of 70 to 30%. To give the Golf 5 GTi its sporty feel stiffer springs would be fitted – probably only 10 to 15% stiffer – combined with revised damper settings. This would be a Recoil to Compression ratio of 65 to 35%. Couple these changes with lower profile tyres and you get a vehicle that is slightly more

uncomfortable to drive but corners and brakes much better than the standard model. You can now put a higher output motor in the vehicle.

Considering the above discussion regarding the feel of a vehicle it has been demonstrated how important shocks are to the overall ride and handling of a vehicle. Yet shocks are usually the last thing that receive any attention when a vehicle is been rebuilt. Just remember that brakes, tyres and shocks are what keep you on the road and if any of the three are not in 100% condition there is a good chance you could end up in a panel shop. Now we come to the big question – **“Will changing the shocks on my car make any difference?”** The answer is yes and here are a few improvements:

- 1) There will be an immediate handling improvement without the need to change springs, suspension bushes and anti-roll bar.
- 2) The increased damping will reduce diving under braking thus reducing braking distance. It will also give the driver more control of the vehicle under hard braking
- 3) The increased damping will reduce body roll during cornering which makes the vehicle more predictable to drive.
- 4) Improved damping also reduces squatting under acceleration.

This leads us to the next question which is **“How do I know when to change shocks?”**

- 1) The first test is the “bounce test” – here the vehicle is bounced up and down by hand and when let go should immediately settle. Any extra bounce would indicate worn shocks.
- 2) Check the shocks for oil leakage – any leaks would call for shock replacement.
- 3) A test drive on a bumpy road (speed humps are the best) should not cause any rattles, thumping or excessive body movement.
- 4) Under hard braking there should not be excessive nose diving. Also under hard acceleration there must not be excessive squatting. Please warn your passenger before you carry out either of these manoeuvres.
- 5) Then driving at between 60 to 80Km/hr you can do the lane change test – change from the left lane to right lane and back again. There should not be excessive body roll during this manoeuvre. I accept no responsibility for any rolled vehicles!!!!
- 6) Some of the fitment centres have on-car shock testers. These are OK but the very best test is to remove the shock from the vehicle.
- 7) The shocks can be removed from the vehicle. The shock is then compressed and extended by hand making sure it is held at the same angle and orientation as it is when on the vehicle. Listen for strange noises and check for hydraulic lags. Also look for signs of oil leakage. Shake the shock to check for any loose bits inside. Check the rod for wear – particularly on MacPherson struts. The shock could also be taken to someone like Gabriel for testing on a shock Dyno to check out its hydraulic performance.
- 8) The final test is to drive the same model as yours and compare – you will be surprised what you have been putting up with!!

The next question would be **“Where can I find shocks?”**

- 1) The first place to look is at the agents but be warned these can be very expensive or long gone from their spares listing.
- 2) The next place to look would be with the big shock absorber manufacturers if they still have a listing for your pride and joy. If no listing exists you would have to take them a sample. Be warned they tend to think that if their shock's lengths match your sample it must be right. What is not usually considered are the new shocks damping suitability for your vehicle? I once had a case (when at Gabriel) where someone wanted to fit a shock to the rear of a Datsun 1000 LDV. The matched shock (length wise) was from the front of a 3 ton Toyota Hino Truck. You can imagine how well that setup would have worked!!!!
- 3) You can always import shocks but the problem there is that if incorrect shocks are supplied they usually have to be returned at your cost. If you are going to import shocks make a detailed sketch of the sample and fax or e-mail it to the supplier before they ship to you. If you are not sure how to measure up the shock you can contact us at GT Socks for the correct method.
- 4) Shocks can be obtained from us at GT Shocks. We have a large and ever expanding data base of shock designs for all makes of vehicles. If your model is not on our data base we can build from a sample and match the damping to your application. The only down side is that our shocks are a little more expensive than stock items from somewhere like Gabriel or Armstrong.

Another aspect of suspension rebuilds is the spring. You will find that unless your vehicle has torsion bars the springs will have settled to some extent. Now part of the rebuild would be to restore the vehicle to its factory ride height. A lot of restorers would send the springs to have them lengthened and tempered. This procedure, in my experience, is very temporary and usually lasts about two at the most. The vehicle will then be back to its pre rebuild ride height. A better option would be to try to obtain unused springs or to fit spacers under the existing springs (they are not likely to settle any further). Another option is to try and find a spring from a more modern vehicle that would fit your model. GT Shocks has developed a coil-over shock that replaces the MacPherson strut or the shock with a separate spring by combining the shock with a spring. The lower spring cup is height adjustable and the spring is selected that best suits the vehicle. Damping in the shock is then set to match the selected spring. This system works very well where springs are unobtainable. The only draw back is that your vehicle would now not be standard.

I must also give you some of the queries we answer on a daily basis – so before you ask here they are:

- 1) **“What is the difference between an oil shock and a gas shock?”**
A gas shock is essentially an oil shock that has a gas charge in it
- 2) **“I push the shock in and it does not come out by itself?”**
Only a gas shock will extend itself when compressed. Almost all the shocks we make are oil shocks. We do some 36 and 46mm bore gas shock specials.
- 3) **“I fitted new shocks and the back of my vehicle is still low”**
Unfortunately shocks do not hold your vehicle up – that is the job of the springs so if the back of your vehicle is very low the only way to restore the ride height is to do something to the rear springs – new springs, spacer or retempering (not best option).
- 4) **“This shock feels softer than the other one”**
It is very difficult to make a judgement on the condition of a shock just by compressing and extending it by hand as the speed you generate is about ten times slower than the slow speed generated on the vehicle.
- 5) **“Are gas shocks better than oil shocks?”**
For most road applications oil shocks will give you a more comfortable ride. It is only for track racing and rally applications that a gas shock would give you a slight advantage.
- 6) **“My tyres are wearing on the inside edge after fitting new shocks?”**
Any fitment of MacPherson struts calls for the resetting of wheel alignment. Wearing on the inside edge usually means the toe-in is out.
- 7) **“The tyres on my vehicle are worn in patches – is this caused by worn shocks?”**
This type of wear is most definitely caused by worn shocks. It is called Hetrodyne wear and usually occurs in three or five patches. If ignored the tyre will soon become unacceptably noisy and have to be replaced.
- 8) **“I fitted gas shocks and the ride is hard – is this correct?”**
Yes gas shocks do give a harsh ride initially but usually soften up after a few weeks. If still unacceptable your only alternative is to for non-gas shocks.
- 9) **“Can I replace just one front shock?”**
Shocks must, for safety reasons, always be replaced in pairs.
- 10) **“I would like to by double acting shocks for my vehicle?”**
This is a myth supported by motor-journalists. They state with great authority that such and such a new vehicle has “double acting shocks”. Little do they know that all vehicles, from mini city cars to big trucks, use double acting shocks these days!!!
- 11) **“I have just fitted new front struts and they are already leaking”**
There could be a factory fault but most of the time it is fitment damage usually caused by the fitment technician gripping the super finished chrome rod with vice grips (mole grips). This particular tool by the way is very good for our business so make sure the fitment guy does not have a pair in his possession when fitting your shocks!!
- 12) **“My front suspension makes a groaning noise when I go over a speed bump”**
First thing to do is to spray Q20 on the shock rod. If the noise goes away then it is the shock. If not, you have to look to other parts of the suspension. Try to work out if you have just had the vehicle washed, been on a muddy road or perhaps launched a boat in the sea. In our experience something will set the noise off.

Prices per unit (excluding Vat) are as follows:

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 1) | Standard type MacPherson Strut | R650 to R850 |
| 2) | Standard type shock absorber | R530 |

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|--|
| 3) | Front and rear Coil-over | R5280 (no spring)
R6540 (with spring) |
| 4) | Convert Strut to Coil-over | R1695 |

That is all from me. Thank you for allowing me to say a few words. Are there any questions? If anything come to you in the middle of the night please wait until the morning to call us. We will be only too pleased to answer any of your shock absorber queries.

Thanks,
Ian Glass.

Delirious in the desert by Dennis Cook

There has been, over the past couple of years, quite a lot of speculation about the possibility of a new Triumph roadster being built by BMW, the owners of the Triumph marque; with speculative articles appearing in Sabrina and club newsletters. Various concepts and even sketches having been put forward, including a new TR on the MINI chassis. I think that the Frankfurt motor show in September should now put an end to any further speculation on this issue and one should accept that there will be no more in this long line of classic British sports cars. On the exact day of the 50th anniversary of the production of the first Mini, BMW released to the press pictures of a stunning MINI Coupé concept; a two seater based on the John Cooper Works version of the MINI, powered by a 1.6 L turbocharged engine generating 208bhp and a maximum of 206lb.ft of torque. From the specifications and

the press release it is apparent that the coupe will be expensive to build and could be competing with the likes of the Audi TT.



Dr. Norbert Reithofer, Chairman of the Board of Management, BMW AG simultaneously announced that two new MINI models were to be built at MINI Plant Oxford, England. One of the models will be based on the MINI Coupé Concept and a concept of the second vehicle (he said) would be unveiled for the first time to global media at Frankfurt Motor Show on 15 September. Reithofer did not announce any timing for when production of the new models would start.

At the Frankfurt Motor show, MINI officially revealed the Roadster Concept alongside the Coupé Concept and, like the coupe version, the Roadster is a two-seater with a chopped roofline and tilted back windscreen. This is almost certainly the second new model that will be produced at the Oxford plant alongside the Coupé. The Roadster appears pretty much unchanged from the belt-line down compared to existing Minis', but has the roll-bar structure shifted forward so it sits directly behind the seats, making for increased rigidity. The MINI Roadster could be powered by the 1.6-litre twin-scroll turbocharged engine already featured in the MINI Cooper S. Boasting direct gasoline injection, this superior power unit delivers maximum output of 128 kW/175 hp and peak torque of 240 NM. The roadster, because of having 2 seats gets a larger trunk and the opening is now useably large, extending over the rear deck and down to the bumper. A lockable pass-through allows a passenger to reach items in the trunk. The hood is a manual one, saving more space.

BMW publicity said:



"The MINI Roadster Concept simply begs the driver and passenger to enjoy spontaneous driving pleasure with nothing but the sky above. The powerful flair of the exterior and the soft roof opening and closing quickly and conveniently with one single movement of your hand gives this concept car particular appeal and wonderful

driving qualities. The MINI Roadster Concept therefore addresses in particular a young and modern target group wishing to enjoy the full pleasure of driving in the open air as part of their active lifestyle, showing their appreciation of a premium car and the individual style of the MINI brand. Ongoing enhancement of the model portfolio has already enabled MINI to reach additional target groups, with the popularity of the brand constantly increasing over the years. Now the MINI Roadster Concept provides new options to enjoy the agile handling, premium quality and individual flair of the MINI in a new, truly unique and unprecedented manner. “

So what's my point - this is a Triumph Club?

BMW took over Mini while it was still alive, and built on the concept. Although the Mini ended production in RSA in the early 70's, it soldiered on in the UK, refusing to die. In 1999 it was voted the second most influential car of the 20th Century, behind original people's car – not the Beetle- the Ford Model T. The last original-shaped Mini, (a Cooper sport) was built in Oct 2000 with a total of 5,387,862 Minis have been manufactured, making it by far the most popular British car ever made. A little like life being breathed into a recently expired Lazarus, in 2001 BMW launched an all-new “MINI”; still a transverse-engined four-cylinder front-wheel drive, but that is the only physical similarity apart from a vaguely reminiscent profile. It has become a rip-roaring success and it seems that its popularity is ever increasing. Initially fans of the original car hated it, but love and hate are just opposite sides of the coin and many owners of the classic Mini are now enthusiasts and owners of the new MINI. Do you recall how in the early days we denigrated the TR 7, and even debated whether owners should be admitted to the TR Register? Undoubtedly the quality of the BMW interloper, coupled with a sensationally effective marketing and advertising campaign have been behind its success, but the Mini just morphed into something new.

Guys; the last TR left the line nearly 30 years ago. Could one really breathe life into a corpse that has turned to dust? BMW are about to launch a sensational roadster which will set new standards for fun (and hopefully affordable) monitoring; competing not only with the likes of the Mazda MX 5, but even cars in a higher price bracket. With the MINI such a success and with BMW constantly linking their car back to the successful heritage of the original, is there any space in the market for another sports car from the same stable? Would they be likely to gamble on a marque that has been forgotten by most people and which has undoubtedly been relegated to the pages of history?

Should we be depressed about this, and bemoan the fact that they will not be any more TR's- hell no; our TR's are indeed a part of motoring history and they are unique. Any attempt at a latter day TR would, in any event, just create a modern car with nothing to tie it back to the original lineage just as the latter day MINI has nothing whatsoever to do with the original Issigonis designed Mini.

Would I betray the Triumph camp and buy this new upstart roadster- only if I could afford it!

Cheers- Dennis

PS: BMW may have copied the concept from a Capetonian, who developed the first Mini roadster, now advertised for sale on Gumtree.co.za.



[SU Carburetor Tips by Jack Cramp](#)

Recently, on completion of a customers SU carburetor restoration I was asked, “Can you replace my plastic topped dampers with brass ones? “

It occurred to me how many people have done just that without possibly knowing what the gusset or web on the neck on some vacuum chambers is for, and, in changing the damper, might negate the whole concept of the SU which is to give “a constant depression or vacuum” in the chamber.

We know that as the carburetor piston moves upwards, the air above the hollow piston must be evacuated either through a 1/16 hole in the damper cap, or, a drilled passage way in the web or gusset in the neck of the vacuum

chamber. If not pressure will build up and retard its movement, also, without a vent, on the way down a vacuum will be created having the same effect, ie, retarding the piston.

The evacuation of the air is done two ways.

An air vent in the cap, a 1/16 drilled hole

A drilled hole in the gusset from the inside of the filler hole leading to the vacuum chamber.

This is where a problem can arise because not all vacuum chambers with gussets have internal holes

Look inside the filler, if the gusset is drilled, you will see it just below the screwed thread, it exits inside the chamber. This has the same purpose as the vented cap.

If the damper has been changed, and it is very possible over the years, you could have a setup where you have a vent hole in the damper cap and a vented gusset, a combination of the two vents would allow air directly into the vacuum chamber, hence no vacuum!

Or a situation where there is a blanked off cap and an undrilled gusset!

Possible some one can explain why the engineers chose the extra tooling for the gusset, a drilling jig had to be made, set at an angle, also a extra drilling operation, when a simple drilled hole in the cap is sufficient?

One area that has caused much confusion over the years is what grade of oil should be used in the dash pots to get the best performance from an SU carburetor. The correct grade is to use mono SAE 20 grade, I have used 3 in 1 oil with no problems. The correct amount is such that you should feel a resistance when the cap has just entered the threads.

[Triumph front suspension by Jamie Hart](#)

Most of the TR series, together with Spitfires and Heralds, use a double wishbone suspension on their front ends. The exception is the TR7 which uses a Macpherson strut on the grounds of cost; this was in the days of the British Leyland cost accountant regime!! This type of suspension is extremely good, so much so that Colin Chapman "borrowed" it when he built his Lotus 7 series in the UK.

One of the critical areas of this suspension is the vertical link that connects the two wishbones together and has the front hub attached as well as the steering mechanism. The link therefore has to swivel and does this via a bottom trunnion and a ball joint at the top. The picture hopefully makes this clear.

The early TR's had a vertical link that was indeed vertical, but halfway through the TR4 production run the link was given a 3 degree lean backwards, called a castor angle, so that the steering became more self centring. This



was tied in with the introduction of a steering rack on the 4 and later cars as opposed to the box used on the 2's and 3's. Whilst this system worked well, as Tim Crawley demonstrated in Plett, any one who has driven a sidescreen with a steering rack conversion will be amazed at the improvement in steering feel and sensitivity. One could only imagine that Triumph must have had shares in the company making the steering boxes!

The vertical link, therefore, takes a fair amount of mechanical strain and its lubrication is critical, particularly where it turns in the trunnion. The link is cast iron, the trunnion is bronze, and so there is considerable room for wear and sloppy steering. The recommendation from Triumph is to use a 90 grade gear oil as lubrication in the trunnion. All well and fine but how does one get it there as a normal grease gun does not like having oil in it! There is a grease gun available from marine outboard engine manufacturers that does a good job in squirting oil where it is required but it is not cheap. It would appear that normal grease does not penetrate far enough into the trunnion and causes metal to metal contact leading to failure. There is a good alternative possibility and

that is to use a combination of oil and grease when the link is assembled that will allow the use of grease only for a while which is probably sufficient for our needs.

The idea is to put a plug into the grease nipple hole on assembly, remember it is a UNF thread, fill the trunnion half full with gear oil and then smear grease onto the screw section of the link. Screw down into the trunnion and hey presto, the oil softens the grease sufficiently to allow the next grease applications to flow around the link and give good lubrication properties! Use a plug rather than a nipple for normal running as this stops the oil running out, use a nipple for greasing only. The top ball joint uses grease as per normal, no problems there!!

When Triumph redesigned the TR4A suspension to use a shim able bottom pivot for the lower wishbone, they also took the opportunity to alter the design of the vertical link to allow grease to be pumped through the centre and flow through to the bottom of the trunnion. This improved matters but it is still advisable when rebuilding the vertical link trunnion area to use an oil / grease mix

HEARD AROUND TOWN

- Geoff and Jill Davis's TR6 is entering the final stages of its rebuild and should hopefully be on the road before too long. Geoff is still looking for many of those little bits that have been put away too safely.....!
- Our national chairman's TR3A is at a critical stage, the body and chassis have been re united to check body fit and panel gaps. The two will then be split ready for the engine and gearbox rebuild to get a rolling chassis prior to re fitting the body.
- Jeff Coombes rebuild of Willem Kool's TR4 is coming along well. The body and chassis have been re united and the whole assembly looks as if it needs the interior fitting and trimming.

Regalia

NOTE..... there will be a sale of regalia at unbelievable prices after the AGM. BMW (Bring Money With!)

Triads

- Graham Main has a Spitfire Mk 2? right hand door complete with glass and outside door handle. He also has a workshop manual for the same car. Please contact him if any one is interested in these items. His telephone number is 021 712 3655.
- John Markland has come across a TR7 convertible with a Ford V6 engine conversion at a bargain price of R 15000 onco. Please give John a ring (0823748620) if you are interested and he will give you the contact details.
- Noel Bastiaan has a 1969 Mk 3 Spitfire for sale at R32 000. It is pretty urgent so please contact him at 021 487 8653 or noel@wesgro.co.za



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