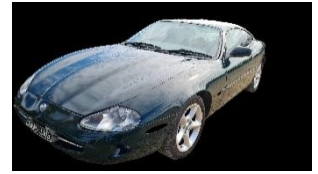




## Part 3

Quite a bit has been going on at Jag Central this last month, with the XK8 receiving the lion's share of attention.

The most exciting happening was getting some booked time at DJR Engineering to get work done needing specialised equipment (and experience/knowledge) that I don't have.



I've mentioned before that the front wheel bearings were noisy, with an uncomfortable amount of free play on the left. Another XK8 (Ross Douglas') had been in only a week beforehand for a wheel bearing replacement, and when that was dismantled, I saw the required bearing was smaller than the ones I had sourced from a major British supplier – 27cm as opposed to 30mm. I phoned the supplier who appeared to be unaware that earlier models of the XK8 had the smaller bearings. Luckily, I sourced the 27mm bearings locally, although they were more expensive. Down side, I'm stuck with the larger bearings for now. Subsequent investigation has shown the larger bearings were fitted from the 1999 model year (produced from August 1998) VIN 031303 onwards, so if anyone out there needs them (part number MNC1830AA) – give me a call!

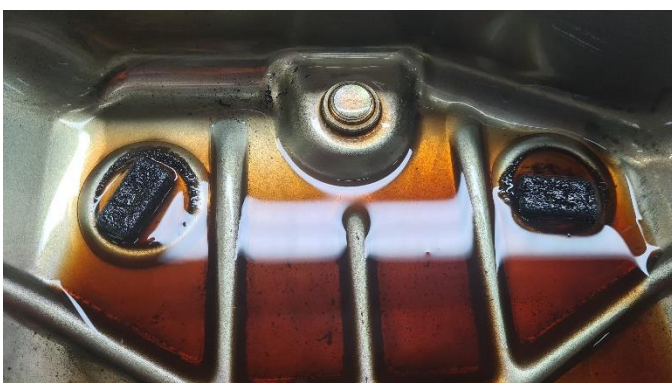


When dismantling, we noticed the OEM ABS spring-pin straps had been replaced with 4mm steel nails. This, however, was an elegant and effective "modification", so these were re-installed! Removing the ABS sensor rotor was a challenge; eventually used a 2" socket with 3/4" drive air tool set at 1000NM. Not a home DIY job!

The old bearings required nearly 40 tons of pressure to remove from the vertical links – again not a home DIY job - and in the process we managed to bend one of the wheel studs. Again, talking to "my" British supplier, the studs are spline-fitted to the hub. **Except, they're not!** Mine are threaded, so easy to replace with 1/2" UNF X 1 3/4" zinc socket head capscrews, with the heads lightly milled down for clearance.



The transmission fluid change was relatively straightforward – the only complication was sourcing the correct oil. My car is fitted with the ZF5HP24 box and, according to Jaguar, is sealed for life. I don't know of anyone who actually believes that, and even ZF recommend fluid changes every 80,000 to 100,000kms. I even got the correct service kit from Repco, who wouldn't stock them unless people bought them! It does however require a very specific oil which is certainly not available from your local store. I was on the point of ordering from Europe, when I managed to find 20ltr of **Mobil LT 71141** in Sydney, which I bought and had shipped to Townsville – and the price was quite reasonable. I got 20 litres for the imported price of 7 litres, so I have enough for 3 oil changes, although I probably won't need to do this job again in my lifetime!



There's a drain plug on the transmission sump, but the pan must be removed to replace the filter; all pretty straightforward. I had heard horror stories of sump bolts sheering, but mine came off with no struggle. The old fluid was darker than the new, but not alarmingly so. The sump pan has 4 magnets to catch any stray metallic bits from the fluid and to keep them out of circulation. Mine were certainly doing their job – and the sump pan itself was relatively clean.

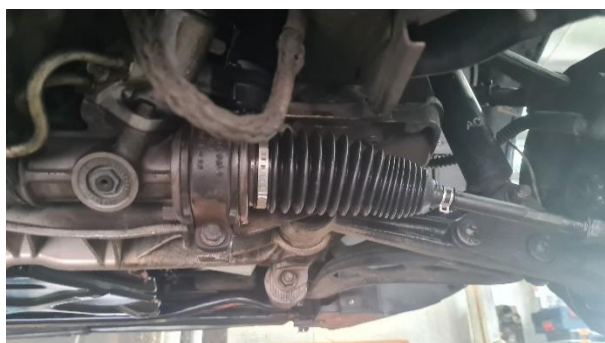


The ZF5HP24 gearbox doesn't have a dipstick, rather it has a bolt/filler-plug on the side, requiring the new oil to be pumped in by hand until it starts overflowing, +/-6 litres – then it's full! There's a process for ensuring the whole system is properly filled but not overfull. The engine must be run until the gearbox reaches a certain temperature, so a laser thermo-gun is very useful. Then the gear lever needs to be manipulated into all gears including reverse for at least a minute each WITHOUT ROTATING THE WHEELS, so with the foot firmly on the brake pedal and the handbrake on. Then, with the engine still running and the car in neutral/park, top up the filler plug and replace it. Check for leaks, and job done!

The relatively clean state of the sump pan leads me to believe this is not the first time the oil has been changed. But this time it's all been recorded and logged. Progress!



While the car was on the hoist, I fitted new steering rack concertina rubbers. The old ones were brittle and distorted – not split, but they needed changing anyway. We pin-punched the tie rods and ends, measured the distance between the marks with vernier calipers, to ensure we could re-fit without interfering with the wheel alignment, working on one side at a time. Pretty straightforward, and another little job crossed off the list.



Time to take the car out on the road and enjoy it!!

Got the car all polished and vacuumed for a short spin out to Cardwell for the Royal Rumble. She (I think she's a she although she's as yet un-named) behaved impeccably, no issues at all with any of the work carried out this month. No leaks, no bearing noises, and no wheel judder from mis-aligned front wheels. Driving this car just makes me feel good!



*I took a great panoramic shot of all the Royal Rumble cars lined up on the Cardwell waterfront – as well as the image of my left index finger! So this shot will have to do .....*