



Part 6

With just a couple of months to go before All British Day at the beginning of June, my attention seemed to veer towards making my pretty car even more beautiful. (My cars are not show cars, they are for driving – but that doesn't mean they can't look good. So, I'm always prepared to put in an extra effort to present my cars well).

I was lucky enough to source a spares car around this time – a 2000 XK8 Convertible. But one person's good fortune is always another person's bad one, and the unfortunates in this case were fellow members Dave & Sarah-Jane from Cairns, whose car turned out to be too far gone – mainly rust – to be salvageable economically. But there are plenty of hard-to-get parts that I can use on my car, and maybe I can get to sell some others.



The dreaded tin worm strikes again!



Dek-a-Dent came around towards the end of April to remove a couple of minor dents – but I was so busy watching what Gary was doing that I forgot to snap him working on my car! Here he is giving some attention to Ross Douglas' XK8 on the same day....

25+ year old plastic covers, switches and escutcheons are always failing and it's rare to find good ones with complete clips and fittings, and some were broken but more complete than mine, so I managed to salvage a few from the spares car, including the front wheel arch linings, front undertray, air inlet pipe and engine cover finishing piece. And, the engine bay and wiper scuttle at least, now look more like they did when first built.

I normally change oil and filters every year, and this was due towards the end of July. But, this year, after only 6,029kms, I decided to do it a couple of months early, mainly because I was getting a very slight but annoying oil drip from my sump plug. At the previous service I had re-used the old sump plug with a new Tridon TSW03 drain plug seal from Supercheap. But the

washer had failed, so this time I invested in a complete plug, some Penrite HPR5 5W-40 oil plus a Sakura C-1916 filter – exactly the same filter as the C-1925 recommended filter, but slightly shorter and therefore easier to instal. All fairly routine – and no more drips!

(The Tridon seal is made of nitrile rubber (as it should be for oil) and has exactly the same profile as the original. I'm not implying this product is in any way inferior – it's quite possible I damaged it when installing, or over-tightening. The correct torque setting for the oil drain plug is 25-30Nm.)

My front shock absorber bushings were on their way out, so I sourced the upper bushes from Jagdaim in Melbourne, and bump stops and dust boots from Pedders in Townsville. Removal and replacement of the coil-over shocks is quite straightforward, and I could have struggled with my spring compressors at home to fit the new parts, but it's so much easier with a suitable hydraulic press, so off they went to Chris for his attention.



On the right - Chris, the coil-over shock unit, hydraulic press, and a safe pair of hands ...

On the left, the finished articles ready to be fitted back to the car.



Handling has definitely been improved – I'm certainly glad I didn't leave this job any longer.

2 weeks before All British Day, on a Sunday Prowl, the car developed a mis-fire, giving restricted performance, but luckily leaving the car driveable so I could get home. The scanner showed the culprit to be cylinder 8 – of course that's the most awkward one to get to! I removed the left hand cover plate hiding the coils, and removed the offending coil and spark plug. The plug looked fine and I concluded the coil had failed, so back to Jagdaim to order a replacement. After some discussion we agreed the part number required, and the following day it arrived – but despite having the correct part number on the box, the coil inside was WRONG! After a nail-biting phone call Jagdaim agreed it had been mis-labelled and would send a replacement – which arrived on Friday 2nd June, 2 whole days before ABD! Plenty of time

Finally, I decided to treat the car (I really must find a name!) to a professional ceramic coating. Detailing by Terry did a fantastic job – I certainly didn't think they could get the paintwork looking so brilliant. Of course, it's 27 years old so if you look carefully, it shows.....



As part of the coating process, a small number of photos were taken to show how well the car responded to its treatment – but sadly they haven't yet been forwarded on to me. I'll show some of the pics when I get them, but for now, here's the XK8 surrounded by some of the over 100 vehicles on display at All British Day this year.