

Midascarsforum.com

magazine



issue 03
December 2009

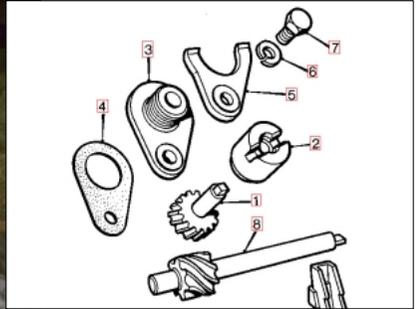


Midas in Finland



**Fly Drive 2009 - Convertible rebuild -
Speedo problems - Midas hooligans**

In this issue



The Midascarsforum magazine is produced for the Midas cars forum members and is only available in pdf format and free to download and distribute. Articles are taken from the forum or have been sent by members to the editor. Interesting stories or other contributions can be sent to the editor: Hans Efdé at hans.efde@hccnet.nl or at hansefde@yahoo.com.

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Cover

Matti's Bronze, the only Midas in Finland.

Back

Two Dutch Gold Convertibles in front of the Uiver, a famous DC2 and the Douglas Invader.

Editorial

Dr. Jekyll and mr. Hide

Returning home from Stoneleigh 2009 in my Convertible confused my opinion of the perfect Midas. I was exhausted driving this car over such a long distance. The noise had been deafening and the fuel consumption not acceptable.

Doing this again in the present technical configuration is not something I am tempted to. For the short trips in Holland it's a great car. The power and the noise are a feast to the ears and the fact that it burns away fuel at 1 litre every 10km is of lesser significance. So what would be the perfect Midas then? I suppose that would be 2 Midasses. An efficient Coupe for the long hauls and the shouty Convertible for the short fun trips. But I don't have room nor money for 2 Midasses. Just 1 Midas is already an expensive hobby. I would be interested to hear from you how a "Dr. Jekyll and mr. Hide" Midas would look like.

I have taken the decision not to spend money anymore on my Midas in the present state. The coming year I'll try to sell the engine and use the money for a new heart transplant. Even the race seats might go for a few comfy ones.

That said the Dutch government has completely gone bezerk on the idea of a new road tax system. The plan is that all cars from 1987 and newer must be equipped with a GPS tracking system, starting in 2012. The more you drive, the more you pay. This sounds good at first glance. The Midas is used rarely, so I could save a few pennies on road tax. But this box gives the government a good insight in your driving behaviour. Test the car on a deserted stretch of road and the next week a speeding fine will drop into your mailbox. And for efficiency sake they'll book the money fully automatically from your bank account as well. They say they respect the

privacy laws. Yeah right. In Holland the police taps more than 2000 telephones a DAY. Not to mention the millions of useless fines the police write to keep the money hungry government happy. They say it's for road safety, but everyone knows that BS. I am not going to comply with this gps box. If the men in grey pass the law in 2010 I will sell my Convertible and have to search a pre 1987 Midas. Or maybe I switch to a classic car, although I don't fancy meeting the tin worm nor loosing the fantastic driving qualities of the Midas.

Well, that's enough muttering for now. I have to praise the quality of the forum and David for all his hard work. The forum has increased interest in the Midas marque for sure. With more than 125 members we are the world largest group of Midas enthusiasts and are growing fast. The price of used cars are increasing and they are usually quickly sold. Blankets are being pulled of neglected and forgotten Midasses in dark and cold garages and they are brought back to life. Fantastic! Keep up the good work.

Welcome to MCF magazine number 3. I hope you enjoy it. You may have noticed that the list of contents is a bit short, but in fact the mag is bigger than usual. This is due to the massive report about the rebuild of Riches Gold Convertible. An astonishing story you just have to read! If you have something interesting for the next issue of the magazine you know where to find me.

Hans Efdé

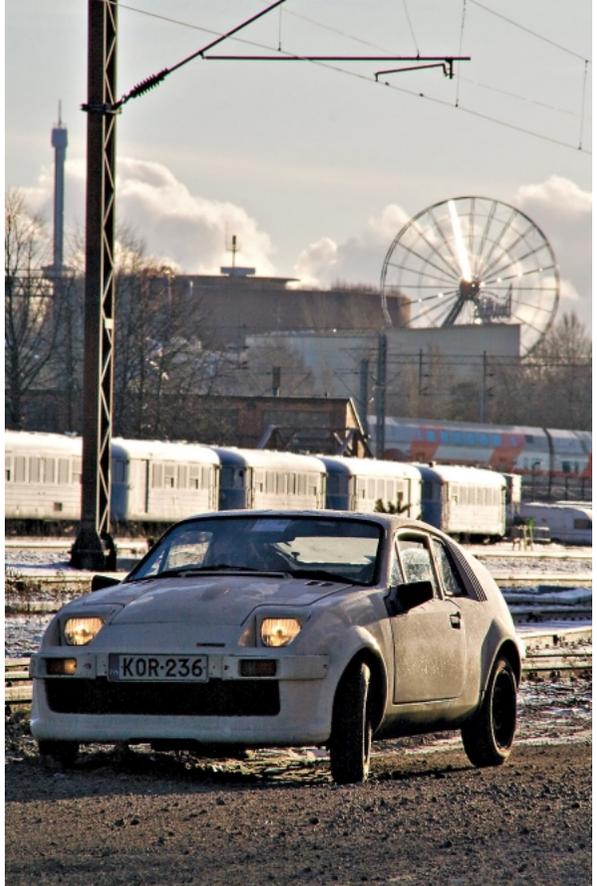
Midas in Finland

Reflections by Matti Ouvinen

Year goes by

A year ago I had never heard of a Midas. When a friend of mine brought one over from England and talked me over to buying it, and why not, one has to commit stupid things when still young. A year has passed with the Bronze as a daily driver.

BMC and Mini enthusiast Markus Jahn, a friend of mine, bought the car from Beulieu Motormart in October. He drove it back home to Finland. At the same time, my daily driver, a -87 Citroën Visa Leader had developed increasing murmurs, including a cracked exhaust manifold and a mystical ignition problem causing it to stall and not restart when running hot. Commuting in the city had become quite a stressful experience, trying to keep it running in the traffic lights... Markus and Janne (a fellow journo/photog at Mobilisti mag) eventually convinced me into



buying the Midas. I was quite sceptical about living day to day with a 25 year old British kit car, having no garage or mechanical experience. Could I survive the winter in something that was built by a couple of guys in a shed, I wondered? Since my mates promised to give me technical assistance and support, I bought it (after a very short test drive).

Markus dug up some 20-



something year old studded winter tires from his very impressive stash of Mini related spares and junk, and I was ready for the winter. The battery seemed a bit lazy though, but i could always get a new one some day.

The autumn progressed, and I commuted my six kilometer trip to work daily. Moisture was of course a problem, but nothing one couldn't live with. I soon got used to driving with the windows slightly open. Windstopper clothing rules, by the way. I was waiting for the car import tax papers and registration process, driving

with UK plates, anxious about being stopped by the fuzz and having to explain everything to them. I never got pulled over though. And eventually I got my Finnish plates as well.

In the middle of November, first snow fell. It fell in bang, the blizzard sending the whole capital Helsinki to a slight chaos. (Well not



really chaos, but this time it was worse than usual...) My colleagues at work welcomed me with a huge cheer, after having made it to work in the most adverse conditions I have ever driven in anything!

So far, so good



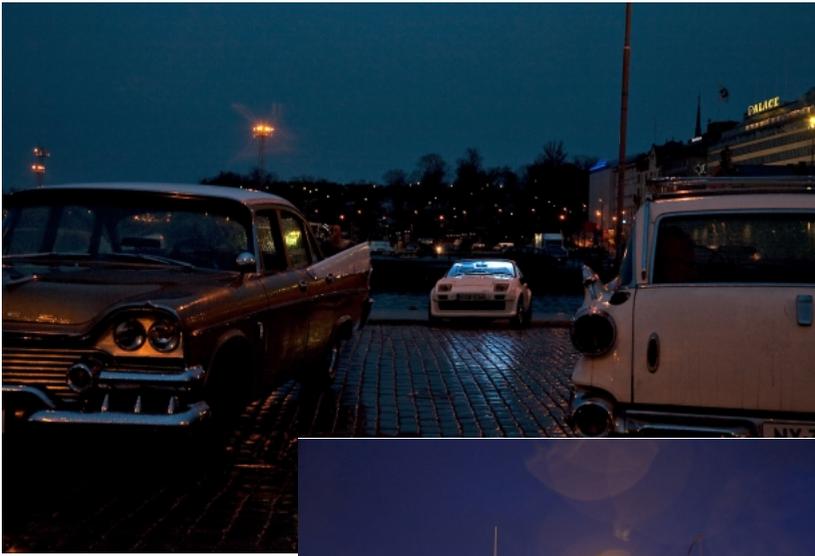
One soggy January morning, commuting to work, I had a flat tire. I pulled off to a service station. I did not have a jack with me in the boot, so I thought I'd borrow one from the Shell station. Nope, they did not have one. A puncture repair aerosol did no good. Thus I called for help, and my boss drove over with a jack and a camera and plenty of ironic commentary on my pit crew skills. Finding a replacement tyre took a few weeks, so I drove on with a very peculiar feeling odd-tired Midas.

The winter progressed on, and the cold February nights saw the temperature drop occasionally all the way to -20. Every morning I had my fingers crossed, hoping that the old battery would have enough life

in it to start her up. It did, until one day. I called Janne to give me a lift to work. After a day at work, I took the taxi back home, along with a brand new battery. But it could not be that easy, could it? The plastic strips down at the bottom of the battery made it just a bit too big to fit in the

battery compartment of the Midas. I barely made it to a hardware store before closing time and got me a chinese 3€ hacksaw. I scrambled back to the car, parked roadside in downtown Helsinki, and went on with sawing the plastic fastener strips off the battery – out there in the park, in -10 degree temperature, with a flu coming up, feeling a bit of fever rising up.

In the end, I made it through the winter with just two days of not commuting in the Midas due to minor technical difficulties. The day that I got my summer tires back on was a revelation, I hadn't driven the car in the dry on summer tires at all, having bought it late in the rainy autumn season. The Midas was presented in our magazine with a six page article and test drive along



It started out with an old Metro block, that was bored up, to make it into a 1380cc. It's a sort of budget build, so many of

with all the history of the Midas cars. I was of course biased, so the roadtest part was done by Janne, my colleague. The static images of the car were shot at the year's first cruising night in Helsinki, a traditional get together of American cars every first friday of the month in the summer season. My car was also present at our stand in the annual Classic Motorshow, getting plenty of attention. In short, during the summer she hasn't missed a beat. That is if you ignore the vapour lock incident that occurred once. The oil consumption is worryingly high, and there's quite a lot oil and smoke coming through at motorway speeds. During the year I've poured in at least 25 litres of oil, and I think I've done five of six thousand kilometers on it.

Engine project

We're currently building a new engine for my car. I'm watching and learning, because I've never done anything like this.



the parts come from my mate's personal collection of old BMC cars and junk...treasures. The conrods are from an Austin 1300, the cylinder head is from an MG Metro, the second hand HIF44 carb was bought at Beaulieu Autojumble... We're going for a nice usable road engine, so it's just one carburator, a slightly more aggressive camshaft and lcb exhaust. My mechanic says it should pull very nicely from around 2000rpm up to a bit over 6000. I've bought a second hand Peugeot Partner to serve as my daily driver for the winter. The Midas shall be tormented no more.

N.E. Midas hooligans moved on by police

Report by Alan Donowho



Alberto noticed whilst out on an enforced shopping trip to the Metro centre, with "she who must be obeyed". (The Metro Centre is Tyneside's famous shopping complex, once reported to be the largest in Europe!) That there was a car show going on, in one of the large car parks there, amidst all of shoppers cars, there were American classics, Ferrari's and a large variety of other assorted interesting vehicles. So we decided as our little N.E. group had not had a meet as yet in 2009, this would be the ideal venue for the first meet of this year.

I rang everybody and on the

second Wednesday of June, we would all meet at the appointed Metro Centre car park. The day duly arrived and most of our little group turned up. Those present included Alberto, George and our new





recruit Jonny and his good lady. Jonny has a very well turned out Domino Pimlico, but has recently purchased the ex. Peter Hill Midas convertible for his good lady and I must say that she was the best looking Midas driver on the day! The only member of our group who wasn't present was Russell, who was on holiday.

We managed to get everybody parked quite close together as it was very busy in the car park. The shoppers inconsiderately wanted to park the cars in **there** car park, did they not notice we were trying to have a car show! Anyway the show must go on and Midas's made no impression on the amassed people there. They were out shone by the lurid colours of the Hotrods, the chromed engines and the enormous American cars! That was until Stan turned up. Stan is an ex Midas owner who fitted a single cam K series engine into a Midas Mk3 Coupe. This car has now been sold on and

Stan has turned his attentions to more exotic machinery, namely a "Corsa Spyder". This car is a loose copy of a 1948 Ferrari sports racing car, but in my opinion actually looks better than the original car. That did it, this car is so unusual that hordes of people came to see it and the Midas's got some secondary attention.

Stan is a great innovator and this car is actually based on a Triumph Spitfire, but one of the more interesting features on the car is the paint work. The car is actually hand painted, well done with a mini roller and coach paint actually. The paint job was done by Stan's partner (soon to be wife) Margi, as she is a painter and decorator by profession. The job apparently was rather tedious, with twelve coats of paint being applied and six of them being rub off again, due to airborne foreign bodies depositing themselves on the slow drying paint. Stan did some research on the "net" and

discovered that in the old days of coach painting, the painters at Rolls Royce, who worked in a heated paint shop would strip down to their shorts and rub linseed oil over their bodies, to stop their flakes of skin depositing on the newly painted cars. That would be a rare site, all of these men working in their underpants. Stan did suggest this method to Margi and being the gentleman that he is, did offer to rub on the linseed oil. She declined!

Anyway back to the show, everyone was having a good time, friends were meeting up, and people were going oh ah, at various cars and engines. The variety of vehicles was amazing. You will note from the pictures there was everything, from a 1960's Morris J2 van done up like a police "Black Maria", beach buggies, hotrods to a V8 4.6 litre Ford Sierra.

Then the Police arrived and a man in a bright green jacket, who Stan thought was

a VOSA inspector. But luckily it wasn't, it was a Metro Centre official. There were about six Policemen and three Police cars, who were looking for the organiser. Of course there wasn't any organiser, as we were all just about to go shopping in the Metro Centre. (That is my story you're Honour and I'm sticking to it). Anyway with the arrival of the party poopers, the little light hearted and harmless event started to break up. First to leave was the Black Maria who cheekily flashed his illegal blue roof light at the police. It started to rain so we decided to make a hasty retreat. The car park cleared very quickly and we went for a cup of tea. Alas from what I can gather this event is to be no more. As you can see from this event the N.E. group are really are the "Bad Lads of Tyneside". Well not really, but the headline got your attention!



Speedo problems

Report by Hans Efdé

During my trip to Stoneleigh the speedo stopped working. I figured it to be a simple problem, but it took me a while to get it working again. I unscrewed the cable from the gearbox and turned it. The speedo reacted, so the cable and speedo pod was fine. I checked the drive gear and pinion in the gearbox. They looked fine as well. I installed the cable again and made a testdrive. Nothing. I pulled the cable loose from the speedo pod and fed it through the speaker hole underneath the dash. When driving I could feel something ticking but the cable didn't turn.

Mmmm very annoying. Time for study. I went through my old Midas mags and found the story of someone who had a similar problem. It turned out that the square end of the Metro cable is smaller than that of a Mini cable. When a Mini engine is installed (like in my car), the square hole in the gearbox drive wheel (item 1) is too big for the Metro cable. With a new cable it's no problem, but after a few years the friction in the cable increases and it won't be driven anymore by the gearbox.

The simple solution is to thicken the square end of the cable, f.e. by welding something on it. But because my speedo was indicating 14% too less after the upgrade of the diff. from a 3.44 to a 3.15, I decided to install new drive gears in the gearbox. This was easier said than done with the turbo in the way, but I got the drivegear out. For removal of the pinion shaft (item 8) it was necessary to remove the left hand engine mount. Then a small plate was removed and the drive shaft pulled out.

The drive shaft had 5 teeth, the wheel 18 teeth so it had a rate of $18/5 = 3.6$. To get the speedo indication closer to the real speed, the cable needed to turn faster. I had calculated that I needed a ratio of 3.2, which would require a 16 teeth wheel.

At my Mini specialist we made a setup and tested various combinations of drive shaft and gears. It turned out that you can use any wheel and any pinion shaft, although Austin prescribes matched sets.

Unfortunately he didn't have a 16 teeth wheel for a Metro, but he did have a 17 teeth one. We swapped my Mini one with his Metro drive gear. It took me a morning assembling it and made a testdrive. Hurray it worked. The speedo is still indicating too low, about 10% but it'll do for now. When I go for bigger tyres (f.e. 185/55) the indication could be spot on.

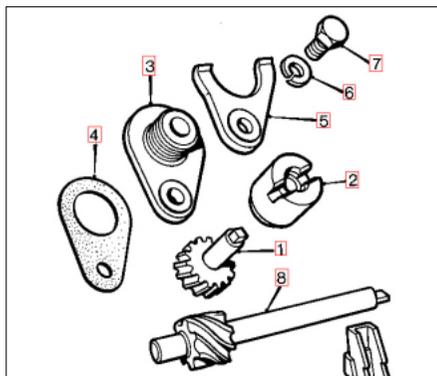
Here are a few websites that may be helpful:

http://www.ime.org.uk/ime/ff/final_drive.html

<http://www.ime.org.uk/ime/s/speedo.html>

Conclusion of this story:

- if you install a Mini engine in a Gold, make sure you install the speedo drive gear of a Metro.
- if you install a Metro engine in a Bronze, it's obviously the other way around.
- any combination of the drive shaft and gear works, just work out the ratio you need.
- there are drive gears with 15, 16, 17 or 18 teeth, drive shafts with 5, 6 or 7 teeth.



Riches rebuild

Rich breathes life into a neglected Convertible

I picked up my Midas from the very edge of the Solway Firth in Cumbria at the back end of last year, the car had stood in a garage for several years and wasn't running though it was complete. It was to prove lucky that the car came with a virtually new complete rear subframe as well.

After an interesting two day journey back to Devon while my hired trailer did it's best to blow every fuse I had in the lighting circuits, the Midas was rolled onto my drive.



Then it rained..... for several months.

On the face of it, the car needed it's brakes freeing off, a new battery, tyres, headlights and a tidy up. Sadly the predictable truth was somewhat different.

The good news was that with a new battery and a gallon of fuel in the tank the engine spun well with the plugs out until the oil pressure came up before firing easily and idling smoothly. The bad news was the 3+ litres of fuel now on the drive and the distinctive sound of a rotted out LCB manifold.

The initial list of bits to get had just grown by a new fuel tank and LCB manifold, as the tank arrived first I decided to take out the old tank and drop the subframe to have a look around it properly. The list grew by a full set of rear brakes including handbrake cable and hydraulic cylinders at this point.... The subframe wasn't holed, but it was significantly corroded and there was that new one just sat there.. That list just got bigger with all the solid and flexible brake lines on the car, even the copper pipes on the rear had corroded and holed in the salty atmosphere.

Ok, so it's now 14/04/09 and this is where we are.

New subframe, new tank, new pipework in kunifer, Goodridge flexi hoses, new hydraulic cylinders. All remaining brake components have been acid dipped to clean down to bare metal, neutralised in caustic soda before painting. The hubs are fitted with new bearings, lubricated with Castol BNS. The suspension has been fitted with new knuckle joints and new hydrolastic piping made up to replace the rotting steel pipe, the valve has been relocated to ease filling.





You may remember the brake levers I rebushed and pinned..

<http://87.82.64.76/viewtopic.php?f=55&t=311>

Now in situ with stainless pins and delrin washers connecting them to the new handbrake cable from Alistair that now has an adjustment built into the offside brake cable.



It's a bit dark under here, but you get the idea. The hose dangling down is the new fuel pipe that still needs running through the car, I haven't forgotten it, honest.. and the stuff you can see wrapped around the exhaust is carbon fibre cloth to keep some of the heat off the fuel tank. The rear brakes are now nicely balanced with equal resistance and a good smooth pull. Mine is a GTM built car so there are no undertrays to go back on, yet. If anyone has some going cheap I'd appreciate a nod.

Now the rear end is sorted I've started on the front with the offside suspension coming off, to bring the front up to the standard of the rear I think I'm going to have to drop the subframe and engine which is something I'd really rather not do, but while it's up on stands I might as well.



16/04/09

Front suspension components from the offside now stripped of rust courtesy of a night in acid, bearings cleaned regreased and set aside, the disc appears to be virtually new under the rust and has cleaned up like new with no wear ridges. Swivel joints removed with a big hammer and cold chisel.

All parts are currently drying outside after their first coat of paint. When everything is dry I'll fit the new swivels and bearings and put the whole lot away until the frame is back in the car. I've got some polyurethane bar coming that I'm going to turn into suspension bushes.

21/04/09

I finally decided that with the rear end looking nice and tidy I wasn't going to be able to get away without removing the front subframe, so today that's exactly what I've done. As I've come to expect, the nuts on the front subframe mounts appear to be of a size unknown to spanner and socket manufacturers. After spending the best part of the day wrestling, swearing and bashing my knuckles the last bolt finally succumbed to the angle grinder and the engine/subframe was lowered *cough* gently to the ground.

Mmm, I don't think it's going to go back that way, I need to find an engine crane.....



The rusty green lump you can see is one of Adrian Dodds tuned 1330 engines, appearances are deceptive as it runs beautifully, it'll even be quiet when it has an exhaust attached. ;)

29/04/09

Managed to pick up a decent English made engine crane at the weekend courtesy of Ebay, got the engine and subframe separated and started stripping the subframe ready for painting. Having spent the best part of a day working my way through corroded fasteners I now have a much lighter

frame, just need to degrease it now. All the parts removed have gone into the acid to strip the rust, they'll be in there overnight.

30/04/09

Frame degreased and drying ready for painting. Starting to remove the rubber bushes from the suspension components so I can start making the poly bushes on the lathe...

01/05/09

Subframe painted with hammerite, various brackets stripped and painted. Finished removing the rubber buses from the suspension arms and ended up using an angle grinder to get the anti-roll bar bush sleeves off one side.

Polyurethane bushes made up and fitted to the suspension arms.

<http://87.82.64.76/viewtopic.php?f=75&t=346>



02/05/09

Front subframe rebuilt today with suspension upper and lower arms, despite the upper bearings being cleaned it took forever to get clean grease pumping out, still need the poly bushes for the ARB to arrive. I'm not going to build the frame up beyond this as it's starting to get heavy to lug about, so the hubs etc will only go back on once the frame is fitted back to the car.

In amongst revising one of the poly bushes I've also rebuilt the nearside hub with new ball joints and fitted new knuckle joints to the upper arms.

06/05/09

Front hydroelastic units stripped in the acid overnight and repainted today, just waiting now for the Hammerite to harden before putting them away ready for the suspension rebuild when the frame is back on. Still waiting for the ARB bushes to be delivered.

Started replacing all the metal brake pipes under the bonnet, typically ran out of Kuniifer. This car has used a roll and a bit of this stuff already, I reckon two whole rolls would do all the brakes and the rear hydro pipes with a little left over.

07/05/09

Bad news on the ARB front bushes, been onto the suppliers and the manufacturers haven't bothered to make any over the last couple of weeks. It's going to be a another week at least, not impressed.



I had hoped to refit the frame with the bushes in place so it went back on today without them, before this the steering flexi joint was replaced (what a fun job that was.), steering rack cleaned, regreased, new gaiters and track rod ends fitted before being fitted back onto the frame. I abandoned any hope of lifting the frame physically up into the car and hoisted it up with the engine crane. I'm leaving it in loose for now and won't tighten up the suspension until it's got it's weight on it.

The rest of the time today has been spent running the brake lines to the Goodridge flexible pipes at the subframe brackets before rain stopped play, I picked up a small pipe bender on the Automec stand at Stoneleigh and I'm well impressed, damn I wish I had a garage... I'm on duty for the next three days so no Midasing this weekend. My Stepdaughter is just finalising her A level Art workbook and she's nicked my camera, I'll put some pics up when I get it back.

I've just realised that I haven't done the drive shafts and CV's yet and they will need to go back on before the hubs go back on. The rusty CV's are now enjoying the acid bath for the night, I can't for the life of me separate the shafts from the Cv's so if anyone has any suggestions I'm all ears. I had to pop the bearings out of the inner joints to withdraw the shafts from the sub frame.

08/05/09

Remember those bushes that were going to take at least another week because they hadn't been made? Guess what's waiting for me when I got home tonight.....



09/05/09

Bimbling in and out of the house today in between calls, drive shafts have been separated from outer CV joints using the correct recommended BFO hammer. The shafts are in the tank losing weight and the CV's have been scrubbed clean, de-greased and painted. Finally got my Paypal account back today and hit Ebay for a small pile of bits.



10/05/09

Driveshafts painted, inner joints fitted and greased.



Outer CV joints waiting to go on.

11/05/09

Having waited for so long for the poly bushes for the ARB it would have been rude not to fit them first today, not a difficult job with just a bit of jacking used to line up holes. They come with a sachet of 'special' lube which I assumed would be silicone grease, turns out it's coppaslip. The lower suspension components were checked for easy movement, no problems there thankfully. The front subframe is now bolted up to the body of the car.



Next is finishing the hydraulic pipes under the bonnet now I've bought another roll of kunifer tubing, annoyingly I'm short of about 6" of tube

from the original roll so I've bought 25 feet just to use 6". Never mind, there's a Porsche 924 here that's going to need re-piping too. Still very impressed with the little tool from Automec.



The front flexi hoses have been fitted so I can get the heights right for the solid pipes, obviously they'll have to come off again to be fitted to the calipers. Both hubs are now fitted loosely, drive shafts are fitted, discs and hubs fitted. I've stripped the calipers (again) and the paint is drying overnight.



12/05/09

Another day of decent weather so continued on with yesterdays work, the new bleed nipples for the calipers arrived this morning and were fitted before the calipers themselves were bolted on and the Goodridge hoses connected up, fitted the NS engine mount and found that the new brake pipes were in the way so new pipes have been made up. I've found that the kunifer tubing really work hardens when you use a tight angle bending tool so re-bending the original pipes just looks a mess.

The underseal in the front wheel arches was grey and chipped so I repainted that once I'd finished working under the arches, I've still managed to get a large blob of it on the back of my head.

The hydroelastic units have now been refitted, I would have fitted the bump stops at the same time but I can't find any UNF nuts to secure the Mini sourced rubbers right now, tried to put some pressure in the system and the ruddy pump sprung a leak.



Having finished all the brake work I realised that I haven't done anything with the master cylinder, taking that off revealed a small amount of brake fluid in the body of the servo. Not sure if that's normal but it means that I'll be taking it apart. The servo is now out as well, for some reason it's been totally started with underseal. I suspect it might have been an attempt to stop a water leak under the dash. Luckily my car has no interior at the moment because I'm not the shortest person to squeeze under the steering wheel.



16/05/09

Today it's mainly raining.....

In between downpours I've removed the rod change unit, stripped, cleaned and rebuilt it with new rubbers and a Minisport quick shift kit before bolting it back into the car.

17/05/09

Raining again..... Went out and picked up some odds and sods, I've sourced a nearly

new master cylinder and servo that should be here in the next few days. Later in the afternoon it dried up so I started on a job I've been putting off for a while, wire brushing the engine and it's components before painting it all. Most of the old stuff brushed and scraped off easily and it wasn't too long before this.....



.... started to look like this..

I took the clutch cover off as the actuating arm is rusted solid in the cover. After a bit of persuading with a large hammer it was in bits, the plunger and pivot pin were cleaned up in the lathe.



Once the paint was touch dry the core plugs were replaced and the cleaned and painted components bolted back onto the engine. The gearbox/clutch housing is painted with silver hammerite which will need to harden off overnight before I can do much with the clutch actuator.

Looking a bit tidier now.

Though the engine plaque has had to come off for the painting, soon be back on though.



22/05/09

Not much been happening this week apart from work, still it's giving the engine paint chance to harden off before it all goes back in. I've found a nearly new master cylinder and servo care of Ebay which arrived the other day and will be fitted once I've had the pedal box out as it looks like water has been coming in through it's upper mounting. Once done I should have brakes.

07/06/09

Slow progress due to work and having my boys down for a week. The drive is currently blocked up with my better half's Porsche 924 now she's got an MX5 to play with in the sun. It should have been gone a week ago, needless to say I hate deadbeat Ebay bidders with a passion.....

Managed to get a couple of hours in today, I've now replaced the metalastic gear shift bush over the diff housing and both of the output oil seals. Following Adrian's advice I bought the correct Payen head gasket from MRA Minis, unfortunately it arrived damaged but to their eternal credit a replacement was sent out immediately with no fuss at all, big thanks to Debbie.

I'd forgotten how easy a gasket change is on an A series engine, 20 minutes all in. The

machined surfaces looked like they had just been done and there's no discernible wear in the bores.



Once the head was torqued up I started measuring up for the bracket to hold the pick up for the MegaJolt ignition system, I machined the pulley ages ago for the timing wheel. The hope is that I'll have a simple post mounting bolted onto the timing cover that fits within the confines of the fan belt routing.



The post is still on the lathe, back to work now for a couple of days. Hopefully back on Wednesday with another update

11/06/09

I'm pleased to confirm that a fully assembled A series can be hoisted back under the bonnet without touching anything

Once the engine was back in I fitted the new servo and master cylinder before setting about bleeding the brakes. I couldn't find the appropriate pressure cap for the Metro reservoir so i couldn't use my pressure bleeder, after much pumping of brakes (how many cars have 8 bleed nipples?) and just over a litre of DOT 5.1 I now have a nice firm pedal.



Next was the clutch cable which has been shimmed with several large washers, turns out the adjuster mechanism on the cable is U/S so back to Ebay tonight for a new replacement.

I've had the roof off today as I've been working on my back under the dash, seeing as I'm not exactly short I needed somewhere for my feet to go. ;) these cars look nice with and without their tops on.



13/06/09

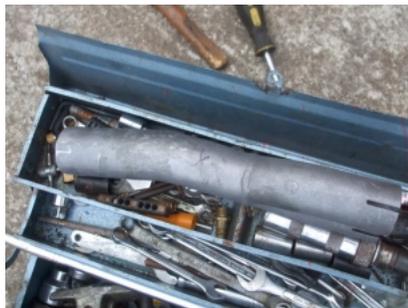
Ebay came up trumps today with new clutch and throttle cables on the doormat this morning so the first job was fitting the clutch cable, I've now got brakes and a clutch.

Next was fitting the gearshift, after a bit of jiggling it was all connected and bolted up and it feels as though I can engage all the gears, though even with the quick shift I'm cracking my knuckles on the dash. This car was built without lengthened shift rods and I don't want to start cutting holes in the chassis now. Looks like I'm either going to have to find a bender or shorten the stick as that's going to get really annoying otherwise.

Ok, gears, clutch, brakes and steering all working, it's starting to feel like I'm on the home run now.

The LCB manifold was bolted up to the engine, I bought this just after I got the car when I thought it was just going to need a tank and a manifold... it's been sat in the workshop for months and I couldn't find the 'Y' piece, so I've turned the workshop upside down for a couple of hours looking for it. Then I found it in the boot of the Midas, it's going to be one of those days...

I've got a threaded boss to weld into the exhaust to speed the tuning process once the car gets on a rolling road, and somewhere I've got a tank cutter that will cut a perfect 24mm hole. The key word there is 'somewhere'. Cue the workshop being turned upside down for the second time, the blasted thing was nowhere to be seen so an unsuccessful tour of the local tool shops ensued before yet another online order. For now I'll have to make do with a 'X' marks the spot.





Manifold bolted up and it's time to clean up the carb, luckily it's pristine internally so after a bit of brushing externally it was bolted up to the newly cleaned and painted inlet manifold. I don't know if I'm going to stick with the MG airbox (already got a K&N filter in there), for what little I might gain with a foam filter I get the added noise in what's intended to be an every day car.



17/06/09

I recommissioned my MIG welder today, it hasn't been used in several years but fired up once the rusty wire had been stripped off the reel. Five minutes later and the lambda boss was welded into the Manifold LCB 'Y' piece, this has got to be the only rebuild I've ever done that has only needed 6" of welding.

Back inside and I've finished the mounting post for the timing sensor and bolted it up to the timing cover, I'll need to fit it all up to the engine before I can finalise the height of the post so that the sensor is picking up along the centreline of the timing wheel. When I'm doing that I'll also cut a groove in the base of the post for an o-ring with the aim of keeping as much oil as possible on the inside of the engine.



18/06/09

Exhaust fitted today, the 'Y' piece on the LCB was too long for the Midas system so the system has been on and off several times while it got trimmed to length. The clamps supplied by Manifold didn't want to fit side by side so I've used stainless motorcycle clamps. After much levering and bashing of knuckles the system just fell into place and lined up ready for clamping. The system doesn't appear to knock on anything, though we'll see what happens once the engine is up and running.

I've finished the fitting of the sensor post, the o-ring idea didn't work as it left the post (relatively) easy to rotate even when bolted up firmly so it's now bolted up with a liberal smear of sealant to keep the oil on the right side of the timing cover..

22/06/09

All the big stuff is done now so progress feels slower as I get hung up with silly little problems. The battery went back in and I've started to make some sense of the wiring loom which has been hacked about somewhat over the years. The salty atmosphere that has caused so much work has also done for most of the 'Lucar' connectors under the bonnet, and there's a few of them to go at. Before long I've got sidelights, main beam flash (including driving lights), wiper motor, hazard lights and the horn. What I don't have are head lamps, indicators, stereo or electric aerial .

The lights are a bit of a worry and I spent much of the day checking relays, fuses and wiring. In the process I've replaced both earthing points with new bolts, nuts and lockers, I need to buy some more earthing straps, the nearside earthing strap is what appears to be 10A wire.

By the end of the day I've removed a medium sized pile of rotten connectors and several yards of surplus wire, most of the new connections have been made with solder protected by heatshrink.

After dark I stripped down my hydrostatic pump, looks like the main piston seal is goosed but I've honed the cylinder and removed most of the corrosion and scoring so it's fingers crossed for tomorrow.

23/06/09

Back to trying to sort out the lights today. Steering wheel off, dash out, switches pulled apart. Everything checks out ok on the multimeter, just no power. This went on for some time until I found a free-floating switch under the loom behind the dash, one of it's flying leads disconnected. Looks like someone has wired a simple immobiliser into the ignition but used the accessory circuit instead of the ignition circuit, when the switch is 'on' I've got my lights and indicators again :roll:

Spent the rest of the day wiring in a new stereo with it's CD changer unit and correcting the wiring for the power aerial, I've removed a few more yards of surplus wiring and another small pile of lucar connectors.

26/06/09

Just doing bits and bats today, radiator fitted and most of the piping done, I've got an MG

oil cooler that I need to build into the circuit and space is getting tight in there. I've sorted out the earthing so that all large bits of metal are earthed, hopefully this will help avoid the problems associated with plastic car electrics. I've also bought a ceramic blower to point at the rear window for demisting. Once I have finished running wires through the car I'll be able to fit the extra sound proofing I bought at the Exeter show and get the interior back in.

27/06/09

Fuel lines fitted, a couple of gallons in the tank and the Midas is continent! No puddles and turning the engine over results in a flow from the pump. The vacuum lines are now plumbed in.

28/06/09

Not much time having just finished a busy 12 hour shift....

Rebuilt the dash clocks, main odometer set to zero and new bulbs replacing the dodgy looking ones. All the leather cloth re-glued around the dash surround and made tidy again.

29/06/09

Set off today with the intention of getting the car running on the distributorless ignition system so I started with lining up the trigger wheel on the crank pulley so that the triggering gap was 90deg ahead of the sensor and then tack welding the ring in place. When the pulley was bolted back in place the alignment was checked again, looking good.

Most of the rest of the day has been spent soldering up the loom to join the Ford EDIS unit with it's coil, crank sensor and ultimately the mappable MegaJolt ECU. The EDIS system can run in a limp home mode without an ECU so the loom was rigged to achieve this allowing me to concentrate on getting the under-bonnet system working before wiring up the ECU inside the car. It also allows me to isolate where in the system any problems may be if/when they occur.



Naturally I've run out of heatshrink so the loom is currently a temporary effort, but with all the plugs wired up and the plug leads clipped on the engine started on the first turn of the key.

This system gives a rock solid idle on it's fixed 10deg advance, in fact even when it started rattling the idle remained steady.....



It sounded for all the world as though there was a nut in the inlet and it was bouncing around on the back of a valve, obviously I didn't spend much time listening to it, I just shut it down with a sinking feeling. I couldn't see anything in the cylinders, but turning the engine over by hand found it going solid just as cylinders two and three were heading for TDC, taking the inlet manifold off and poking around with the light didn't show anything either. Nothing else for it, the head had to come off.

The head was off five minutes later, no damage to the valves or pistons thank God, nothing in the inlet or exhaust tracts either. The engine still locked up, but now when the centre pistons were half way up the bore this time. Then I remembered the distributor drive shaft, the one I was supposed to remove before starting up the car... Bollocks.

I've now got a drive shaft that's missing a few teeth so the oil is coming out now, or at least it will on Friday when I'm off next. Hopefully the new gaskets will have arrived by then.



04/07/09

The teeth are coming out one by one with much fishing about with flexible magnetic pickups and flushing through with cheapo oil, the local recycling centre is beginning to think I'm running a garage business with the amount of oil that's going into their tank. If I'm not careful I'll be getting banned (again) for recycling too much....

In between oil changes I've been at the wiring again, the EDIS unit and coil pack are now located on the left inner wing and the coil has been rewired to take it's power supply from the hard cut rev limiter that lives in the same box as the MegaJolt. The MJ has a 'soft' rev limit where it backs off the advance at whatever revs you want to limit it to, the 'hard' limiter reduces the power going to the coil once you get past this point as just a bit of extra insurance.

06/07/09

Rubbish day today, rained every time I set foot outside, not namby pamby drizzle though, proper monsoon stuff.

Staying inside I've made up an aluminium plug to fill the dizzy hole based on measurements taken from the removed distributor, made it pretty tight and had to gently persuade it into place with a rubber hammer. If the engine ever develops enough crankcase pressure to blow it out I'll be looking for the holed piston.





Wired the hard rev limiter to the Mega Jolt main board and managed to damage a surface mounted 10k resistor in the process, I've had to buy 100 online to replace just one resistor, still it works out a few quid cheaper than buying just one and paying £5 :o postage, at least Dick Turpin wore a mask.

07/06/09

More schitzo weather today, I've been up and down like a brides nightie in between torrential downpours and burning sun, can't wait for the snow...



I've more or less finished under the bonnet now, the cooling system is now all connected up and filled, the under bonnet part of the Mega Jolt is finished and connected up, I'll need to get some plug ends so I can shorten the Fiesta leads and stop them touching the bonnet.

I've now started on the dash which was sort of floating around in the main moulding, all the loose leather cloth has

been secured and tidied up and the Metro dash unit secured properly, when I've got more light tomorrow I'll find the wires I need to tap into for the Mega Jolt unit and look at the options for fitting the Thatcham 2 immobiliser into the system. I'd hate to lose this car as soon as it gets mobile.

08/07/09

I hate vehicle wiring.

The Mega Jolt is now wired up, that was the easy bit. Wiring in the immobiliser was something more of a challenge, there are wires everywhere. I've got it to the point where everything appears to work but due to the damaged resistor in the MJ I can't start the engine. An odd problem has raised it's head, no dashboard back lights, no switch lights and the headlamp/main beam indicator lights aren't working either...

I hate vehicle wiring.

13/07/09

IT'S ALIVE!

Several hours of messing about with the wiring on the ECU only to find via a process of elimination that the rev limiter was completely goosed, two minutes with a soldering iron and one limiter later and the engine is running.

Just got to solve an elusive problem in the dash illumination and then I can rebuild the dash and start on the interior.

30/07/09

I hate the British weather and I need a garage.....

Just managed a few bits and pieces over the last couple of weeks, I've sorted the dash illumination problems though I'm still lacking fuel and temperature gauges. The ignition system is working fine and is currently running Grahams 1380 map which seems to do the business.

03/08/09

Had the front suspension apart today, I must have put the driveshafts only part way into the outer CVs as they both popped out when I attempted to move the car so today I did it properly and now I can drive the car around on the drive. It's been a long time coming! Over the previous couple of days I've been cutting and fitting foam sound insulation, partially refitting carpets and the drivers seat. Lots of angle grinder work has reduced the seat height so I'm now looking through the screen rather than over it, the car has leather Richfield seats so the next step would have been replacement with side mounted buckets or something similar. As it stands the roll bar is currently providing head restraint duties so some heavy-duty padding has been added to the shopping list, any known work-arounds would be welcome.

I started fitting the new dampers to the front suspension, my car has never had dampers fitted before so I'd had to buy mounting pins and drill the bodywork for the top mounts. Thankfully I've not refitted the dash yet as access is interesting to say the least, rain cancelled play again at this point so I'll have to fit the nearside damper another day.

16/08/09

Just a bit of a cumulative update, my opportunities to work on the car have been few and far between with continual rain on my days off.....

The nearside damper caused a few problems with fitting as the access to the top nut is virtually non-existent to anyone without arms like an orang-outang. With my youngest holding up the damper from under the arch I used a small rare-earth magnet on the end of a length of 2.5mm piano wire to drop the washers over the threaded section before cutting a small cross in the rubber and using the same length of wire to drop the rubber in place. Two small magnets were used to hold the nut square while Peter twisted the damper body to catch the thread, a 24" breaker bar and 15mm socket were used to tighten everything up. The whole operation felt akin to changing the spark plugs via the exhaust pipe. Although the dampers are just oil the suspension is now sitting nearly an inch high at the front now despite me bouncing up and down to settle it.

The dash is back in, I've had to replace both the oil pressure switch and the temperature sender after spending ages trying to find a problem with the wiring that didn't exist.

I've beefed up the fixings for the door panel, it was held in with M3 machine screws that screwed into some dodgy aluminium rivet jobbies that fell out every time I closed the door, I also made up a new internal release rod from piano wire to replace the two-piece effort that

was held together with electrical connectors. The panel is now held on with M6 countersunk fixings.

Next little job is to get the gear stick bent properly to bring it closer to where I want it and stop belting my knuckles on the dash, I've found a small motorsports preparation business nearby who's not only happy to put the stick in his pipe bender, but he's also got a rolling road and donkeys years experience of setting up A series engines.

20/08/09

Ended up bending the gear stick myself and I'm not cracking my knuckles on the dash any more, the rear window ceramic heater is now wired in and the rest of the sound deadening has been fitted followed by the rest of the interior. For the first time in about 10 months the car has carpets and both seats where they belong. The car is insured from September 1st and the time spent in between now and then will be spent spanner checking and getting it ready for the MOT.

I'll be claiming my free entry to the Exeter Kit Car Show this year!

25/08/09

Spent the last two days buffing and cutting back the gel coat, the effect has been astonishing to say the least. Still need to do my spanner check and fasten down the hard top properly and it's MOT time.

MOT booked for 2nd September, fingers crossed!

10/09/09

MOT passed on the 3rd after a small amount of work sort some minor problems highlighted by the MOT. I've been driving it for the best part of a week now and haven't come home on the back of an RAC truck (yet). Spent yesterday on the drive sorting out issues that have become apparent while driving the Midas to work and back over the week.

The clutch cable (brand new) broke it's adjuster leaving me unable to engage a gear with the engine running, thankfully I habitually use clutchless changes on the move anyway so I managed to get home after starting the engine with 1st already selected. I think the problem stems from the AP rally clutch that's fitted to the Midas and the extra effort needed to depress the clutch is goosing the adjuster. The cable has been replaced but I'm not sure how long it's going to last so I've two options open to me, either lash up a solid adjuster or convert the beast to hydraulic clutch.

Considering the spec of the engine I've been slightly disappointed by the performance of the car, until I looked a bit closer and found I was only getting half throttle. A bit of bending later and things are much better, overtaking is now an option.

The doors have been re-hung as they weren't fitting properly, and the window mountings firmed up at the same time.

Thank you for a great story Rich. On the next pages the finished result. Ed.





Pepper says hello

Fly Drive

Hans Efdé enjoys the last drive of the season

Peter Camping had invited me to join him on the Fly Drive show at Lelystad on August 30, 2009. I hadn't read about it, but luckily Peter's Almere classic cars enthusiast club had been informed by Aerodrome, the aircraft museum in Lelystad. So Sunday morning very early I drove with my son Thomas to Lelystad under a grey sky with a few blue spells. Rain was underway, but the forecast was that the northern part of Holland would stay dry including the airfield.

We arrived and met with Peter. Unfortunately there were only a few cars because many other tours were organised that day. Never mind, we parked our cars just outside the aircraft platform area. In 2008 the cars were parked between the aircraft, but this year the aircraft would also do flying demo's. So they needed to be towed to the runway and back. In between the aircraft actors in military



clothes tried to give it a bit of WW2 atmosphere. A group of middle aged women performed old songs from that era. It was a great setting. The Schiphol replica building from the thirties in the background, the old warbirds and ancient airliners, it looked all very romantic. You could almost forget that wars are meant to wound and kill thousands of people, if not



starve them. Not so romantic in real life. Luckily we forget the horrors and just enjoy the beautiful efficient killing machines that were designed and built in those days.

Because in the afternoon it was quite cold and windy we went into the museum. The Aerodrome is Holland's most important aircraft museum that includes an intact Boeing 747 and a number of impressive displays. Unfortunately the Dutch aircraft history is not a big one, so compared to f.e. the RAF Cosford museum it's a bit empty and disappointing. Still worth a visit when you're in the area.

Outside we enjoyed the noise of several warbirds including a Douglas Invader (that returned from the runway due to a magneto problem), Spitfire, Focke Wulf replica, Catalina, C47 troopship and a Fouga Magister trainer. At the end of the day the clouds disappeared and we got just 5 minutes to park the cars in front of the aircraft for a few pics. It was the so called magic hour, the hour before sunset that displays a soft red light. Consequently the photos turned out splendid, as you can see on these pages. If you want to download them, just go to www.flickr.com and search for the pics of "midasracer".

We drove home under a clear sky that slowly turned red. Just before dark we arrived home and I parked the car in the shed. Alas this was going to be its last trip of the year. I hope to make more use of my Midas next year, but it depends what I am going to do with the engine. I could use a bit more reliability and better cruising abilities. We'll see.



Advertisements

All advertisements are an issue between buyer and seller. The editor takes no responsibility for the condition of the cars and/or parts advertised.

Who wants a heated front screen?

Alan Donowho has distributed the heated front screens, but has five spares for sale. Asking price is £200 per screen. Contact Alan at: alandonowho@blueyonder.co.uk if you are interested.

Midas Gold Convertible for sale (Netherlands)

Recently sprayed red, new interior, Dutch registered, rare!
42000km's. Asking price 5000 euro's OBO. Mail Arjan at arjan.vano@casema.nl.



Next issue

The next issue of the Midas Forum magazine is expected in May 2010. Possible items are interesting stuff from the forum like the mods on David's car. Also on the shelf info about another French Bronze, a book review, thoughts about a new design rear subframe and much more. And I almost forgot:

Best wishes for 2010!

