

Rufus - Jury Rigged Engine Start:

When carrying out a restoration (if the engine is not seized) I always try to start it up and check for oil pressure, compression and funny noises etc. I do this even if I intend to recondition the engine. Having removed the fuel tank, associated pipes and all the wiring I needed to jury rig an engine starting system.

For the fuel system I used a 5-litre can perched on a step ladder with a gravity siphon supply to the carbs.

After completing the modifications to the bonnet I had removed the dummy radiator cowl, radiator, alternator and fan belt so rigged up a cooling system by putting a bottom hose (upside down) on the water pump outlet, switched off the heater valve, applied a hose pipe to the upside down bottom hose and allowed water from the garden hose to dribble out the thermostat housing. Not brilliant but I only wanted to run the engine for a few minutes to check the oil pressure light went out, to hear what the engine sounded like in general and to warm up the oil a bit prior to draining.

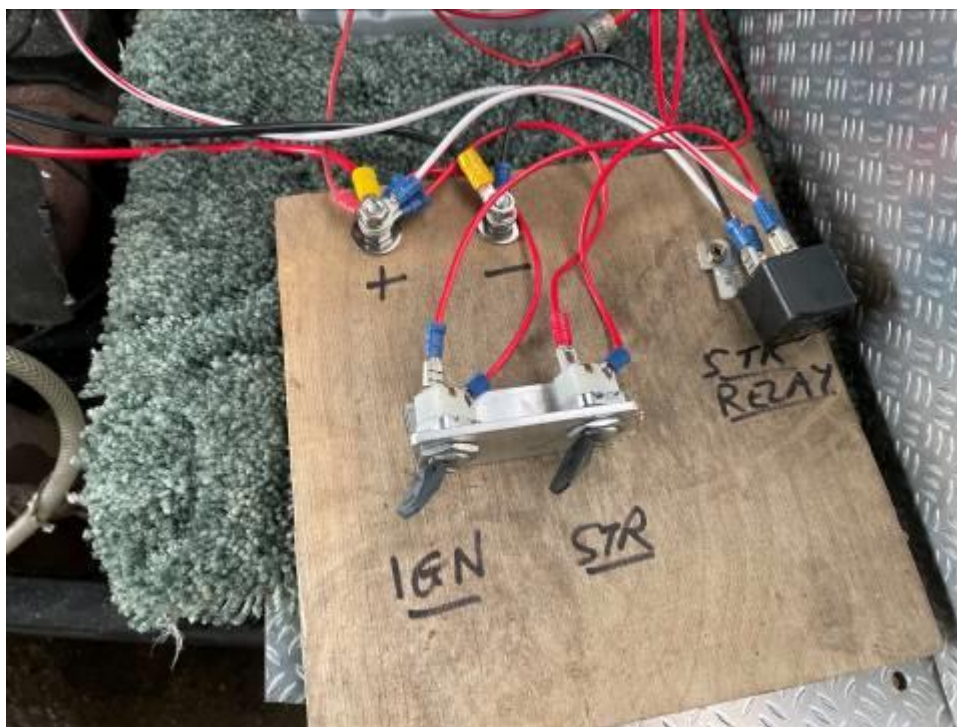


The Jury rigged engine start.



Ditto.

Electrics was simply a spare battery with the original heavy leads between the battery, starter motor and engine/chassis earth. A separate ignition circuit fed power to the CB points and another wire (via a switch) powered the starter solenoid. After removing the oil pressure pipe (I had cut through it with a pair of pliers) I fitted an oil pressure switch which was powered by another positive wire incorporating a warning light.



Close up of the switch panel.

With the above sorted I checked the oil level, squirted some WD40 through the plug holes and turned the engine over on the starter for a few seconds to blow all the crud out of the cylinders.

The plugs were then cleaned, gapped and replaced. The points were adjusted and the coil, distributor cap and leads cleaned. Checking the carbs revealed that the choke mechanisms were seized. Although the problem would be internal I gave the linkage a good soaking with WD40.

Then I tried starting the engine. Of course it wasn't that easy, especially without the choke, after a bit of coughing and spluttering the engine made an effort but didn't really run. Pulling out the carburettor pistons revealed that the needles were covered in black plastic type gunge.



A gunge coated needle.

After cleaning and replacing the pistons and needles the engine started and run well enough for me to get an idea of its condition. While the engine was still warm I checked the compression doing both a dry and wet test; followed by draining the engine oil.

Summary:

Initially I was quite pleased with the engine which produced oil pressure, didn't knock and had very good compression. Draining the oil produced a thick black gunge that after the first couple of litres could barely trickle out of the drain hole. To be honest I have never come across oil so bad. The engine will definitely get a full strip and rebuild.