

## My Car History

*My TR ownership experience started in June 1990 When I bought an extremely rusty LHD TR6 from TR bitz. Fortunately, I knew a guy who restored vintage car chassis for a living, It was driving this TR6 that pushed me into getting my own.*

*I had completely rebuilt it in May 91, converted it from RHD and to fuel injection. I needed a source for the PI equipment, and the same guy who rebuilt my chassis also located a 2.5 PI saloon with six months MOT for £500.*



*The PI was stripped of its injection equipment and an extremely underpowered 30,000 mile 2 ltr engine was sourced from McGuinness's for £80.*

*The PI turned out to be very solid, when the MOT ran out it only needed a pair of track rod ends and an hour of welding on the front panel for a new MOT. I therefore decided to restore the PI saloon, this was completed by Nov 91 and fitted with the engine out of the TR.*



*Back in those days there was no free road tax, and I had no money, so the TR was taxed for 6 months of the summer and the PI for the 6 months of winter. I got fed up with revving the 2 ltr until valve bounce set in, so when the end of Sep arrived, I swapped the engine out of the TR into the PI for the winter. This was a revelation, the PI engine that refused to run cleanly except on long motorway journeys ran faultlessly in the saloon, only for its troubles to return the following summer when it was swapped back into the TR.*

*This was the point I realised the carburettor TR6 fuel tank had no internal baffles like the PI versions, and getting air in the high-pressure fuel system is guaranteed to give poor running. I incorporated a swirl pot before the pump to allow the air to rise out the feed to the pump.*

*By this time, I had also bought an accident damaged Dolomite Sprint, the crankshaft needed a regrind despite a recent rebuild as some Muppet had used so much silicone sealant during the rebuild it had effectively blocked the oil pump pick up.*



*While I accumulated the necessary panels for the rebuild, I had a perfectly good sprint engine and gearbox, and since it was winter, I also had a TR6 with no engine. A few hours of head scratching and lots of bits of Ford Cortina exhaust downpipes later I had a new tubular exhaust manifold for the Sprint engine that looped over the cam cover past the battery and joined onto the TR exhaust system.*

*This was a combination that worked extremely well. The Sprint engine produced just as much power as the PI saloon engine (it was a 132bhp version), was about a hundredweight lighter which got rid of the TR6s usual understeer. It would also regularly do 40mpg on a run compared to the 25-27mpg of the PI engine. It only had one slight drawback, the close ratio gearbox of the Sprint has quite a high 1<sup>st</sup> gear which made pulling away from rest on a steep hill a bit of a struggle. I fixed this by swapping the 2.9:1 Sprint 1<sup>st</sup> gear for a 3.3:1 ratio from a big saloon gearbox. By this time, it was 1992. I had built the PI saloon a fresh PI engine (plenty of bits to be found in McGuinness's those days). The Sprint had been rebuilt and all the cars had their own engines back.*



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*In Aug 92 TR Bitz were holding an auction at their new premises. They had recently moved, and the bottom had fallen out of the market.*

*I had always wanted a TR5/TR250 but they were well out of my price range when I bought the TR6. An extremely sad looking TR250 was in the auction, but I had no money, just a credit card with about £1330 of borrowing ability left on it. I did on it anyway and ended up with a winning bid of £1300.*

*I towed it home with my PI saloon and managed to sell the Sprint for £1600 before the credit card bill arrived!*

*It turned out that under all the filler (the wing beads had been removed and the gap filled over), and the hand brushed Royal blue paint there was actually a very solid car although it had been whacked both front and rear.*

*The remaining £300 from the sale of the Sprint was sufficient to rebuild the body and the chassis. Every expense was spared, the differential came from the accident damaged Sprint, (axle was bent), the diff casing came from a knackered PI saloon diff. That diff had done 140,000 miles when I fitted it to the TR, it now has over 250,000 on it.*



*RHD conversion using a saloon steering rack, LHD dash chopped up and re-welded to suit and the dashboard was made from 2 layers of 5mm plywood glued together and varnished (needs re-varnishing now after 30 years) Wiper motor is Morris 1000 and most of the dash switches and gauges were from the scrapyard.*

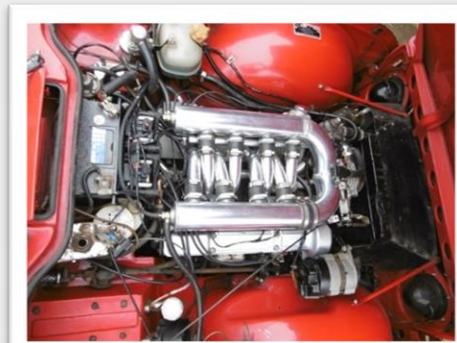
*I didn't want the carburettor engine, so the TR250 engine and box was fitted to my TR6, and the PI engine and all the uprated suspension bits were fitted to the 250 which I then badged as a TR5. I sold the TR6 to finance the rest of the rebuild.*

*Moving onto about 1997 I happened to come across a Stag engine in bits at the Triumph spares day at Stoneleigh. I was amazed they made as much power as they did as the design of the inlet and exhaust manifolds was appalling. I had considered fitting the 3.9 ltr Rover that was in my Toledo, but it was too wide and too long to fit without major surgery, and the Stag engine uses much the same gearbox as the TR.*

*The decision was made, a Stag engine was bought and rebuilt. Fitting it was not easy as I wanted tubular manifold which I had to make myself. By this point the TR had become my only car and my daily driver doing about 12,000 miles per year. I wanted something quick and economical; the TR fitted the bill with 165bhp and 27-28mpg.*

*Roll on 10 years and 70,000 miles and the head gaskets were starting to fail. I bought another Stag engine and rebuilt it with more compression, fast road cams and a more sophisticated version of the fuel injection system that I had been developing. The new engine made 216bhp, fuel consumption was even better (best was 43mpg at a steady 55mpg on the motorway on a 120 mile round trip). The old engine had a new basket set fitted and was fitted to the 216bhp estate I sold last year, still running fine.*

*About 3 years ago I wanted even more power as the TR was somewhat lacking with 216bhp compared to my MK1 Stag with 246php. Yet another engine was built and after much testing and a new design of the inlet manifold the third engine has 257bhp. My Stag is very close with 256bhp as to also has an updated inlet manifold.*



*Next project is to refresh the 216bhp engine with my latest upgrades and fit that to my MK2 Stag*