



Overheating, ignition or fuel problems?

Richard Withington recently contacted the V8 Register and also posted on the V8 Bulletin Board when he experienced problems with his MGBGT V8, Damask 1471. Richard unfolds the tale of tracing the problems and the eventual outcome, which resulted in normal service being resumed.

"Recently whilst travelling at moderate pace on the A52 trunk road the coolant suddenly overheated without obvious cause. I suspected a burst hose but before I could stop on such a busy road the temperature needle fell back to normal. I attributed it to a sticking thermostat as the rest of the journey was without incident. The next day, intending to check coolant levels, hoses etc, the engine started but only enough for me to drive out of the garage. It then stalled and refused to start. I suspected the ignition system, but this seemed fine. Plugs removed and gaps checked etc. Richard also suspected that the brief overheating could have affected the Accuspark electronic ignition system but this was quickly discounted".

"Numerous attempts to restart the engine over the next few days were unsuccessful, notwithstanding help and advice from enthusiasts and professionals alike. Contaminated fuel was suspected so the tank was drained to no avail. In the absence of any other avenue and a strong smell of petrol on trying to start the engine, I removed the carburettors and had them rebuilt by Andrew Turner, locally to me. They were returned in superb order and refitted, and Hay presto! After some coughing and backfiring the engine is now running normally. However, the exhaust did emit a lot of smoke and smuts on the initial start-up but all is fine now.

Andrew Turner advised that the O rings on the choke jets were in very poor condition, I can only conclude that too much fuel was suddenly being forced through the



Refurbished SU Carburettors, prior to refitting

choke jets and flooded the engine to the point where it would not fire despite an adequate spark.

Incidentally, the cost of carburettor refurbishment was £400, which I feel is very reasonable when you consider a refurb kit from Burlen is over £200 for parts alone".

An interesting footnote

Tony Lake had the following to say about potential contaminated fuel when Richard was at this point in his fault checking: One option to salvage your fuel is to dose it with as much E10 as you can squeeze in to the tank, because the ethanol will absorb the water. Another option is to dose it with methylated spirit which is ethanol diluted with methanol which gives it an awful taste and is poisonous causing blindness, otherwise folk could make their own gin with a few botanicals and avoid the alcohol duty. Ethanol has an affinity for the water at the bottom of the tank which is absorbed and then disappears in the combustion process.

Before E5 and E10 there were various products on the market which were based on ethanol as a means of absorbing water in petrol without having to drain the tank.