

Reducing The Shock

FOR years Neil Lynn has been offering a shock absorber refilling service to the classic brigade both in the UK and abroad. Here he unfolds the mystery of his technique and offers you the opportunity to do it yourself. - CR

To refill your Girlings you will need to do the following:

Remove suspension units from bike and remove covers, springs and aluminium bottoms.

Hold unit upside down in a vice with plunger pulled fully out and drill a hole using a magnetised bit to suit a 3mm tap (photo #1). On later Girlings without aluminium bottoms (photo #2) drill hole in lower side.

Tap hole with a 3mm tap which has been magnetised. Turn unit the right way up and push down hard to expel the old oil. Vigorously pump the unit until all oil has been expelled (photos #3 & #4). [The reason for magnetising the drill bit and tap is to stop as much debris (swarf) as possible from falling into the unit. The first hard push down is very important for the same reason.]

Stand the unit upright to drain and do the other shock absorber.

Place the unit in the vice again, upside down with the plunger pulled all the way out. Using a hypodermic syringe, inject as much oil as you can into the unit through the drilled hole (photos #5 & #6).

The best oil I've found is American made GP1 which has a seal sweller ingredient and really works well. Take the unit out of the vice and lean it upside down against the wall for an hour. In so doing you are waiting for all the air bubbles to rise to the top.

Put the unit, upside down, back in the vice and slowly push plunger in, allowing surplus oil to discharge. When plunger is fully home pull it back just enough to let the oil level drop below the hole.

Wipe away any surplus oil and clean around the drilled and tapped hole using a clean rag and methylated spirits. When dry apply a large globule of silicon (as in the ready made gasket stuff) and install a grub-screw so that it is buried in the silicon.

Pull down sharply on the plunger and remove the unit from the vice. Do not remove silicon from around the screw as if you do it will leak. If there is any air leaks around the screw, this pull down will create suction which should pull silicon into the opening and seal the leak. When the silicon is dry, refit springs covers and aluminium bottoms.

Your shocks are now ready to use.

I've found that sometimes one unit is more worn than the other. They may not have been a matched pair or they may have been used in a sidecar rig, which for some reason wears one side more than the other.

The GP1 oil comes in different viscosities, so it's possible to match them up by using different weights in each unit. If each unit is in good shape, I use 30 weight.

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