

Frank Cope Trike – Condition Assessment

1 CHASSIS

1.1 GENERAL

The chassis has been stored outdoors for a large part of its life. Given this fact, it is in remarkably good condition. A number of 1728, 7128 or 7728 was revealed.

There is corrosion on the front edge of the rear crossmember behind the pedal bar and some pitting on the upper part of the rear suspension tube.

The front bumper extension is of thinner construction than the main frame and is riveted directly onto the chassis, suggesting a factory-fitted component.

The front bumper is speculated to be BSA RWD and needs blasting, polishing and re-chroming.

The car still retains its original competition number plate and this can be seen in some of the old photos.

1.2 REAR SWINGING ARM

This indestructible component exhibits little wear. The rear brake drum has not been removed but the hub bearings roll freely with no feel of rust on the raceways. The brake linkage is removed and although the short rod and linkage at the swinging arm is present, the rod from the pedal to the rear, including the spring pressure reducer is missing.

We did not attempt to remove the swinging arm, although given the ease with which other components were freed, I suspect that easing off the damper would result in the bearings being freed without difficulty.

As received, the arm was fitted with a standard trike 18" wheel which was in poor condition. The single spare was also an 18" trike. Note that some shots show Frank Cope with 2 spares.

1.3 BRIDGE

This component is corroded but serviceable. Bonnet securing clips and stands would however need replacement.

The one wing support was missing. The other had the mounting point for the additional raised lamp bar fitted to the car still in position. (see photos). John donated a spare support for the nearside.

1.4 FRONT HUBS

These appeared to be in very good condition. The two splined driveshafts were in very good condition and slipped into the hubs as if they'd never been apart. The hubs are standard trike and all bearings turned easily with no play. Again, there was no evidence of corrosion on the hub bearings. Both turned freely without any sign of roughness. No play in the outer universals.

The two front wheels, still fitted with tyres, are BSA RWD narrow section rims. Both are in very poor condition.

As received, the trackrods were still attached. The split pins in the trackrod ends were moveable and we were able to unscrew one, which had pristine threads and came apart easily. The trackrod ends seem fine with only light surface corrosion which polished off as we turned them.

The four main bolts retaining the hubs to the springs are present and not corroded. Both fabric couplings were present.

1.5 PEDAL BAR

Amazingly, a light spray of WD40 allowed us to free off the main pedal bar pedals and levers, as well as the non-standard brake rocker bar on the chassis side. A specially-forged brake actuation lever was found to match this. There is no play in the main bar and pedals.

The brake pedal has been modified by welding on a new lug to alter the brake action. The clutch pedal is broken and the actuating lever and tube are missing, although the actuating rod is present.

The handbrake lever is present although the ratchet is rusted up.

1.6 STEERING

The steering box is present and in excellent condition with no play. As with other internal components, it is hard to believe it has been so neglected.

The top support bracket and remains of the scuttle rail are present, along with the wheel hub. The horn button is present in poor condition and a modification to place a motorbike throttle or choke lever behind the steering wheel is present.

2 ENGINE

2.1 GENERAL

The engine has been partly dismantled, but the only major parts missing are the tappet covers, and some smaller blanking plates and other minor components. A number of 1961 was stamped on the end casing. The head has been removed and the studs are corroded.

The cylinder head appears in good condition although some corrosion around the water outlet pipe.

The carburettor has been removed and is missing, and the distributor is in poor condition with the cam corroded.

The bottom end appears in very good condition and given the condition of other parts which were more exposed to the elements, I would anticipate that apart from the need to clean up the bores and replace the main bearings, little repair work other than stripping and cleaning is needed.

The clutch could not be seen. It is possible that the corks may have corroded the clutch plates.

The engine seems to be a 10HP block (63.5 mm bores) of later Series 4 design, grafted onto earlier endplates. Had the engine been replaced with a later one, the endplates would have been changed as well, suggesting that this was a "Works" modification, and that the larger engine was built as a "special". I did not check to see if the con-rods had holes as per the Trike and S1 engine. I suspect not.

2.2 RADIATOR

The radiator shell, as cut down to fit over the bumper extensions, is battered but repairable. There is no dummy honeycomb left. The BSA badge is present.

The radiator itself is very battered and has been punctured. Parts may be salvable but would need straightening and repairing. The honeycomb needs replacement.

There is no filler cap in the bits.

2.3 ANCILLARIES

Starter and dynamo are present. The dynamo is in poor condition but may well be restorable.

3 GEARBOX

3.1 INTERNAL

We were not able to assess the internal condition of the gearbox. Given the effects achieved with one small can of WD40 on the external parts, I would be very hopeful of the gearbox being in very good internal condition. The diff. bearings were free but we did not attempt to free off the differential gears.

3.2 TRANSMISSION BRAKE

All parts of the front brake appear to be present and in good condition.

3.3 GEARCHANGE

There are two gearchanges. The one on the car is missing the gearlever, and there is a second gearchange with a modified shortened gearlever not fitted to the car.

4 BODYWORK

4.1 GENERAL

There is very little bodywork left. The ally scuttle panel exists, attached to the door hinges and door panels. All of the woodwork is gone. There are the remains of an aluminium folding windscreen. The bodywork was clearly painted green over cream with black wings.

The front wings exist in part but only as patterns.

There is a normal rear wheel cover which has been bent and battered, and also a sidecar mudguard. It is not clear if this is part of the car.

The remains of the oval petrol tank were recovered. The filler is missing but the threaded boss mounting the petrol tap is present.

5 BITS MISSING

The car lacks the following major parts:

- Bodywork
- Windscreen
- Gauges and instruments
- Lights etc.
- Electrical ancillaries
- Bonnet
- Wings
- All parts of the legendary 2nd engine.