

Springtime?

Dave Whetton wrote a very interesting article in the Dorset Club January Newsletter describing the installation of 'Nobby Anti-Bump Springs' to give a 'lift' to the rear-end of his Box Saloon.

These springs were originally available as an aftermarket fitment in the Thirties and sometimes turn-up at Autojumbles or on Ebay but new ones have now become available from Willie McKenzie (Austin Reproduction Parts Ltd) in Poole.

Our RN Saloon rolls alarmingly when cornering hard, so, partly inspired by the above article but also to help support Heather's enormous Eurotour suitcase, I thought it might be a good idea to do something similar.

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are easily fitted and anchored firmly between body and back axle. They definitely improve riding comfort and steering, stop rolling on corners, and allow of much greater speed over bad roads. Suitable for practically any type of standard or sports Austin "7". Ideal for Austin "7" Vans. Fit a set to-day and enjoy big car comfort. Order from your local dealer or direct from -

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A pair of new 'Nobby' style springs costs £75 but suitable motorcycle telescopic rear spring damper units in good condition can be obtained for as little as £20 – happily, they also add some very effective damping.

Purists, should not read any further – there is nothing here for you!

I obtained a pair of adjustable 'shocks' (horrible expression invented by motorcyclists I suspect) in good condition from a 2007 written off Yamaha YBR-ED motorbike that I guessed might be suitable as I could just about compress each one an inch or so by hand on the softest setting. I obtained them from 'Recycle Scooters Ltd' of Aberdare where 'Steve' was incredibly helpful but felt sure he'd never previously sold such items for use on an Austin Seven. Unfortunately, these units often have a working compression of only around two inches but the ones I selected have close to three inches of travel. Therefore, by mounting them at 45°, just over two inches of compression accommodates a



vertical wheel movement of close to five inches (simple geometry and trigonometry) so, hopefully that will be OK.

The photos show the under-car components prior to installation and the completed off-side assembly.

This arrangement also allows around three quarters of an inch of pre-compression during assembly, to give a small amount of rebound travel. I also made the upper mountings adjustable just in case I have miscalculated things.

The top mountings are attached to the relatively thin floor under the rear seat although the inner ends sit close to the edge of the 'tunnel' so are reasonably well supported. The outer edge however, is near the middle of the floor panel and therefore likely to flex. So, I fabricated a pair of strengthening brackets that sit inside the car and spread the load to the wheel arches and the vertical sides of the tunnel.

I'm delighted to say that the handling of the car has been totally transformed – now, more Go-kart than A7. Fast cornering has become less terrifying because the stiffer springing reduces body-roll. In addition, the damping on uneven road surfaces is now really effective. Therefore, so long as none of these new items fall-off or tear a great big hole in the floor – it seems the exercise has been a success (for a non-purist that is!) Bob G

The response from one very well-respected HA7C Member was 'Cowboy' Charming!