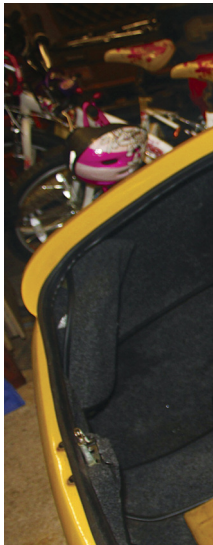




Having problems keeping it up, especially in the cold?

Keep needing to give your wife your helmet to protect her head when she is getting bits out for you?

If this describes your current situation then you need to think about replacing your boot strut. If this is one of those jobs that you keep putting off, in my case for a few years, then now is the time to get it done before the boot tries to eat someone else.



Note the different fittings

I did this on my Chimaera; however the process is exactly the same for any cars that use these gas filled struts, either for the boot lid or anywhere else.

In terms of difficulty it is the equivalent of a Halfords one spanner job, in that this job does require a tool, but it is simple. When I did mine it took around fifteen minutes and that included taking the photographs.

The only tool necessary is a small screwdriver; an ideal size is one that you use to replace fuses around the house (*in the pictures you can see that I am using an electrical voltage probe, it just happened to be easier to find than my screwdriver*).

Mine had the metal cups and pins. If you have these and look closely at them you will see something akin to a bit of wire wrapped around it just below the ball/socket. If you have 20/20 eyesight you will see which end the pin is, however if, like me, you cannot see this, prise it gently in the middle and you will see which way around it is. It will pivot around the pin and when fully open the pin will pull out. Once the pin is out, remove the pin from the bottom mounting. When both pins are out the strut will probably, as in my case, stay in place. Gently rotate the strut and it should easily come free from its balls.

Before fitting, compare the new and old to make sure that they are the same length.

When fitting, one thing to make sure of is that the cylinder bit (*the thicker bit*) is at the top. This is so that the lubricating oil that is in it is at the bottom to keep things lubricated and the seals damp.

The first thing to do is to acquire the replacement strut. There are two main specifications to these struts, the overall length and the force. There are many posts on PistonHeads, and other sites, that advise the Chimaera boot strut is the same as a Golf boot strut. This is true when it comes to length but, and this is a very big but, they are twice the opening force. This will lead to two possible outcomes; first the boot will always be being pushed up in the corner and this might lead to damage over a period of time. Second, it might open rather more forcefully, resulting in your wallet disappearing over the roof, or even worse a bashed chin.

After an amount of searching I bought my replacement from a company called SGS Engineering Solutions (01332 576 850 or www.sgs-engineering.com) which was recommended on PistonHeads. I was very pleased with the cost (*under £25 including tax and delivery*) and service received. They even emailed me to check the length of the one that I had fitted. It arrived promptly and well packaged.

The first job is to find something (*or possibly someone*) to keep the lid open whilst you are working on it. In my case I had a broom in the garage that was the right length.

Removal of the existing strut can differ depending on the one fitted. There are two basic types, both of which work by having a ball which is fixed to the car and boot lid, with a receptor cup that sits snugly over the ball and has a fixing to keep it from popping out. Luckily whatever type is on the top, easier to get to, end will probably be the same as the bottom.

Apart from that, fitting the new one is almost the reverse of removal, but in my case it had the other type of fitting. This is made of plastic but has a metal spring clip that goes all the way around the back to hold the ball on both sides.

To clip this type on (*or remove it*) use a screwdriver to pull the metal clip back, clip it onto the ball and push the clip back. This was easily done with my finger.

I am not sure if it is easier to fit the top then the bottom but I did the top first on the basis that it would then hang down. When I came to fit the bottom one the socket was pointing in the opposite direction from the ball, which was easily rectified by gently twisting it by hand. If this is necessary do it clockwise, so that the end does not unscrew from the rod. Also do not use pliers on the shaft as if scratched the lubricant will leak and the seals will get damaged, drastically reducing the length of service you will get from your new strut.

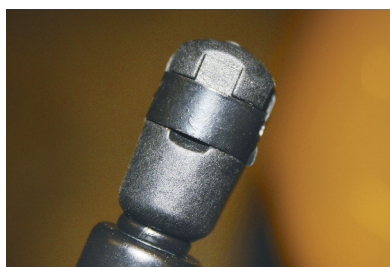
After fitting, a quick probing tug is recommended to each end just to make sure that you have not missed anything and it is all secure.

The time has now come to remove your temporary strut (*broom in my case*) and to slowly close the boot, making sure that everything moves as it should and nothing catches.

The final job is to open the boot lid just over halfway, then admire the smoothness and the rising swish as it continues unaided to its fully open position.

Just remember to put your helmet away safely until your next track day.

MIKE HARDY



Metal spring clip holds it in place



Ease the spring clip back to release

Photographs courtesy of
MIKE HARDY



...the new one arrives!



New & old together - make sure they are the same length



...all clipped on

Sorted!!



Historic speed trials SAVED for another year



Speed trials have taken place at Madeira Drive, on Brighton's seafront, since 1905 and it's thought to be the longest running motor sport event in Britain. This event has won international acclaim for showcasing top-class cars and motorbikes having to race for a distance of a quarter of a mile.

The organisers had fears for the event taking place again because of a minority of politically correct killjoys. Green Party leaders for Brighton and Hove City Council had yet to accept an application to host it again this year.

However...

Motorsport enthusiasts have had other ideas and have voiced their support for holding the event through a petition that was started by Brighton and Hove Motor Club, which runs the event annually. With more than 12,000 people signing the petition calling on Brighton and Hove City Council to reinstate the event.

With a refreshing rare victory for the automotive loving public, councillors joined forces to give Brighton and Hove Motor Club permission to use the seafront strip this year. Result!!

RAY HARRIS-HAWKINS

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