

It's 'D' Toolbox

My current favourite Velocette is my recently acquired KTS which is also a major frustration as I can't ride it due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The bike is wonderfully original and has the all important patina. It's possibly not to everyone's taste but I think it's great. One of the parts needing a bit of attention was the D shaped toolbox, the knob didn't engage, there was a serious patch of rust and the lid didn't fit. Off it came for an inspection. The Underneath edge was seriously dented and split, and the lip of the lid had several splits along with evidence of previous ancient repairs. Unfortunately, when realigned the knob was way out. The splits were all in areas where there was severe corrosion and too thin to weld. Silver soldering was a solution that looked viable so I used a blowlamp to test the metal, bad result as the rust dissolved and the splits became large cracks, and it was difficult to prevent distortion. This was going to be a major fabrication job. Plan B required.

For a laugh I priced one from our favourite parts supplier, £150 plus the usual p&p so expensive. When all else fails, hit the online auction sites. Surprise surprise up popped a brand new British made item made supposedly from original tooling, mine for the princely sum of forty quid. All the stated sizes matched the original so throwing caution to the wind I raided the piggy bank and sent off for one.

On receipt of the new tool box a good inspection revealed it was well made, and was an accurate replacement for the original, apart from the knob. Even the holes seemed to be in the right places so naively I thought I'd soon whip this on and job done. Wrong.

When offered up the box fouled the seat spring, odd, the old one didn't. Tried the old one, same result, now I know why underneath the old box was all dented, it was to allow it to sit lower on the frame and miss the spring. It looked like the saddle needed to come forwards a bit. Several hours later and fitted with new brackets the seat had moved an inch forward. This gave minimal clearance but didn't look quite right. Using the marketing literature on the VOC web site I could see the clearance should be a lot more. What was going on? Further investigation showed the mudguard stay the toolbox attaches to was leaning forward instead of being vertical. Now this KTS year had a pillion pad as optional, mine must have had one fitted later on. The mudguard stay had been cut and each side connected to the mudguard under the pillion pad, in the wrong place. Just how much did I need to change/fix to just swap this toolbox?

If the toolbox side was wrong how about the chain side, I hardly dared look? Sure enough it sloped forward but to complicate matters has the rear chain guard attached to it. Making it vertical made the chain guard foul the rear stay. This wasn't going well. One problem at a time, repositioning the toolbox stay resulted in instant correct alignment, all hidden under the pillion pad. Some minor fettling has corrected the chain guard side,

when the lockdown finishes and my local welder is open for business, I'll make the changes more permanent.

The final task was to paint the toolbox which amazingly was drama free, and secure the knob that was supplied loose. I made a rubber washer out of an old bicycle inner tube to fit over the thread and sit on the outside and protect the paint. On the inside is a washer followed by an extremely tight grommet. There is just sufficient movement to guarantee good alignment of the threads.

One pleasant shock, the supplier of the toolbox actually phoned to enquire if I was happy with the product. When did that last happen?

This is further proof if needed that there is no such thing as a five minute job on a Velocette, but you knew that!



Original tool box



New tool box in place