

PRESS RELEASE

# The Chassismeister

Your chassis is the backbone of your TVR and the item upon which every other part of your car hangs. It is easily overlooked. It's not as exciting as a brake upgrade or a new chip for your ECU and it is not as aesthetically pleasing as a re-spray or a new carpet. But it is a whole lot more important, in fact it is critical.

RT Racing in Sheffield has been restoring TVR chassis for over 15 years and has recently opened a new chassis shop to increase their throughput of TVR chassis.

Richard Thorpe, Managing Director of RT Racing explains, "Several years ago we identified that having just one chassis job on the go at any one time wasn't working for us. Customers were having to wait and the jobs were piling up. We quickly increased our capacity to enable us to carry out two chassis restorations simultaneously and that worked well for a number of years. But the number of chassis jobs coming to us now, as Chimaeras and Griffiths are reaching that critical age, is steadily increasing. So we had to take a sharp look at our capacity and think of another way round the problem."

Our solution was to open the new RT chassis shop.



What RT Racing has done is to create a dedicated chassis shop and chassis holding area within their 7000 sq ft workshop to allow them to introduce a production line system, which allows them to work on six TVR chassis simultaneously. Each chassis is at a different stage of restoration and is dealt with individually, but the net result is that the RT Racing chassis shop can turn out a completed full body-off chassis restoration every week.

And it is not only full chassis restorations that RT carry out. They will also replace your outriggers the right way, by fully removing the body, and they also have a dedicated TVR jig which is used to properly align your outriggers as well as for straightening out accident-damaged chassis. RT's chassis shop is well equipped with all the latest welding gadgetry, including brand new TIG, MMA and MIG welders which between them allow RT to weld pretty much anything including mild steel, stainless steel and aluminium, a plasma cutter which allows for the intricate removal of key chassis tubes and mounting points, and a brand new tube notcher which profiles the ends of replacement chassis tubes to allow them to marry up to the adjoining metalwork perfectly. Most impressively the tube notcher works well on an angle too, so is perfect for the fabrication of additional strengthening ribs on any TVR chassis. And its speed of delivery has also helped further improve RT's turnaround time.



Critical to the success of the chassis shop is the RT chassis team of Russell Harris, Steven Harris and Peter Hamilton. Russell and Steven have been involved in many dozens of TVR chassis jobs and are responsible for the preparation and reassembly of your car. After a test drive to check out the car, the geometry settings are noted and then the process begins. All fuel, hydraulic and electrical connections are disconnected and marked up, then the chassis is unbolted and the body is removed. It is important to note at this point that the body is lifted without the use of straps and the outside of the body is not touched once during the lift or subsequent storage. There is therefore no opportunity whatsoever for your paintwork to be damaged. The engine and running gear are then removed from the chassis and catalogued and the chassis itself is then stripped down to its constituent parts. The Harris party piece having once more been completed, the bare chassis is then sent away to be bead blasted. Upon the chassis' return it is then handed over to Peter Hamilton, the RT Chassismeister.

With a solid history in metal fabrication including seam welding and preparing rally cars, for the past decade Peter has worked on many different TVR chassis at RT, from Granturas and early Ford powered Tuscan through various Wedges and S Series cars, to Chimaeras and Griffiths and of course many Tuscan Challenge race cars. More recently Peter has also carried out a crack repair on a T350 and has significantly strengthened the chassis on a high powered competition Griffith to help maintain its geometry. Famously Peter was also responsible for the chassis work on the Thorpedo and the White Elephant restoration and more recently has converted a Cerbera chassis to accommodate a BMW straight six. Along the way he has also worked on more than one Aston Martin, a number of Rolls Royces, a Lamborghini, and several Harley Davidsons. He has also welded a stainless steel handle back on to a frying pan for one of RT's best customers, but he told us not to mention that. So we won't.

Peter's first job is to carry out both a visual and ultrasonic inspection of the chassis. After the bead blasting the visual inspection will show up all the obvious issues, but the ultrasonic inspection actually measures the thickness of the solid and true metal in any given chassis tube.

It is not unknown for chassis tubes to look and feel perfectly good but contain less than half the metal they originally started out with. Any tubing which does not measure up is cut out of the chassis and replaced. The job is speeded up by Peter's comprehensive drawerful of pre-prepared laser cut body mounting plates, wishbone brackets and seat belt mounts which make for faster fabrication and a wholly accurate job.

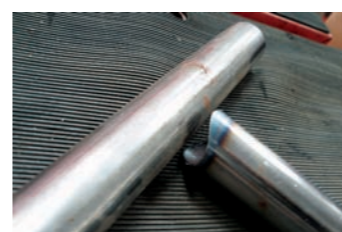
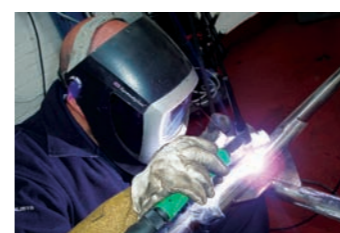
When the chassis has been made good again it is sent off again for a second bout of bead blasting to gain a key for the finish. RT Racing offer a wide choice of finishes for your chassis including powder coating, nylon coating and plastic coating and all are offered in a wide variety of colours. The chassis and wishbones having been coated, they are returned to the RT chassis shop for Russell and Steven to reassemble and then rebuild the car. This process having been completed, the geometry is then set up and the car test driven once more.

RT Racing complete chassis restorations start at £3,500 plus VAT and given the number of hours, along with the precision and great deal of attention employed in completing the job, you have to say that it is not at all badly priced.

Richard Thorpe, Managing Director of RT Racing comments, "There is no TVR chassis that we can't accommodate and we pride ourselves in doing the job properly and competitively. Most importantly the body is lifted from the chassis without us having to touch the exterior and we don't use any straps, so your paintwork will remain in absolutely perfect condition. And we pride ourselves that the chassis restoration itself is performed with the utmost precision and care. We carry out chassis restorations for TVR owners and we also carry out chassis restorations for other TVR specialists including TVR Power. So our delivery of this service has to be perfect every time and our new RT chassis shop will help us to deliver that. We now have the capacity to turn out a completed TVR chassis restoration every week of the year and look forward to helping keep many more TVRs on the road for many years to come."

Whilst striving to deliver the perfect TVR chassis restoration, RT have also improved on the specification of the Waxoyl they are applying. The much improved Mil-Spec 3215 Rust Buster formula is said to have greater adhesive and protective properties than the standard product and with treatments starting at just £99 plus VAT, Mil-Spec 3215 Rust Buster should prove very popular with TVR owners. And it can be applied to both new and not so new TVR chassis to offer increased protection to your metalwork.

And RT Racing not only offers expert chassis restoration but of course also offers a full TVR servicing facility along with crash repair, body modification and re-painting facilities. They also offer genuine TVR OEM parts through their Multipart distributorship. So whatever you need, RT Racing will be able to help you along.



Photographs courtesy of Howard Bryan



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