

Lagondaforum: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by Colin M34 at Mar 10, 2012 5:01 pm

Hi Folks,

Sadly, one of my friends has damaged his beloved DB 3L. Apparently the weather was awful at the time and he hit something very solid with his nearside wheel. This bent the chassis and did a great deal of damage to the front suspension.

The owner is a well known and enthusiastic Lagonda owner who is most keen to get his car back on the road as soon as possible.

We have a good repairer lined up, and having discussed this among my Lagonda Club friends, it appears that the best solution might be to buy a complete engine-less car or chassis and dispose of the rest of the vehicle when this one has been repaired.

Does anyone know of a derelict car or got any other ideas? Is the chassis running gear on the DB 2.6 and 3.0 litre the same?

Cheers

Colin M34

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by TVJL at Mar 10, 2012 5:50 pm

Hi Colin,

My commiserations to your friend. But, I can only denigrate the solution proposed. Some of us are trying to do all that we can to ensure that no more of these wonderful cars are scraped. For years, hulks were 'robbed' of their running gear to keep DB2 series cars on the road. Now, at long last, the DB Lagondas' time in the sun has arrived. The DB Rapide is now properly appreciated and valued. The 3 litre cars are now on the move up, thank goodness. The last thing that should be happening at this stage of these cars' history is the sort of scenario outlined. Derelict 3 litre (and even 2.6 litre) cars are now, thankfully, being bought up by the discerning and restored to their former glory.

I imagine that your friend's car was insured. Find someone who is on top of current values and get them to do a proper up-to-date valuation for the insurance company to make sure that the car isn't written off. The chassis on these cars is massive but, being cruciform, can twist (which is what may have happened here). Be that as it may, please please please get your chap to have a proper repair job done. It will pay dividends immediately and, after all, this is *his* "beloved" DB 3 litre!

Regards,

Tim

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by Richard Reay-Smith (R57) at Mar 10, 2012 6:21 pm

Hi Colin

I can only agree with the previous comment, though I don't know the extent of the damage.

I can thoroughly recommend Tim Butcher of Trinity Engineering who sometime advertises in the magazine. He used to look after my DB Mk111 and at the same time I saw him do a complete restoration of a Lagonda DB 3 litre drophead to his usual very high standard. I imagine he will have access to chassis straightening expertise.

Regards

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Richard

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by Colin M34 at Mar 10, 2012 7:54 pm

Folks

Thanks for your valuable comments – this is the purpose of this forum!

I share fellow readers enthusiasm to see derelict but complete DB cars restored to their former glory. Nice cars - this one has an overdrive fitted which makes a huge improvement to long-distance cruising.

Let's ask a quick technical question. Is the running gear – not the engine – on an LB6 chassis the same as that on a DB2? My understanding is that the combination of the Aston Martin Chassis and the LB6 engine was the basis of the “new” Aston Martin DB2. I was not aware that other bits were common as well and would love to be enlightened.

I can reassure all that a very careful and thorough assessment and repair will be done on this car by a “proper” restorer with access to chassis straightening expertise. What scares me is these are expensive, complex cars to work on and that a proper repair could “run away with the hours.” Finding some good second hand suspension parts is going to help a lot with the eventual cost.

I fully support your move to ensure that restorable cars are not scrapped. My enquiry was more directed to seeking remnants of ones that have already been savaged, so if you know of a source of reasonably priced second hand bits, please PM me.

Thanks again for the support here - much appreciated.

Cheers

Colin

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by Colin M34 at Mar 10, 2012 8:09 pm

Hi Guys,

Having resonated with Tim's view about not breaking up good restorable cars, blow me, look at http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/1950s-Lagonda-No-Reserve-/25101228882?pt=Automobiles_UK&hash=item3a717f9172#ht_500wt_1089.

Anyone fancy making some comments about what should become of this car? Is it a known one? What engine do you recommend putting in it?

Cheers

Colin

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by TVJL at Mar 10, 2012 9:25 pm

Hi Colin,

I, too, noticed this car on eBay. I'm making enquires as to provenance but I'm quite sure that the ID can be repatriated if necessary. This car is very typical re condition these days - the engine, gearbox and most of the brightwork have been sold off / lost and here's what's left. Cars in this state are

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now being snapped up for a relative song and then restored - thank goodness! Sometimes, one can find better cars, with just the engine and box absent from an (otherwise) good project, but these are mighty scarce now.

Re compatibility with contemporaneous Astons, essentially it's just the engine and gearbox that are of use.

If we are recommending traders, my vote would be for Four Ashes: <http://www.fourashesgarage.co.uk>. Chris Adams has lots of experience of working on DB Lagondas (and offers upgrades too, including overdrive).

As for costs, I am still wondering why he isn't claiming under his policy to underwrite a proper repair job. The key, as i say, in this regard is to get a proper valuation done.

Regards,

Tim

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by TVJL at Mar 10, 2012 9:46 pm

Colin, just a postscript on rereading your penultimate posting. By your comments "I share fellow readers enthusiasm to see derelict *but complete* DB cars restored to their former glory" and " My enquiry was more directed to seeking remnants of ones that have already been savaged", I hope you don't mean to suggest that only complete project cars should be restored? If we went down that route, precious few of these cars would ever be restored, for the reasons I've already mentioned. The point, precisely, is to save the 'savaged' cars from extinction!

T

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by Colin M34 at Mar 11, 2012 5:55 am

Hi Tim,

Couple of replies to your points.

Firstly, my original concern was to know where to source the suspension parts needed for repairs. At least now we have now established that unlike the engines, DB2s do not share the same suspension so we stand a reasonable chance of finding replacements without competing with the Aston boys. Also, don't forget to comment on whether the front suspension parts on the 2.6 and the 3L are the same or whether we need to watch out for variants. This is quite important and if anyone else can supply this information it will be much appreciated.

Secondly, regarding the insurance settlement, I think it is better not to discuss this aspect on this forum - suffice to say the owner is aware of the importance of getting the job done properly.

Turning to wider matters, in common with other readers, I have spent many years looking at remains of cars in various states of decrepitude. This inevitably involves crawling around clumps of nettles which always seem to sprout round interesting projects! However, I will leave others to rescue 'savaged' DB Lagondas and will admire from afar any ones that have been brought back from extinction. Certainly the eBay one looks pretty good and Tim, don't forget to give your views on a suitable engine to go in it. I think a 3.8 Jag unit is probably as good as any. In the same way I had an enjoyable discussion with a specialist restorer who suggested that a BMW turbo diesel engine would make nice replacement for the american V8 lumps used in some Bristols.

In support of Tim's argument of rescuing cars that have already had bits taken off them, over the years we have scoured places like the USA for unloved "parts cars." It helped that I had worked in Bell Labs many years ago. On bringing one car through Felixstowe, the customs man remarked with a smile that this was "a real Lazarus job." The Northern Lagonda Factory did the owner proud with this one. In terms of hunting derelict Lagondas, my saddest experience was in the 1980's when I followed up a lead in rural Massachusetts to look at a fire damaged M45. It had been a bad fire and

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there was NOTHING that could be saved – not even the chassis. Later I was thanked by a fellow UK enthusiast for saving him the air fare to come to the same conclusion.

I wonder what will happen to the eBay car?

Cheers Colin

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by TVJL at Mar 15, 2012 11:18 am

Colin,

If your friend was the buyer lucky enough to buy this car for £501, please beg him not to break it. We can recover the ID for him and take it from there.

Regards,

Tim

Re: Help to repair accident damaged DB 3L

Written by Colin M34 at Mar 15, 2012 2:53 pm

Tim

My friend is non technical and I do not think he bought it. I thought about bidding in his behalf but because of the conversations on this forum, I held back. Perhaps I should have done so it because at least it would have been in sympathetic hands! However it IMHO it really is a Lazarus job and it will be interesting to learn of its fate...

If you hear of any rescue missions needed, let me know privately as we may have somewhere safe to store the remnants of a "savaged" DB Lagonda.

I'm well coupled in the with the Lagonda Club DB team.

Colin