

Painting of Clear Front Indicators

by Scott Reynolds

I bought a pair of new front indicators for my Apricot V8, I had to decide if I would colour the indicator lenses orange, or leave them clear & use orange globes, I decided to use the orange globes, if I didn't like it I could always dye the lenses and go back to 'clear' globes later.

I removed the packaging tape and associated gooey residue from the main body of the indicators and prepped them for painting with a satin black acrylic lacquer, masked up everything I didn't want black, and sealed the openings so no overspray would get to the inside, and began to apply the colour giving them an initial light coat, followed by a few slightly heavier coats, they looked really good until I held them up to the light and I could see right through them! Another couple of coats and the light no longer shines through them (If I hadn't have held them up to the sun I wouldn't have known until they had been assembled and installed into the car and the lights were turned on), they may look as if they have a solid covering of paint but hold them up to a direct light source to be sure, don't rely on ambient light.

For the reflective backing I found an old spray pack of 'super chrome' in the shed - I've never been a fan of these 'chrome in a spray can' paints – applied an initial light coat followed by a few heavier coats to get a decent film build and was very disappointed in the finish, it was more a dull silver than the so called 'super chrome'. I had used another spray can (Solver brand) of silver for something non P76 and the finish of that one was much better and brighter than the so inappropriately named 'super chrome', one light coat & one heavy coat over the 'super chrome' and they sparkled, you still can't beat an enamel for great gloss directly from the can.

It was now that I thought I should've probably painted the aluminium colour onto the edges of the lenses before applying the black, but it was too late for that, with the careful use of some fineline tape and regular masking tape I masked the now black bits, and the lenses - oh what fun it is to do the side repeaters - and applied the aluminium colour, a few light coats did the trick there. Assembled the parts not forgetting the metal dividers, put them in the car and I couldn't be any happier.

I also wanted to refinish the headlight surrounds – they had been painted black along with the grille - I took the headlight surrounds to my local powder coater who was able to strip them and powder them in satin black, then all I would do is apply the aluminium colour to the appropriate areas... however it seems that there must have been some residue from the stripping process still in the alloy as they didn't come out at all well, they now need to be sanded and re-powdered, but that's another day.

As for the grille, the paint on the chromed leading edges came off easily, however it revealed a multitude of small imperfections which are now highlighted by the brightness of the chrome – any readers have a decent 2nd hand super/exec grille available?