

PROJECT TRIUMPH ISDT ADVENTURE BIKE

A NEW RIDING POSITION - MOVING THE FOOTPEGS

Much as I enjoy riding classic dirt bikes I actually spend many more hours on modern machinery, so it is only natural that I start pondering on ways to improve a classic with modern technology and thinking.

From the outset my ISDT Triumph was not intended to be a faithful replica, rather it was to be strongly reminiscent of the period, yet able to be ridden off road, sometimes in fairly demanding conditions. Purists I'm sure would shudder, but then I have yet to see many stock 1960s Triumphs actually used off road and certainly for the adventure rides I'm intending.

One of the aspects of the Triumph that I wanted to improve was the riding position. The T100's typical 1960s feet first, bars-in-your-lap ergonomics make it difficult to stand for any period of time. Covering difficult off road terrain is better done standing on the pegs than sitting in the seat, especially considering that my suspension travel would be limited and that increasing it would radically alter the appearance of the bike.

My answer to opening up the riding position would be to move the bars further forward and the footpegs back. Fitting the Honda SL350 front end (see part 3 for reasons and apologies for this sacrilege) placed my bars forward by over 30mm, in line with the fork stanchions.

The next puzzle was how far to move the pegs back. On the brake side of the bike the left peg could be pretty well anywhere, but the right side, with kick-start and gear lever to consider, was no easy matter. Hours of studying the problem led me to the conclusion that the footpegs would either have to stay where they were, or go back further than might be ideal for a cross country bike, right back to a trials position, almost under the swing arm pivot.

After much measuring and consideration I decided to move the pegs back and use a trials folding kick-start (from Terry Weedy Products in the UK) that would fold out and clear the foot peg. The pegs chosen were Sammy Miller's folding universal type that come with mounting brackets for welding to any frame. The right peg was mounted direct to the frame on the (later model) model T100 swing arm gusset with a short piece of steel bar between frame and bracket to space the peg out for the riders leg to clear the somewhat bulbous stock oil tank.

For the left foot peg base I was able to use the stock Triumph foot peg arm rotated on the taper, cut at the appropriate point and the Miller foot peg bracket thoroughly welded to it. In this position the foot peg arm is over-centre to the rear and securely jammed against the frame tube. I don't see any chance of the dreaded foot peg arm rotation, even if I strike a rock.

The stock Triumph brake pedal was never going to fit with the rear-set peg, so a Sammy Miller brake pedal was bent to the shape of the clutch cover. The pedal mounts on the stock T100 pivot via the original hole drilled into the swing arm gusset. A simple brake stop with a hole for an adjusting bolt was welded to the frame in place of the fairly weak bolt-on Triumph stop.

My final foot peg locations ended up with the pegs slightly out of line side to side, The left peg is pretty much where I would like it, but the right is 30 mm further rear-set. The result however is that you barely notice the imbalance and after 10 minutes on the bike it isn't apparent at all. The resultant standing riding position suites me well, being quite trials oriented and far more in the modern shoulders-ahead-of-the-feet style, leaning forward slightly on the bars. The brake pedal is a little awkwardly splayed, given the clutch cover's buxom bulge and the gear lever, predictably is so far from the rider's toe so that changes must be made trials style by lifting your foot up from the peg. Conversely the sitting riding

position finds the pegs a little too rear-set and you must deliberately lift your toe onto the brake pedal, while on the gear lever side you still need to dab your boot forward to change either up or down the gearbox. One finishing detail yet to be completed will be to shorten the gear lever and fit a folding tip.

All up I am happy with the result. The riding position now lets me stand easily meaning that I can take the bumps with my legs rather than my back as when sitting. There are compromises of course, mainly to the seated position and gear changing but they are compromises I am prepared to take in order to make the Triumph as dirt worthy as practical.