

SAVVA Technical Tip 140 - fuel Filters

It's amazing how a small problem can manifest itself into a major problem. Sometimes, it's the fault of the product/part and sometimes the fault of an inexperienced mechanic as in this case.

An example:

After servicing my little old 1958 Singer, i.e. new oil and filters etc the car developed a major problem. It would run perfectly and then suddenly lose all power and the electric pump would go wild because it was short of petrol. I would then wait a while so the pump could catch-up and fill the carburettor. This you will appreciate really inhibits one's progress i.e 5 kilos in 30 minutes!

I started by replacing the electric fuel pump, no difference, then using a compressor blew the fuel line out – no obvious blockages. Drained the petrol tank and removed the fuel gauge situated at the top of the tank in the boot so I could look inside to see if there was any junk – clean as a whistle.

The problem had to be somewhere in the pipe from the tank to electric pump situated under the bonnet. I replaced a large section of the fuel line, no better. The pump still went wild. Then in desperation I sucked on the petrol pipe going to the pump and ended up with a mouth full of 95 grade petrol – not nice!!!

Then a friend came around who is far more knowledgeable than I'll ever be so I had to listen to his suggestions. For some unknown reason he went straight to the new fuel filter, wriggled it then sucked on it, and announced that was the problem. There was a hair line crack and it was sucking air. I fitted another filter and – walla! Problem solved.

Two days and R700.00 later the problem turned out to be the R20.00 fuel filter. The question why? To be honest I can't blame the filter as I could have been rough fitting it. My suggestion is to be careful when fitting them as they are made of plastic and could be damaged if miss-handled. Also, don't buy the inexpensive no name brands. Attached is a picture of the offending filter.

