

R&R the Running Boards

Bill Lee
30 May 2014

As most everybody in the club knows by now, I did NOT restore my car! I bought it from my brother-in-law, Bill Snook, in 2007, and he had done the restore in the mid-80's. After he finished the car, he pretty much just parked it, drove it infrequently, kept it under a car cover in the driveway to his house.

The car was parked facing west, the sun was always on the driver's side of the car. When I got the car, shortly I found that the tires on that side of the car had deteriorated badly as had the rubber on the running board. I surmise it was because those parts of the car were not covered and exposed to the sun for 20+/- years. A couple of years ago, I replaced all four tires. And last year I decided to also replace the rubber on the running boards.



Thinking this would be a simple fix, I ordered replacement rubber mats from Snyders. This past month, as I was preparing for the mini-tech session we had, I decided to do it.

First item: take them off the car. On my '29 Tudor, that means unbolting them from the fenders and the running board braces. No big deal. But getting them out from between the fenders without scratching up the paint was a bit of a hassle. A little care and it was done.



The running boards on the '29 have a shiny metal trim around the edge of the board. The original was polished zinc, but replacement parts in shiny stainless are available (as are zinc). Piranio's to the rescue!

The trim is formed to fit over the edge of the board, on top of the rubber, and then folded under the bottom lip.



If I could get them off without destroying them, I wanted



to reuse them. Well, after ripping one set to shreds trying, I found a way to unbend the lip, and I suppose if a person was VERY careful, they could be salvaged.

I found that using a large pair of channel lock pliers, you could just hook the edge of the trim, then rock the pliers back and take the bend out of the trim. Eventually you can take the trim off.



Of course, then the fun began! 😁



First off, getting all the old rubber off, the contact cement that it was glued on with and then to the bare metal underneath. Found some rust, but that was easily dispatched with the plastic mat grinder wheel that I have. That is until I started looking closely at the cracks where the metal pieces that form the running board are attached. Rust that I could not get to by hand, and no sand blasting available.

Looking closely at this picture, you can see the rust hiding back in the corners. I talked with Chuck Sportsman and Ken Parker and both suggested using

Ospho, phosphoric acid-based liquid that transforms the rust from iron oxide into iron phosphate, and then covering it with primer and paint. Off to Hilliards to buy some, and treated the rust to a lunch of it!

Resulting in this! Looking good!

Next step was to lay down the rubber mat. It comes with a very sticky back surface so all you need to do is peel off the protective paper and lay it in place. It's slightly longer than necessary, so trimming with an x-acto knife did the trick.



The final step was to put the new trim in place. (Sorry, no pictures.) It involved holding the trim tightly to the edge of the board and then bending the lip over the bottom. I did this by clamping the trim to



the edge of the board using a block of wood to spread the load, and then slowly bending the lip using a body hammer. Since the lip your bending is underneath where it can't be seen unless you're in fine-point judging, it is not a smooth as the original but it still looks perfect on the exposed places.

Once the trim is back in place, then the board needs to be re-mounted on the car. You need to check if there is any rust on the splash aprons where the boards meet, you need to make sure the running board braces are where they belong (I had one that was ... weird!) And this is what it looks like!

