

A Flat Solution to a Lumpy Problem with the Rover SD1 Binnacle Cover.



If, like me, you have purchased a new binnacle cover for your SD1 from Rimmer's ex-India stock then you will very likely be pleased with the change in profile from lumpy to smooth on top of the instrument housing. However, it might not stay that way when the interior climate of your SD1 gets to work on the compressed cardboard and in a few months, at worst, or a few years at best, you will once again see the old familiar profile. Well, you can do something about it and delay the day when the inevitable happens.



The reason, apart from climate, is nearly all the original covers and all the ex-India items have just four buttons to attach them to the top of the instrument housing. Yet, amazingly, the housing has five buttonholes. Have a look at your housing and see the extra fixing hole, dead centre between the four existing locations. What is needed is to fit a fifth button, dead centre, to the cover.



From your discarded cover carefully remove a button/fixing plate from the underside. Using a file or bench grinder, smooth off the rear face where it has been punched through to form eight attaching claws for the original moulding process. Now carefully mark the exact centre position for the fifth button on the new cover. Place the button plate in position and mark through the holes with a soft pencil or fibre tip marker.

Next, use a small drill/router in a "dremel" type drill to broach out eight blind/shallow holes at the marked positions. Be very careful not to drill through the cover. These holes only need to be about 1/16" deep, sufficient to provide a good key for the adhesive.



Make sure the rear face of the plate is perfectly flat and cut back part of the covering material to allow the plate to sit nicely in its new position. Mix up some regular Araldite, (not the rapid stuff, it sucks!) and work a small blob into each hole with the pointed end of a kebab stick. Also work some adhesive into the recess at the rear of the button and lightly over the rear of the plate.

Position the plate over the holes and press into position. The Araldite will squeeze through the holes and form blobs on the button side of the plate. Ensure correct location on the marks and remove excess adhesive with the pointed stick before leaving it to cure. Use a small clamp to squeeze out any excess Araldite if necessary.

Check the location when part cured and leave it in a warm place for 24 hours. When the resin is cured, pare off any excess lumps and the cover is ready for fitting. Bear in mind that this modification is not a complete solution but it definitely prevents that unsightly lump appearing at the top/centre of your binnacle cover and, depending upon interior climate, will help prevent the more shallow undulations re-appearing in the medium term. A more certain prevention would be to ensure that interior humidity is low at all times but this is a problem for most current SD1's because of their propensity to leak like a sieve, particularly in the boot space and the front windscreen area.

As a point of interest, some of the original binnacle covers had five fixing buttons when they were originally made but I believe it was a minority event. I have only ever seen one, although there must have been more. Perhaps it was Rover's corrective solution to lumpy covers for the upper class late Series II VDP's, because although the original cover on my (very) late TP Vitesse only had four buttons, I replaced it with a "Fiver" taken from a late VDP Efi, yet, despite this, it still warped somewhat.

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