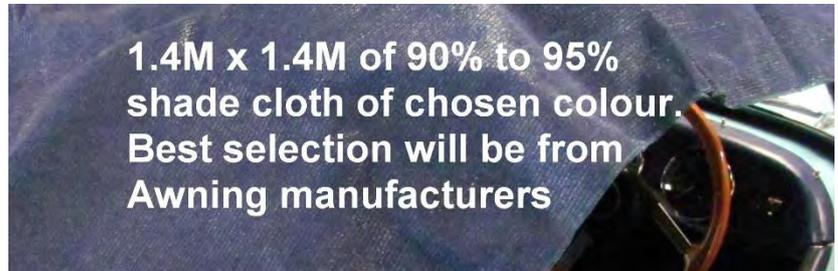


Keeping your cool in summer.

Whilst the North provides many benefits, there is also the problem of being too hot to enjoy our cars for many months of the year, however with the way things are going most of us no longer wish to be burned to a crisp with the top down or swelter in a sauna with the top up during summer.

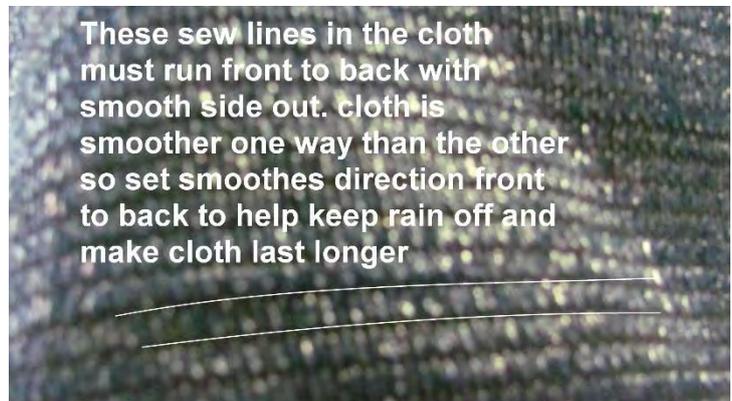
Perhaps it is timely to go the Queensland way and knock up a shade cloth soft top which, by the way is both easy to stow, cheap to make and as cool as sitting under a tree in a nice breeze whilst driving.

Go down to your local Awning maker and select a snappy colour of 90% or 95% shade cloth. It comes in wide rolls so you need 1,4M x 1.4M. Then visit your local Haberdashers and get about 10M of reinforcing tape. You might be wise to also get some size 14 needles and matching good quality strong thread so you do not get into trouble from using the household sewing machine.



You will also need 10 Tenax Snap fasteners and 12 lift the dots from the register, then armed with all the good gear it is time to get serious.

The shade cloth has sewn lines running through it which need to run front to back, these show the bias and give the stretch where it is needed. There is also a smooth and rough side to the cloth, use smooth side outwards and also smoother surface going front to back.

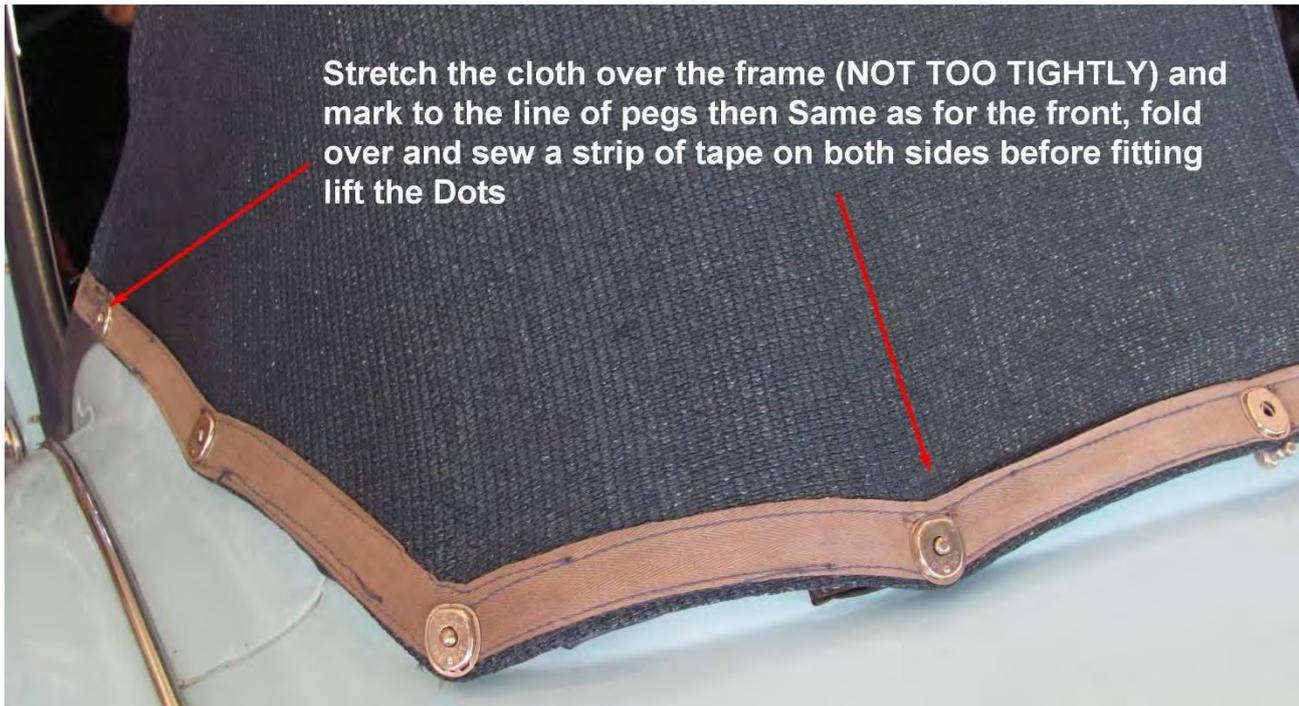


Having oriented the cloth, mark the required width of the screen, fold over and sew a tape on both sides before fitting the TENAX to suit you peg spacings.

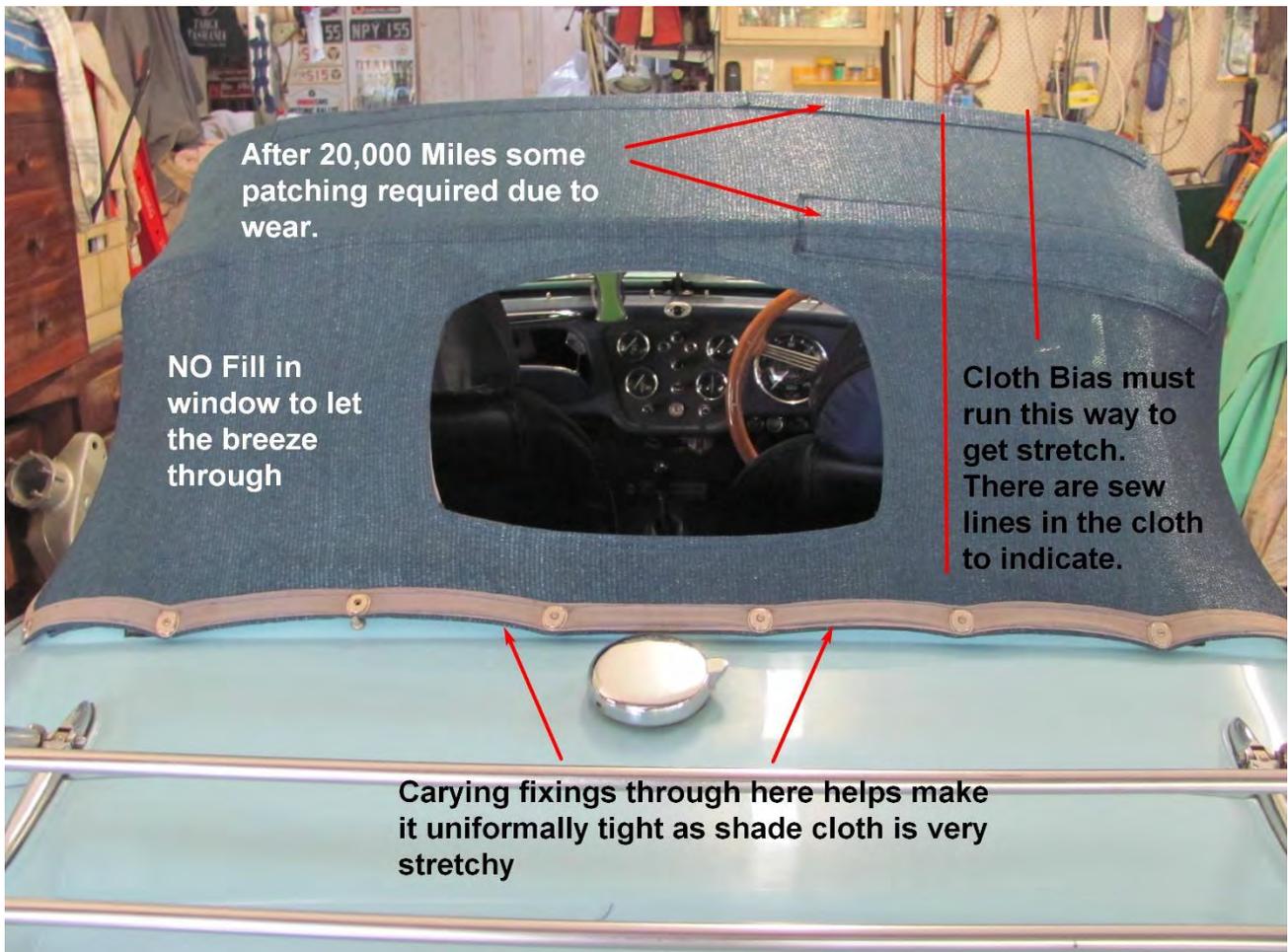


Having fixed the front to the windscreen frame it is time to stretch the cloth to the back and mark out the line for the same process as the front, fold over, sew tape on both sides ready for lift the Dots.

You might need a little help in marking out the full width but using the body line is about right. Do not worry about the excess material at the top just now, solving this comes later.

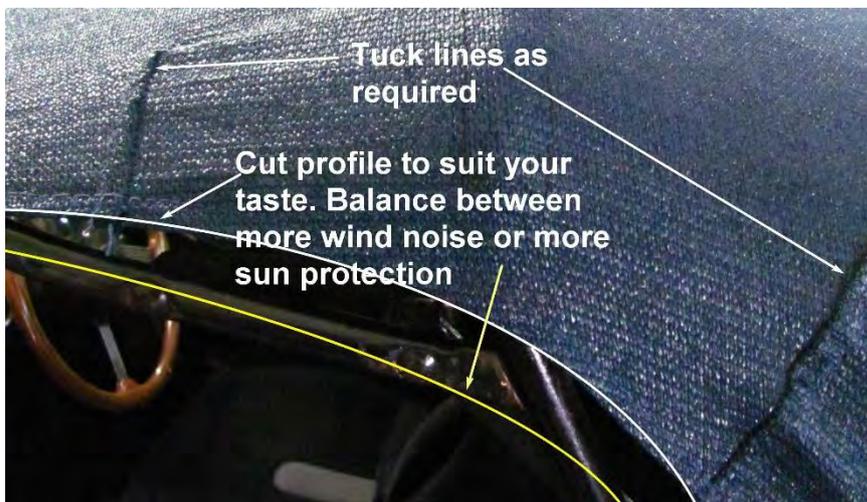


This is not a bad time to decide on how you want the back to look. I would advise against using a window filler as this restricts airflow. Just a simple hole for vision and airflow needs the edges folded over and sewn, or, you might use a more elaborate shape and method to finish this area off.



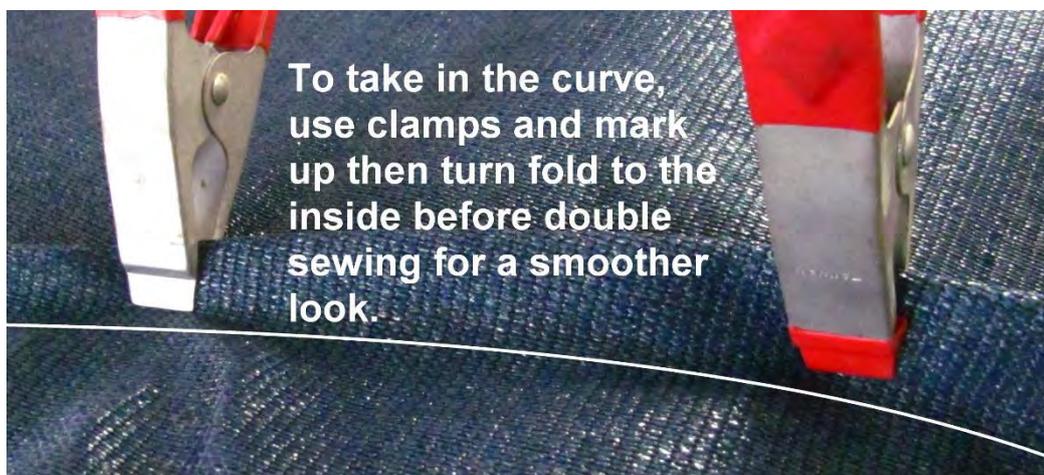
Nearly finished and time to tidy things up on the sides and top. Simple folded and sewn edges work OK but there is plenty of scope for the designer in you to make your mark. I went for simple as I wanted the whole job to be useable by lunch time.

The lower the profile the greater is the wind noise, so balance between looks noise and protection.



Next comes sorting out the excess material around the curve.

Just about now you should be getting the hang of it but these last tucks need to be turned inwards to try and create a reasonably smooth outer seam.



There are obviously many ways to create a summer top, depending on your taste, your need and of course the resources you think are appropriate.

My budget was \$100.00 and allocated time was 4 hours, however a professional boating canopy maker can do your TR proud for a little over 10 times that amount. There are soo many options to let your creative self or accountant make their mark.

Happy summers ahead.

Rob



