

- 1984 Panther Kallista 1.6 2 seater roadster. Red & black
- Mileage on clock 86,000 miles
- Engine and all mechanical components replaced at 83,000 miles.
- NCT is overdue

Firstly the good points, every mechanical part on the car is new within the last 3,000 miles with the exception of the radiator, gearbox and back axle.

The Ford CVH engine camshafts are known to fail around 75k miles and sure enough mine failed at around 83k shortly after I bought the car. Due to problems with the cylinder head studs seizing in the block when my mechanic stripped the original engine, I procured a brand new "new old stock" CVH 1.6 engine from SpecialisedEngines.co.uk and fitted this. This engine is in absolutely perfect new condition and the car has been my daily commuter for about 6 months now.

At the same time as that engine work was being done I fitted the following.

- New Webber 2v carburettor with K&N free-flow filter,
- New Bosch distributor,
- New upgraded 85 amp alternator (original was 55amp),
- Recon starter,
- New clutch,
- New up-rated electric fuel pump,
- New sports ignition coil
- New electric fuel pump
- New electronic adjustable cooling fan switch,
- New exhaust (all of it),
- New battery,
- New front shocks and springs
- New ball joints and bushings associated with the front axle work.
- Reconditioned steering rack,
- New mirrors, new badge bar, spot lights and "desmo" indicators.

Consequently the car really has had the years rewound to zero in mechanical terms. (plus 3k miles). See photos 7 thru 11.

Receipts for the above work are all there as well as an extensive history file from previous owners as shown in the photo 6 below.

The car looks terrific and it drives very well, the handling and feel is similar to a Morgan although the independent suspension is substantially better than the sliding pillar suspension of the Morgan. It will cruise comfortably at 70mph and if pushed it will go up to about 90mph.

In terms of performance the 1.6 CVH engine is ultimately not a very powerful unit and the power curve tends to be quite a narrow band from 3000 to 4,500 rpm, I have rejiggered the carb to optimise this for driving around town but another owner might find a different combination of jets that suits them better.

The wire wheels were new when I bought the car 2 yrs ago these are absolutely flawless, though whilst looking wonderful they are rather heavy at 30lb weight each, the original factory alloys were 15lb and I'm told the car would be faster and more nimble with the alloys but they were hideous and detracted from the classic 1930s look so the previous owner bought the wire ones, however he had never fitted them and then fell into bad health so when I bought the car from him they were still in the boxes, (I took them and left him the alloys).

In terms of their spec, almost everything mechanical on these cars was sourced by Panther from the Ford Company, so the front axle and suspension and steering were all mark 4 Cortina components, the engine was from the mark 4 Escort (same as Morgan incidentally) the 5 speed gearbox is Sierra and the back axle is Capri. The only parts that are uniquely "Panther specific" are the exhaust, the bell-housing and the clutch cable. So they are very inexpensive and easy to repair. The entire exhaust is new from manifold to tail and was purchased from Bruno Eismark who is well known in Panther club circles as the man who bought all of the Panther factory surplus stock when it closed down in 1990 (he worked there).

The car is of course not perfect cosmetically, there are some paint blemishes around the body, one area of crazing on the bonnet about the size of a cigarette packet is visible up close but not immediately evident otherwise, (see photo 16) and there are several small spots of blistering around both the rear wheel arches (see photo 19), but you will note that the aluminium body doesn't rust, and these are not indicative of underlying rot, it's just bad paint adhesion in those areas. These are not visible in the photos because of the shine, but they are there nonetheless.

The steel rail chassis has had one or two weld repairs in the UK (before my time) but these were solidly done and my own mechanic remarked that they are quite sound. There is however two areas I wish to particularly mention, there is an area of the bodytub which is made of steel rather than aluminium and which is visible under the front wheel arches on each side, it is essentially a sort of outrider to the chassis, it is not structural and is not in fact part of the chassis but due to its location, people in the past have made the mistake of attempting to jack the car with it, (a common problem on panthers, instead of placing the jack further in on the main chassis rail).

The effect of this has been to damage this outrider and it has corroded, to the untrained eye it could be mistaken for the main chassis but it's not, however it is unsightly, and before retailing the car you might have it cleaned back, and have a plate welded into it, this could be done in-situ and treated with waxoyl and it will be fine, the car passed its UK MOT and its last Irish MOT with this damage clearly visible because it was recognised for what it was, i.e. non structural, I draw it to your attention because if I don't, you will upon first seeing it, think it is more serious than it is. Photo 14 shows the double rail (with unfortunately in this photo can also be seen to be jacked) and photo 15 shows how it looks from under the wheel arch. The NCT is now due again.

The doors are steel rather than aluminium and both of them have some small areas of rust at the bottom forward corners, it's nothing terminal but needs to be done soon. see photo 17. The passenger door window is also a bit difficult to wind up but I believe it isn't the winder mechanism but in fact the vertical channel appears to be moving a little on its mountings inside the door and so there is a bit of winding back and forth to jockey it up and down. Both door locks are a bit ineffective but I believe that these would be easily replaced or adjusted, I have not bothered with them because my car is always in a locked underground garage. You will conclude from reading the above paragraph that it would be a good idea to take off both doors and sort out these few issues on a bench, but they open and shut perfectly and are essentially quite solid.

The cabriolet hood has no tears and is in sound condition with the exception that on the right hand side of the rear window the stitching has become "unpicked" and although it doesn't leak, a new owner would probably want to re-stitch it, see photo 17. The seats were re-trimmed by the previous owner and these are perfect, the carpets are in reasonable condition with only normal wear. It has a good sound system which can take an ipod and there is a pair of custom built speaker boxes in the rear parcel area which are fitted with new powerful speakers.

The dashboard instruments all work, there is a slight wobble in the speedo and I should mention all Panthers have very poor backlighting on the dials, mine is no exception and one really has to peer at them at night, this is perfectly normal. The radiator cooling fan is controlled by an aftermarket

electronically adjustable switch, I have optimised this setting for town driving and there is a green light on the dash to indicate when the fan is running.

In terms of value and price, with all this mechanical work done and a few cosmetic improvement it should easily retail in the UK for around 8,500-9,500 sterling and you can peruse other cars on carandclassic.co.uk to verify this. Bad cars make about 6k sterling, concours examples make about 11k. The cars are getting some increased interest with the 40th anniversary and are still great value compared to a Morgan, this months classic car magazine has a three page feature about them.

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PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4



PHOTO 5



PHOTO 6



PHOTO 7



PHOTO 8



PHOTO 9



PHOTO 10



PHOTO 11



PHOTO 12



PHOTO 13



PHOTO 14



PHOTO 15



PHOTO 16

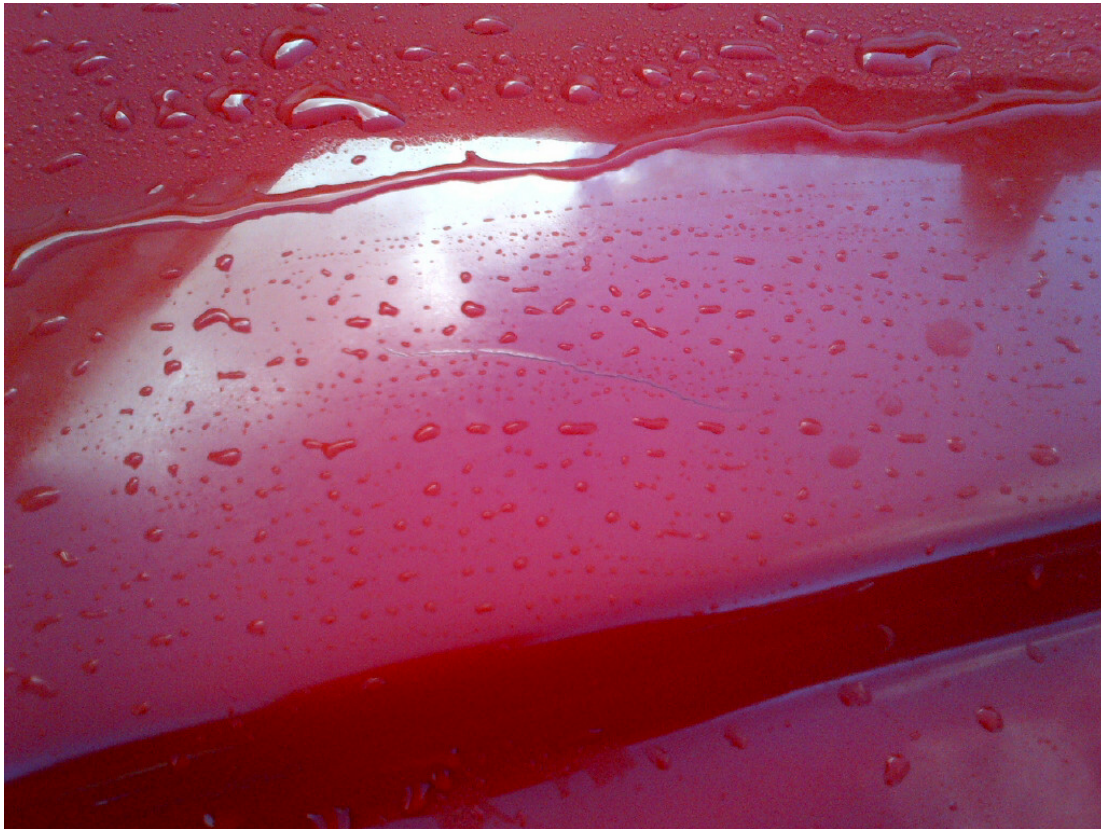


PHOTO 17



PHOTO 18



PHOTO 19

