



THOUGHTS FROM THE MODEL T GARAGE...

By Ed Meenan

Once again Ron Patterson (Coilman) has written to tell us about a product that has just become available. Here's Ron's message

Model T Generator and Starter Brushplate Rebuilding-An Update...

I don't know if any of you have used the Model T generator and starter brushplate rebuilding video I did for the MTFCA video library?

The process for brushplate rebuilding remains fundamentally unchanged, but since that time some significant advances have been made in brushplate insulators that are available from Model T parts suppliers.

In the past when rebuilding the generator brushplate you had to buy two of the currently available insulators and cut one to fit the back side of the brushplate. This was awkward at best. You usually didn't have a pattern from the removed part because it was damaged (isn't that why we are replacing it?). You also had to be very careful cutting the new insulator because the final alignment of the third brush-sliding slot was critical or it will short out against the metal brushplate slot.

When adapting the currently available starter brushplate insulator part you needed four pieces and again had to modify two of them for the backside of the brushplate. Patterns were a bit easier to be had (no sliding brush), but you had to shorten them and add a new 1/8 mounting hole for the rivet.

Recently I met up with my fellow "Sparky" John Regan. I showed him on of my rebuilt brushplate units and we discussed the issues with the currently available insulators. John took a keen interest. I don't know if any of you know John, but he is a manufacturing genius.

We got exact measurements for the original generator and starter insulator parts and John entered the critical dimensions into his CAD/CAM system.

He sent me a paper sample of each part to check for final fit on a brushplate. He also selected an appropriate material with sufficient toughness (for the third brush slot) that could be laser cut to exacting measurements.

The final product is a perfect fit and requires no modification.

If you are rebuilding your generator or starter brushplate get yourself a set of these insulators. They are far superior to any previously available. They can be obtained from www.funprojects.com (search on brushplate insulators) or contact Lang's Old Car Parts or Snyders. Make sure you specify the new **FunProjects** insulators.

Ron

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Continuing last issue's tips for new T drivers

Setting the spark and fuel mixture correctly is very important to prevent engine overheating and fouling!



Start the car with the spark retarded but drive with it advanced as much as possible without causing spark knock! In a car with the timer positioned correctly, the spark lever will usually produce the best results when advanced more than half way down the quadrant. Some folks like to set their timer position to produce maximum high speed power when the spark lever is pulled all the way down. You can usually tell the point at which the spark timing produces the most power. Going further, you will begin to feel a loss of energy.

Running with the spark too retarded will quickly cause the engine temperature to rise. When in a parade, we all like to retard the engine to get that nice distinctive Model T idle that sounds SO good. But when we do that, the engine temperature will rise fairly rapidly. Since we are barely moving, a parade is a challenge for the cooling system under the best of conditions. Retarding the spark makes the system work much harder to cool.

If you like to retard the spark, watch your MotoMeter or temperature gauge and when the temperature begins to climb past normal, advance the spark and give the engine a chance to cool back down. I always wonder how many folks who have over-heating problems in parades are running with the spark retarded to show off that neat "T" sound.

Another cause of overheating that is frequently overlooked is the fuel mixture. Running with the fuel set too lean will cause a loss of power and increase in engine operating temperature. Setting the mixture richer will cause a noticeable decrease in engine temperature. Setting it too rich is not a good idea either because too rich a mixture will cause sooting and rapid plug fouling.

See you down the road...