TINKERIN TIPS

Tinkerin Tips is a regular feature section of hints and tips for the restorer. The newcomer to the hobby will find much of importance; the oldtimer may yet have a bit to learn. The Feature can only be continued if YOU will help to write it. Address all contributions to: Tinkerin Tips, Box 711, Tarzana, CA 91356.

BY TED ASCHMAN, JR.

SPARE TIRES

On a trip down to Nashville a few weeks ago I witnessed a roadside repair that, while it used to be quite common not too many years ago, I had all but forgotten. Seems a couple of T-ers from over East were heading in the same direction as I and one with a '22 Touring and no spare had a real blow-out of the left front tire. His buddy, driving a '15, was packing only a 30 by 3 spare. As I came upon the scene, they had mounted the 30 by 3 on the 30 by 3½ rim. Much as you might think that there wouldn t be a fit, there sure was.

Back on the farm, we used to use 30 by 3 s on the front as they were a couple of bucks cheaper, and we had 30 by 3½ rims. Only one thing bad about this arrangement was that, if you lost air, the tire would run right off the rim and in doing so would invariably climb the roadside fence, stopping only after it reached the middle of the field.

If your car packs demountable clincher rims, check your spare carefully, if you haven t done so, to make sure it will fit. I know a guy who put four brand new shoes on the ground of his recently restored '24 Touring and put a so-so spare on the back under a fifteen-buck tire cover.

On the way to the big city he cut a valve stem on his right rear which, as you know, sort of lets the air out of things. No problem, he thought, as he went for the spare. With the actions of an expert, off went the rear tire and up he came with the spare that WOULDN T FIT, no matter how he tried. When the lugs would line up, the valve stem wouldn t, and vice-versa.

When he came home and told me of his problems, all I said was, "Get rid of the Chevrolet rim. Friends - They look like a T rim, but they aren t.

FRONT END ALIGNMENT

The other day a neighbor down the street applied with vigor the contents of his "squirt can to his king pins, tie rod ends and spring shackles. After he had done so, he sort of regretted this act as it now all he could do to keep his T on the road, it shimmied so much.

If this has ever happened to you, don t blame the oil for this steering misbehavior. Blame improper alignment or worn king pins and bushings. With proper caster and camber (which can only be changed with brute force) and the correct toe-in (Ford called it "gather), steering is no effort and on a smooth and level road your T will run as straight as an arrow.

A common but yet unusual source of front-end shimmy is in the front wheel bearings. With the wheel jacked up, make sure there is no play here.

A word of caution. While all this makes an easy steering T while moving *forward,* watch it when backing up. In reverse, too much speed, a too short a turn, can cause the wheel to be jerked out of your hand, with dire consequences. Make it a practice to keep *both hands* on the wheel when backing, and go slowly.

Occasionally, when rebuilding a front end, the spring hangers (or perches) will be inadvertently swapped from side to side. The left perch is stamped T-275-B and the right is stamped T-274-B, so if steering problems persist it would be wise to check them.

Loose kingpins or worn bushings also have a tendency to make your steering a little "goosey. The spindle bolt should have a clearance of .004-inch; that is you should ream out the spindle bushings to .504 inch. Snug down the spindle bolt until there is some resistance to turning the spindle by hand.

RECHARGING MAGNETS

Most all know the procedure in recharging the magneto magnets while they are installed in the car, but the other day I learned a new trick in really doing a good job.

This old timer told me that to get a "balanced recharge, the recharging operation should be performed four times, turning the engine over a quarter turn after each charge.

He said that doing it this way would give you about a 90% charge. He added that the only way to do the job "right was to take each magnet off of the flywheel and charge them separately, as too much current is lost in the flywheel while doing it the "easy way.