THE MODEL T FORD

ITS REPAIR, SERVICE, AND RESTORATION

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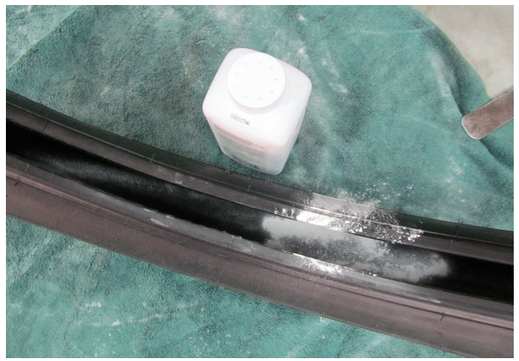
Tips for '26-'27 Wire Wheel Tire Mounting and Balancing

The Ford drop-center wire wheel allows mounting the 21" balloon tires an easier proposition than high-pressure clincher tires! The tire goes on the outer rim of the wire wheel at the valve stem side, pulling the stem up into the rim and compressing the tire so that both tire beads meet and drop into the channel. Pulling the upper beads over the outer rim completes the mounting.

Balancing helps ride and handling. Some use 'balancing beads' that are poured or vibrated into a modified valve stem. This places micro beads of hard spheres that 'sling' around inside the tube, at speed, to internally balance the tire and wheel. Your Tech Editor uses simple metal weights placed on the outer rim. Whichever method you use, taking the time to balance the wire wheel and tire is worthwhile. Follow the steps below for easy mounting and balancing.

Use a rubber rim strip to protect the tube from weld spots in the drop center.

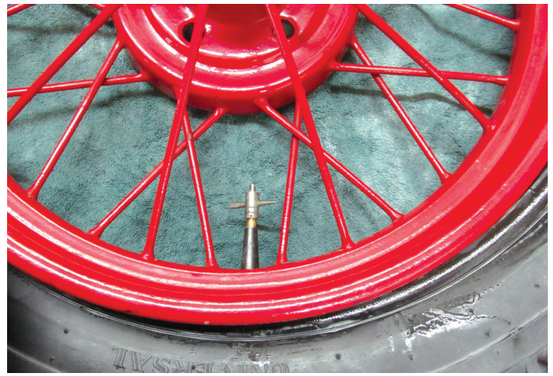
Dust the tube with talcum powder on all surfaces.



Dust the interior of the tire with talcum powder to provide dry lubrication to reduce tube chafing.

Inflate the tube just enough that it remains flat, then place it inside the tire.

Brush the inner and outer tire beads with a thick soap solution to lubricate the tire and help glide it over the outer rim. Mount the tire so the 'DOT' or 'date codes' are on the inner wall of the tire.



Pull the valve stem into the rim hole. A valve tool is useful as a grip to tug the rubber stem up fully. Squeeze the lower edges of both beads together to mount the lower half of the tire into the drop center.

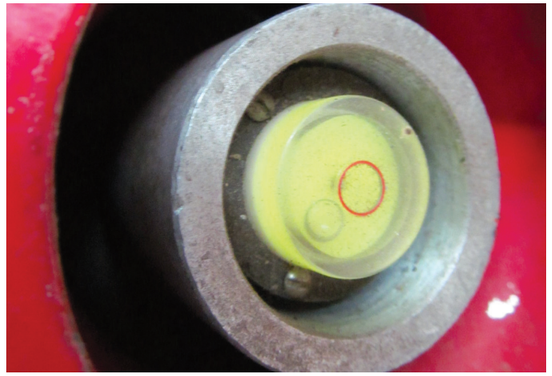
Work around the rim in small increments, pushing the beads over the rim. If you use a tire tool, be careful not to pinch the tube.

Since the lower half of the tire is compressed in the drop center, pull the rest of the tire over the upper part of the rim. Now inflate the tire to half pressure and ensure the beads are centered around the rim.

Inflate the tube to the recommended or desired pressure, depending on tire size and load (approximately 27-32 psi 186-220 kpa).

A portable wheel 'bubble' balancer (available at Harbor Freight and similar stores) can be used to STATIC balance the mounted wheel. This is a low-cost tool that is easy to use, following the instructions provided.

On the right are balancing beads (Dyna Beads® or others) that can take the place of static balancing. This method relies on the fast turning wheel to 'sling' the beads in the tube to provide radial balance. On the left are low-cost, stick-on weights (available at auto parts stores) with a 2" (50.8 mm) length = 1 oz. (28.3 grams). Normally, static balance helps both radial and lateral imbalance.



Mounted on the portable wheel 'bubble' balancer tool, the tool indicates that the new tire and wheel are out of balance.

Notice strips of weights layered on the outer rim. Position strips for adjusting the location around the rim, separating segments of weights as needed. Sometimes balance is attained when segments are placed apart from one another.

Once the weights are placed in the correct spot(s), the wheel comes in balance, centering the bubble in the dot. Mark the weight locations with ink marker on the inside of the rim. Placing the weights in this location will hide them, but keeps the balance just the same.

Adhere the weights to the inside of the wheel rim, using the ink marks as your guide. The 'sticky' of the adhesive weights was poor on the powder-coat finish on these particular wheels, so I applied a bead of contact cement (Seal All® or similar) to secure the weights in place. A coat of hobby shop enamel paint will mask the shiny metal weights.

And a tech tip...

A tip for loose or rattling hub caps, as the thin tabs won't hold at times: Use a single layer of friction tape. Folding the thin tabs into the friction tape keeps the cap snugly tight!

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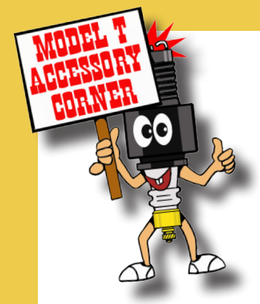

Holley Vapor Manifold

Developed in times of poor gasoline fuels, this manifold provided dashboard-adjustable heat to assist the carburetor in vaporizing fuel. The set included a special exhaust manifold fitted to the intake to provide heat. A rather complex arrangement!

A showcase of aftermarket accessories from the past, often found on the Ford. Many thousands of inventive products were sold to dealers and owners to upgrade, customize, or improve over the factory parts…in most cases not so much!

By Dan Treace
Technical Editor

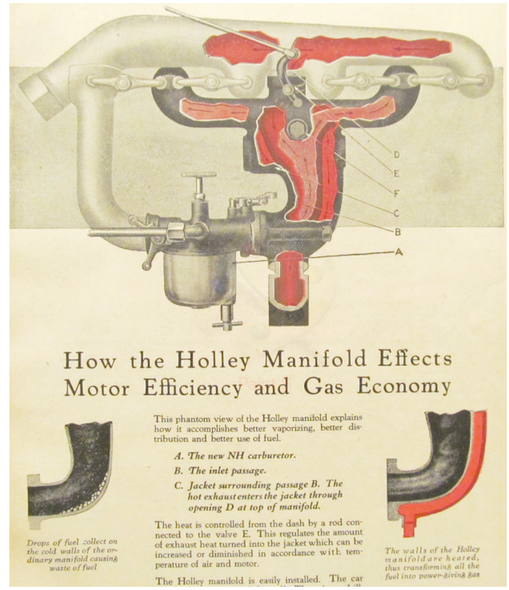

Photo of Vapor Manifold intake.
Not pictured is the special exhaust manifold, with a central port connection, provided by Holley.

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