

Truck Shop by Dave Sperry

Ever since I bought my LRE the horn didn't work. It was disconnected by the horns. When I reconnected it I could hear a slight noise but no honk. I started the engine and the honk wouldn't quit. So I stopped the motor and disconnected the horns. I tried to find a working pad and was told "Good Luck!".

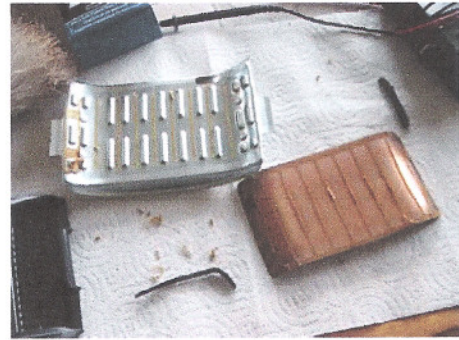


How to fix it; I took the two forward facing bolts holding the center pad off the steering wheel. I think it's called the "Omni" wheel for the square horn pad. Inside the plastic pad were two metal plates. One was galvanized steel with rolled ends & ridges and the other was flat copper with rolled ends. The galvanized plate was grounded by the bolts to the steering wheel. The copper plate had the hot wire going to a 90' tab that stuck thru a hole in the galvanized plate. Originally, there was a 1/16" thick foam gasket in between. It had adhesive on both sides. It kept the two plates apart. After 31 years the foam crumbled, the plates touched, and continuous horn. If you look at picture 2 you can see the leftover adhesive on the plates.



The object of the repair was to get something between the plates that was thick enough to keep them apart, thin enough so they would touch and honk when you pressed them and, not fall out.

Preparation; Use a whisk broom to remove the crumbled foam. Remove the adhesive on the steel plate. I used my finger nail. I did not remove it on the copper plate for fear of bending it. Then rinse both plates with disc brake cleaner.



Velcro; To separate the plates I cut 1/16" wide strips of the loop section of self adhesive Velcro and stuck them on the steel plate where the old adhesive had been. See picture 4.



With each step you can look put the plates together and see if the ridges in the steel plate touch the copper one with no finger pressure. If they do touch, more Velcro. You can see the copper plate has very few Velcro strips. I eventually added one more on the curve of the copper plate. The fewer the better on the copper plate as you may bend it trying to get one off.

Now you put the plates into the horn pad. Be sure the 90' copper tab is in the middle of the hole in the steel plate. Next get a VOM and clip the leads to the two plates. If you have to squeeze before it shows continuity that's great. If not, take the plates out of the pad and look at where they may be hitting. More Velco there.

Install the pad back into the wheel & test. I did & it shorted on one side. I pulled everything out and added one Velcro strip on that side. I put it back in and now it works beautifully. Being nylon, the Velcro loop material should last a long time. Looking back, the only thing I would change is put a small piece of electrical tape over the hole on the steel plate below the copper tab.

Now I have a much safer LRE with a good set of horns for some small strips of Velcro and a couple of hours time.

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