

'53-'54 DIST. Originality Verses ??

By Roy Braatz

A friend bought a NOS tack drive distributor from a Corvette supplier for his '54 Vette because his original had a bad shaft which drives the tack gear. The cost was \$600.00 but he said the cost reflected the NOS rarity because Delco no longer makes them. O.K.! I said. If that's the case and its NOS original, that's part of the game. Then two weeks later he asked me over to his place explaining that he left the key in all night and burned out the points. He also explained that he bought new points for a Corvette and they didn't work and wouldn't go into the distributor. When taking the old ones back to the parts house, he was told his were for a car distributor, not a Corvette. He asked if I knew what was wrong. I didn't, but upon inspecting his I realized that his so-called NOS distributor was not the same as my original '54. We removed his and compared them. The outside had only minor differences, but inside it was totally different. After a phone call to a Delco supplier, we were told that we had a dump truck distributor and that it would work. It goes without saying that my friend was not happy, but he needed it to finish his Vette.

Some people may say, "So what, it works." I don't mean to come down on suppliers (maybe they didn't know) but someone did somewhere and is misrepresenting them.

A Corvette cam is 1 inch in diameter which, in turn, uses a different plate to hold the points, causing the need for the condenser to be mounted outside. Figure 1 shows the size difference of the cam used in cars and dump trucks is 1/2 inch in diameter, which, in turn, uses a different plate to hold the points. The condenser is mounted inside.

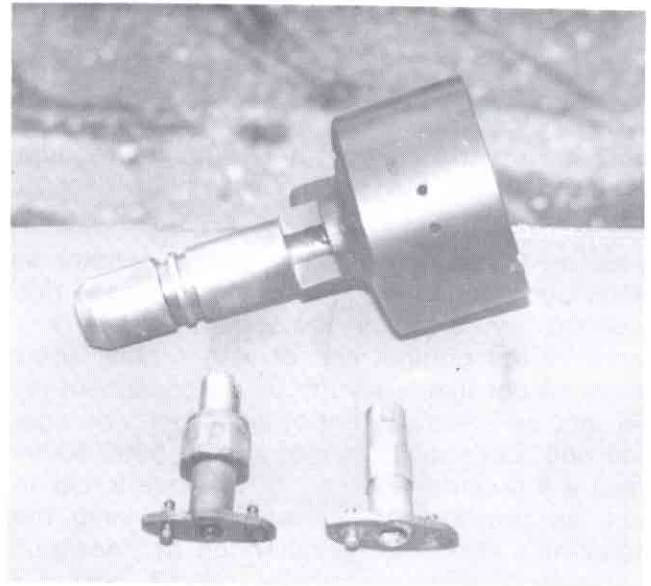
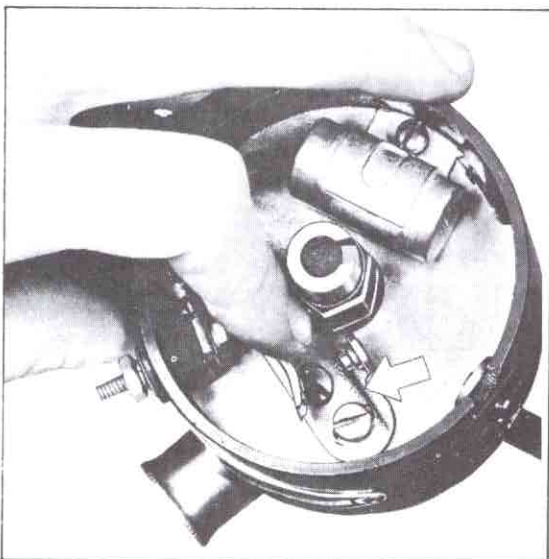


Fig. 1
↑
VETTE
CAM
↑
CAR
CAM

CONCLUSION

Find a machine shop to repair your old distributor drive shaft or pay big bucks for the wrong distributor. If you have already bought and used this replacement distributor and can locate an original distributor, then between the two, you can make up a correct distributor. The reason is two-fold: By using the 1 inch cam in the Corvette, you get a longer spark saturation to each firing cylinder and at high rpm, you have less chance of the points floating, causing power loss and, you will have the right distributor!

CORVETTE PARTS ARE:
Distributor Assy 1112314
Distributor Shaft 1926887
Distributor Plate 1926897
Points 1925852
Tack Drive Unit 1926891