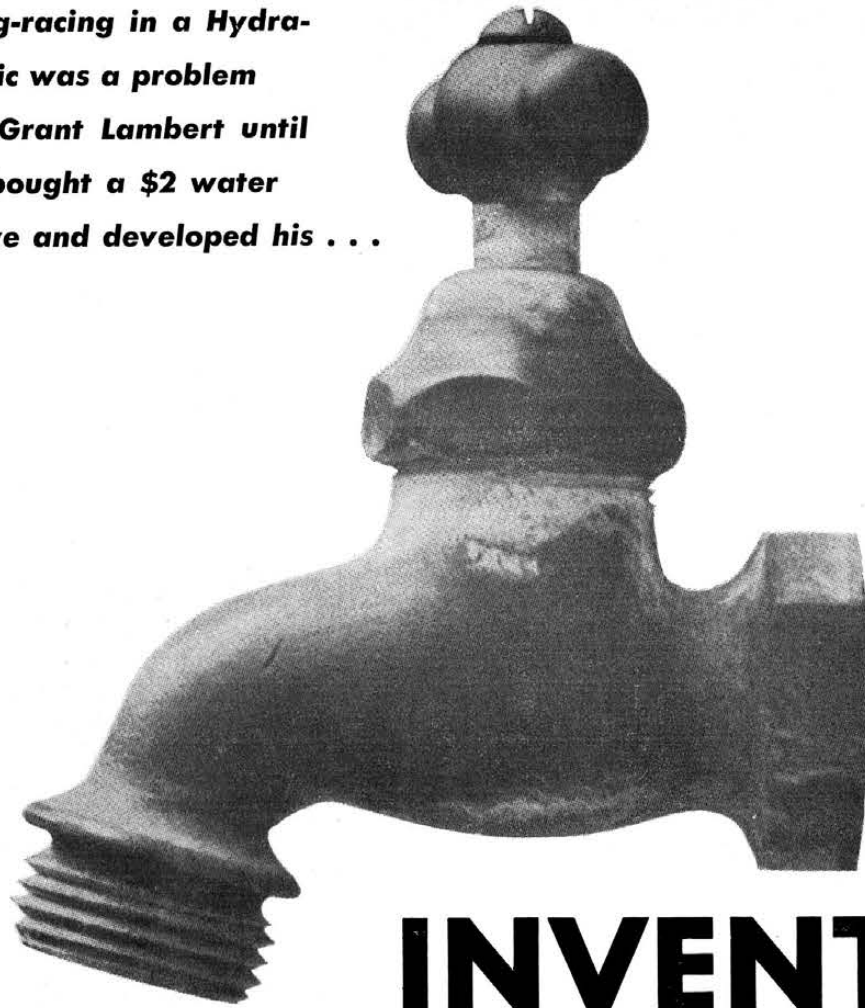


Drag-racing in a Hydramatic was a problem for Grant Lambert until he bought a \$2 water valve and developed his . . .



INVENTION FOR JEANNE

Text and Photos by Dean Moon

GRANT LAMBERT never dreamed that by agreeing with his wife he would discover a sensational new gimmick for boosting their car's performance—or that Jeanne herself would become a top competitor at the drag races!

It all started when Grant, mechanic at a Whittier, Calif., motor firm, proposed to Mrs. Lambert that they go all-out in remodeling the family '49 Olds club coupe. He wanted a "real crazy," super-custom job, but Jeanne didn't agree. They compromised on a moderate custom project, which was accomplished at a price well within the family budget by Cliff Crowfoot, a fellow employee of Lambert's.

Crowfoot installed '48 Studebaker Champion tail lights, fitted two Buick "portholes" into the rear bumper for exhaust outlets, using metal grommets with extra-heavy chromium plating to retard corrosion on the bumper.

In the engine compartment is a standard Olds 88 power plant with stock 303 cubic inch piston displacement, a Weber $\frac{3}{4}$ cam with solid lifters and '52 Olds rocker arm stands. Lambert installed his own ignition system, an Edmunds dual manifold and two '50 Cadillac carburetors. The heads were milled .100 of an inch and headers were fitted with 30-inch Glasspac mufflers.

Painted a Mandarin red, the moderate custom created quite a stir when Grant took it through its paces at the Santa Ana Drags several months ago.

Mrs. Lambert was quite impressed also. In fact she took the wheel the next time herself. Then he had a new problem.

Jeanne, competing in the drags, found that the Olds seemed to pause momentarily while the Hydramatic transmission would shift into fourth gear—and this lapse could be the slim margin between the top spot in the race and being an also-ran.

"We need more horsepower," she complained.

A tune-up specialist himself, Grant started tinkering. He toiled hours and hours over the engine, yet the most he could boost the output was a paltry 2 MPH.

Then the thought struck him: What if the transmission could be held back in third gear, thus completely eliminating the "losing pause"?

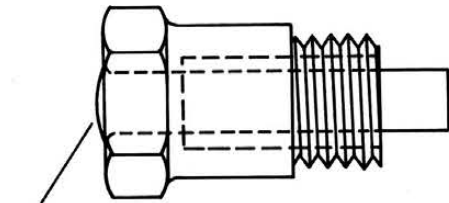
That was the key. Lambert worked out a "manual-variable pressure regulator plug" that can be used on any hydramatic transmission, particularly one without dual-range. There is no alteration to the transmission itself, only to the present pressure regulator plug. Best of all, any Hop Up enthusiast can, without too much difficulty, duplicate Lambert's installation.

Heart of the assembly is the upper section of a standard, screw-type water valve, obtainable in any hardware store for about \$2. This is used for the sealed shaft, to prevent the Hydramatic fluid from escaping into the actuating shaft.

Other materials needed include a washer, a small piece of $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch steel for the actuating arm, minor brazing job and machining, a clevis and pin and a hood release cable.

Disassemble the valve. On the top section, using a hacksaw, cut off metal shaft from one-quarter inch below seal. Part shaft above threads and below where handle is attached.

Grind off head of pin from stock pressure regulator plug, then remove pin with drift punch. Shorten pin $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. Braze on a flat washer whose inside diameter is just large enough to fit over pin. Washer is then machined to fit within spring hole in pressure regulator plug. Shape with slight contour end of pin that fits into plug—the end to which

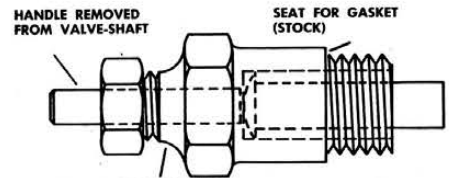


TO REMOVE PIN, HEAD WAS GROUND-OFF, THEN REMOVED BY DRIFT-PUNCH.

washer was attached. This makes for better seal, preventing oil from escaping.

Braze valve atop pressure regulator plug. Insert altered spring-pin, remaining part of shaft from original water valve, seal and hexagon cap. (Shaft of valve holds position simply because there is no room for it to become disengaged.)

Plug can now be installed in original position—upper left of transmission.



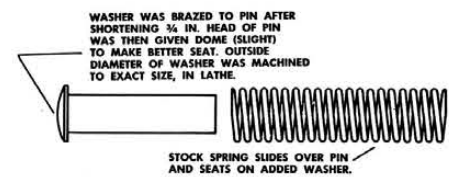
TOP PART OF WATER VALVE BRAZED TO PLUG.

While it would be desirable to be able to attach the actuating arm directly to the plug, this is not possible because the plug has to be screwed into position with the actuating arm attached.

Grant made an actuating arm from a piece of $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch flat steel stock and mounted it on an existing bell housing bolt. On this particular installation, too, he had to have an offset forged onto the arm in order to align it with the plug.

For easier operation, a bolt with a shoulder could be specially machined. This would allow the bolt to "bottom" on the shoulder instead of on the arm itself.

On face of the arm that comes in contact with the actuating pin, grind or shape



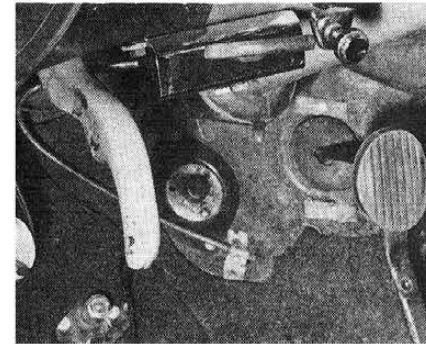
WASHER WAS BRAZED TO PIN AFTER SHORTENING $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. HEAD OF PIN WAS THEN GIVEN DOSE (SLIGHT) TO MAKE BETTER SEAT. OUTSIDE DIAMETER OF WASHER WAS MACHINED TO EXACT SIZE, IN LATHE.

a radius similar to that of a rocker arm, thereby allowing the arm to "slide" on pin. Align arm, using flat washers as shims. Attach small clevis and pin on other end of actuating arm and to this secure an aviation type hood latch release

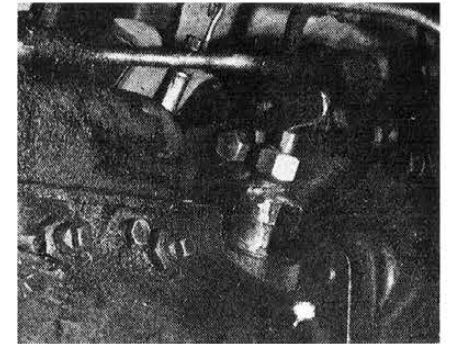
(Continued on page 63)



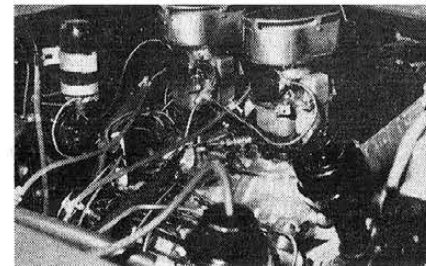
Mildly customized '49 Olds is drag winner with Hydramatic transmission "gimmick"



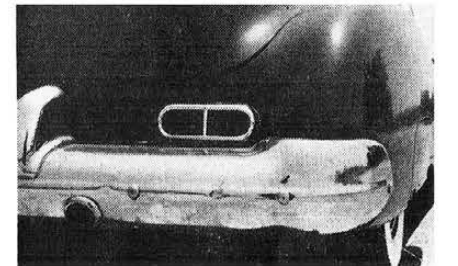
Aviation type hood release cable mounted under dash allows Hydramatic to be held in any one gear for any length of time



Simple installation of "manual-variable pressure regulator plug" is shown here in detail for any enthusiast to follow

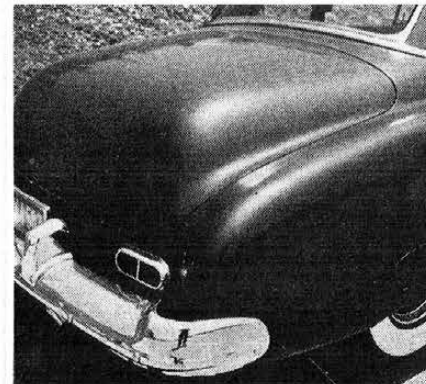


Olds 88 engine uses Weber $\frac{3}{4}$ cam with solid lifters. .100 off heads, Edmunds dual manifold, special ignition system



Buick "portholes" set in bumper for exhaust, extra heavy chrome to retard corrosion. Taillights are '48 Studebaker

Dechromed deck lid, rear fenders with taillights removed are featured on Olds



Minor dechroming of hood gives custom appearance to otherwise stock front end



CUSTOM CAPRI

(Continued from page 25)

two-tone yellow and the top was black. Upholstery was black and red leather.

The interior has been unaltered except that the instrument panel has been painted the same color as the body—which now is '53 Buick Mandarin Red. The top was sprayed Nash Ambassador Gold—making a striking color combination.

The crowning touch of ingenuity is the hubcaps. These are '51 Lincoln stock parts, but with the centers made from the lids of aluminum saucepans. The medallion in the center of each cap is from a '53 Lincoln.

INVENTION FOR JEANNE

(Continued from page 39)

cable. This type is recommended because it is adjustable and locking, permitting quick and easy adjustment.

The cable's function, of course, is to allow for maintaining transmission in any one gear for any length of time. It can be mounted just under the dash for easy access. Grant angled the cable in through a small hole in the floorboard. He first visually aligned the cable with the bottom end of the actuating arm.

Use a small piece of scrap steel, secured by metal screws to the floor board, to keep the cable in place. The floor mat will cover the installation.

Now you're ready to go!

The regular pressure regulator plug allows for shifting of gears when a certain pressure is built up on the spring. Now, with Grant's gimmick, you can keep tension on the spring for as long as you want, since the gear will not shift until the tension is relaxed.

How does it work? Well, first time Grant tried it out on the drags, he finished the quarter-mile in third gear—boosting his time six miles an hour!

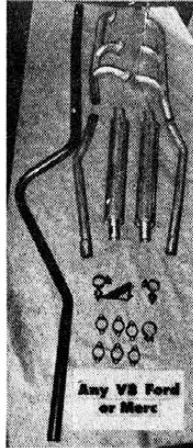
The mechanism works on all gears too, Grant has found. Testing at El Mirage Dry Lakes one weekend, he decided to let the Olds race in extended third gear, just to see how far it would wind. He roared past 90 MPH—and still had speed to spare—when he cautiously decided that he had proved his point, and backed off.

Grant recommends his gimmick unreservedly, and so does Mrs. Lambert. She has good reason to be pleased with it; in a recent drag, she came up with top speed for the quarter-mile—89 MPH, using the extended third gear. And their "moderate customized" Olds was one of the prettiest in the race, to boot!

Try it yourself: You'll find that you'll get more enjoyment—and more horsepower—per dollar invested than almost any other gimmick you'll find anywhere!

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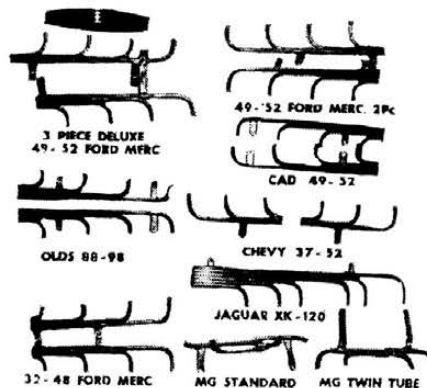


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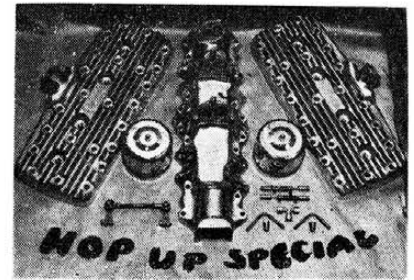
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