



TClinic

STEERING GEAR — SAFETY CHECK by Earl Sargent

Steering problems still seem to be a “bets noir” to the average TC owner-mechanic. One of the more common difficulties in attaining good steering seems to be the elimination of excessive play in the mechanism (with the wheels dead ahead). Sometimes this indicates trouble within the steering box itself. Occasionally however, gears and their attendant bearings are in good condition and the blame lies elsewhere. A quick procedure for checking this condition is to have someone move the steering wheel in both directions just enough to feel a fair load on the wheel and at the same time you observe the gear box closely for signs of play between the box and the car frame. If play exists, check the three frame mounting bolts for looseness and possible wear. Another point to be inspected, if play exists, is the large main pivot bolt. There have been cases of wear or looseness here too.

First printed by TCMG in 1973

2002 Update

While the above is very valid, we should be so lucky if that is all that is loose. In addition to the box itself, check the drop arm to sector shaft connection, all the ball joint ends, the leaf spring bushings, king pins, wheel bearings (heck, just check the whole front end. All play adds up. Once in order you can cruise down the road in the TC by holding the steering wheel with two fingers.

Of course while not original many TC'er have opted to go the Datsun steering route. Yes it steers wonderfully but does it feel like a TC anymore?