

Last Tech Article for the year. 2013

Distinguishing Between Original and Reproduction D-305 Distributor Caps

by Bob Baird

The short D-305 distributor cap with no windows was used for carbureted 1955-57 Corvettes and dual-four 1958-61 Corvettes, so it has a wide usage on these early cars. Along with the few remaining original caps, there are the more easily obtainable reproduction or service replacement caps. Because there is more than one style of non-original D-305 cap, the most important thing we want to do is to be able to identify the features of an original. We will also compare these features with the AC Delco service replacement cap for contrast.

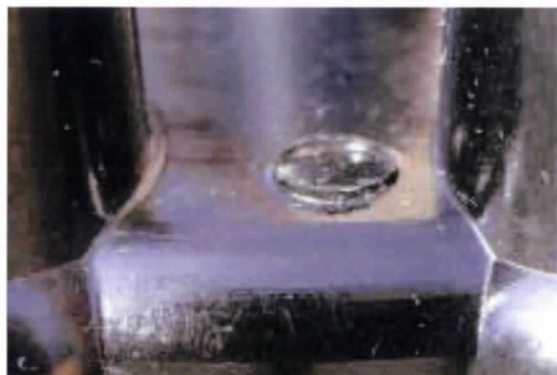


One surefire way to determine if your D-305 cap is original is to remove it from an original unopened box.

The boss for the clip on the original (left) is greatly reinforced on the replacement (right). Note the concave reinforcements on either side of the replacement in place of the triangular indentations on the original and also the addition of a flat 45° surface at the back of the replacement.



Some replacements are nothing more than something that fits and does the job. But the AC Delco service replacement not only looks close to the original at first glance, it also features some improvements that make it stronger. The bosses on either side of the cap for the two spring steel clips endure the most stress and are thus the most prone to cracking. The service replacement addresses this as shown in the photo. So, save your original and run the service replacement on your car when it's not being judged.



Another difference involves the casting mold marks on the top of the cap that appear between each of the plug wire posts. On the original, they are flat, farther back from the edge of the cap, and offset to the right. On the service replacement, they are tall, on the edge of the cap, and nearly centered. Some reproduction caps have no casting marks on top at all, so these are immediately apparent as non-original.

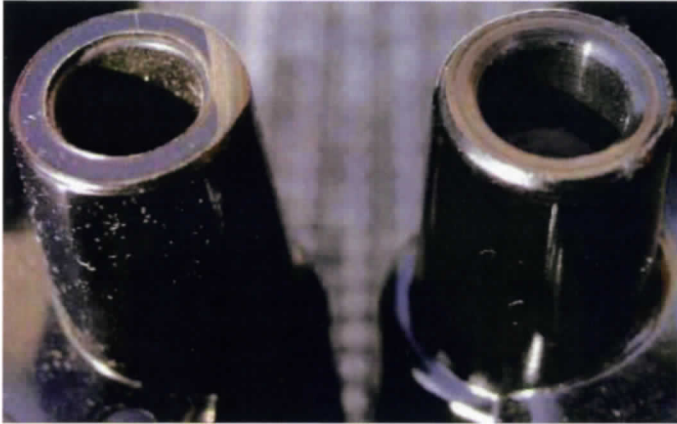


The casting mold marks are flat and off center to the right on the original (top photo), whereas they are quite tall on the replacement, which also has the mold mark more centered and over toward the edge (left).

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The third difference is that the top edge of the original posts are polished and on the replacement they show circular machining marks on the top. Of course, this can't be seen during judging, but it is another feature that will help you identify an original cap.



The tops of the posts are polished smooth on the original (left), whereas circular machining marks are seen on the replacement (right).

Lastly, all we need do to identify an original cap is to turn it over and look for the familiar Delco-Remy logo. This logo is absent from both the service replacement and reproductions.



Delco-Remy logo inside an original D-305 cap

MAC owns a collection of tools and literature, primarily unique to Corvette restoration and repair, for use by members. Generally these are special use tools needed one time during a restoration/repair project. If you have any suggestions for other unique tools that would make it possible to do your restoration task yourself, let me know and I can present your suggestion to the Board of Directors.



Engine Stand - 2ea



Hydraulic Engine Crane & Tilter - 2ea



C1 / C2 Body Lifting Jig - 2ea



Solid Axle Rebound Strap Riveting Tool



Solid Axle Rear Spring Banding Tool



Engine Start-Up "Dash Board" Box



**California Screamin'
NCRS Racing DVD**



NCRS Training 5 DVD Set
Judging 101, Ops, Matrix Training,
Ref Manual, Paint & Fiberglass



Coil Spring Compressor



Mid-Year Trailing Arm Tools



Radiator Stamp Kit
"GM" "16 CT" "06A CG"