



New Ignition Coils for Prewar Cars

By Gil Fuqua (TN)



1 The River Carriage coil (left) is made of high-impact plastic and includes a high-efficiency electrical core that is epoxy sealed. An original coil (right) is shown for comparison.

Original-type coils for prewar cars have not been available for years . . . that is, until the River Carriage Shop began manufacturing a replica coil last year that is the same size and configuration as the original coil. The original coils were made of bakelite and included a distinctive mushroom-shaped cap. The River Carriage coils are made of high-impact plastic that are cast in molds made from an original coil. The cases of the River Carriage coils are painted to match the dark brown bakelite of the original coils.

The new coils from the River Carriage Shop have the distinct advantage of a sealed, modern core that is impervious to moisture. The new coils also put out a higher voltage than original coils which results in a hotter spark for starting and running. The coils are designed as a direct replacement for the original coil, including captive nuts on the bottom for mounting the coil. The new coils also require an external ballast resistor in the ignition circuit, just like the original coils.

The original coils were state-of-the-art technology for the 1920s and included lacquer coated magnet wire that was wound in layers around the core, each layer being separated by wax paper for insulation. Since the original coils were not epoxy-sealed like a modern coil, they were subject to degradation from moisture and vibration. The River Carriage coil uses modern wire with a high-grade insulation for the windings. This allows the coil to be wound without the insulating layers of wax paper, resulting in much tighter windings that translates into improved electrical efficiency and higher voltage output. The coils are then pressure impregnated with epoxy to seal the windings from moisture and vibration.

River Carriage Shop tests each coil on a load and duty cycle set-up to assure they meet specifications. The load test is important since it subjects the coil to the same heat and electrical extremes that are characteristic of the coil in operation on a car. The coils are warranted for three years.

The coils sell for \$285 and River Carriage can also recore an original coil with the modern insert for \$225. Contact for further information: River Carriage Shop, 21188 Maplewood Ave, Rocky River, OH 44116, telephone: 800-950-2415. 



2 Under the mushroom-shaped cap, the terminals of the River Carriage coil are clearly marked for wiring. Note the epoxy seal around the inner edge to seal out moisture. By comparison, the cap on the original coil is not sealed and was subject to moisture degradation.



3 The base of the River Carriage coil is stamped with a serial number and test date. The base includes captive nuts for mounting the same as the original coil (left).