

DATSUN 320 TRUCK NEWSLETTER

February 1988

Issue 6

Hello there again. I hope that you are having a fine start to a new year. My family and I are doing well, and my wife is due to give birth to our second child any day now. We are eagerly anticipating this event and my wife will sure feel better to be able to sleep on her stomach again.

Good news for this month is that Skip Levin loaned me his 320 truck service manual which I copied and will start including in this flyer. Skip had mentioned earlier that he wants to sell his truck. He has a 1965 320 with an E-15 engine in it and it runs very good. If you are interested, his phone is 432-0645. Also for sale is Don Uly's 1960 model 222 truck for \$650. It runs good and his number is 489-0958. And the oldest truck I have seen is for sale by Neil Fraser of Spring Valley. He has a 1959 model 222 with a U-2000 roadster engine in it for \$2500. This truck is in very good condition in all areas, and his number is 463-5156.

If you are selling your truck, or parts, give me a call and I will include it in this letter. I have many, many truck parts available since I have parted out a '63 and bought a lot of good parts from wrecking yards. If you need something, give me a call and we'll see if I have it.

FIXING THE DISTRIBUTOR

As I mentioned last newsletter, I had to rebuild my stock distributor. It wasn't a very hard job if you have some automotive experience and aren't afraid to work with small parts. It comes apart easily and the only tricky part is to get the wire from the points bolted to an insulator terminal so it doesn't get grounded out. After the distributor is taken apart, clean up all the pieces, make sure that the contact mounting plate can swivel freely on the base. Check the advance weights and springs for worn out pivot points. Also check the shaft and cam for excessive wear and free play. All the parts go back together in a straightforward manner, just use caution when tightening the plastic wire insulator terminals since they can crack. Check the vacuum advance diaphragm unit by sucking on the tube connection. The arm should pull in easily and stay in when you stop sucking. If the diaphragm lets air through, you must use a new vacuum advance unit. Once the distributor is reassembled, set the point gap at .020 of an inch to start with and reinstall the distributor on the engine. The shaft will only fit in the engine one way since the drive slot is offset on the end of the distributor shaft. Start the engine and adjust the timing to 10-15 degrees before top dead center. The engine should run much smoother after making repairs to the distributor.

OIL FILTER DIFFERENCES

Working with Kelly McKeirnan, I have figured out the difference between '63 and earlier oil systems and the '64 and later systems. They both use the same filter element, but the early system only filters a small amount of oil back into the oil pan through small holes in the hollow filter bolt. Later systems filter all of the oil flow through the system using 2 good sized holes in the hollow bolt.

TRUCK MODEL DIFFERENCES

There are other models of Datsun trucks which predate the 320 line of trucks all the way back to the first Datsuns ever brought to the USA. Here is a quick rundown of the first trucks:

MODEL LG-220

The very first truck, sold only in the western United States. Only about 10 known to exist. Sold in mid 1959, it had a 1000cc 37 horsepower model "C" engine, 4 speed trans, 500 pound capacity with I beam front axle and leaf springs.

MODEL PLG-221

Sold from late '59 through 1960, this model featured the new 1200cc 48hp model "E" engine. About 45 were sold in the western US. Had a 500 pound capacity with same leaf springs and solid front axle.

MODEL PLG-222

There are still a few known survivors of this model out of the 253 sold from 1960 to early 1962. Nearly the same as the model 221 except for different sheet metal sides on the bed. Still a 1/4 ton rating.

MODEL PLG-223

Major changes were built into the 113 trucks of this model. The new 1200cc 60hp model "E-1" engine powered this model which sold from 1961 to early 1962. Capacity ratings were either 1/4 or 1/2 ton. The front suspension was revised to use A arms with torsion bars to hold it all up. This and all earlier trucks used 15 inch wheel rims.

MODEL L-320

Our familiar old favorite, of which about 8,232 were sold. Uses the E-1 60hp engine, 14 inch wheels, torsion bar suspension, capacity ratings of 1/4, 1/2, or a full ton. Body also available in the Sport Truck styling, 1000 of which were made. Sold from 1962 to 1965 with front grill changes every year. Many changes and improvements made from the 1963 to the 1964 model years. Many of these trucks are still out there going strong. Last year for column shift 4 speed transmissions.

MODEL L-520

And now the more "modern" trucks appear with a 67hp model "J" 1300cc engine, floor shift transmission. Sold from 1965 to 1969, about 35,230 made, yearly grill changes. 4 headlights starting in 1967.

MODEL L-521

Totally new style body with same J-1300 cc engine, 4 speed floor shift. Front suspension still torsions bars and A arms. About 31,290 built. The all new overhead cam 96hp L1600 engine available in 1969 and the modern trucks have completely arrived.