

FREEZE-PLUG FIX

by Dean Price

Perhaps because of the dissimilar metals, pressure and heat involved, the Twin-cam head core or freeze plugs, and particularly the unreachable plug at the rear of the head, always seem to be creating problems.

The obvious, permanent fix for this problem is to tap the holes with a 1/2 NPT tap and insert a threaded plug. Refill with a straight anti-freeze (desirable anyway because of the electrolysis problem inherent in engines with aluminum heads and cast iron blocks), and forget your freeze-plug problems forever. There are nicely cad-plated, allen-head plugs available that fit nearly flush and can be removed at will, even with the head installed. One source on these allen-head plugs is BEEDEE's in Pasadena, although I'm sure there are many more.

However, all this drilling and tapping doesn't help a bit when you're out in the middle of the Mojave and you hear the characteristic CLINK when that rear plug lets go, and the water-temp needle goes off the top of the gauge.

A neat gadget to have in your spares kit is one of the rubber "FLEX-DRAIN PLUGS" made by PERFECT AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS. This outfit is located at 33 Commerce Rd., Carlstadt, New Jersey, but their product should be available at most auto parts houses. Ask for No. DP-35 UB (fits 1/2" universal drain-plugs). This product was designed to cure the problem of stripped oil-pan drain-hole threads, but serves our purpose beautifully. The nicest part is that it can be installed absolutely without tools and should be a permanent enough fix to last forever, or until your head comes off and you can do the drill and tap number.

The illustration shows how the plug works and it is an easy matter to stretch out the plug with the threaded bolt included, insert into the vacant plug hole, withdraw the bolt from the plug allowing it to expand to the bulbous shape shown, and re-fill with coolant.

