

TIMKENS FOR TINKER T

by Phillip Lee

The last time I had Tinker T out for a little tour was in Pulaski, TN with about 10 other Ts. Some of the talk was about front wheel bearings. So, I thought It would be a good idea to repack the front wheel bearings on my T.

As some of you know, we have only had our T about 2 years now. As a T novice, I did not know the front bearings had threads. When I first got the T, I knew that the wood wheels and hubs had been changed to wire wheels and hubs. As a kid, my father always said, “ **Son, if you kant fix it you kant drive it.**” So time to check the wheels bearings but no matter how hard I pulled, the front bearings would not come off.

I have learned what I know about the Model T from the forum and other members of Tennessee Ts. One of the things is that the wheel bearings are threaded onto the axle and mine were threaded backwards I thought until a Tennessee T member explained that if the were that they would tighten and lockup the wheel. **No**ther lesson learned from a Tennessee T member. No name mentioned but his initials are Bill Robinson.

So I got the T in the shop and jacked up and on stands. I got the wheels off with no problems. When I punched the inner bearing out of the first wheel, the bearing fell apart and so did the inner bearing of the other wheel. So I decided to replace all the wheel bearings. Tinker T was down until I could order and install the new bearings.

After looking at several suppliers, I found that the exact replacements were about \$80.00 each for the outer bearings. I also found that you can get two front bearings with threaded inserts for about the same price. So being of sound mind and a bit frugal, I bought the bearings with the inserts. Oh, by the way, both bearings are Timkens, so the quality of the bearings would be the same.

When I got them in, the big question was, how do you tighten the bearings because they do not have the flat spot like the original? As they say, when all else fails, read the instructions. The instructions say to use needle nose pliers. That works good until you almost get them tight and then the needle nose pliers will not reach the little slot in the insert. I have some big slip joint pliers and if you squeeze real hard you can tightened the bearings on the round shoulders. It worked great on one side, but on the other side, before I could get all the play out, the insert started slipping inside the bearing. What to do now? I went ahead and put the castle nut and tried tightening and it worked. No play in the wheel.

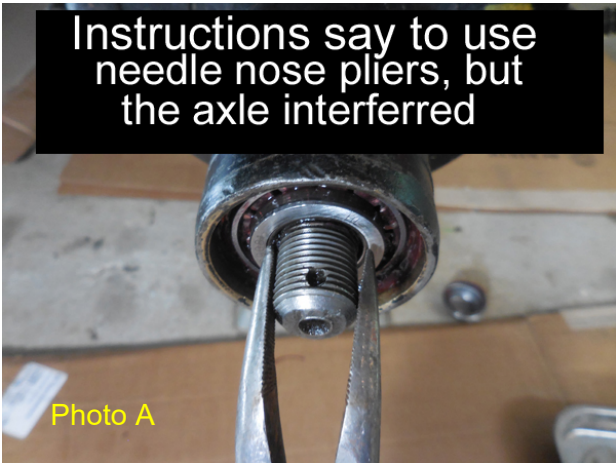
Bottom line: The bearings with insert will work. You need a special tool to properly install them.

If I had it to do over again, I would spend the extra money and save lots of aggravation.

Side note. A T ride had been planned with Bill, Paul, David and me. With Tinker T down waiting for new bearings, Bill offered to let me ride with him, so the T ride on still on for me. A customer of my son-in-law tested positive for the Chinese virus so to be on the safe side Bill said “STAY AWAY FROM ME” I missed the ride. That was several weeks ago so with no symptoms for my son-in-law or me, I am good to go.



This is the bearing that I chose to install. Note the notches in the LH view. Grab the notches, then turn the insert to adjust.



Bearing notes:

Photo A: The needle nose picture shows that they will not reach the slot when the bearing is screwed down about 1.5 inches. This picture is from Lang's and shows the slot in the insert.

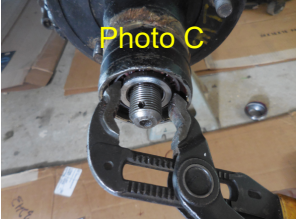


Photo B: One picture shows the shoulder on the old bearing and how a crescent wrench will fit and how I used a screwdriver to get leverage.

Photo C: One picture shows how I used slip joint pliers on the the new bearing without the flat shoulder.

Photo D: One picture is a mockup of a tool needed to tighten the bearing with an insert.