

Knock On – Fall Off

If you do not fully believe that you do not need to belt the hell out of the spinners when fitting wheels or that they do really need to be fitted to the correct side....let me tell you a story.

There is this member I know fairly well who departed home with his wife for the Xmas in July BBQ at Mal Munro's about 100kms south of Sydney. It was a typical Sydney winters day, clear, still and about 22C, the best for TRing. About 5km from home he turned left at a set of lights and as he accelerated up the hill the front of the car dropped and he heard that horrible sound of metal on road. The front left wheel had departed and the car was dragging itself up the road.

Close inspection revealed that the spinner had come off and the wheel had parted company when the car turned left. The unfortunate member walked back up the road for about 100 meters but was unable to find the spinner. The wheel fortunately was just near the car. Who knows where the spinner came off; it was the left turn that finally caused the wheel to come off.

When the wheel came off, it ran on the disc causing a flat spot but it did not prevent the car from being driven home. The problem was that the car was so low to the ground the original jack that was being carried could not be used. A good Samaritan in a Commodore stopped with a scissor jack that fitted under the chassis behind the rear wheel. This allowed the car to be lifted high enough for the TR's jack to be fitted and the car lifted.

Now the simple job of fitting the spare which was an original steel wheel. The spline adaptor was removed and the wheel fitted. He then removed all the "stuff" behind the seats so the 5 1/2" wheel could be carried home. One of the drawbacks of running wide wheels. After packing away everything, he attempted to drive off. Attempted being the operative word. That front wheel would not turn.

Thinking the worst, he looked at the problem and realised that the great aluminium four pot caliper was fowling the wheel. Unpack and jack the car again. This time the rear wheel was removed and the spline adaptor from the rear axle was transferred to the front axle along with the 5 1/2" wheel. The steel spare was then fitted to the rear. All packed again and this time it moved without any crunching or grinding. As about one hour had passed by this time, he drove home and changed cars to the trusty but not nearly as exciting, MX5.

To add a little insult to injury, he had an audience. There had been an accident up the road and the people in the backed up traffic just sat there and watched the drama.

On arrival at Mal's, the waiting crowd expected to hear that either the four adaptor nuts had come off or the complete hub. No one expected the spinner. Later that night, Bob Slender called the member and suggested that the spinners may have been on the wrong side. No...never but wait till I check. Sure enough the left adaptors were interchanged with the right.

Oh...you have guessed, yes it was me. A small out for me is that as I run alloy wheels on the track and wire on the road, I change my wheels/adaptors about six or seven times a year, No excuse though.

This does go to show that the running wire wheel will tend to turn and tighten the spinner. If on the incorrect side, it will tend to loosen the spinner. I work on my nephew's classic race cars (F5000, CanAm Lola, and Indy cars) and they all run centre lock wheels. They also run left and right, just like the TR. Not sure the alloy wheels would self tighten but they are harder to remove than fit.

Fortunately, as the wheel was almost outside the mudguard before it parted company, there was only minor damage to the mudguard. There was no real damage to any of the suspension except for some grinding of the sway bar link but it did not need replacing. There had been some contact with the reinforcement on the bottom of the chassis under the suspension tower. All in all, I got out of it lightly, only a pair of new disc. I hate to think of what would have happened if it had occurred a little later at 110kph on the freeway. For a start, my wife would never get in it again.