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Classic Performance Products 1957-60 F-100 Power Steering

By Grant Peterson



If you've ever driven an old truck with manual steering and tires wider than 6.00 x 16 bias-plies up front, you know where the term "Armstrong power steering" comes from! Even when your bias-ply tires run a little low on air, you gain a great deal of resistance you don't need while trying to maneuver into a spot in the corner store's cozy parking lot to buy a lotto ticket. Let's not even get into doing this with radial tires. Now you don't need a new truck to flip a U with ease or parallel-park without taking a rest first. Classic Performance Products has just the ticket for the '57-60 Ford F-100 crowd **POWER STEERING!** Believe it or not, the cornerstone of their new kit is a compact, relatively light power steering box made by Toyota for only a few years. The Toyota box isn't much bigger than the stock side-steer Gemmer box that came installed in these trucks from the factory.

Four-wheel-drive enthusiasts have snatched this box up for years because it easily adapts to confined spaces and it'll turn those big, gnarly mud tires with ease. We might not be driving monster trucks, but we need to turn our tires too, right? CPP thought so, and they are actually manufacturing their own housings for these since they've become so scarce. That way everyone can buy one, and CPP can come up with more applications to use them in. The Toyota box is topped with a rag joint that attaches directly to the DD shaft in our Ididit tilt column. No U-joints hooked to a mess of snaking shafts. We ordered our column in a plain steel finish that we painted black to match our black Lecarra '40 Ford 15-inch steering wheel, but you can order them in chrome or polished to add some sparkle to your interior.

CPP makes things as painless as possible by including a plate to fill the stock hole in the floor that also mounts the bottom column support, a new drag link with tie rod ends, and a pitman arm. They have different power steering hose kits depending on what power steering pump you are using. Call them up and discuss your needs with them if you have questions. This changeover does require some light fabrication, mostly drilling holes and grinding of filling. There's no welding involved. So most people should be all right, just follow CPP's careful instructions. The guys there really know what's going on since they develop and manufacture most of the parts they sell in-house. About the only thing we couldn't do at this point is wire the ididit column since the truck is currently void of most of its stock wiring, but that's another story literally. Read on for the gist of what could be the reason you keep your truck and finally really enjoy it. Then steer yourself in the right direction by calling CPP.



A tasty spread of parts from CPP, ididit, and lecarra. CPP supplies the



8..Who doesn't like getting the grinder out? The top edge of the



16..The high-pressure line goes on the box like so and was directed to angle

power steering box, hose kit, pitman arm, drag link, and floor plate/bottom column support, while the tilt column, knobs, and column drop are from Ididit. Iecarra makes the beautiful cut-down 15-inch '40 Ford steering wheel and adapter for GM splined shafts.



1..Jeff gets started on dismantling the "Armstrong" steering. Don't forget a steering wheel puller, because no matter how tuff you think you might be, you'll probably wind up hurting yourself one way or the other and have to buy a puller anyway, so let's all work smarter, not harder.



2..Once the wheel was off and the column drop unbolted, Abel worked on removing the pitman arm. When the cross-bolt is out, the pitman arm may come off by hand depending on how rusty it is. Ours wasn't bad, but a puller could be used here, too.



3..With the pitman arm off, the three bolts that secure the steering box to the frame were removed. The box can be wiggled out of its home by pulling it toward the front of the truck until the steering shaft is free of the column.



4..With the old box out and the frame cleaned up, it is time to mark the one new hole you need to mount the Toyota power steering box.

framerrail above the pitman arm hole also needs a shave to clear the new box. Again, keep trying until it fits.



9..Here's CPP's machined solid steel mount for the Toyota box. It bolts to the box with the four provided bolts before going into the frame.



10..The new box goes in pretty much just like the old one, except you don't have to Jimmy a steering shaft back into place since the Ididit column will go directly into the rag joint on the steering box. You might also notice the Toyota box's diminutive size; that's why it works so well, and why they're getting hard to find today. The 4x4 guys have been scooping them up for years. CPP is working on manufacturing their own soon.



11..When the box is back in the chassis, the center of the rotation had to be found so the pitman arm could be installed in the 6 o'clock position, which would leave equal rotation to turn left or right. With that taken care of, we put the impact gun on the pitman arm nut and installed the new drag link. Don't forget to put the cotter pins in the castle nuts after they're tightened down!

down along the frame for smooth, out-of-the-way routing.



17..The area around the high-pressure line going into the power steering pump is really tight between the belt and the reservoir, so take some care to clock it right when it's snugged down. The low pressure line coming out of the reservoir is simply cut to length since all it needs is a hose clamp to keep it secure. The Toyota box more than clears the Sanderson headers on the Smeding 351 stroker motor, more than any of us expected, which is great!



18..Back inside the cab, Jeff drills out the holes for the ididit column drop.



19..CPP includes this plate to cover the factory hole in the floor used to fit the column and shift linkage. The ididit support attaches to the plate, supports the bottom of the column, and finishes off an often awkward area.



20..Being that the ididit column is bigger in diameter, it hits the brake pedal ever so much, which means the pedal needs to be removed and bent in the vise enough to clear the column. Jeff also removed the clutch pedal while he was at it since it won't be needed when the truck is back on the road.

Surprisingly, the two rearward original holes line up with the new box's mount. CPP supplies a paper template with the new bolt pattern on it, I and with a light on the inside of the frame it's I easy to line up with the two original holes like I Abel and Jeff are doing here.



5..The light shines through the holes in the frame so it's a snap to get in the right spot. When it's right, tape it in place.



6..With a center or transfer punch, mark the center of the new front hole according to the template and drill it out to 3/8 inch.



7..The pitman arm hole needs to be opened up just a hair. You can do this with a drum sander or even a file if need be just check that the box fits without any interference.



12..Everything worked out pretty nicely when it was all connected to the steering arm, which was previously heated up and bent down the same amount of drop the CPP dropped axle has to keep the steering geometry correct and avoid bumpsteer.



13..During the R&D process, CPP's engineer Danny Nix came up with this doubler plate that also acts as a cage around the bolt heads that hold the steering box to the frame, so this plate will go on before the three bolts. Then just bed the tabs up when the bolts are tight to help keep them in place.



14..The Ford motor in the '50 is getting a Vintage Air Front Runner serpentine belt system, which calls for a Type 2 GM power steering pump. We had to pull the AN adapter fitting that goes to the high pressure line and install one with 15mm threads so everything would jive. Talk to CPP about what pump you're using since fittings and hose length can vary.



21..With the column supported by the column drop, the turn signal lever was installed BEFORE the Lecarra '40 Ford steering wheel adapter. If you don't do this now, you'll have to take the steering wheel and adapter back off to do it like I did, smooth.



22..The Lecarra '40 Ford wheel goes on next and is attached with three of the six button heads before the horn button retainer goes in. Connect the horn button's wire before bolting it down.



23..The retainer is flipped over and installed like so with the last three button heads.



24..With the usual clockwise push-and-turn motion that horn buttons require, the nice Ford script is just where it should be. Maneuvering the F-100 is no sweat now thanks to CPP!



It's always best to have shop and assembly manuals on hand to make sure your installation is correct and to make the project as easy as possible. We recommend factory



manuals, available at [Greg's Automotive](#)

15..The high-pressure fitting on the steering box is the one closest to the framerail. It takes the gold colored fitting, while the high-pressure side takes the black-anodized one. The thread size for each is really close and would be easy to mix up, so that's why they're color coded.



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