

## “SMOOTH RIDE!” INSTALLING A HEIDTS® FRONT SUSPENSION IN A '35-'40 CHASSIS

Reprinted By Permission From Buckaroo Communications - Photography: Jeff Tann Words: Jeff Tann



**1)** A heavy-wall-thickness square tube was tack-welded to the chassis to hold it in place when the stock crossmember is removed.



**2)** Using a 3/8-inch drill, the rivets were drilled to remove the shanks.



**3)** The crossmember was easy to remove when it was moved back to the wider part of the frame. Since these crossmembers are worth money to nostalgia rodders, owner Bob O'Bryant wanted to keep it in good condition. The radiator mounts are still attached to the crossmember and will have to be removed and used after the new front suspension is installed.



**4)** According to the instructions, the centerline for the HEIDTS® suspension will be 1/2 inch back from the straight-axle centerline.



**5)** The HEIDTS® centerline was drawn on top of the frame to make it easy to spot.



**6)** O'Bryant decided that it would be better to use a pair of hand clamps to secure the boxing plate before the welding was done. He started by tack-welding the section to the frame at the front and rear.



**7)** Here's what the framerail looked like after it was boxed. This strengthens the frame at the point where the crossmember will be installed. Without this, the frame could tear from stress over time.



**8)** The crossmember was installed and it was a tight fit. A few hammer whacks were necessary to get the centerlines to match up.



**9)** Here's the centerline on the frame lined up with the centerline on the crossmember.



**10)** After all of the measurements were made and the crossmember was located correctly, it was tack-welded to the frame.



**11)** The upper A-arm mount or tower had to be installed next. It was placed on the frame and extends upward from the lower crossmember.



**12)** After the towers lined up perfectly, they were tack-welded to the frame. All of the measurements were made again to be certain they were correct. When O'Bryant was satisfied, the towers and crossmember were finish-welded to the frame.



**13)** The Swaybar block was bolted to the crossmember on the bottom, and when it was in place, the upper bolt hole was drilled and tapped. Doing it this way ensures that the bolt holes will line up.



**14)** Bolting the coilover shock to the upper tower started the installation. At this point the bolt was finger-tight just in case it would have to be removed.



**15)** The lower A-arm was installed using the long bolt supplied in the kit. Washers are supplied to rest against the urethane bushings.



**16)** The coilover shock was connected to the lower A-arm. This is a long bolt because it is also used to secure the Swaybar connector. The bolt is installed from the front and O'Bryant made sure the Swaybar connector was installed first.



**17)** The spindle was connected to the lower A-arm. The lower ball joint is long, so spacers are used to make sure the castle nut aligns with the cotter keyhole.



**18)** Using the other long bolt supplied in the kit, the upper A-arm was installed. This connection also uses the large washers supplied in the kit. The upper bolt is secured with a Nylok locknut.



**19)** Now the upper A-arm can be connected to the spindle. HEIDTS® recommended using one of its narrow front suspension kits to keep the tires inside the fenderwell so the tires don't hit on turns.



**20)** The caliper bracket is designed with one bolt on the top traveling upward into the spindle and another bolt on the bottom with a bolt that travels sideways into the spindle.



**21)** The rotor was installed on the spindle and then the small spindle bearing was installed. It was also packed with high-heat disc-brake bearing grease.



**22)** After the rotor was installed, O'Bryant tightened the Allen bolts with a 3/8-inch Allen wrench. At this time, you should make sure that the rotors are centered between the calipers.



**23)** After all the front suspension parts are installed, the bolts can be tightened. The upper A-arm bolts were secured with a pair of 15/16-inch wrenches.



**24)** The lower A-arm bolt and Nylok locknut was secured with a pair of 15/16-inch wrenches.



**25)** Before the rack-and-pinion can be installed, you have to install the bolts with a pair of spacers and washers.



**26)** The rack-and-pinion unit was reinstalled and then it was tightened with a pair of 15/16-inch wrenches.



**27)** The chassis is finished and the HEIDTS® suspension looks great and works terrific. The '40 will have positive power steering, should handle like a sports car and will stop quickly with the large brakes. The best part is this kit is priced right.



Reprinted By Permission From  
Buckaroo Communications