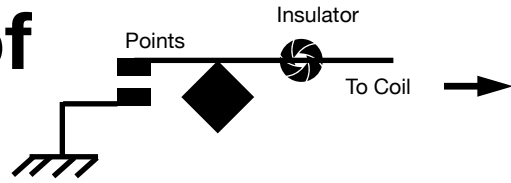


# The Primary Side of your Coil !



Most folks have a pretty good grasp of how the old style ignition systems work and they will do the job just fine in the great majority of cases. The points open the circuit, the magnetic field in the coil collapses rapidly and that collapse across the secondary creates the fire that we all know and love.

Over the years I have had to deal with a number of Ignition issues and on several occasions issues in the primary side have caused some difficult problems to troubleshoot. So I thought I might share two of those in an effort to save some one else some time and trouble.

We had just cleared the County line, on a three day tour, when the ole Packard began to miss. Upon returning, I began my hunt for the problem. I checked wires, plugs, distributor caps, condensers and even ventured into the Carburetor. Still the miss persisted and was beginning to get the best of me. Finally I discovered a part of an insulator inside the distributor. After taking a few measurements I discovered that the Conductor that carries the signal from the points to the coil was shorting to ground, through a failed insulator in the distributor housing . The voltage at that point is very high and when the points open up the collapsing field also effects the primary (don't believe me, just touch that point some time when the engine is running). Fabricating a new insulator out of some white Delron solved the problem.

You have a car that would not make a spark even after changing the Coil, Condenser, Points and anything else you could think of? Try this simple test, place an insulator (Match Book Cover or anything similar) between the points. Remove the wire between the Distributor and Coil and measure the resistance to ground at the end of the wire. This should read infinity, if not you have an issue with the insulator in your Distributor. Insulator materials have improved dramatically over the years and one that is coming up the 100 year old mark could easily be at fault. Recently I measured one that was 4.5 ohms which could easily cause problems.

I hope this helps someone along the way.

JB