

## Custom Steering Wheel



By Roger Kizer

I wanted a real wood steering wheel for my Barracuda, but did not want to pay the price for an original or have an aftermarket one either. None I saw seemed to fit the style of the car, so I devised a plan to create my own from a broken original and a used one I found on eBay. With that, a welder and some deep thought I came up with my two spoke, real wood steering wheel that uses the original horn button and looks real nice mounted in place of the original. Now it feels like I'm driving a car, not steering a boat!

**My ebay starting point. A used three spoke 13 1/2 in. steering wheel. Wood on the outside, plastic finger grips on the inside.**

**This is the normal view for this type of steering wheel, but my 1966 Barracuda has a 2 spoke wheel so I turned it 180 and will cut out the "top" spoke to create my 2 spoke wheel.**



Using the horn ring as a guide, I centered it, marked and drilled holes so the bolts that mount the ring and horn button can pass through the wheel and mount the hub that I will use from a un-restorable original.

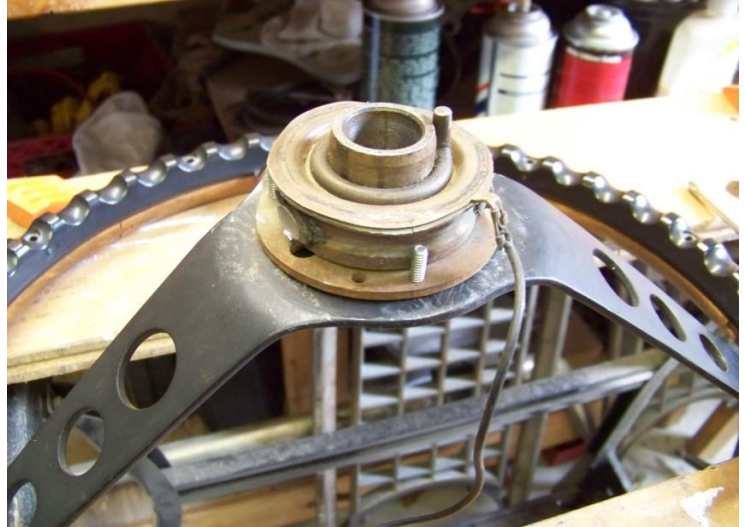
Make sure you get it centered or the wheel will be off and the turn signal canceling pin will also be off.



Here is the old steering wheel where I cut off the hub to use for the new wheel.



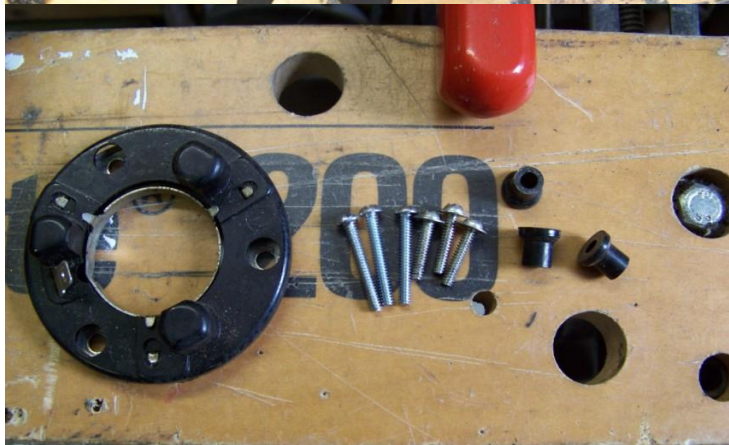
After centering, bolting it up and checking the alignment...



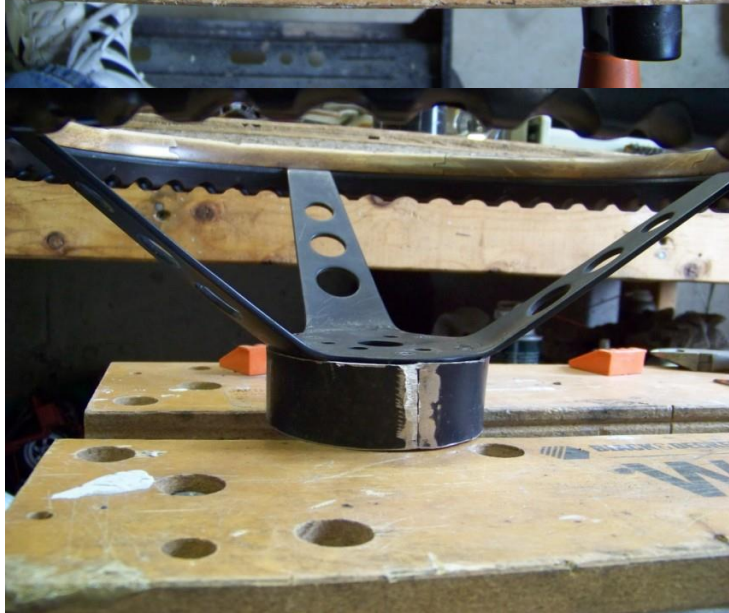
... it was welded in place. If you don't have a welder, or don't trust your welding skills, have a professional do this. The consequences of a failed weld here could be devastating.



The original mounting bolts were too short after passing through the new wheel, so longer bolts were needed.



From a piece of sheet metal leftover from various rust repair projects I created a ring the same diameter as the steering column. This took some time to get it as close to perfect as possible.



Notches were cut in the ring and the third spoke cut off the wheel. The ring was test fit and trimmed many times to insure a good even fit.

The steering wheel was mounted in place to insure a proper fit, then the ring was tack welded. The wheel was removed and finish welded.

Here is the completed product with the horn button installed. Similar to the original 2 spoke wheel, smaller in diameter and a real wood wheel. The only thing left to do is paint it and refinish the wood.

