



LINE - LOCK

Northstar Chevelle
Club Newsletter

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SHOP TALK

For those of you interested in originality, yet want a positive, power shift feel, here's a potential solution.



This would have solved a problem on my 69 Chevelle (and perhaps other 4-speed versions). Reason: part of the stock shifter mounts to the transmission cross member and under severe load (so who doesn't like running the gears occasionally) will bind under the torque of an engine running at wide open throttle. Break a motor mount and things really get interesting (a.k.a. missed shifts)

You can graft your round handled shift lever onto a Hurst Competition Plus shifter. You could purchase an after-market shift handle that will bolt onto the Hurst unit or use parts from a stock unit. You will need a stock shifter you don't mind cutting up (this may cause some members heart failure at this point, so you've been warned). The piece you'll need is the stock shift mount which snakes through the shifter. Check the pin for damage, file if necessary and drive it out. Simply cut the end off using the box as a guide.

Caution: the shift mount rod is case hardened, thus a tough one to cut through. A ceramic / tile blade on a sawzall will work well. Once you penetrate the case hard-

ened skin, standard blades will cut just fine. Cut it as close to the square body as possible. As you can see from the photo, the cut could have been made a little higher thus it was ground down before installation.

What you see is the OE mount, cut and drilled (or milled) to clear the 3/8 fine thread bolts used to attach it to the Hurst shifter mount. The bolts are new grade 5 with nuts and lock washers. They look like 1 1/4" or 1 1/2" compared to the scale (see picture 1). An alternative method of attaching involves tapping blind holes into the OE mount.



If you have access to a Bridgeport mill, you can machine up an adapter which would look similar to the sawed off stock mount. You'll need to use a short, fat socket head cap screws to handle mount bolts since the existing holes are large; accommodating the rubber bushings used. You may eventually dispose of the bushings and hard mount the handle; preferring the solid feel better. An advantage to machining your own adapter is that you can position the handle lower and much closer to the stock position.

The cannibalized OE mount is simply bolted to the Hurst handle, reusing the stock mounting hardware (nuts, washers and bushings).



SHOP TALK (CONT.)

Here's what a trial fit looks like; height is approx 16 1/2" to top of ball from floor location shown. Height is an issue since the installation was going to be much higher than original.



The stock Hurst handle bent back at around 11" of height and the top of the ball was about 15" off the floor; a 1 1/2" differential. The original floor had to be trimmed to clear the left side of the Hurst box as shown.

Be careful when you decide to snug up the handle bolts. Those stock rubber washers, when compressed, can break the stud; (a.k.a. over torque). A solution is to weld the studs in place using high nickel rod. Simply grind a good size chamfer around the base of the shift stick and the top of the mount. Tack the parts and after checking, proceeded to fill in the chamfer with approximately a 1/4" or 3/8" bead all the way around. In most cases this will turn out mint with no discoloration of the surrounding chrome. This is also a good time to get those studs out of the mount as well, they're a press fit.

With the console installed it is hard to tell from stock; even though the shift handle is higher and further back than original. Although the reverse lockout fingers are not functional, its still provides that stock lock yet positive shifting installation.



- Zman