THE OFF-SIDE UNDO

June 2025

English Motoring Club of Mississippi

Vicksburg, Mississippi
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'A gentleman does not motor about after dark.' —Joseph Lucas

It Was Sooo Hot!

By Gene Johnston

Everyone forgot to take photos at the June EMC gathering at Keith, Pat and Brian Anderson's place (sigh). There are promises that we'll do better next time starting with the July 19th gathering. I am happy to report that Keith and Brian have the coolest working garage in the area i.e. the air conditioning was operating at 110%. There were two hardy souls that appeared in LBC's Roy and Chris Schooler (MGB) and Hal Fleming (MGA). In total there were 20 people that made the gathering. We wandered the grounds checking out cars that are being cared for by Brian and Keith and enjoyed our time together. Of course, the usual spread of great food including Charlie Durning's favorite, apple pie and vanilla ice cream was present. No one went away hunger I don't think. A short club meeting was held. Roy Schooler offered his abode for the August meeting which will be an important one as it is the last meeting prior to Brits on the Bluff. Clay Johnston informed the group that membership is still lagging a bit as we head toward the EMC's Brits on the Bluff, September 19 – 20, 2025 so if you've not paid your dues for 2025, please get those in. If you question if you have or haven't you can email Stephen Turner at stephendturner89@gmail.com or Clay Johnston at clay_johnston@bellsouth.net.

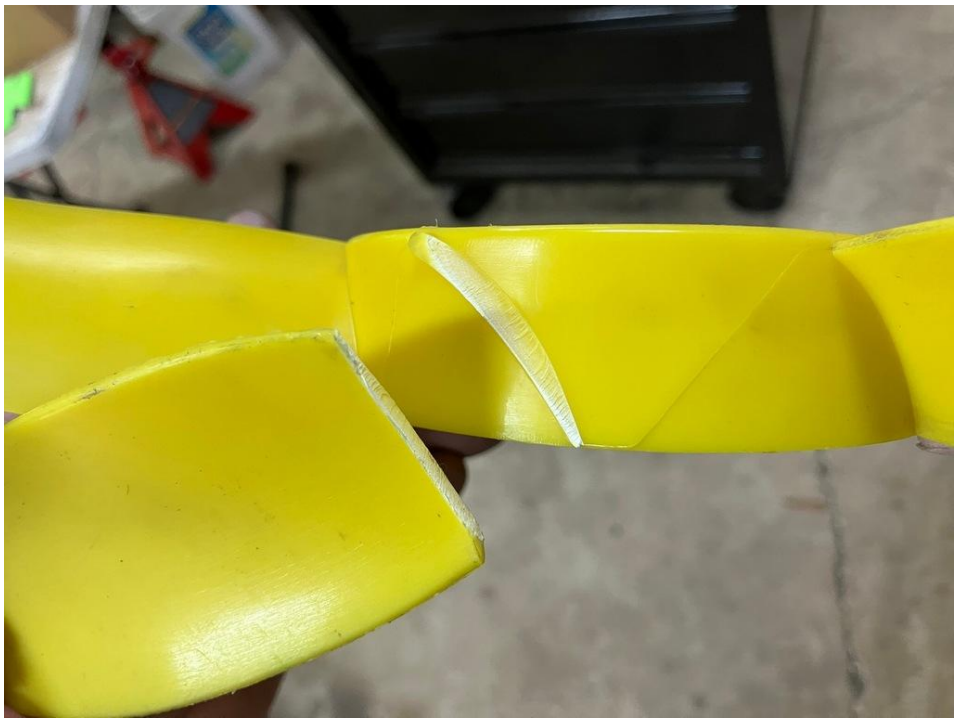
As noted, everyone got shutter amnesia at the June Gathering. I looked for a back in time photo. This one predates my joining the EMC and is indicated to be from the '90's! Oh my!

3 Similar Cars, 3 Different Solutions

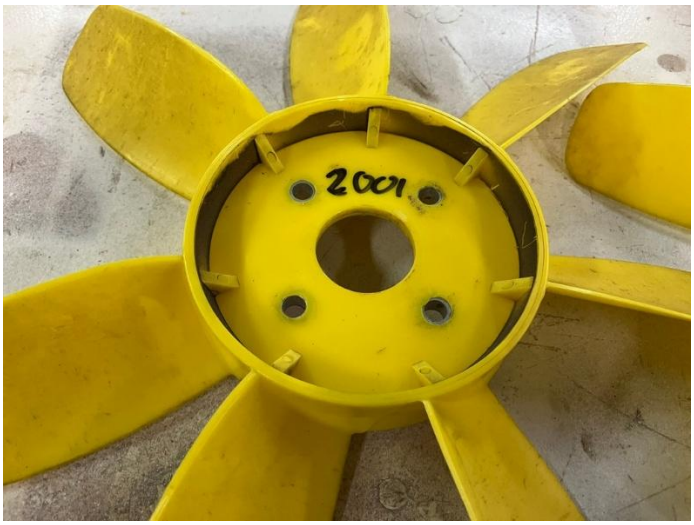
A Learning Experience

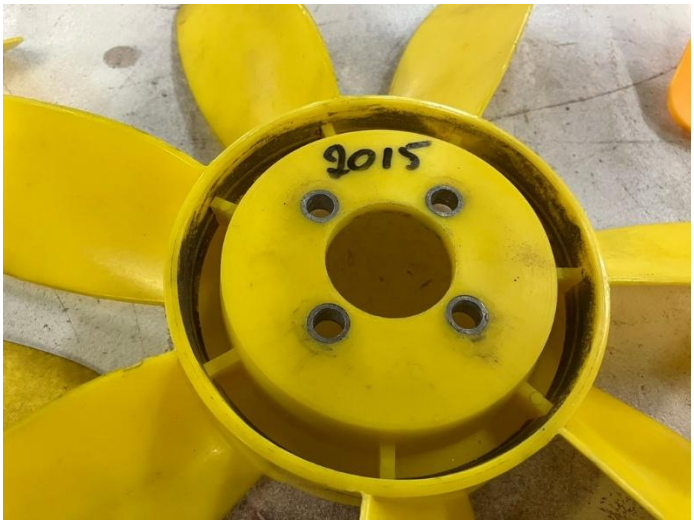
Text and images by Charlie Durning

On the way back from Glore's May gathering, Bro Clay shucked a blade off of the engine cooling fan on his MGB. The good thing is the incident happened while he was idling up his driveway on his way home. Luckily, no damage was done to his hood or radiator.



In doing a quick "interweb" search, what was found is losing a fan blade is fairly common with the yellow plastic fans commonly used on MG cars. Further investigation was in order. What Clay found is the area where the blade fractured was a white color. So I did an inspection on my yellow fan and found the root of one of my fan blades also had a white line though not fractured yet. I suspect that the blade was in the beginning stages of weakening. As a precaution Bro Gene also inspected his fan and found no issues. What Clays and my fan have in common is both were purchased in 2015. Bro Gene's fan was purchased around 2001. Though the blades on Gene's fan looked like ours, the hub is different slightly different.


2001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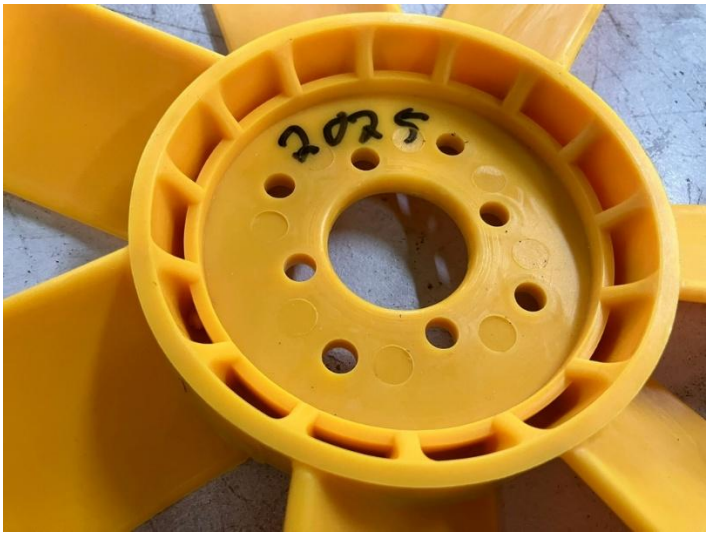
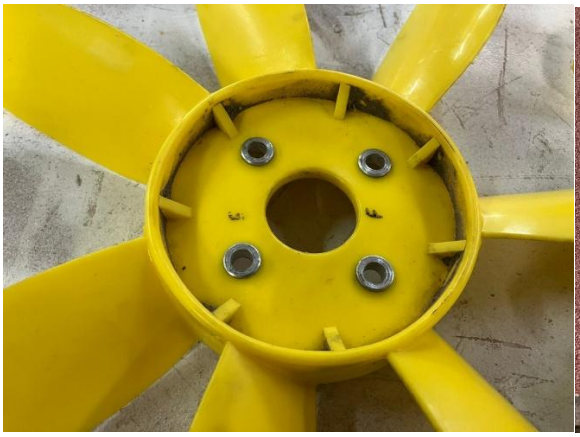
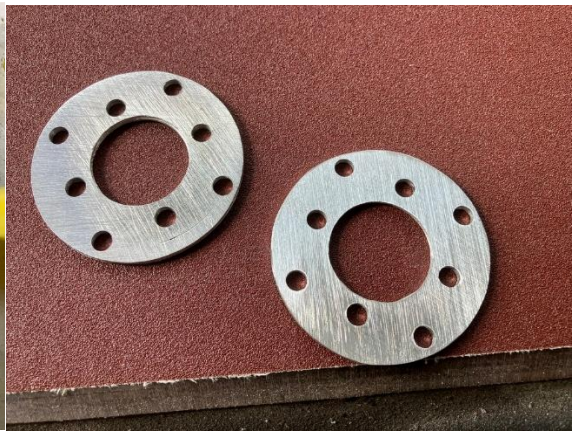

2025

During the research of the fan failure, it was brought out that fans purchased between 2012 and 2018 could be prone to this failure. Some failures caused collateral damage to the hood and radiator. Clay was definitely lucky that his fan failed at a low engine speed.

There is a possible solution. A “new and improved” nylon fan is now available from the usual suspects. The new fan is now an orangish color. This fan appears to have sturdier/stiffer blades and where the blades are attached to the hub looks to be more robust. The shape of the blades are different as well as the hub has a different offset where it mounts to the water pump. Another difference between the fans is the bolt holes in the yellow fans have steel inserts for the bolt holes whereas the new orange fan does not. The inserts in the yellow fans provide a solid connection between the head of the attaching bolts and the face of the water pump flange. That way the fan is securely held in place.

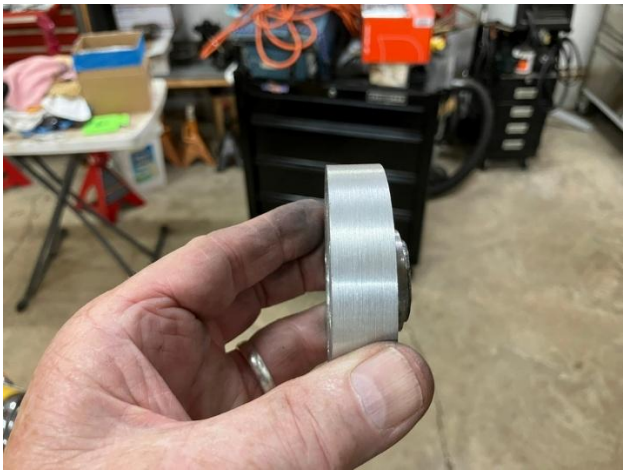


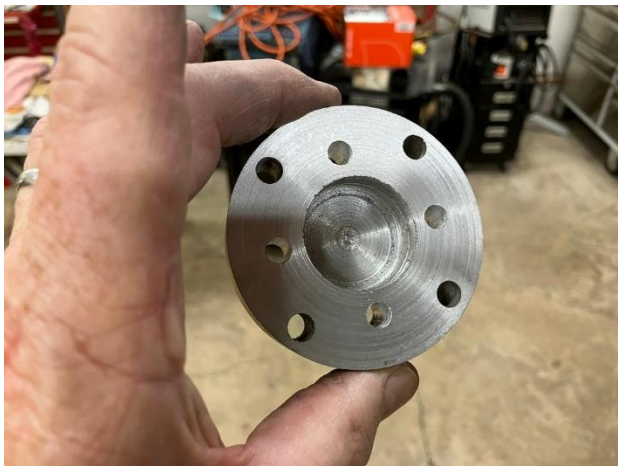


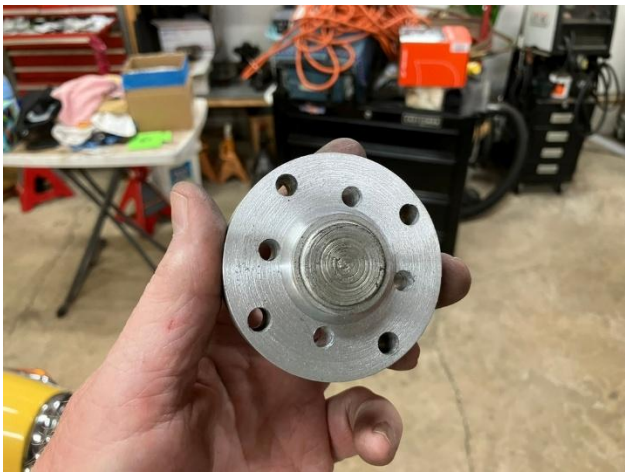
Since the new orange fan is nylon, it is made of a compressible material. I am not comfortable with just a bolt head holding the fan in place without some reinforcement. My solution was to make a clamping ring to spread out the load and the use of blue LocTite to keep the bolts from backing out unexpectedly.

The mount flange in the new fan is displaced by 5/8” from the location of the flange in the 2015 yellow plastic fan. To rectify the difference, Moss offers a fan spacer to get the fan blades back to the location of the yellow plastic fan. That may or may not be an issue for some cars. Moss clearly states that the spacer must be used on 72-76 engines equipped with a belt driven air pump. As near as I can tell the 72-76 engines with an air pump have shorter water pump and a cast iron 2 sheave water pump pulley. The hub in the new fan interferes with the front sheave of the pulley. Moss does offer a fan spacer to deal with the 5/8” difference. At first I thought I could just machine off that sheave to get clearance. Unfortunately, at less than 1/8” clearance, the new placement positioned the fan blades are too close to the crank damper for my liking. So in my case a spacer

would be best. As luck would have it, Bro Gene had a spacer that could be modified to fit. The spacer was the key for my 74 BGT.







Bro Clay's car was a completely different matter. His 72 B has a later engine sourced from a 77 or later car. That engine has a larger diameter crank damper and a larger

diameter stamped steel water pump pulley along with the short water pump. The new fan would not go over the snout of the stamped pulley. His only option was to use the fan spacer. Clay did have a fan spacer in his gold mine. That spacer got the fan into the right position for Clay's car. Since Bro Gene also has a yellow fan on his 71 B, he has opted to retrofit his car with the new orange fan. Once his fan was removed it was discovered that the yellow fan purchased in 2001 has a different hub than Bro Clay's and my yellow fan. Instead of being flush on the back like the fans purchased in 2015, the 2001 fan is recessed about 9/16". The water pump and pulley on Bro Gene's engine appears to be for the long pump. The air pump sheave on that pulley has been removed for cosmetic reasons. Though in this case the sheave need not be removed for the new fan to fit. It looks like there will be no issues with installing the new fan on Ole Red.

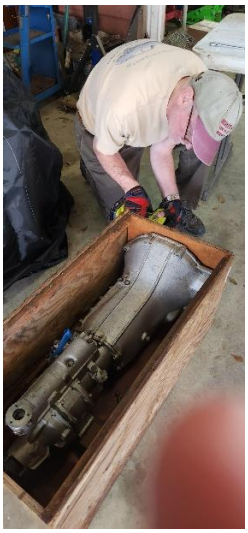
In conclusion, if you have the yellow fan purchased between 2012 and 2018, it would be wise to inspect fan blades for evidence of stress. The new fan does look like a good solution, just be aware of the differences when installing the new part on your engine.

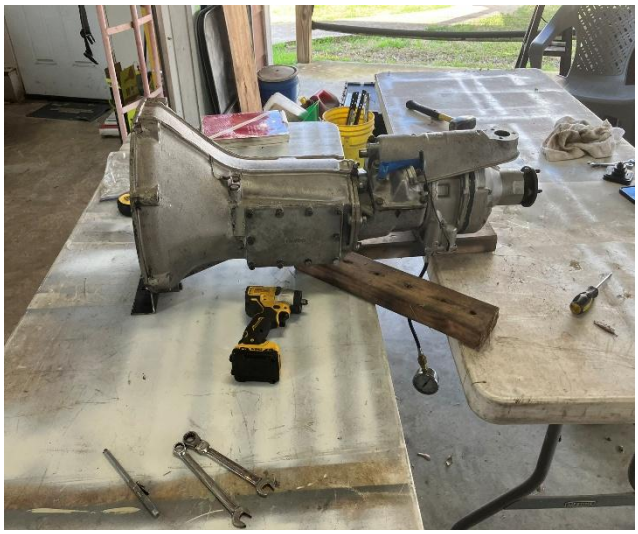
Eventually

By Gene Johnston

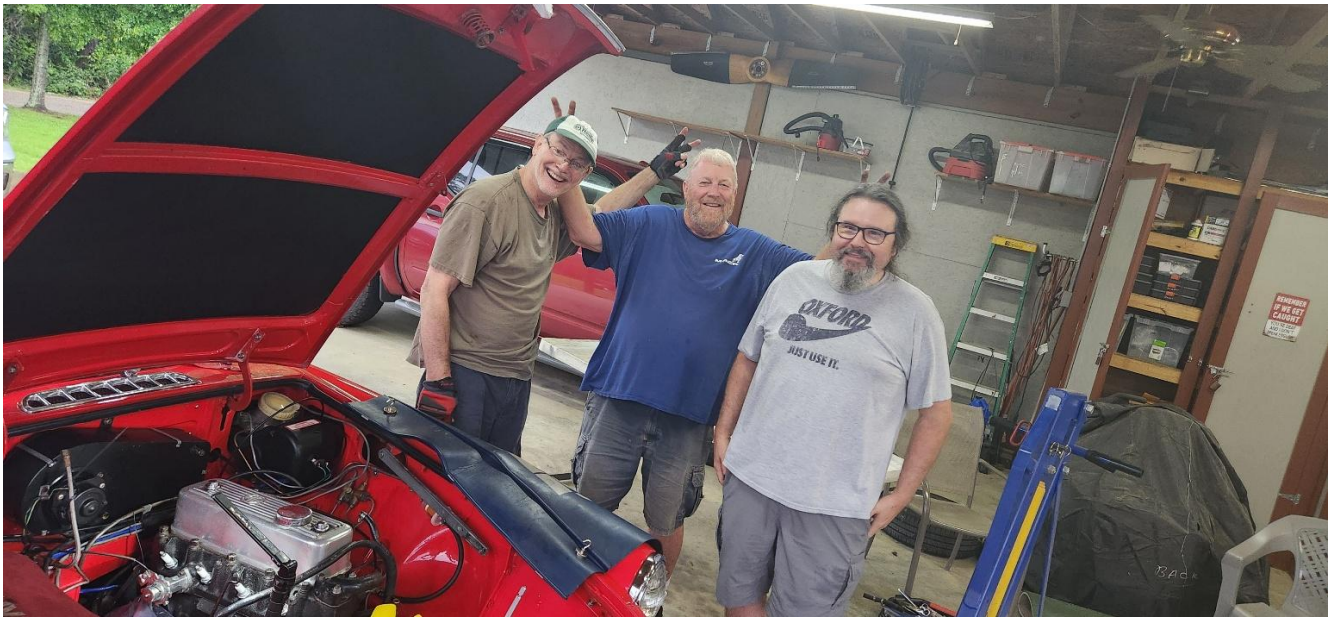
Photos by Charlie Durning

Late in 2024 "Ole Red" my 1971 MG roadster had started developing what I thought were likely clutch and/or transmission issues. Synchros meshing issues and a judder occasionally when backing. I researched as best I could and determined that the clutch assembly was changed sometime back in the early 2000's and in 2014 I'd had a gearbox issue a failed interlocking arm as best I could tell and recall. I sent that box



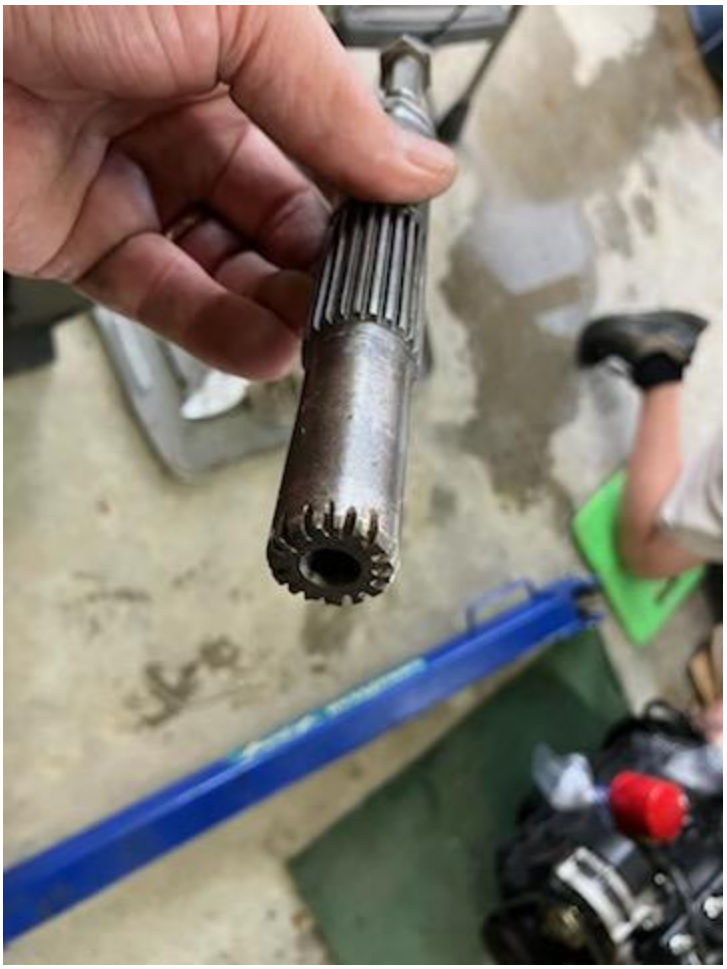


out for rebuild while I located a replacement overdrive box and installed it into OR. With the clutch reaching 20+ years of service and the gearbox reaching 11 years of service I thought the best plan was to pull the engine, gearbox assembly and replace the clutch and install the gearbox that I'd had rebuilt 11 years previously. A full clutch and gearboxectomy if you will. Charles Durning down in Magee MS offered his outpatient surgical unit as the site for the procedure. Brother Clay Johnston, Charlie and I would perform the operation while the operating theater (the peanut gallery) would be occupied, at least during the initial stages by Will Ducan, Tom Brown and Keith Anderson. Tom politely provided the peanuts which were very good.

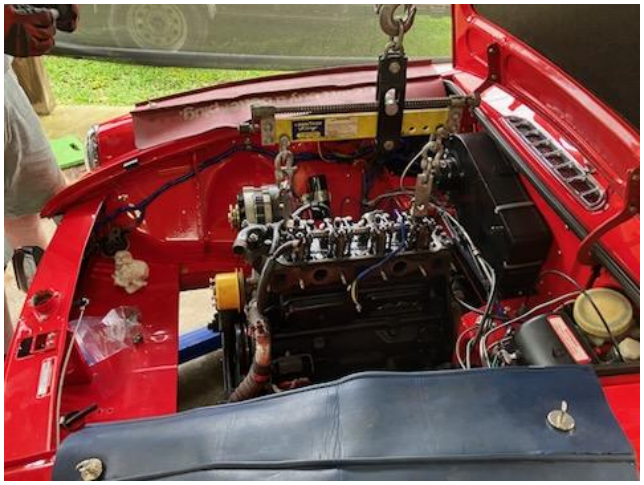


On Sunday afternoon, the 15th of June we were successful in the removal of the assembly. Our evaluation of the clutch disc and throw-out bearing (carbon type) determined that both were in remarkably good condition and likely could have gone many more miles if not years. Hmmmm. Dad had always told me to keep my foot off the clutch and well, evidently although not being too attentive to some of his advice had listened to this one.

Still working into the evening of the 15th we installed a new aluminum flywheel (why not?), clutch assembly (heavy duty solid disc) and the replacement gearbox. That's when the patient issues developed. We could get the transmission to within an inch of mating with the engine but couldn't get it any closer as hard as we tried. The patient was on life support at this point so at 8:30pm we decided that the staff needed rest. On Monday we determined that the issue was in the pilot bushing. It seems that the nose of the bushing had developed creases or a burr in the nose area and would not allow the gearbox input shaft to seat properly in the bushing. In medical terms, RATS!



Not to be defeated Brother Clay and Charlie modified a spare input shaft that was on hand to allow the reaming of the pilot bushing in place. After 30 minutes of work, we were successful in cleaning up the pilot bushing and on the first attempt the transmission slid into place. The engine/gearbox assembly was re-installed.



On Wednesday we returned to the operating room, cleaned up a few remaining details and the patient was released hopefully for another 20+ years of full activity. Things to remember? If you have an option of a long or short pilot bushing, consider using the short bushing and don't forget to keep your foot off the clutch!

Happy Motoring!

The EMC