

## The Name Plate That Never Got Used

Did you know Avanti Motors was considering the Roman Numeral Three, Part number 1700340 to replace the Roman Numeral Two, Part number 1700132 for the 1970 Avanti with the new high back front seats—with the headrest built into the seat. These new front seats were the standard front seats from 1970 to 1983. If my memory serves me correctly, the new high back seats were called “command center seating.”

I frequently get asked the differences between the original Studebaker Avanti and the first Avanti II and the differences between the different years of Avantis from 1965-1985.

Some Avanti owners know I have in my head information about the 1963-1985 Avantis, that nobody else in the world has. They have asked me to share this info with the other Avanti owners, other than their calls with me. I will be doing this with articles in the *Avanti Magazine*. I will spend more time with the changes made, between the different year Avanti from 1965-1985.

For years I had heard rumors about the possible change from the Roman Numeral Two, to the Roman Numeral Three. Now I have solved that mystery with documentation for “Nostalgic Motor Cars Unlocks the History and Mysteries of the 1963-1985 Avanti IIs,” for *Avanti Magazine*. Knowing Avanti Motors, under the ownership of the Altman’s, would have assigned a part number and blueprint drawing of the Roman Numeral Three, if the rumors were true. I started looking through the original 1963 to 1985 Avanti Motors blueprints. Months later I found the original part number and blueprint #1700340

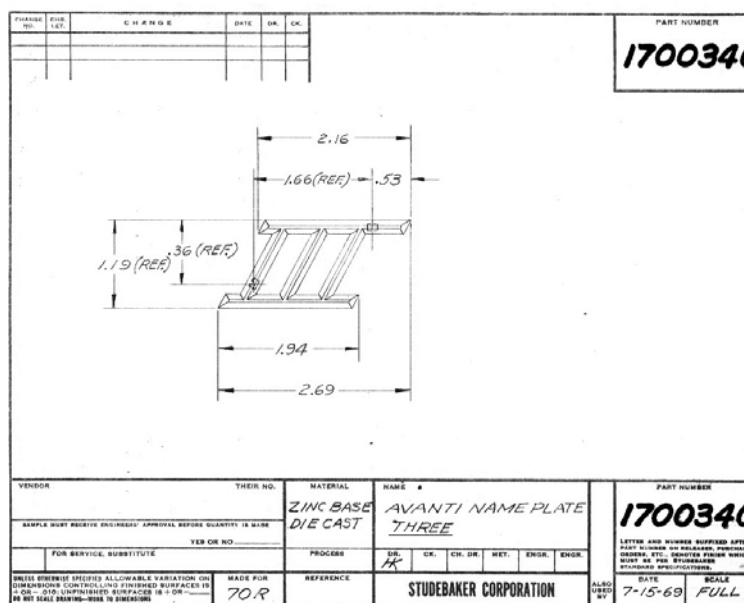
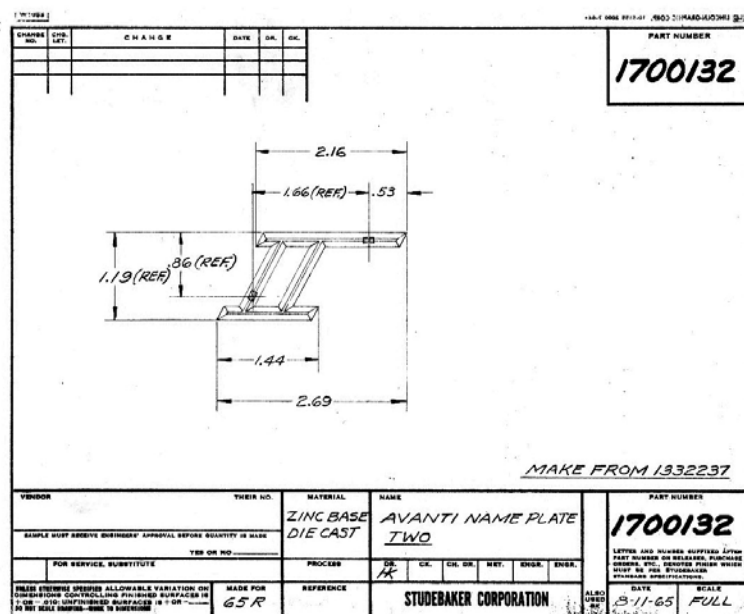
This is very important, please notice at right that an original Avanti blueprint will have an Avanti part number assigned. These prints will have the name Studebaker or Avanti Motors at the bottom of the blueprint. This is important, as this shows it’s an original blueprint. If it doesn’t state Studebaker or Avanti Motors, it is simply a drawing somebody has drawn to make a reproduction part. Example; if you want to make a rubber Avanti trunk weather seal, you send the manufacturer of your reproduction trunk weather seals a sample. They will draw up a blueprint from your sample. They then send their blueprint to you for you to sign off, before they will produce it. Their blueprint will specify what type of rubber and the durometer they think it is. They also inform you of the shrinkage allowed for that product. This does not mean it is to the same specification that Studebaker or Avanti Motors required, as they are just guessing at the original specification. That’s why some reproduction parts don’t fit like N.O.S parts.

If it shows or states manufacturers blueprint, and it’s not a Studebaker or Avanti blueprint, the print was drawn and the parts were made without the original blueprint specifications.

The unknown Avanti Three name plate, Part number 1700340 was drawn and finished on July 15, 1969. It was to be installed starting with the 1970 Avanti. This use of the three name plate is

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Dan Booth has over 47 years of exclusive, hands on Avanti sales, service, collision and parts, not Studebaker cars or trucks, just 1963-1985 Avantis.



1700340 downsized blue print drawings

somewhat of a complete mystery. The differences between the 1969 Avanti II and the 1970 model year are minimal. The only major differences, that I can recall, is the 1970 was the first to have the new high back front seats. The technical name I think was “command center seating.” The blueprint states it was to start with the 1970 model year.

Avanti Motors changed the prefix on their serial numbers from RQA—used from 1965 to 1969 models—to RQB, for 1970 and beyond. The original build sheet for the first 1970 Avanti states “1970½ engine.”

There seems to be a lot of misinformation of the changes Avanti Motors made to the original Studebaker Avanti. Most know its a Chevy V8 engine, but they are unaware of the many changes that were made. I will just touch on some of the major changes made. If you have any questions, of other changes, just call me Dan Booth at (248) 349-4884.

The first Avanti two was serial # RQA-0001, which I own. It was most likely assembled with a body that was already completely finished and painted white. I assume this because what I have read is that when Studebaker shut down, the employees were informed to finish up the Avantis that were far enough along to be finished and to strip the others and put the parts in the parts bins.

The black vinyl interior probably was also all done and ready to be installed.

The first Avanti II was almost all Studebaker, except for the engineering department engine. I was told by Avanti Motors a used Chevy 327 cubic inch engine, acquired from a salvage yard, was installed. Some of the other differences were the body was shimmed on the chassis by about two inches, which eliminated that beautiful rake. The front fenders had about two-inch filler added to the wheel opening. The plastic hood ornament insert was painted black. The rear C-pillar and door panel plastic emblems were also painted black.

The first Avantis produced by Avanti Motors used 2½-inch exhaust manifolds. The first left exhaust pipe, Part number 1700067 and the first right exhaust pipe Part number 1700068 were also redesigned—not sold separately as 2½-inch exhaust manifold kit 1700069 \$625. See my 1963 to 1985 exhaust article “Nostalgic Motor Cars Unlocks the History and Mysteries, of the 1963-1985 Avantis”, in issue 201, of *Avanti Magazine*. You can also go to my web site, [NostalgicMotorCars.net](http://NostalgicMotorCars.net)

The fan shroud Part number 1700000 \$395 was redesigned and a fan shroud spacer Part number 1700954 \$7.50 was added to the top of the radiator.

The Studebaker fan blade, Illustration #0506-6 Part number 1556021 \$295 N.O.S and viscous drive assembly, Illustration #0506-8 part number 1560257, \$70 were replaced with viscous drive assembly #1700013 \$125 N.O.S. and fan blade Part number 1700012 \$125 N.O.S, with A/C. The non A/C cars got fan blade 1700347 \$150 and spacer 1700348 \$20 N.O.S

The fuel supply, and return lines were moved to the right side of the frame, instead of

Studebaker’s lines being on the left side of the frame. The gas tank was slightly changed.

The bellcrank, Illustration 1209-1B Part number 1547288 \$325 N.O.S was changed to Part number 1563499 \$350 N.O.S for oil pan clearance. The tie rods were also flipped, so the adjusters were now on the outside away from the oil pan.

The trunk lid now had an Avanti name plate, Part number 1351155 \$39 along with the Roman Numeral Two, 1700132 \$55 was added. This replaced the Studebaker name plate. The front nose panel still had the Avanti name plate, but the II was also added.

The name plate blue print was drawn in full scale, and was finished on August 11, 1965. It was originally derived from a Studebaker name plate Part number 1332237. The II name plate was installed from RQA-0001 all the way through the Altman’s production. In about January 1983, Blake stopped installing the II on both the front and back of the Avantis. They just had the Avanti name plate installed.

The most obvious change was the installation of a Chevy 327 CID V-8 engine.

The motor mounts were changed to Part number 1700495MMHD \$30 each. The auto trans mount was changed to Part number 1564701 \$19.95. The motor mount supports were changed to 1563714 and 1563715 \$90 each.

The original Studebaker Avanti radios had a special tape overlay, Part number 1700132 that covered up the Name “Studebaker” on the bottom of the face plate.

The steering wheel center cap also had an overlay over the Studebaker name, but I don’t think they ever assigned a part number to that.

The original illustration number 0501-11, part number 1555873, that pesky radiator reservoir tank, was modified and had a different location. There were other changes made but not worth mentioning in the article.

RQA, used from 1965 to 1969, that designated the original Studebaker Avanti front seats (low back), which leaves the RQB prefix in the serial number to distinguish the new “command center seating” high back front seats. //

