

Nostalgic Motor Cars Unlocks the History and Mysteries of the 1963-1985 Avantis

By Dan Booth,
Nostalgic Motor Cars

Dan Booth has over 45 years of exclusive, hands on Avanti sales, service, collision and parts, not Studebaker cars or trucks, just 1963-1985 Avantis.



1701886 N.O.S. Rag Joint \$175.00
1700615 N.O.S. Rag Joint Bolt \$5.00

This is an Avanti Safety Issue !

The Avanti steering flange and insulator (Rag Joint) part number 1557139 superseded by part number 1701886 was installed on all 1963-1985 Avanti. It connects the steering column to the steering gear box.

To say it's a very critical part for controlling how your Avanti safely changes direction, when you turn the steering wheel, would be an understatement. It's simply rubber and cotton threads. It's made like they make tires. Would you drive your car with 36-58 year old tires? Probably not, but your steering your car with a 3/8" thick flat donut rubber circle that only 2" away from the left exhaust manifold that's 36-58 years old. To the best of my knowledge the rag joint #1557139 and 1701886 were made especially for the Avanti

I have had at least 25 Avanti owners call and thank me for my requested article in the *Avanti Magazine* (issue #191 Summer/Fall 2020) about the rag joints, possibly being unsafe.

What Readers/Customers Had To Say

- It was falling apart,
- It was cracked, just like the article stated.
- When I pulled the steering column back to remove it from the steering gear box, it just tore in half.
- I am not about to drive my Avanti with a 36-58 year old piece of rubber, controlling the steering.
- It eliminated the play in my steering, thank you!
- I changed my rag joint on preventative maintenance, I didn't like the thought of my steering being controlled by a 36-58 year old piece of rubber.
- I had my rag joint rebuilt because no other Avanti vendors had them. The replacement rubber part was not as heavy duty as your N.O.S. rag joint pictures shows. I was very concerned over that issue as it was probably just a generic piece of rubber that was installed on my old couplings, I installed my N.O.S rag joint that I purchased from you and it firmed up my steering response compared to the rebuilt rag joint. Thanks again and please continue your tech articles I truly appreciate the detailed explanations and the pictures!
- I had my rag joint rebuilt, but it was not the same number of layers of material, or as thick as the N.O.S. rag joint you sell.
- I decided when I read your excellently wrote , alerting, article, about a rubber part that totally controls every move of my steering wheel. I had to read it a second time. Then I realized that my 1963 Avanti had a 58 year old piece of rubber that has gone through thousands upon thousands of severe temperature changes under that hood. It was a no-brainer ! It had served it's purpose and I just wanted to change it. By the way it was very easy to change, thanks to your instructions. I also think your Avanti articles should be called "Dan Booth Unlocks the History and Mysteries of the 1963-1985 Avantis", unlike other how to articles in the Avanti Magazine, you give the history of the part and detailed instructions, so a layman can repair their own cars. Thanks and please keep those article coming!
- A very special thank you, to all that have called and emailed me to let me know this article was enlightening, and just may have saved an accident, or a life! I'm glad I could help, together we can keep the Avanti safely on the road, to make more history for our favorite automobile.