



JEEP HOSPITAL

Each month Dr Jeep (Tony Whitehead) takes us through the trials and tribulations at his "Jeep Hospital", USA 4X4 Jeep Specialist in Melbourne, Victoria. Over 20 Jeeps are admitted weekly for servicing and suspension work through to differential, transmission and engine rebuilds. Dr Jeep explains the diagnosis, the corrective surgery and future care of these vehicles.

DANA 44 TJ AXLE SEAL

The rear axle seals on a TJ have a tendency to weep. A worn seal lets diff oil out and water in, a bad combo for the internals of the diff or the brakes. These brake shoes are not worn out, but are so badly contaminated there is no option but to replace them and a new seal. The design of these rear axles means you need to destroy the wheel bearing to change that seal. When doing so, also check that the seal surface has not been grooved too badly. If so, the axle will need replacing as well. A lot of trouble over a \$20 part. We always check the wheel cylinders too while we're in that far, they can leak brake fluid and/or rust solid and offer poor rear brake performance.

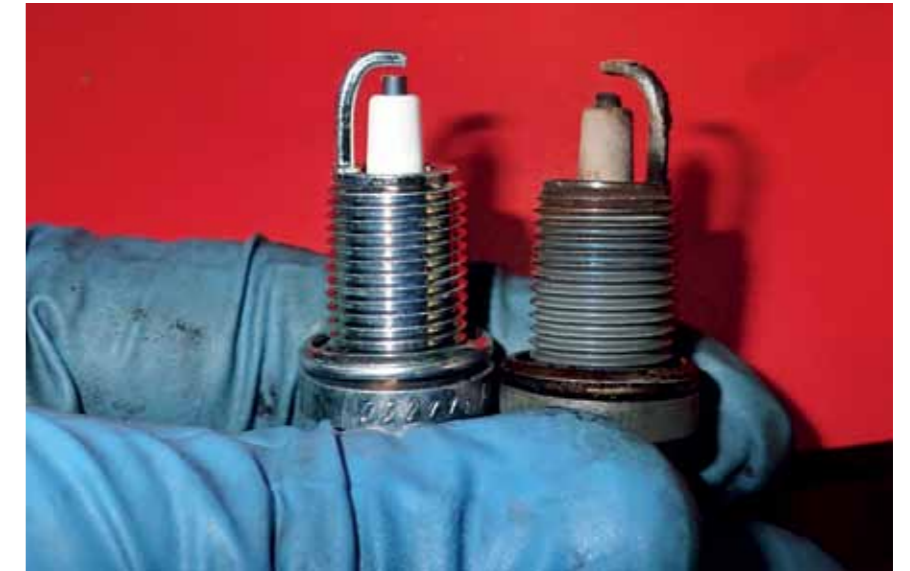


SPECIAL MOD

This TJ had just passed roadworthy at "Stevie Wonder Motors". These front control arms had both been ground away to cut away the part that was touching the oversized tyres on the undersized stock rims. I can't believe some of the butchery I see some times. This has guaranteed these arms to the scrap metal bin. It's very special workmanship. All they needed to do was add a washer or two to the steering bump stops.

4.0L SPARK PLUGS

By the service book every 48,000km regular type spark plugs need to be changed. The gap is supposed to be about 0.9mm and these had worn to a gap of 2mm. That's going to affect mileage and performance badly, and on the 4.0L make sure to use the correctly specified plug. If your engine has a distributor and leads Champion plugs are the right one, if you have coil packs you need the NGK spark plugs. They all fit the heads OK, but the Champions can arc out across the coil pack rubber boots and give you a rough running motor.



POWER STEERING LINE LEAK

This TJ had a ton of oil leaks, one was simply caused by the two power steering hoses rubbing together. After a clean down with brake cleaner we could see the low pressure line was rubbed through to the cloth layer. It was a simple fix, cut the last 40mm off and refitted with a good quality hose clamp, and make sure they're set so they can't rub as the engine moves around. We also flushed the reservoir out, something that gets neglected is power steering fluid, you can actually get an inline filter for them but each service if you draw the reservoir's contents and refill it will help make it all last indefinitely.

STEERING LINKAGES

When adjusting your steering, always set the rotating clamp bolts so they don't strike other components when in use. You can see the gouge in the over sized tie rod tube from the drag link adjuster. I've rotated one clamp/bolt to clear and will do the second one to match. Some under side armour can also be in the firing line. Always check your adjustments when its back on the deck under ride height conditions, snagging steering linkages are not good things. This tie rod tube would now be cause for rejection if it needs to pass a RWC test.



RUSTY SUMP

This is a first for me, this 4.0L sump was so badly rusted it's going to need replacing. Too bad the rocker cover oil leak hasn't been able to progress further forward to save it. I guess it has been a boat launching machine and has had a lot of salt water on it, either way I wasn't game to touch any of the rust blisters as I know what would have happened next.



JK 3.8L

This 3.8L V6 JK had a set of spark plugs replaced as part of the regular service here. What we didn't notice was one of the leads had degraded to some extent and in changing the spark plugs we had stirred the hornets nest. As it was not evident until doing a 100 kph test run (we don't do here as its too far to drive to get to the freeway). At that speed under load the motor was down on power. After the customer brought it back I scanned the PCM for faults. We found #6 plug fault code came up and then found this crusty spark plug lead cap. It looked fine until you bent it, so we replaced the leads and cleared the codes, then a 100 kph test run proved successful.



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