

Wheels Of Fortune Revisited

More On The Pantera Campagnolo Wheels

Story and Photos by Mike Drew

Back in 1997, I wrote what I believed would be the definitive analysis of the four variations in Campagnolo wheels used on Panteras from 1971 to 1974. This story appeared in the Winter 1997 *Profiles* and brought Pantera Geekery to new heights. While the response of many readers was, "Hey Mike, get a life!", many others found this heretofore unexplored aspect of the Pantera to be rather fascinating.

I felt fairly proud of myself for hav-

ing successfully conducted this research, but my pride was fairly short-lived when I discovered that I'd overlooked two design changes, meaning that there were no less than *six* different styles of wheel fitted to the Pantera between 1971 and 1974, not even including ten-inch Campagnolos.

Furthermore, I discovered that some cars actually came from the factory with mis-matched wheels. I have a borrowed set of Campagnolos on my Pantera which came from an original-

owner L-model, and upon close inspection, I realized the front and rear wheels were different from each other!

Here, then, is an update to my previous article, where the subtle detail differences of the remaining wheels are explored. I feel fairly safe in saying that this represents the final word on the subject. In the future, I'll take the opportunity to present several different variations on the 10-inch Campy theme, although this time I'll make no claims of having discovered all of them!



So what is all the fuss about? How different can Panteras wheels really be, anyway? The answer is, very different indeed. Here is the photo originally run in 1997, which purported to show the four known variations of the Campy wheel from 1971-1974. At top left is the extremely rare three-slot wheel, so-called because of the three slots cast into the flat portion of the wheel. At top right is the one-slot wheel, so-named for obvious reasons. Other than the slots, the two wheels are virtually identical. At bottom left is a two-slot wheel from mid-1972 vintage. At bottom right is a 1974 L-model wheel.

Missing from this roundup are the late 1971 two-slot wheel, and the late 1972-early 1973 two-slot wheel. Although these missing wheels are similar to the others, each is unique in several ways



This photo shows the back side of the previous four wheels. Note that the three-slot and one-slot wheels are, for all practical purposes, identical. They feature ribbing which is extremely dainty, which leads to speculation regarding their supposed lack of strength when compared with later Pantera wheels. The missing first-generation 1971 two-slot wheel has the same contours.

Certainly somebody thought they needed to be beefed up, because the 1972 two-slot Pre-L wheel at bottom left has substantially heavier ribbing on the back side.

The missing early L-model two-slot wheel and the later L-model wheel pictured at bottom right have been strengthened even further, and both weigh quite a bit more than the earlier wheels. Presumably they are the strongest of the bunch



The three-slot wheel was never used on Panteras exported to the USA, and was only found on the very earliest European cars. Publicity photos of prototype Panteras show these wheels, but they were virtually never seen on cars sold to customers. The features are very sharp and crisp



The one-slot wheel is identical to the three-slot wheel save for the lack of the two inner slots. The wheel center is rather modest, with narrow webbing connecting it with the pentagon. Both the pentagon and the raised surfaces containing the larger holes have a flat, machined appearance



The 1971 two-slot wheel introduced profound changes. The center is identical, but the webbing has been widened slightly, and no longer reaches the top of the wheel center. The raised surfaces and the pentagon have now been given a softer, more rounded appearance



The 1972 Pre-L two-slot wheel changed yet again. The hub has been enlarged, requiring small reliefs to allow lug wrench clearance. The webbing has also been widened slightly, and the raised surfaces and the pentagon have now been raised from the face of the wheel and are slightly taller



The first L-model wheel brought a return to some original design themes. The hub was strengthened even further, and the webbing was increased in size yet again. The pentagon is now flat, but the raised surfaces still retain a rounded contour



The later L-model wheel was almost identical to its immediate predecessor, but the wheel center has been fortified yet again, requiring even larger reliefs for lug wrench clearance. The webbing is wider and no longer tapers towards the center