

Valvoline's Answer to Older Cars' Need for Zinc in Oil

Courtesy of Robert Couch

1. What are the benefits to using a racing oil versus a regular "street legal" oil?

The Valvoline VR1 Racing & "Not Street Legal" Racing Oils contain additional additives for increased horsepower and reduced friction on metal parts, provide extra wear protection for high compression/higher horsepower engines, and include less detergents than regular conventional motor oils.

2. What is zinc?

The anti-wear additive simply referred to as "zinc" by most car enthusiasts is actually short for Zinc DialkylDithiophosphates or ZDDP. Its primary role is to prevent metal-to-metal contact between engine parts by forming a protective film. Despite being referred to as "zinc," this additive actually contains zinc and phosphorus, with phosphorus performing the anti-wear function.

3. Why have the zinc/phosphorus levels in motor oil changed?

With ever increasing limits on emissions, automobile manufacturers have tightened emission control systems on newer vehicles. This is one of several factors considered when the American Petroleum Institute (API) sets standards for motor oil. The current API standard is "SM" which replaced the previous "SL" classification. Because phosphorus can poison a vehicle's emission system, the level of zinc is lower for current motor oil.

4. What is the controversy surrounding the amount of zinc in motor oil?

Many hands-on car enthusiasts and engine experts believe the lower levels of zinc in "SM" motor oil is causing excessive wear in older style push-rod and flat tappet engines. This is despite the fact that all new motor oil classifications are intended to be backward compatible. This has resulted in the widely accepted belief that modern motor oil is not adequate to protect older engines.

5. What solutions does Valvoline offer to the zinc issue?

Valvoline offers two solutions to the zinc issue:

1. Valvoline VR1: Contains 75% higher zinc than SM motor oil with a balanced additive package designed to work in both racing and street-legal applications. This product will protect older style push-rod and flat tappet engines. Valvoline provides this product in both multi and mono viscosity grades: 20w50, straight 50, 10w30, straight 30, straight 40, and straight 60.

2. Longer-Lasting Zinc/Phosphorus: Valvoline uses an advanced zinc/phosphorus additive that keeps higher levels of phosphorus in the motor oil where it protects the engine instead of poisoning the catalytic converter. Valvoline is the only brand offering this unique additive across its entire line of passenger car motor oils including SynPower -- the only synthetic offering this additive.

6. Which oil has more zinc/ZDDP: VR1 or "Not Street Legal" oil?

Valvoline VR1 Racing Oil contains .13% of Zinc and .12% of Phosphorus compared to the Valvoline "Not Street Legal" Racing Oil which contains .14% of Zinc and .13% of Phosphorus.

7. Can I use an additive to boost the zinc level?

You can use an additive to increase the zinc level. However, check with your motor oil manufacturer to ensure the additive is compatible with your motor oil.

8. Is VR1 a conventional oil, a synthetic or a blend?

Valvoline VR1 is a conventional, non-synthetic racing oil.

It'll be There When I get Back

By Dave Doroghy

I am about to leave for a three-month trip out of town. Some of you in the Club who have met me know that I work for VANOC where I have been the Director of Sponsorship Sales for the past five years. Over the summer we finally reached our sponsorship revenue target and I was given a new assignment to go across Canada with the Olympic Torch Relay. Last week we were on Vancouver Island and later this week I leave for New Foundland. I am sure many of you have been following the relay in the news.



Leaving town for three months entails an endless list of things that have to be done. Today I got one more checked off my list as I tucked my Morgan away. I put the bulky grey storage cloth cover over the old Gal and carefully positioned a small oiled filled radiator style electric heater next to her. She will be fine in my old detached garage; the heater will keep her warm and the winter sleep will do her good. Just before I left I started her up and let her run for 10 minutes so that rigamortus wouldn't set in while I was gone. As I shut the garage door behind me I realized how low maintenance this car is, compared to other possessions of mine. Like a fine wine the Morgan will just sit there and improve with age. The car was built in 1966 allowing me to boast today that it is 43 years old. When I return next year my bragging rights will extend by one year, as I become the owner of 44-year old car. I used to think of the passing years as something that eroded the value of your car, but now as an antique car owner I have come to embrace a completely new paradigm. The passing years only give the car more character, make it more unique and add to its value.

And just like the wine that is left in a cellar to get better and better with age requires very little or no maintenance, so does an idle Morgan. I have a friend checking in on my home while I am gone. Someone, has to drop by to water my plants, someone has to pick up my mail, if my cat hadn't ditched me last summer someone would have had to feed him. I have bills that I will pay online while I am away, and I will be monitoring the three different places where people can leave voice messages for me. But old Morgy will require no attention whatsoever. She is hassle free. Just leave her there and she will be at my service when I get back.

And it is great to have the spring to look forward to coming back to. The All British Field Meet is the Morgan hi-light of the year for me. Come the Victoria day long weekend my car will re-emerge in all of her splendid glory to be surrounded by blooming plants and the bucolic setting of Van Dusen Gardens, and old acquaintances. I can't wait.

I'll be sorry to miss the Christmas Party and some of the other Morgan events taking place over the next few months. I look forward to seeing all of you again in the New Year as our cars all get one year older and one year better and so do we.

Oh and as I go from Coast to Coast following the Olympic Flame across this great country of ours I'll be sure to keep my eyes peeled for Morgans. Something tells me come January in Manitoba, I'll likely not be spotting too many of them.

Stay well and we will see you in 2010.

All of my past Dorg's Morg articles can be accessed at www.dorg.ca and I can be reached by email at Doroghy@hotmail.com.