

Do You Have Seat Belts in Your Model A?

I had a different subject in mind for this month's Spoken Wheels but I changed my mind when I received an email from Brad Richter, secretary of the Model A Touring Club. Brad reported about a Model A that was involved in an accident while participating in a local Club Tour.

The accident happened on Saturday, May 12th. It happened in an instant and the driver of the Model A was not at fault. The driver suffered a broken elbow, broken ribs and a severe laceration to his arm. The passenger was found pinned in below the gas tank and had to be air lifted to a Trauma Center with major injuries. She died the next day. The car WAS NOT equipped with seat belts. Brad included this picture of the Model A involved in the accident.

Our cars are now reaching the age of 80 years and while we are able to upgrade our Model A's with improvements that allow us to comfortably run at speeds where we can drive the freeways and interstate highways when necessary, we need to always keep in mind that the Model A Ford does not have the built-in safety features that modern automobiles do.

Hopefully, we will never experience an accident but if we do, seat belts are the one safety feature that is most often credited with preventing or minimizing injuries to the car's occupants. Seat belts help keep occupants seated and not thrown around in the car, or worse, thrown out of the car.

Tech Tip - Installing Seat Belts

Most Model A parts suppliers offer seat belts at a reasonable price for your Model A Ford, but if the seat belts are not properly installed, they are of little use in the case of an accident when they are most needed.

Properly installed seat belts require strong anchor points that will not fail if an accident should occur. There are good instructions in "Mechanics Handbook", vol. 2, by Les Andrews and also "How To Restore Your Model A", vol. 6.

Installing seat belts in a Model A Ford is not something every owner is qualified to do. So if necessary, seek professional assistance.

