

### DASHBOARD POLISHING

Slough built tractions are graced by a rather superb piece of solid walnut in which are embedded instruments and sundry other controls. Sadly, few members today can remember the magnificence of the original French polish finish that was applied. For in most cases after thirty odd years the blistering Australian sun has done its dastardly worst and left a series of deformed and emaciated ridges that once was a smooth mirror-like surface.

Happily, however it is not too difficult to restore the original finish quality, and today we have the availability of products that will ensure that your hard work remains good almost indefinitely.

1. Once the dash and capping (also door cappings on earlier models) have been removed, apply paint stripper and leave for 15 minutes, then hose off. Stripping is a long process on French polish because it softens and dissolves only a little at a time. It is however, much faster than sanding because sanding clogs

the paper very quickly and one tends to go through a lot of sand paper.

2. Once all traces of original finish are removed, thorough sanding becomes necessary to smooth down the grain. As all woodworkers will tell you, SAND WITH the GRAIN, 200 and then 400 W & D used dry so as not to raise end grain.

3. Watty! market an excellent grain filler which incorporates a stain (available in walnut). This is rubbed into the wood with a dry cloth and allowed to dry (10-15 minutes in warm weather). Then polish the surface with a soft cloth until all excess is removed and a soft lust-

4. Spray with long life Estapol.

5. An alternative to spraying is the brush, but great care is needed to avoid runs and to ensure smoothness. These steps are as follows:

- a) Place the Estapol lacquer in a pot of hot water to encourage flow and brush on neat with the grain using long smooth flowing strokes. Dry and sand, 600 W & D.
- b) Then thin 10% and repeat.
- c) Thin a further 10% and repeat.
- d). etc. etc.

Five or six subsequent coats are usually necessary and a dust free environment is essential (winter is a good time of year as atmospheric dust is at its lowest).

Spraying has the advantage of applying a first and final coat to achieve a glass like finish. But clean the gun with paint stripper straight away!

Gerald Propsting

