

# Simply Slick Shifting

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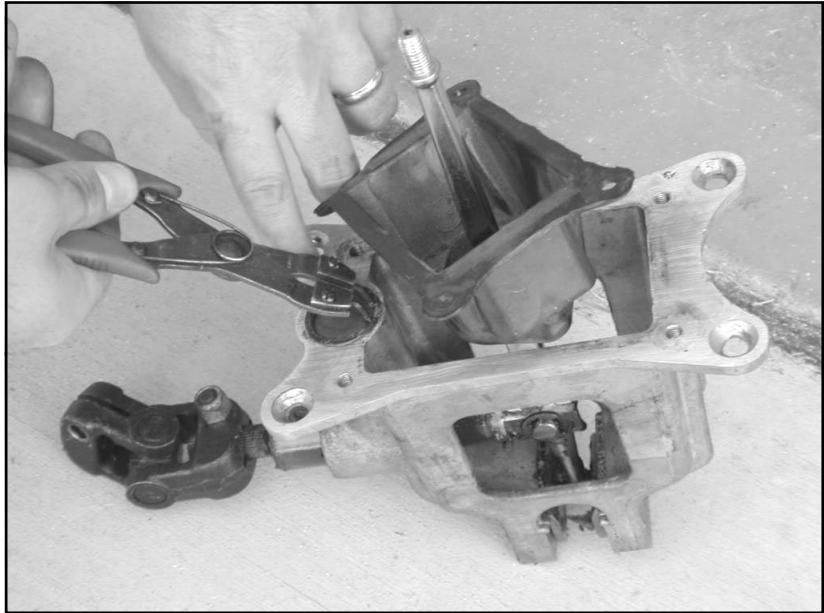
Heavy shifting is a Pantera driving characteristic that most owners accept and take for granted. Looking at all the metal that needs to be moved every time you grab for a gear makes it easy to believe that the heavy shifting is an unavoidable consequence.

But Dennis Quella of Pantera Performance Center discovered many years ago that there is a simple modification which can be performed that will ease this problem greatly. Best of all, this modification can be performed without removing anything from the car, is easily reversible, and is *free!*

Immediately behind the shift gate is a spring-loaded plunger which bears down upon the shifter rod. This plunger is designed as a centering spring, to force the gearshift lever towards the center of the gate (side-to-side.) However, like most (all?) transmissions, the ZF has its own self-centering springs inside; thus the two systems are redundant, and sometimes can "fight" each other. It therefore makes sense to remove one of them. Since tearing into the gearbox isn't an option,



*With the unnecessary parts removed, the shifter is ready to go*



*The shifter box has been removed from the car for clarity. Use a pair of snap-ring pliers to remove the snap ring at the very rear of the shifter box*

it's best to take the easy way out and remove the plunger and spring.

Although the photos show the shifter box totally removed from the car for clarity, it's quite simple to do this job with the shifter in the car. Remove the four Allen bolts which secure the shift gate. On early-style interiors, you can then remove the raised section of the center console and gain access to the critical area; later-style interiors require removal of the entire center console.

Using a pair of snap-ring pliers, compress and remove the one-inch snap ring immediately behind the shifter opening. Make sure you don't drop it into the shifter mechanism! There is a round sheet-metal cap which will raise up slightly under spring pressure; underneath is a spring and a cup with a protrusion on the end which acts upon the shifter rod. Remove all these components and file them away in your used and obsolete parts pile.

Re-install the center console and shifter gate, and you're done! Take the opportunity to verify the adjustment of the shift lever in the gate, and make any adjustments required (probably none.) Then take it out for a spin and marvel at the newfound lightness in your shifting!