

# That first step on frozen accelerator is a killer

By Jim Williams  
The Nebraska *Manual for Drivers* contains a piece of advice that can kill you. It's on page 59, in the "Emergencies" section, under the heading "Accelerator Jammed."

Here are the manual's suggestions:

- Slap pedal hard with foot;
- Turn off ignition;
- Use brakes;
- Shift to neutral;
- Concentrate on steering.

The first one is the killer, and here's why.

A car's throttle is like a small door in the carburetor, the part that mixes gasoline with air for burning in the cylinders. When you press the accelerator pedal, a cable or system of rods opens the door, letting more fuel into the engine. When you release the pedal, a spring pulls the door closed.

Suppose this spring breaks. You're cruising along at about 40 m.p.h. then you lift your foot to slow down. With no spring to close it, the throttle keeps you going at 40 m.p.h. So you "slap pedal hard with foot." Oops! The throttle opens all the way, and now you're doing maybe 105 m.p.h. with who-knows-what just around the bend. Not good.

The second tip isn't as bad. But if your car has power steering or brakes, turning off the ignition will cut the power assist. Take it from one who has wrestled a

5,000-lb. T-bird with a dead engine that this is not easy.

The remaining advice is good. In fact, I suggest you practice it a few times on a quiet road. If the throttle sticks:

- Shift to neutral;
- Keep the car on course;
- Brake calmly to a halt.

Once the car is under control, you can try sticking a toe under the pedal and lifting it up. Sometimes this will pull the throttle closed. Test it several times before you drive on to make sure it won't stick

again. Now you know the safe way to handle a sticking gas pedal, Governor.

Since the life-or-death stuff is out of the way, on to the fascinating trivia. Remember the Trans-Nebraska Open (TNO)? The 980-mile automotive insanity is approaching.

However, TNO Headquarters has told me that a local rock musician, thinking TNO was an illegal substance, broke in recently and smoked the entries. So all interested persons are asked to call 477-2838 this week, even if they've already

written in, to be placed on the mailing list.

According to TNO, the event begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 29, using a Le Mans-type start. Contestants will pass through checkpoint towns around the state, picking up some item of evidence at each to prove they were there.

"The TNO winner," said an organizer, "will have to master everything Nebraska can throw at him—bad weather, bad roads, car trouble and sheer, unmitigated boredom." Not to mention a specially-equipped entry carrying the colors of "Pit Stop."

## Weight training changed

# Intrasquad meet opens swim season

UNLs swim coach John Reta has been busy preparing his 17-man squad for an intrasquad meet Nov. 21.

Men and women's teams will compete at the meet held in the Womens P.E. Bldg. swimming pool.

The men's training has changed slightly this year, Reta said. Instead of lifting weights for just six weeks as in the past, the swimmers will use the weight program throughout the year.

"We are trying to keep a balance

between strength and endurance," he said. "In the past, we have had a situation where toward the end of the season the swimmers are just starting to build up their endurance about the time they are losing some of their strength."


Reta has five programs going simultaneously for the swimmers in the Coliseum pool to aid their individual needs. However, the team is hindered by the pool's size, he said.

"It's too early to tell how the team

looks," he said. "The people back from last year are looking good, but there is a lot of difference between looking good in practice and looking good in competition."

The team has worked on basics, because it's important to build a strong foundation for the season, he said.

"There is a lot of competition on this team," Reta said. "The swimmers are pushing each other to do better and that's a healthy situation."



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