

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It has been quite awhile since I sent out an update for the '55 project. The main reason is it is just mighty hard to capture the progress of block sanding. I have been working the dings and dents out of the body panels. I am going to try to do an update on a couple of the harder ones that have taken many hours of block sanding, epoxy primer, and 2K primer. On some of the panels it is taking several rounds of the above.

The main reason for this update is the project I just finished tonight as well as the results of painting the first panel this past Thursday night. Last Saturday was a cool day in the 60s and the weathermen were saying hot weather was on the way. I decided to tackle the floorboard and trunk areas of the car. I wanted to strip them down to metal and put a couple of coats of SPI epoxy primer on them.

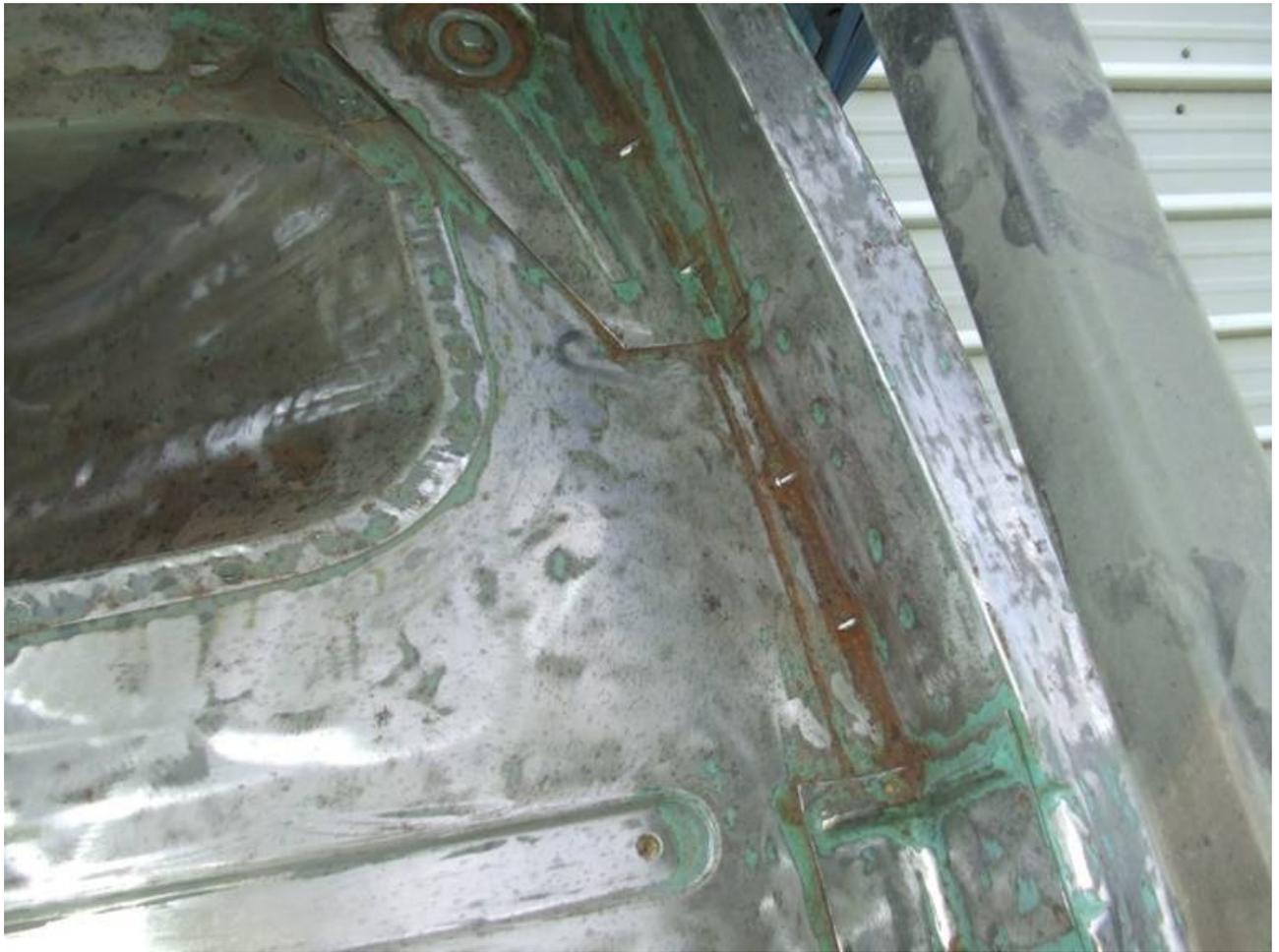




They were not in too bad of shape to start with.



The largest hole in the floorboard is about 3/16" diameter. There are some tiny pinholes on the other side in the same area.

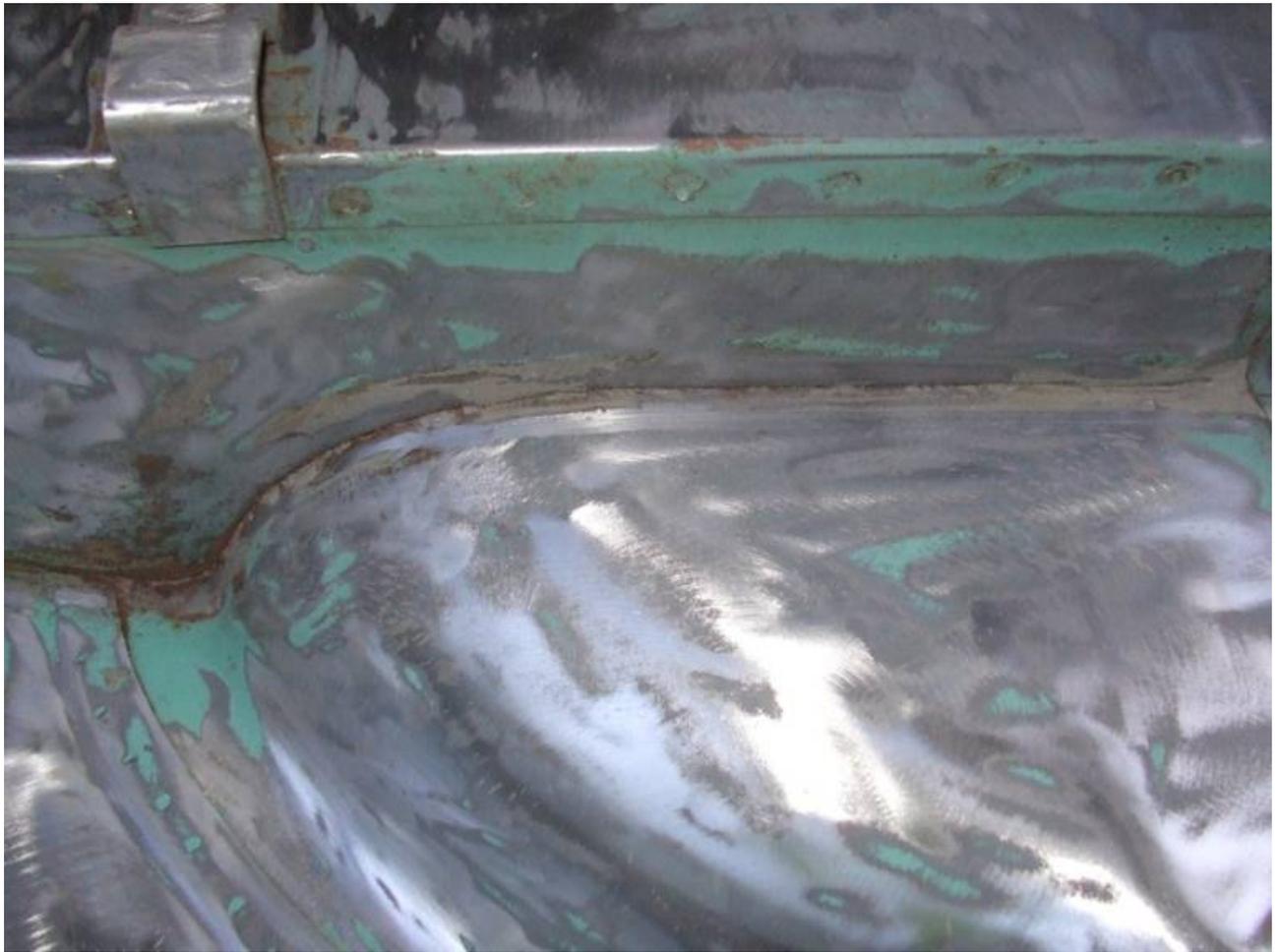


I could not get any of the grinding wheels I had into the corners. So I resorted back to the sand blaster.



I had worn out the largest ceramic tip that came with the Harbor Freight blasting kit during the last round of blasting. The next size down was getting clogged up in a few seconds. I tried to help that out by sifting the sand through a sifter my wife let me borrow.









Of course one of the hassles of sand blasting is trying to get rid of the sand. The rotisserie helps a lot by being able to rotate the body around and sucking up most of the sand with the shop vac.







After stripping most of the old paint and primer, the entire area was buffed with 80 grit on a DA. It was then cleaned with wax & grease remover.











The two coats of SPI epoxy primer laid down nicely, as usual.

This past Thursday evening was the first night of a 6-week collision refinishing workshop. I had planned to take the two front doors in for painting. After talking with Wayne McFadden, the instructor and receiving some advice from the SPI forum I had set out a plan of action. Wednesday I did the final block sanding with 320 grit on the 2k primer. The doors were then sprayed with 2 coats of epoxy primer which would act as the seal coat. Thursday, I wet sanded the epoxy until the orange peel was gone. I had to jury rig 2x2s onto the inside of the door in such a way that the jam areas could be painted and then the door flipped over to paint the skin side.

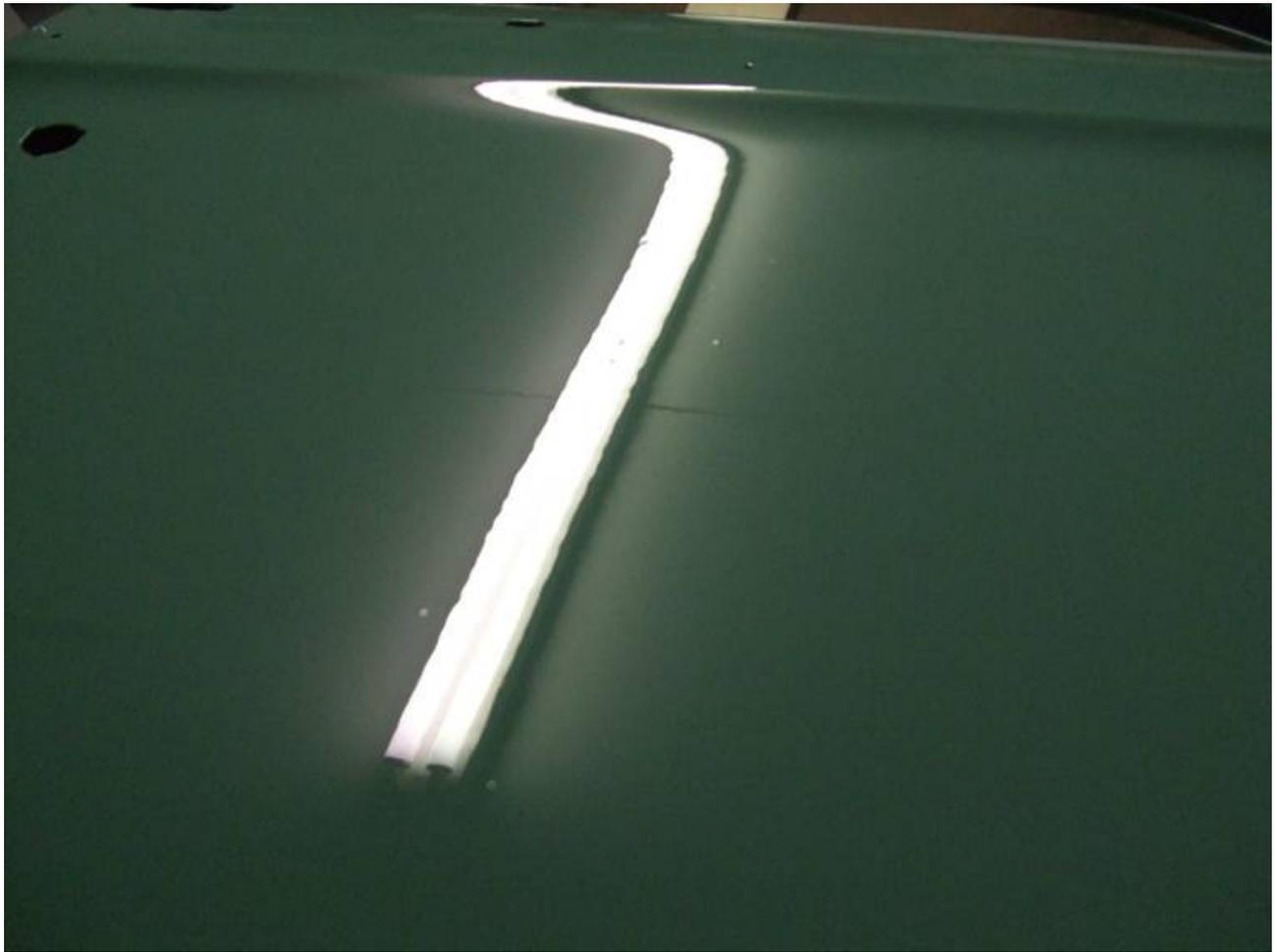
All this took much longer than I had thought and only one door was ready by the time I had to leave for class. I messed up big time by putting the door on the floor of the Suburban on its outside skin. On the way to class I had to slam on the brakes and the door slid up toward the seat. Well of course it was scratched and nicked. I spent the first 2 hours of class applying dolphin glaze to fill the nicks, sanding it smooth with 320 and finally wet sanding the areas again with 400 grit.

Finally, we were able to get it in the booth and Wayne did an excellent job of painting it. He is using my spray gun which is probably not as nice as his. After the jam side was painted I screwed the 2x3s onto the 2x2s so it could be turned over and the outer side painted. We did not have time to bake it very long and it was still tacky when class was over. It was loaded into the Suburban with the lumber down which kept the paint from touching the floor.

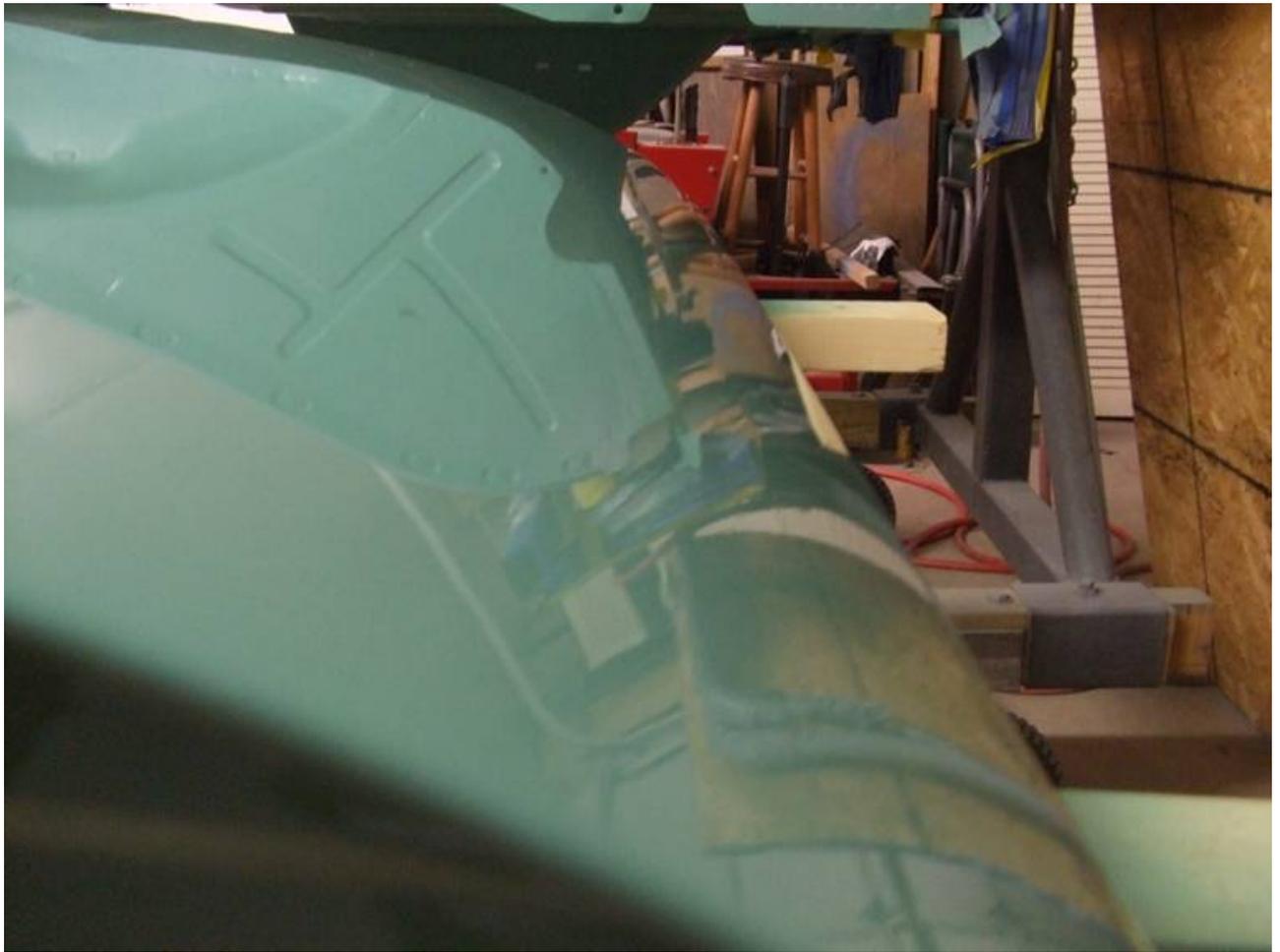


Wayne McFadden, the instructor and vice president of the NE Okla. SDC club applies the single stage.





There is light orange peel and some dust nibs which I will try to get out when it is color sanded.







It is pretty exciting to see the Saginaw Green going on the car. I have not gotten to do any work outside this week so far. We were blessed with 3 ¼ inches of rain yesterday and it has been raining off and on today, Memorial Day. I would like to send a salute out to all my fellow vets on this special day.

Charlie D.