

ENGINE STAMP STANDARDS



BLOOMINGTON GOLD ADDS OPTIONS FOR CORVETTES
WITH REPLACEMENT ENGINES & STAMPS TO BE GOLDCERTIFIED



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Bloomington Gold

PURPOSE

Increase the interest in Corvette preservation, restoration, and collecting.

VISION

Since 1978, our vision has been that truly original engine Corvettes are special and that the Corvette community would recognize their rarity and desirability.

Our future vision is of a time when people can also feel comfortable about Corvettes that have been either restored to or preserved within 95-100% of their typical factory production as long as their original engines have been replaced with true copies of the original. Deserving vehicles should not be over-penalized.

Our most exciting vision is one where more “descriptive” terms used in Certification will help people understand which one is which, without having to rely on Awards or Titles.

MISSION

Preserve the identity of original engine Corvettes

Goals

- Increase the appreciation of original engine Corvettes
- Increase the appreciation of great Corvettes with replacement engines
- Decrease the need to make the latter appear to be the former
- Decrease consumers' confusion which is which
- Decrease restamping of engines
- Increase the enjoyment for owners and judges
- Increase the desire to preserve/restore/collect all Corvette types

Our Strategy How To Do It

- Increase the recognition/reward for original engines
- Decrease the over-penalization of true replacement engines
- Distinguish between the two more clearly
- Remove the "need" to re-stamp engines
- Increase the use of common sense, data bases, and experienced inspectors
- Increase the incentive for owners to reveal their knowledge
- Increase clarity of a Gold Certificate with Plain English
- Increase the penalties for misrepresentation

What This Means To You

As long as a Corvette scores at least 95% and the engine stamps **APPEAR OEM, INCONCLUSIVE, or are Declared NON-OEM By The Owner**, it can be Gold Certified.

Definitions (Not Standards)

Blocks

Original (OEM)

Installed in “this” vehicle when driven out of the GMAD plant.

Non-Original (Non-OEM)

Subsequently installed in “this” vehicle *after* this vehicle’s original block was removed.

Stampings

Original (OEM)

Installed in the Original Block installed in “this” car by the engine/vehicle assembly plant (OEM)

Inconclusive

Contains characteristics (size, font, shape, location) not known among OEM stamp variations, yet unclear whether OEM or Reproduction.

Reproduction

Subsequently installed or altered stamps *after* the block left the assembly plant in order to replicate or “resemble” OEM. *However, a non-trained person would **not** likely see the difference.*

Generic

Similar to reproduction except that a *non-trained person **would** likely see the difference within 30 seconds when comparing side-by-side with an original stamp of the same type and date vehicle.*

Missing

Either Original/Replacement block *without* VIN and/or Date/Suffix stamps

- Original untouched pad w/out stamps
- Decked pad w/out stamps
- Unreadable (too faint, incomplete, rusted, etc.)

Misrepresented

Purposely altered configuration of a VIN tag, trim tag, engine suffix, date code, or block (including casting and date codes) different from the original assembly of “this” vehicle.

NOTE: RESTORATION ENGINES

This is a misleading term with vague and ambiguous meanings.

- It **WILL NOT** be recognized by Bloomington Gold.
- Please **DO NOT** refer to any engines this way.

Definitions (con't)

OEM

- Appears OEM according to Inspection team's judgment based upon experience, logic, and knowledge of known data relative to engine/vehicle plant stamps.
- Regardless of probable anomalies, acceptable damage, deterioration, or repair, the preponderance of evidence *suggests* the stamps are original to the vehicle

NON-OEM Includes

- Reproduction or replica stamps made to closely resemble OEM stamps (installed by other than the engine/vehicle assembly plant) due to the absence of the original stamps.
- Generic stamps that do not closely resemble OEM stamps.
- Missing stamps (pads without VIN and/or Date/Suffix)



IMPORTANT NOTE

All Plain English definitions are subject to evolve quickly.
Please see [Bloomington Gold.com](http://BloomingtonGold.com) website for latest revisions.

Judging Standards

ELIGIBLE FOR GOLD CERTIFICATE

APPEAR OEM

No detectable deviation from known OEM stamps (ghosts, rust, damage, anomaly OK)

INCONCLUSIVE

Detectable deviation (size, font, shape, location, etc.) unknown among OEM stamp variations, yet unclear to inspector *team* whether or not OEM. Authenticity cannot be conclusively determined.

Owner Declared NON-OEM (Engine stamps not further evaluated)

If owner openly declares this on application, the engine stamp pad will NOT be evaluated by an inspector but still remain eligible for Gold. Stamps may range from nearly perfect replicas to generic or totally missing (See Definitions Section). Since it has already been declared Non-OEM by the owner, there is nothing left for the inspectors to determine.

LIMITED TO SILVER CERTIFICATE

On the other hand, if owner declares **OEM** or **I Don't Know** on the application, stamp inspectors will thoroughly evaluate the engine numbers using all available data, techniques, and knowledge. In the event that stamps are determined by the inspectors to be Non-OEM, the vehicle will NOT be eligible for Gold *that* year. However, if the owner applies the following year and openly declares Non-OEM on the vehicle application, it will then be eligible for Gold.

Rule of Thumb:

- If **OWNER** declares Non-OEM, the vehicle can get a Gold that year.
- If **INSPECTORS** determine it to be Non-OEM, the vehicle cannot get a Gold that year.

Good Advice:

**If you already know your stamps are Non-OEM, declare them.
Don't waste your money and a year by not declaring them.**

NOTES

1. In the past if an engine stamping was determined to deviate from typical factory production, the owner would have to spend time, money & effort trying to reproduce an engine stamping that did not deviate from OEM configurations. There was no guarantee it would fare any better. Under the new Standards, the owner simply needs to declare Non-OEM stamps the next time and the vehicle will then be eligible for Gold Certification. No more trying to figure out what was accurate enough.
2. Bloomington Gold does not support education leading to the perfecting of replica stampings. In order to protect the uniqueness of OEM configurations and prevent the continued dilution of OEM credibility and legitimacy, neither Bloomington Gold nor its inspectors will provide or explain any proprietary data or details of any deviations. Thank you for understanding.

Procedures

On the Pre-Registration Form

Owners must declare (check the box) which description (per the Definitions page) best fits the engine and stamps associated with their registered vehicle VIN.

BLOCK	STAMPINGS
<input type="checkbox"/> Original (OEM)	<input type="checkbox"/> Original (OEM)
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Original (Non-OEM)	<input type="checkbox"/> Blank / Obscured
<input type="checkbox"/> I Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> I Don't Know

On Certification Day

1. If the owner declared either “*Original (OEM) Stamp*” or “*I Don't Know*”, the owner thereby grants consent for the stamp inspectors to closely inspect ***all*** stamps and castings and use ***ALL available knowledge and tools*** (magnification, cameras, photos, computers, lights, conferences, comparisons, etc) to determine what the stamp and casting numbers and dates appear to be.
 - If APPEARS OEM, it will be noted on form and be Gold eligible
 - If INCONCLUSIVE, it will be noted on form and be Gold eligible
 - If NON-OEM, it will be noted on form and be limited to Silver that year. However, the owner may return and declare Non-OEM stamps the next time and the vehicle will then be eligible for Gold. ***To be eligible for Gold Certification, Non-OEM stamps must be declared Non-OEM by the owner, not inspectors.***
2. If the owner declared Non-OEM, the engine stamp pad will NOT be evaluated by an inspector at all and ***will still remain eligible for Gold***—regardless of the quality or presence of pad stampings.
3. Regardless what the owner declares or what the inspectors determine, ***any vehicle with trim/VIN tags, engine CID or suffix letters detected (by any means at any time) to be different from the vehicle's original assembly will be permanently disqualified.***

Sample Judging Sheet Format



START TIME _____

FINISH TIME _____

ELAPSED TIME _____

C2 (1963 - 1967)
CERTIFICATION FORMS

Date Certified _____ Pin# _____

LABEL

GOLD SILVER BRONZE NONE
426 813 1199

Total Value Loss _____

Numbers Team

Place Engine Pad Tracing Here Check Here If Photo Taken

Owner's Signature _____

1. Judge's Initials/Print Name _____

2. Judge's Initials/Print Name _____

3. Judge's Initials/Print Name _____

DECLARED REPRODUCTION ENGINE CARS - JUDGES DO NOT COMPLETE 1-4

CODE	ACTUAL	← GOLD ELIGIBLE →			*SILVER Maximum	**Uncertifiable
		APPEARS OEM ?	Inconclusive ?	Owner Declared NON-OEM ?	Determined NON-OEM #	
1. Pad VIN	_____	0	0	0	0	
2. Pad Date / Suffix	_____/____	0	0	0	0	
3. Casting Number	_____	0	0	0	0	
4. Casting Date	_____/____	0	0	0	0	
5. VIN Tag	_____	0				0
6. Trim Tag	_____	0				0

TERMINATION LINE

Standards for Gold Certification

1 APPEARS OEM

No detectable deviation from known OEM stamps (ghosts, rust, damage, anomalies OK)

2 Inconclusive

Detectable deviation(s) (size, font, shape, location, etc.) unknown among OEM stamp variations, yet unclear to inspector team whether OEM or not. Authenticity cannot be conclusively determined from known data.

3 Owner Declared Non-OEM

Owner already declared Non-OEM stamps. No further evaluation by Judges needed. Remains eligible for Gold whether nearly perfect replicas, generic, or totally missing.

4 Tags

Remounted, authentic manufacturer's tags must be supported by positively inspected OEM engine stamps with VIN derivatives.

Below Gold Certification Standards

5 Determined Non-OEM (by stamp inspectors)

Non-OEM Deviation detected within stamps declared OEM or Unknown by owner

CODE	ACTUAL	
7. Build Date	_____/____	
8. Trim Code	_____/____	
9. Paint Code	_____/____	
10. Body Code	_____ <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> S	
11. Color / Material Matches Trim Code		<input type="radio"/> (YES)
12. Color Matches Paint Code		<input type="radio"/> (YES)

Terminate if Items 5 or 6 are NOT OEM.

(NO)
 (NO)

* SILVER Maximum Column: A SILVER Certificate is the highest award available if any of these deviations exist, regardless of the score.
 ** Uncertifiable Column: Only a Recognition Letter is available.

DISCLAIMER: Neither Bloomington Gold, the NCCB nor any judge individually warranties or guarantees in any way ANYTHING on this or any other car judged at the Bloomington Gold Event is as it left the factory. Certificates are for the purpose of sport and recognize cars for their appearance relative to typical factory production.

Sample Certificate

B L O O M I N G T O N G O L D[®]

NATIONAL CORVETTE CERTIFICATION BOARD
GOLD CERTIFIED[®]

Presented to _____ Corvette, VIN _____

Owned By: _____

Is restored to or preserved within 95-100% of the appearance of a Typical Factory Production Corvette of this era. Specifically, the finishes, dates, installations, completeness, and configurations have been preserved, restored, or replicated in accordance with factory assembly procedures. (See reverse side for exceptions.) Further, the technical operations have functioned in accordance with inspection criteria.

Engine Casting and Stamp Numbers Description

APPEAR
OEM



INCONCLUSIVE

Owner Declared
NON-OEM
Stamps Not Evaluated

Certification Director

Date of Certification

© 2014

bloomington
GOLD[®]
Corvettes USA

Sample Certificate

B L O O M I N G T O N G O L D®

NATIONAL CORVETTE CERTIFICATION BOARD

GOLD CERTIFIED®

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Certification Director

Date of Certification

© 2014

bloomington
GOLD
Corvettes USA

Sample Certificate

B L O O M I N G T O N G O L D®

NATIONAL CORVETTE CERTIFICATION BOARD
GOLD CERTIFIED®

Presented to _____ Corvette, VIN _____

Owned By: _____

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Certification Director

Date of Certification

© 2014

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Corvettes USA

Special Warning

Although Bloomington Gold's enhanced Certification Standards are designed to decrease the over-penalization of legitimate replacement engines, it must be clearly understood that discovery (by any means) of purposeful MISREPRESENTATION of engines or trim/VIN plates will be dealt with swiftly, firmly, and "creatively".

Misrepresentation Definition

Discovery (by any means) of the following WILL result in immediate disqualification of the vehicle, permanent prohibition of that vehicle/VIN from future events, and may subject the owner and/or restorer to the same prohibitions.

- Reproduction, altered, replaced, or generic Trim or VIN plates
- Reproduction engine code using different letters from the original suffix codes
- Replacement engine block configuration (CID) different from the original

For example, if a 427/390 hp 1967 Corvette is discovered (by any means) to have been "altered" to appear as a 435hp (whether or not it has a blank pad, reproduction stamps, or OEM stamps), it will be immediately disqualified if evidence is discovered before, during, or after vehicle certification. Any association of the owner and/or restorer with such action will result in permanent disqualification from future events. Non-negotiable.

Any Bloomington Gold judge associated with same will be immediately and permanently terminated.

Therefore, to save time and avoid surprises, please inquire up-front if you have any questions or nagging doubts about the legitimacy of a Corvette(s) you are considering having certified.

Although Bloomington Gold is NOT interested in being the "stamp police", it should not be assumed no one will notice or that the inarguable evidence won't surface later. It often does.

Specific details may be noted on Mandatory Data & Declarations form.

"If you know it, declare it."

Reasons for Change

Why Bloomington Gold is enhancing Gold Certification

Bloomington Gold has studied the dynamics of preservation, restoration, and collecting, along with the mentalities and mindsets that have formed over time. Some good trends. Some not so good. This summarizes what we see:

Trends

- The data file used to train inspectors is so immense; it will be increasingly difficult if not impossible for stamp installers' data or technology to ever catch up. *As the data files continue to expand and inspector knowledge deepens, the minutest deviations become obvious or "easily detectable" and it becomes more difficult to "let them slide".*
- Owners had been increasingly pressured and stressed trying to figure out how to present an engine not having original stampings.
- Some owners have become increasingly combative when stamp deviations are detected.
- On the other hand, inspectors (and Bloomington Gold) have become increasingly hesitant to continue to bless reproduction stamps containing tell-tale deviations only to see owners use their endorsements to imply an original engine or at least mask that it is a reproduction stamp on a replacement engine.
- The general Corvette population (including most of the owners) can't recognize the difference between professionally reproduced stampings and OEM stampings and have becoming increasingly confused as to which is which. This is diluting the appreciation and distinction of the OEM blocks and stamps—a trend that Bloomington Gold does not want to support.
- Although traditionally lagging the C2 data files, C1 data files are increasing and the stamps and VIN tags that have been previously accepted will come under increased scrutiny. The likelihood that inspectors will become better able to recognize the difference between OEM and reproductions stamps among C1s will likely escalate.

Reasons for Change (con't)

Implications

If nothing had changed, some or all of the following cycles may likely occur:

Reproduction stamps will prevent excellent vehicles from GoldCertificates.

Owner enthusiasm/participation will decline from frustration and disappointment.

Preservation/restoration of many otherwise excellent vehicles will be discouraged.

OEM stamps will be diluted by the proliferation of “close” reproduction stamps

Collectors/enthusiasts will become more gun shy about what they're really buying.

Stress levels on both owners and judges will reach the point they say, “forget it”.

Bloomington Gold Philosophy

- These trends and implications are not in the best interest of the Corvette community.
- Bloomington Gold is not interested in perpetuating these trends and cycles because they appear destructive to the Corvette community in both the short and long run.
- Continued improvement in reproduction stamp/tag technology is NOT for the greater good over the long run, anyway! We do not endorse it.
- Fostering the challenge for reproduction stamps/tags to be accurate, dilutes the historic value/credibility of true OEM stampings.
- Removing incentives to reproduce stamps within a nano-micron of OEM will slow the demand for more accurate reproductions and increase the appreciation of OEM stamps because they will retain their uniqueness & intrinsic credibility.
- Increasing the tolerance level of reproduction engine stampings in order to retain eligibility for Gold increases the incentive to properly and enthusiastically restore otherwise worthy vehicles.
- Reproduction stampings (or lack of them) does effect the perception of legitimacy among a large segment of the Corvette community. However, it should not be the linchpin or single preemptive factor preventing an otherwise historically accurate restoration from being GoldCertified.
- OEM stampings need to be distinguished from and remain on a higher plane than reproductions, replacements, or other non-OEM variations.

Bloomington Gold Action Plan

Bloomington Gold wishes to introduce a new encompassing approach to Corvette engine stamps:

- Reduce the owners' stress levels related to reproduction stampings.
- Reduce the inspectors' perceived liability for not detecting the "easily detectable".
- Shift standard for OEM stamps from "Reasonably Undetectable" to "Undetectable"
- Distinguish and elevate the pride/prestige of vehicles with OEM stamps/tags.
- Reduce the incentive to make reproduction stamps indistinguishable from OEM.
- Keep Gold Certificates within reach of vehicles within 95% factory appearance; those with replacement engines installed will be identified as such, those with OEM engines will be recognized as such.
- Keep the policy & procedures easily understood and easy to follow.
- Give owners options to "Declare" reproduction stamps without penalty.
- Give inspectors options to use all available data to determine OEM
- Change the mistaken impression that GoldCertified always means Original engine

BOTTOM LINE

Bloomington Gold will employ and promote the knowledge of our stamp inspectors and depth of their data bases for the greater good of the Corvette and collector car community.

***Providing people useful descriptions
and accurate awards.***

Guy Larsen

