

## RMS INSTA-POLL

*"1. Is it OK to touch up covers? (i.e., recolor the struck striker) 2. Is it OK to put tape on the back of brittle strikers? 3. Is it OK to tape on a striker from one cover onto a bobbed cover? 4. Are there any other ways of*

*'fixing' a damaged cover that you know of? Is it OK to do that?" - January 2009; responding 97*

*[Note: Almost everyone noted up front that it's OK to do anything you want to your own covers for your own collection, but as far as covers that are going to be traded, sold, given away, etc...]*

1. **Is it OK to touch up covers? (i.e., recolor the struck striker) -** No! **90** Yes! **7**  
*-cleaning with water was almost a universal OK, so it has not been included in the question*  
*-several collectors said it was OK to use an eraser*  
*-“There is a special kind of eraser used on old documents to clean smudges and dirt ....it cleans without damage and doesn't alter the original cover ...that's ok”*
2. **Is it OK to put tape on the back of brittle strikers? -** No! **28** Yes! **69**  
*-“I am a certified archivist and the use of tape on any document or artifact is a no-no, except there is an archival tape available.”*
3. **Is it OK to tape on a striker from one cover onto a bobbed cover? -** No! **93** Yes! **4**  
*-“No, can you say ‘counterfeit?’”*
4. **Other ways of 'fixing' a damaged cover? And is it OK to do that?”**  
*-“Years ago, when I had "free" time for the hobby, I would take those covers which had the bad strikers and carefully remove the abrasive surface of the striker with a sharp X-acto blade. Then let it set for a few months. I would then take some flat black paint and paint on a striker. Believe it or not but the flat black looked really good. But what made it really look good was taking the Xacto blade and removing some of the paint around where the staple had been.”*  
*-“I think on one occasion I took a single comb from one feature or printed stick and combined it with another (of the same cover) feature or printed stick to make a full book.”*  
*-“The weakest part of my older full books can be in the folding area of the saddle. If there is a danger, to avoid breakage there I may apply a strip of "filmoplast" paper mending tape by Neschen to help fortify the fold.*  
*-“What about some folks who like full books and "reconstruct" covers into full books with other match combs.”*  
*-“I have seen a comb of Feature Matches stapled into a non-feature cover.”*  
*-“I sometimes put tape on the back of a cover that is weak along the folds.”*  
*-“Some covers have a celluloid cover that peels. You may be able to repair that with a touch of colorless glue.”*  
*-“Very small amounts of an adhesive( e.g., Elmers glue) can be applied with a toothpick to repair turned up and/or separated corners of a cover.*

*Ed. Pretty clear results—No, Yes, No. Although basically everyone agreed that a collector is free to do whatever he or she wants to with his or her own collections, in the long range scheme of things, even those covers will eventually wind up being recycled back into the hobby. But, I think that simply has to be looked upon as part of the inevitable cycle of things. The eventual ‘new owners’ of those ‘repaired’ covers, however they’ve been repaired, will have to decide for themselves if they want to keep them or not, according to their own collecting standards. Good poll!...If I do say so, myself. Thanks to all who participated!*