

GROUNDED

On page 36 of your October 1988 issue, the schematic diagram (Fig. 2) for the "Solid-State Tesla Coil" shows the ground side of the power supply going to the emitters of the transistors. Obviously, if the circuit is wired up that way, no operating current would be delivered to the high-voltage circuit, and hence it would not work.

M.M.
Atlanta, GA

Of course, you are correct. For proper operation, reroute the connection to the emitters from the bottom of C3 to the top of that capacitor. All should now work fine.

REPLACEMENT PARTS

I enjoy reading your magazine, and I've noticed your emphasis on readers helping each other. This letter is in response to L.J.'s question in the September "Letter Box."

The U1 op-amp (MC3401) for the "Wind Witcher" project (February 1988) can be replaced by an LM3900N. That's what I used, and it turned out great.

By the way, pin 7 is repeated twice in the schematic. The correct pin 7 should go to ground.

R.F.S.
Sun City, AZ

MINIMUM ORDERS

We just received our first copy of **Hands-on Electronics** (the August 1988 issue) here at work, and I was really impressed with the article "Low-Battery Alarm." It presented a solution to a problem I'd been working on.

I jumped right in and called Jameco, as the article suggested, just to find out that the \$0.99 8211 would cost me \$20.00—their minimum order. I called around locally, but no one sells or can order one for me.

Is this a new chip, or hard to get? Do you have a cross-reference to ECG or others?

A.S.
Addison, NY

Minimum orders are a problem for hobbyists, but unfortunately there are few ways around them. There are relatively few well-stocked mail-order parts distributors left, and just about all have a minimum order or a service charge for orders below a certain amount. That comes about because of the cost of doing business by mail. Unless the order exceeds a certain amount, retailers actually can lose money filling an order. And while \$20 may seem high, it is less than that charged by many long-established, mail-order distributors.

Unfortunately, we don't have an ECG (or other) cross reference for the 8211, nor an alternate source. Often, we buy components for several projects at a time. We suggest the same approach. Get the catalogs from as many parts distributors as possible and try to lump your parts-buying together. You'd be surprised how quickly you can reach most distributor's minimums. ■