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3874 Oak Drive  
Martinez, GA 30907

706-863-1206  
Fax 706-863-1928

## **Kart Washing**

Cleaning is a very important part of maintaining your kart. A lot of racers discount this and do not spend the necessary time to do the job properly. A clean kart is much easier to work on and adjust.

To begin, tape up the engine to prevent water from entering (this is detailed in the engine maintenance section) and remove the clutch. It is strongly suggested you remove your My-Chron, (or other instrument) as they are usually water resistant, not waterproof. Tape off the opening in your catch tank as well, water in the catch tank can be drawn up into the engine, and I don't need to tell you what that will do. If your tires are dirty, you can clean them on the kart, however, they clean up much better at the track, and the kart cannot be properly cleaned with the tires on. A mild degreaser diluted makes a good solution to wash with. Simple Green, 409, etc., are all good choices, however, like stated, make sure you dilute them or your paint may suffer as a result.

Rubber gloves, a washrag, and a toothbrush are my tools of choice. The toothbrush works very well in the hard to reach areas around the rear bearings as well as the front spindles, and the rag makes the larger areas much easier to clean.

Wash time! Warm or hot water cleans better if you have it. Plus, reaching into a cold bucket in February is no thrill either. Spray the kart down in sections to keep the soap from drying before rinsing. Extremely dirty areas may require a couple attempts to get as clean as we want them. Using the toothbrush, scrub all the tight spots. While you have the toothbrush handy, clean the chain as it is on the rear sprocket, this does a great job. Rinse well, and keep going until you get the whole kart cleaned. Keep in mind, under the motor mount and the rear frame rails are usually an overlooked spot, so make sure you look under the kart as well. Blowing the kart dry with compressed air is an excellent way to dry the kart. If compressed air isn't available, a leaf blower has been used successfully. The goal here is to prevent rust and corrosion from starting. Blow into the nerf bar mounting tubes, the front bumper tubes, and the steering post tube. All these areas gather water, and when it rusts up inside, removing these parts becomes very difficult. Take the time to get the kart nice and dry. Now is a good time to start your engine and dry it as described in the engine care and maintenance section.

Lubrication time. It is important you take the time to lubricate your chain and bearings and displace any moisture. Spray the chain well, and lube the rear bearings as well. Remove the front hubs, wipe them and the spindle clean, oil the spindle shaft and replace

the hub. Spray the tubes mentioned above, and add a bit of lube on all the moving parts. Give the kart a good inspection, and if desired, wiping the kart with WD-40, gives it a nice shine. Now, weekly maintenance can begin.

## **Weekly Maintenance**

A properly maintained kart is usually a faster kart. Plus, the risk of falling out of a race from a failure is decreased significantly. Commonly overlooked items include dragging brake lines, loose weights, and missing or loose bolts. Any one of these items can cost a victory or good finish, and parts falling off or losing brakes can be dangerous. Take the necessary time to completely go over the kart. Check and make sure the parts that need to move are free, and that the others are tight. Make sure all your steering and brake connections are tight. Rules require every fastener holding steering or brake components to be cotter pinned or safety wired, this is a good time to verify these are in place. Just a couple of notes; locknuts should never be reused, once tightened, the holding ability is lessened, and tight is tight enough. There is not a need to over tighten. Weights must be double nutted or pinned, and verify they are tight. Attention needs to be paid to brake lines, throttle cables, fuel lines, and instrument leads to make sure they are securely tied away, dragging the track will damage usually beyond repair. Inspect and replace any bolts with damaged or rounded heads. Some that immediately come to mind are the ones turned the most: motor mount clamp bolts, wheel nuts, gear nuts, and weight bolts and nuts.

Take the time to make sure the catch tank is empty and clean. The engine draws air from the catch tank, and clean air is always better. The filter here needs the same attention as the one on the engine.

Bearings are another part of the kart that requires constant checking. Any bearing that roars, or makes noise is dirty and needs to be checked and more than likely changed. Just a note, anything you do to a bearing to get oil in, will also allow the entry of dirt and other contaminants, so be very cautious when prying back the bearing shields to oil your bearings. It is normally a better idea to leave the bearings alone and replace a couple times a year rather than to try and maintenance them. JRPW also has a removable bearing shield that you can remove to oil and lube your bearings. ( part number JRP 306?) This will also aid your bearing life, however, it is imperative that after washing, your bearings be oiled immediately.

Check all steering components for loose motion, and add a drop of lubricant to all moving parts. Inspect the rear axle assembly and make sure it does not move any side to side. Just as with the front end parts, any play or movement creates drag, which is scrubbing off speed. While you are at the rear axle, make sure your chain is properly aligned.