

Taking Care Of Your Investment

Racing is full of investments, and our engines are a major part of that. Careful maintenance and care can help the engine perform at its peak for the duration of the build. Many times, racers complain about their engine acting up, and the cause of the problem can be traced right back to the lack of attention paid to the engine between races and at the track. Let's start from the beginning with a brand new fresh engine, and outline how we need to care for it.

Adding the fuel and oil. The fuel needs to be strained to avoid any debris. We don't need anything creating a blockage in our carburetor. Add the oil using a clean funnel or container. A funnel with oil film on them at a dirt track is a magnet for dust, so make sure it is clean before using. Let's look at our air filter next.



Use a quality filter and ALWAYS spray with filter oil. Carefully spray the filter and cover the filter area with a good even coat, wipe the excess off and you are ready to install. This will help keep dirt from entering the carb. Having a extra filter to replace at the track is a good idea. You can pre-oil the filter and store in a zip-lock bag. This helps save a step at the track.

Speaking of air filter, we need to maintenance our filters as well. Every week the filters need to be cleaned before we use again. Dirt can destroy a brand new engine in a very short while, so take the time to prevent this. Spray the filter down with a good quality degreaser and allow to soak for a few minutes. Then, wash from the inside out with warm water. Warm water always does a better cleaning job than cold. Once satisfied the filter is clean, allow to



sit and dry. Never use compressed air to dry the filter, the element is easily damaged and will render the filter useless. Follow the same procedure for the catch tank filter if you have one. Keep



in mind; air filters have a life span. Visually inspect your filters with a flashlight from the inside, and if you see any holes or tears, discard right away.

Catch tanks. The catch tank is an often-overlooked item on the kart. The catch tank needs to always be clean. Take the time weekly to clean and empty the tank. The reasons for this are two fold. One, we don't want oil getting on the track, and two, the engine draws air from the tank. The engine expels air from the crankcase as the piston goes down, but it draws in as the piston goes up. If the tank is dirty, we are sucking the dirt right into the crankcase.

Now that we have the engine full of fluids, the filter clean, oiled, and installed, and our catch tank clean, let's head out on the track for our first laps on the engine. Finish the session, and upon getting to your pit, drop the oil with the engine hot. This helps flush the crankcase thoroughly of all the assembly oils

and contaminants from break-in. After this, your regular change schedule can be followed. I personally recommend changing the oil every twenty laps or so. This helps keep the crankcase flushed, and always keeps us nice fresh, clean oil. I start the day with fresh oil, change after practice, and change again after heats or qualifying. Always use good quality karting oil. Many are out there and some do a better job than others, contact me or your engine builder for recommendations.

Never use automotive oils. These oils usually are not compatible with alcohol, and may cause a lot of damage. They also make a TERRIBLE mess inside the engine.

Bolts, bolts, bolts. Some engines have a lot of vibration, and coupling this with the surface at some tracks, and well, you get the point. Take the time to check over your engine bolts and



make sure everything is nice and tight. The main areas to check are the carb and tank bolts, and the header and header brace bolts. Head bolts and sidecover bolts should only be tightened with a torque wrench. Tight is tight enough, more than that can cause damage and break parts.

Hopefully this will shed a bit of light on some potential trouble spots and help you get the best performance from your engine between rebuilds. All it takes is a little bit of time and care to keep everything running smooth.

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Driver Profiles

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	Lee Jordan Nickname: "Late" Age: 37 Hometown: Rock Hill, SC Division: Stock and Animal Series: Tri State Pro Series Chassis: Unimover Engine: Performance Karting and SDRF Sponsors: LJ DeCago, PAR Photos, and Chase's Race's Illustrated
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Lee Jordan is a self-employed graphic designer of screen printed apparel. He has been racing since the age of seventeen and continues to chase series and big money races all over the southeastern United States. He claims the 2nd Annual Bobby Jennings Memorial Race to be the biggest win of his career.

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www.jrpwracing.com