

GRASS ROOTS

TECH BARN

with: Jimmy Rivers

Getting a Clean Start

In last month's installment of the "Grassroots Tech Barn", we covered how to properly wash your engine. This month we are going to dig a bit deeper and explain how to wash your kart. We will outline the procedures necessary to get your kart sparkling clean.

Cleaning is a very important part of a good maintenance program. Some racers discount this and do not spend the time necessary to do the job correctly. A clean kart is much easier and more pleasurable to work on.

To begin, tape up the engine to prevent water from entering as we explained last month, and remove the clutch. It is strongly suggested you remove your My-Chron, (or other instru-



ment) as they are usually water resistant, not waterproof. I prefer to remove my front hubs as well and clean them with brake cleaner. Seal 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.

Always have your tools and supplies at the ready before beginning any wash job. Rubber gloves, a washrag, and a toothbrush are a few of 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. Have an air hose and blow gun, spray lubricant, and bearing oil within arm's reach as well.

Time to get wet; 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 overlooked spots, 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

parts becomes very difficult. Spend the necessary time to blow the brake system and the rear bearings dry as well.

Once we have the kart all dry, go ahead and lubricate your chain and bearings immediately. We want to make sure we have intercepted any possible moisture before it has a chance to cause problems. This is where being prepared ahead of time is critical. Spray and wipe down the kart with WD-40 or equivalent, and you are ready to start your regular maintenance program.

Like stated above, a clean kart is much easier to maintain and work on, and a properly maintained kart is a faster kart, and for us racers, faster is always better. See you next month!



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

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