

GRASS ROOTS TECH BARN

with: Jimmy Rivers

Rub-A-Dub-Dub, Without The Tub...

In this month's installment of the "Grassroots Tech Barn", we are going to explain how to properly wash your engine. This is a topic we have covered in the past, however I feel it



important enough to cover again for those that may have missed it before. I might also add, judging from the engines I see come into my shop, this is an area many racers need help with.

Some racers and engine builders cringe at the thought of getting an engine wet with water. Failure to properly seal an engine from moisture and allowing water to enter the engine can cause a lot of damage, just like washing your car with the windows down. This month's goal is to lay out the proper procedures to wash your engine with its "windows" up and sealed.

To begin, we must make sure all the openings where water can enter are sealed off. Remove the air filter and seal with a carb cap or tape. Tighten the spark plug to seal off the cylinder, and block off the line to the crankcase breather. Take a small piece of tape and close off the vent on the fuel cap as well. The only way to truly seal off the exhaust port

for washing is to have a header attached. Make sure the bolts are tight and use a good gasket.

Before I begin washing, I want to have everything necessary to complete the job ready for use. Degreaser, hot water if possible, a small brush, and an air hose are my tools of choice. This makes the job a good bit quicker, plus gets the engine dry



in a shorter period of time. Pressure washing is **STRONGLY** discouraged, as it will force dirt and water into the engine. Moderate pressure from a typical garden hose is more than sufficient.

Once satisfied we have the engine sealed, and our tools ready, hose off the engine to remove the first layer. Spray with



degreaser, and allow to soak as you scrub the difficult areas with a brush, then rinse thoroughly. Repeat as needed to get it nice and clean. Be sure to spray behind the flywheel and get the underside of the engine and chainguard clean as well.



As soon as you have finished with the water hose, get ready with the air hose. Thoroughly dry the engine with the air



hose to displace any moisture. If compressed air isn't available, a little ingenuity leads me to something like a leaf blower, lol. Laugh, but it will do the job just fine, and sometimes "a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do!" For extra security, you can start



the engine and let the heat complete the drying process.

To finish the job, spray the engine down with WD-40 or a similar lubricant. This will protect the engine from moisture as well as give it a nice shine. This is also a good time to drain the oil and get ready for the next day at the track.

Properly executed, this is the best, and most simple, way to clean your engine. Hopefully this helps you to be comfortable



with the process of cleaning your engine. Your engine as well as your builder will appreciate your new found skills. See you next month!



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