



Cold Remedy

Hard as it is for a lot of us racers in the south to believe, there are karters out there that cannot race all year long because of the weather in their region. Some racers have a very short season and their engine spends a lot of time in storage. Other racers, for different reasons need to put their engine away for a while. A lot



of ideas and methods exist, but I am going to share with you my personal recommendations. The goal of this article is to educate you on how to store your engine for an extended period of time, and how to bring it back out, and prepare it for the return to the track.

One of the most damaging things that can happen to any engine is rust, caused by exposure to moisture. Rust in the crankcase can be very costly, and require replacement of most all the engine's internal parts. If not detected, more damage may result, sometimes leading to a major blowup.

We want to make sure to start with a good clean engine. Wash thoroughly as outlined in one of our previous articles, which is available on our website. Once clean, start the engine and build some heat to displace any moisture. Once the engine is warm, drain the tank and allow the engine to run out of fuel. This insures the bowl in a flathead tank is empty as well. At this point, go ahead and drain the oil from the engine. Make certain to mark the engine to reflect the lack of oil, you don't want to remember this the hard way.

Once we have purged all the fluids, we want to prepare the engine for storage by lubricating the engine and blocking off the areas where moisture can enter. The areas of concern are the carburetor inlet, the exhaust port, the breather tube, and the fuel cap.

First, I like to remove the spark plug, and spray WD-40

liberally down the cylinder, and all over the valves and into the ports. Rotate the engine a few times by hand to make sure the lubricant reaches all areas. Once satisfied, rotate the engine to just before top dead center with both valves closed. Spray another shot of WD-40 into the cylinder. Leave a bit of the oil in the top of the cylinder during storage. When we leave the engine at top dead center with the valves closed, it relieves the pressure on the valve springs, and limits the chance of moisture entering the cylinder through the ports. Replace the spark plug, and tighten.

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Next, spray a shot of lubricant into the breather tube, and seal it thoroughly, whether by taping off or plugging the hole. Remove the header assembly, lube the exhaust valve, and seal off the port. Good quality tape will work, or use a template cut from



cardboard and bolt on using a gasket. While the header is in hand, spray some WD-40 in both ends; let's protect it while we are at it. Spray a good amount of the lubricant down the carburetor bore;

this will keep the intake tract protected. Remove the blower housing and lightly spray the flywheel and replace the cover. Spray the pto side of the crankshaft and the seal area to protect it from rust. Make sure to seal off the carb inlet, G-Man makes a handy cap for this for both styles of engines. Tape off the vent on the fuel cap for a flathead engine, or the fuel inlet on the fuel pump on an Animal and we are sealed and ready for a long winter's nap.

Where you store the engine also makes a big difference on how well it is protected. The race trailer is not the preferred



place, as the temperature stays cold. Your wife may not agree with this, but the best spot is indoors in a closet or laundry room, where the temperature stays constant and there is little presence of moisture. If you get shot or strangled, for bringing it inside, remember I am only making a suggestion. Plus, with the header removed, it takes up less space. If inside the house is not an op-

tion, try and store in the safest possible place.

When the time comes to bring it out of hibernation, remove the spark plug, and lubricate the cylinder again. Fill the crankcase with oil, and replace the fill plug. Hold your thumb over the spark plug hole and turn the engine upside down. This will allow a fresh coat of oil to cover all the internal parts before the engine is rotated.

If you have a flathead engine, go ahead and replace the carburetor diaphragm, and if an Animal, remove the bowl and lubricate the inlet needle. Remove all the tape and caps and bolt on the header. Spray one more small shot of lubricant down the cylinder, rotate the engine a few times by hand and replace and tighten the spark plug. Mount the engine on the kart and we are almost done.

After adding the fuel and starting the engine, let the engine get warm, then drain the oil to remove any contaminants. Replace with fresh oil, and we are done and ready to hit the track. Make sure to follow your regular maintenance schedule to insure the best possible performance between rebuilds.



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