

SPEED SHOP SCHOLAR

Welcome to another edition of the "Speed Shop Scholar." Another season of racing will be upon us before we know it, and it is time to prepare our machines for the battles that lie ahead. This month, we are going to talk about some of the parts and pieces that can let you down and leave you on the sidelines. We are also going to be proactive and be ahead of the curve by replacing some other parts before they have the chance to cause grief and heartache.



Maintenance and success go hand in hand. To win races, you have to finish races. Maintenance can be quick and easy, or deep and through; I believe we all know which one of these wins more races. Without a top notch maintenance program, your successes will be fewer than desired. Winning racers are always a step ahead.

Even though it is the dead of winter, unlike our friends in many areas of the country, racing season here in the Southeast never fully stops. This means some of us have little time to spare to get our maintenance done. No break, short break, or long break, it all has to get done. It's time to get to work.

As I stated above, some parts should be replaced on a regular basis, even without failure. I don't believe I have ever had a part break in the pits or in the shop. They have always waited and let me down

at a very inopportune time.

Throttle cables, spark plugs, chains, and many bolts are items that need frequent replacement. Other parts have a longer life cycle, but still need constant attention. Regular replacement is still important to maintain peak performance.

Throttle cables should be replaced a few times a year just for peace of mind. They can be bought for a couple bucks and can certainly cost much more than that if it fails. If you observe any fraying or unraveling, replace immediately.

Spark plugs are another item that should be cycled out by time rather than failure. With the poor quality of the gasoline we have to use, combined with prolonged idling, it doesn't take much for a letdown to occur. Keep a spare or two on hand just in case.

Chains are another item that is often overlooked until the bitter end. I have witnessed many a racer throw their chain several times, put it back on, and throw it again; constantly repeating the cycle. Almost always, chains twist once they are thrown, and are much more likely to leave you out of the running.

Replace any discarded chain, and find the source of the problem. Improper alignment and excessive tension are usually the culprits.

Motor mount bolts are often completely ignored until one rounds out. If you have ever witnessed someone under a kart with everything from a chisel to a





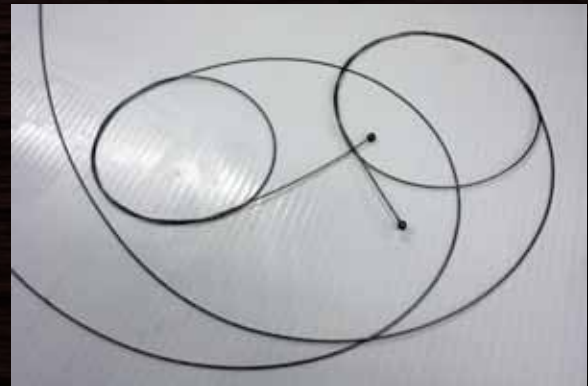
tion will extend bearing life greatly.

We cannot be thorough if we don't address our fuel lines. We have discussed in the past how the fuel hardens them, and this requires frequent replacement. Keep some extra line on hand along with a spare filter or two. Taking the time to fully clean the fuel system is always a good idea. Be certain to secure all connections of your lines.

Time spent going over every detail and replacing suspect items before a failure occurs is definitely



hacksaw blade, you can understand the value of good bolts. Getting caked with dirt along with rounded Allen bits are usually to blame. Inspect every time you loosen the mount, and keep an eye on your wrench you use. Often the bolt is damaged by a very worn tool. This is definitely a place where a quality tool is necessary. You certainly don't



want to be the one under the kart trying to get the stripped bolt out. A dab of anti-seize on your new bolts will also save you many headaches.

While on the bolt subject, inspect all the bolts you use often. Hub bolts, exhaust bolts, weight mounting bolts,

time well spent. It's often the small details that separate the front runners from the pack. Be observant, be proactive, and be safe. See you next month!



any of these can create quite an issue if they strip or round out. Again, inspect your sockets and wrenches too.

Inspect all your bearings for wear. The only acceptable motion in a bearing is in the direction of travel, any side to side, or up and down movement is grounds for immediate replacement. Even slight movement will be magnified once under a load. Noisy, tight, or bearings with rough spots also should be replaced. Proper cleaning and lubrication

