



SPEED SHOP SCHOLAR

Welcome to another edition of the "Speed Shop Scholar." It has become the time of year that we need to talk about protecting our equipment from the effects of winter. Cold, damp weather can damage or possibly ruin hundreds, and even thousands



of dollars of racing equipment in a matter of days. This month, we are going to share some secrets to prevent this from happening to you.

Before any maintenance program can begin, we must start with a clean slate, or in this case, a clean kart. Once clean and dry, coat the entire chassis and running gear with a good coat of spray lubricant. Be certain to spray and coat all areas, not just the ones you can readily see. This includes the un-



derside of the chassis. Pay extra attention to all uncoated surfaces as they will need additional oil to remain protected. Using a quality bearing oil, lubricate all bearings and rod ends. Turn the steering shaft and spin the axle to allow the oil to circulate throughout.

The mandated fuel in the Box Stock classes is gasoline. This is definitely not a quality fuel. Today's fuel has many ingredients and components that make it very corrosive to our engines. Using any type of treatment or stabilizer, while maybe effective, will run us afoul of the technical regulations applied to the fuel.

The best choice is to remove all the fuel completely from the system and cleanse and treat all the affected components. This begins by draining the fuel tank and all the lines. Remove the fuel line at the



pump and drain the gasoline into an approved container. Then, remove the float bowl from the carburetor, and using low pressure compressed air, gently blow any remaining fuel from the system. While the bowl is removed, blow the carb dry of fuel, and lightly coat all the internal areas of the carburetor and the inside of the bowl with WD-40. Spray a light coat inside the carb as well, to protect the throat area.

After all the fuel is gone and the carburetor is protected, remove the fuel tank from the kart. Shake and thoroughly empty to ensure all traces of fuel are

gone. Any remaining fuel will definitely sour before the new season begins. Remount the tank securely.

To help protect the engine while it rests over the break, remove the spark plug and spray a liberal amount



of WD-40 down the cylinder. Pull the engine over slowly to circulate the lubricant. Finish off with a final squirt and then replace and securely tighten the spark plug. Pulling the engine up onto the compression stroke will close both valves and further isolate the cylinder from any moisture.

Complete the protection process by draining the oil, and sealing off all the areas where air and/or moisture can possibly enter. This includes the breather tube, the exhaust, and the air filter adapter. Be certain to tag the engine to reflect the lack of oil, we do not want any issues due to the lack of oil. Spray a light coating of WD-40 over the entire engine to protect it while it rests, adding a bit extra to any exposed bare metal, such as the crankshaft.

One of my pet peeves is rust in the socket head of allen bolts. Most allen head bolts we use are uncoated, and the slightest bit of moisture turns into a rust spot in the socket head. To keep myself off the edge of the cliff, I wet the tip of a q-tip with spray lube and rub into the head of the bolts as an additional safeguard against rusting.

To protect your clutches for the winter, place into a zip-lock bag and store away. Use the same method to protect other important items such as your My-Chron.

Storage location of your racing equipment dictates how well everything survives the winter. If you can move everything inside



into a garage or other area with some sort of climate control, this is preferred. However, this is not always the case. If your racing trailer is your storage location, seal off any



obvious air leaks to keep out as much moisture as possible. I also recommend a product called Damp-Rid. This uses calcium chloride flakes in an elevated basket to draw moisture out of the air. This is a fantastic aid in the fight against moisture, anytime of the year. It works great in the trailer



or the shop, anywhere you want to eliminate or reduce a moisture problem.

The time and effort you spend in preparation for a winter break will be rewarded in the coming months when you prepare for the new season. Spring prep will require less effort and your precious equipment will be in a much better mechanical and visually appealing condition. The new season starts here, today. An ounce of prevention is equivalent to a pound of cure. See you next month. Stay warm and dry!

