

# KARTER



# NEWS

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TRIES  
KARTING





*Dan seems to think this is O.K. !!*

# **ALL AMERICAN RACERS TRY KARTING!**

Karting has matured. We are turning lap times near and sometimes faster than Indy-type U.S.A.C. cars. We have a technical competence that turns out machines which will handle, brake, and provide gobs of power as well. The 2-stroke engine has been engineered and developed until it turns out as much as four horsepower per cubic inch. That kind of power output will lay any other type of motive power in the shade—bar none. Without karting, the 2-stroke might still be pottering around on chain saws and lawnmowers. Today's motorcycle 2-strokes and some outboards are taking cues from kart engines, but are still in a fairly rudimentary stage when compared with our screaming little bombs.

Back around the early sixties, the boom in karting activity enticed nearly everyone to try their hand at the unpretentious looking, but fun, karts. Movie stars, highly-placed executives, farmers, and even pro-racers of the big cars got in on the action and doubled up their legs to go scooting around on the seat of their pants.

The dyed-in-the-wool kart racers were most interested in the comments about karts from the pro-racers. However, the state of the art as it was in those early days precluded the pros from viewing karting seriously as a part of the racing picture. One press report had Sam Hanks of Indianapolis fame saying that the twin Mc 20 machine he tried was "the most overpowered piece of hardware" he'd ever been on. It probably was. The early karts lacked some finesse in the handling department. The brakes were sometimes merely scrubs on the tires or, at best, modified for kart use by converting a brake intended for other than racing usage.

Another problem was that the short road courses built for karts were foreign to the pros, so they could not form a frame of reference to compare karting with their usual equipment.

It has been some time now since karting has received much national press. During this time, many changes have come about. First, enduro racing became popular. Second, engine, chassis and brake development provided better and better machines with which to harness the increases in engine output. Third, a good national organization lent direction and pro-

grams that build a strong foundation for the sport as a whole. All of these changes provided credibility and maturity to karting as a serious member of motorsport. IKF has begun to push away from tending its own fires and is seeking to build a name for the sport that will be respected for what it really is. We are no longer a mere novelty!

This program requires a good deal of public relations and education. To that end IKF contacted Dan Gurney and Swede Savage of All American Racers. The intent was to set up an introductory day for the pros to get a real feel for the state of the sport as it has developed to date. Enduro equipment was chosen since both Dan and Swede were somewhat familiar with sprint equipment, but the long distance machines were new to them. We also felt the pros could make a better comparison between enduros and the big cars since they race on the same courses.

The All American Racers team has signed to race Plymouth Barracudas in the Sports Car Club of America Trans-Am Championship series. Their involvement in preparation for this, and USAC racing, leaves them with a lot of work and not much time. However, Dan and Swede are the kind of people who love racing, and are willing to "go the second mile" for those who share their feelings. It is really great to meet people like Dan and Swede. Their success has not blunted their helpful attitude toward the "little guy."

A bit of history is in order here. Dan started racing sporty-type equipment in Southern California which eventually gained him a spot on the Porsche Formula One Grand Prix team. Dan led the team of silver cars until Porsche decided to abandon its Formula One effort. After a short time, Dan formed All American Racers to design and build his now-famous Eagle racing machine. The chassis was an instant success, but it was reported that many teething problems with the Gurney-Westlake engine prevented him from continuing the Formula One competition. Dan's talents were turned toward Indianapolis and other United States Auto Club racing. He is also active in SCCA and NASCAR racing. Dan finished second at Indy twice with stock-block Ford engines.

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*Swede and Duff check out the Mole.*





*Dan and Rocky Moran discuss his FKE while Jim Fullmer looks on.*



*Dan and Swede receiving their custom-made leathers from Azusa Engineering.*



*Bob Meli and Swede get the C-Open ready to light up – Dean Lamborn on the starter.*



*Swede really enjoyed the "Water Bomb".*

## ALL-AMERICAN RACERS

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FKE. Dan is tall and was cramped in there, but he gamely set out to see what was up. The gears were a bit tall for the short course available to us, but Dan seemed to get the feel pretty well, despite the fact that Rocky's clutch quit working after a few hot laps. At first, letting the clutch slip took some getting used to, but in typical Gurney fashion, Dan adapted very quickly to the new type of equipment.

Meantime, Swede was trying to get situated into Duffy's Mole, but he didn't feel as though he could safely get out on the course, being so cramped. Duff fits his machine perfectly, but Swede's motorcycle-muscle thighs were just too thick to steer properly.

Dan came in and talked to Rocky about his Mole while Swede moved over to Bob Meli's twin B-Bomb powered Rupp (K series) kart. It didn't take long for Swede to find the com-

*Swede, driving Bob Meli's C-Open leads Dan who is on Ted Fabian's*



bination, and shortly thereafter, Dan set out in Chuck Pittenger's C Open National Championship machine (owned by Ted Fabian). Everyone stopped to watch this one, because after a few familiarization laps Dan and Swede got together for a dice. Lap after lap they went after one another, having quite a ball. Swede would pull Dan down the straight just a bit, but Dan got him back in the twisty stuff.

Finally, we gave them the one lap signal as Bob Meli figured his machine might be nearly out of fuel and starting to lean out. When they coasted into the pits, Dan was fine but Swede had a touch of excitement out there, and came in on only three wheels. It seems that he was flat out on the straight when the world slewed around suddenly as the right rear wheel and tire departed. Swede said he had his hands full for a moment, but he managed to handle it in the end. Bob found the missing parts and concluded that the knock-off must have unscrewed itself somehow.

Dan talked to Ted and Chuck while Swede got with his old friend Daryl Domes who, along with Mike Colver, got him into Mike's water cooled B Limited machine. (See report in February Karter News.) Jack Nelson's twin B-Bomb C Open was Dan's next ride.

The press people, after taking pictures, were busy riding Tom Medley and Skip Shaw's two Reed machines and really turning on to karts, too, by the way.

Later on, Swede asked Dan to take a spin on Mike's "Water Bomb" and play with the adjustable stinger and trigger operated carburetor. It would be safe to say that they both really were impressed with the innovations on Mike's machine. Before the day was over, Mike had one tire showing cord.

All in all, everyone had a successful and interesting day—press included. The technical editor of Hot Rod, John Thawley, claimed he was afraid he was "hooked" on karting. Swede also expressed an interest in running some races now and then

if he could find the time. Dan enjoyed the day immensely as well. You can bet that he will keep an eye on karting, too. George Cardas and Dan may get together about fuel for AAR's Indy cars as a result of their conversations.

Karter News interviewed Dan and Swede later to round up their overall impressions about their day with the karts.

IKF and Karter News would like to thank those people who provided us with a cross-section of karts for the day.

Duffy Livingstone—Mole/B-Bomb

Rocky Moran—Mole/B-Bomb

Tony Paronelli—"Pumpkin Seed"/B-Bomb

Mike Colver—B-Bomb/Hornet

Ted Fabian—Mc101's/Merit

Jim Barbee—Mc101's/Merit

Bob Meli—B-Bombs/Rupp "K"

Jack Nelson—B-Bombs/Rupp "K"

George Cardas—Komets/Kolb

Tom Medley—Mc91A/Hornet

Skip Shaw—Mc91A/Hornet

John Broadbeck—W. Bends/?

These people allowed us to use their "sweated-over" equipment for the advancement of the sport of karting. We all appreciate their attitude, and we think that Karter News can speak for everyone in the sport when we say THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Also IKF and Karter News would like to thank Azusa Engineering who provided custom-made leathers to Dan and Swede for the occasion. The words of Jim Patronite, owner of Azusa, show Azusa Engineering's thoughts. "If it will promote karting we are only too glad to help." We all thank you Jim.

Finally, we would like to thank Dan and Swede for taking time away from their extremely tight schedules to give us a boost. We think they enjoyed themselves, and we are very happy to have put the show on for them.

*National Championship machine.*

