



Track Etiquette

We try to teach all new racers what the 'rules of the road' are, because they apply in practice as well as during a race. 'Rules of the road' are an outgrowth of both common courtesy and sportsmanship. Strict adherence to the, 'rules of the road', are demanded of all drivers so that a safe place to practice and race exists. Here are a few of them.

Always drive a straight line, don't zig zag. When you aren't driving a straight line you are blocking, and that is against the rules. If you aren't fast enough to keep the person behind you maybe you should let them go by and learn something from following them. Sometimes some unintentional blocking goes on when we have beginners involved. Often our small drivers steer in the direction they look. If another kart pulls up along side, and the small size racer looks over at them, inadvertently the small size racer steers in the direction that they are looking. This usually results in a collision. Not typically life threatening, but a good way to bend wheel rims.

No bumping or pushing. In racing there is casual contact, but intentional contact is not allowed. It is sometimes hard to tell the two apart. This is one of the challenges that the race director, flagman, and corner workers face. If it is determined that someone is bumping or running into someone else on purpose, they will be black-flagged and get a penalty. This is done for two reasons. Most bumping or pushing is an accident waiting to happen, and certainly not a sportsman like way to compete. It is harder and takes more skill to pass a fellow competitor without first hitting him. The good racers aspire to pass in this matter.

When is it okay to overtake in a corner? Experience and good judgment will help the seasoned karter avoid trouble with another competitor in a corner. For the beginner, we try to convince them that unless they are clearly alongside or ahead of the person they are trying to overtake, they should concede the corner to the other person. Now you'll see karters race through corners side-by-side. The rules regarding who has the right to the corner exist to avoid a potentially dangerous situation. If a competitor manages to get his front wheels just past the rear wheels of the racer in front, and then they enter the corner in this fashion, the person in front may never know that he has company close behind.

No "paybacks". Human nature says that if you've been wronged you get even, right? Not. Getting even right there and then seems like a fair enough policy, but the problem is that usually the guy that just rammed you from behind may have had help doing it, or did it completely by accident, or wasn't even the person who did it! After all, the driver fixing to retaliate didn't see what happened in most cases, he just felt it. So the violated driver sets about getting even and the next thing you know someone is run off the track, or the two now engaged in a rolling battle end up on top of each other. This isn't good for obvious safety reasons, but also because we now have good opportunity for someone to get mad, and emotional, and ugly. That's why the race crew makes decisions on who should be disciplined, if anybody.