

WEST AUSTRALIAN 21/12/05 #15

Indoor tracks welcome newcomers

KART RACING

KEN SEEBER

Outside it could be raining, hailing, snowing, boiling hot or just simply dark, but you can always have some fun with go-karts, this time indoors.

Perth has two indoor hire kart facilities, one at Belmont and the other in O'Connor.

Both circuits are well established, with the O'Connor circuit being around for 14 years, owned and managed for nearly all that time by brothers Gary and Brendan Joyce.

In addition to their main 242m circuit that can handle 10 karts on the

track at the one time, there is a "slider" track of 60m where the surface is hosed with water.

It is just like driving on ice — and makes for some very interesting sessions.

Clientele varies widely, with many companies providing corporate events for employees.

These are well catered for with organised competition, amusement activities and snack bars.

The mainstream karts use a 6hp Briggs & Stratton four-stroke engine with a centrifugal clutch making them simple to drive and allowing the driver to focus on getting round the track. They have a top speed of 50kmh.

With a sophisticated timing system in place, each competitor receives a print-out of their lap times, thereby

ending all potential arguments about who was the best.

Kids as young as eight can drive on the track, as long as they meet the 125cm height requirement.

With internal-combustion engines running indoors, fumes can be an issue but both circuits have overcome this with big, open doors and fans for maximum ventilation.

So, get yourself and the kids down to one of these tracks and have some fun over the holidays. Both are open seven days a week until late.

Warning: Many people who have sampled karting at these indoor tracks (and the outdoor tracks) have gone on to join a club, buy a kart and start racing.

The contact number for Belmont is 9479 1200 and the O'Connor venue is on 9314 2435.



Stella Chen Ming Hui, 13, tries out the indoor kart track at Belmont.