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Power the go in some kart classes

KART RACING

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In some previous karting features we have looked at some of the engines used in the popular mainstream "control" classes. There are, however, some other classes where more power is the go.

In WA, the State Karting Association has created the Open class, which caters for a range of high-performance kart engines, using a range of weights to achieve overall performance parity.

This ranges from 130kg for a 125cc piston port engine up to 185kg for a twin reed valve engine kart. These are the minimum all-up

weights of the kart and driver after each heat.

The result of this amalgamation is a range of devices that provide the fastest way around a go-kart track.

One type of engine allowed to run in the Open class is the ICC or "shifter" engine.

These are 125cc in capacity and run a clutch in conjunction with a six-speed gearbox.

More commonly in Europe, karts with these engines start racing with a standing start when all together in a single class.

However, with the WA Open class, because many of the karts are direct drive (with no clutch), a rolling start must be used.

There are a few makes of shifter engine, all coming from Italy, a country that has a long history of producing racing kart engines.

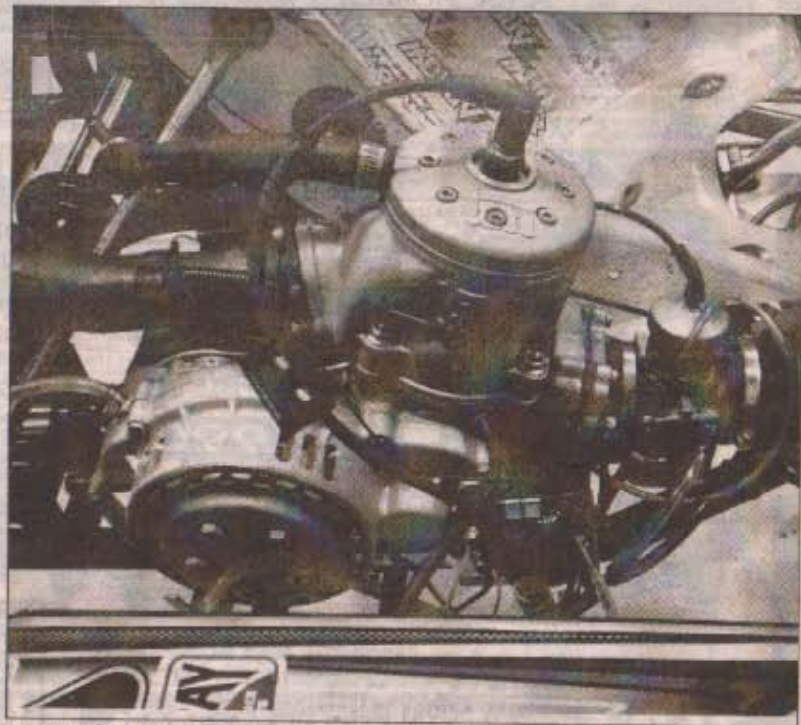
The engine shown in the picture is made by TM, which, in Australia, is the main shifter engine alongside another make, the Pavesi.

Both are similar and produce around 31kW (42hp). If scaled up to the size of a 3.8-litre V6 Commodore this would give 954 kW (1276hp).

Very impressive but not sure how one would fit the 30 cylinders required under the Commodore bonnet.

Fitted to the kart, the engines have a left-hand clutch lever under the steering wheel and a right-hand gearshift lever under the steering wheel.

While the Open class is not run as frequently as the other classes, it is spectacular, drawing everyone to the fence whenever it is run.



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The TM 125 is one of the fastest engines allowed on a go-kart track.