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Karts provide on the edge action

KARTING

KEN SEEBER

The closer to the edge you operate, the greater the chance of an accident there is. Karting is on the edge.

Motorsport has the basic goal of going around the track in the shortest possible time to get to the chequered flag first.

This applies to everyone on the track and when two or three karters want to get into that corner at the same time, something has to give.

In 99 per cent of the cases, someone will back off and everyone gets through in an orderly fashion.

A common protocol is that if the

other driver has his/her body in line with your front wheels then it's their corner and you back off and let them have it (the corner that is).

As always, there are the 1 per cent situations and the karts touch.

Fortunately, since karts first started racing, the crash safety of karts has improved immeasurably.

All karts now have to run nose cones at the front, side pods between the front and rear wheels on each side and rear bumper bars.

These are designed to prevent the karts and their wheels locking together in a touch situation.

Because of these measures, most accidents result in the karts spinning off and stalling, leaving the driver to wait out the rest of the race.

Also with time, karting safety

requirements have developed, with high standards of the safety apparel for the driver covering boots, driving suit, gloves and helmet.

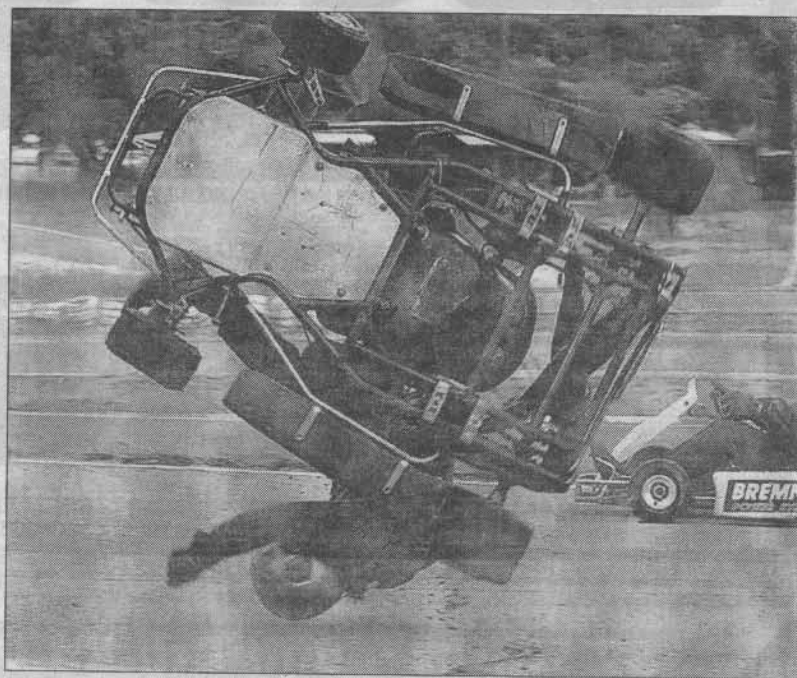
At race meetings, fully trained first aid personnel are always on hand, with an ambulance present for the full racing day.

However, some accidents can get worse than just a touch, as the accompanying photo shows.

In this case the driver, Mike Sully in the middle of a big one, walked away with slight bruising, a tribute to the karting safety standards.

As is usual in these situations, the kart came off much worse than the driver.

With a bit of work, both the driver and kart were able to participate in the next heat.



Mike Sully flying at the Cockburn Kart Circuit. Picture: Karlo Perisic.