

The New Newman Kart Club's road trip to the Karratha round of the Northwest Zone 2005 Championship.

By Vic Marwick

It all started a few months ago with a few beers out the club. (As most of these things do.) A few of us were sitting around, secure in the knowledge that we had reached the pinnacle of Kart racing. We'd won a couple of races each at the local club meets and thus had nothing to learn about Karting. It was time to take our fantastic raw talent out to the world and show them what real racers can do.

Inevitably, the beers wore off, and so did some of the blind enthusiasm. Bravado, however, was alive and well. Chance meetings of the other involved parties gave rise to lots of "Yeah mate, I'm ready." "Definitely going," "Almost organised the paperwork." And so on. These were of course, almost all complete lies. We all wanted to go, of course. But the date was approaching fast and none of us had done anything at all about the said paperwork, or our karts, or registration, or accommodation, or travel, or **anything** for that matter. I know for my part at least, I was thinking of going up to Karratha to watch, and all of the other stuff was too difficult to organise. "I'll do that next year", I faithfully promised myself.

So the weeks rolled by, the bravado continued and there was almost no chance that we would have to show up all those highly experienced posers that would undoubtedly be racing at the Zone meet anyway. We had got out of it! We could go and watch the races, sink gallons of beer and slap each other on the backs, sagely telling each other how we would flog the daylight out of them if we were out there.. PERFECT!

Unfortunately, we hadn't counted on Bully. I had gone to bed early about a week before the meet. (I was in bed early following a full day of drinking and spruiking about it being too late to organise for the Zone. ("Pity none of those other bludgers had done anything about it."))

The knock on the door from Bully was enough of a surprise without even hearing that he'd just got off the phone with the Karratha club secretary and had nominated myself, Jethro, Greeny and Todd, to race at the Zone.

I smugly pointed out to Bully (who was flushed with Jim Beam fuelled enthusiasm,) that it was too late to organise our licenses in time for the meeting. Bully just took another swig of enthusiasm, looked blankly at me unable to comprehend my stupidity, and said that we'd get Niva to sort it out.

Now I'll be the first to admit that it was very naïve of me to believe that even Bully wouldn't have the front to bother Niva with all of the paperwork and hassles at this late stage, particularly since we all knew that she had been pretty unwell. So foolishly I went back to bed believing that when the Beam wore off, Bully would see sense, the same as I did.

Did I say that I was Naïve? Bloody stupid would be closer to the mark. Full credit to Niva though, she was watching TV, looked ready for bed and had a sick 4 year old to deal with. She was, as usual, extremely helpful and graciously helped us get our licenses in time for the big day. Bless her soul, she didn't even go crook at Bully and tell us to rack off and leave her alone. Bloody woman! How was I supposed to get out of it now?

The rest of the week was a blur of dayshifts and nightshifts, getting the popup caravan, the car and the karts ready. (The latter ended up being a quick degrease and pressure wash.) We loaded the Karts into Greeny's trailer on Thursday all set for a sparrow fart start on Friday. Greeny and Co, as well as the Styles family all made timely starts and got underway at the arranged time. The Marwick family pulled a supreme effort and was only half an hour late hitting the road. An uneventful trip to Karratha followed and we even found the Kart track without incident, thanks to the incredible foresight of throwing Bully's mud-map in the bin.

At the time I arrived, there were probably about 40 or 50 karts at the track. We casually strolled around the pit area with the nonchalant disdain of seasoned Kart stars, even remembering to wipe our drool off the shifter karts before we went on to register to race. We proudly showed off our pretty pink temporary licenses, and happily set about the important task of displaying our brand new "P" plates prominently on our battered 5 – 10 year old karts.

While all this was happening, another 30 – 40 karts arrived and started setting up camp. This didn't faze seasoned professionals like us at all, so while the youngsters Jethro and Todd practised. Greeny and I smoked cigarettes, discussed complicated tactics and drooled on expensive karts. We did eventually go out to practise and our dazzling performance mesmerised the others so much that I expertly crashed the back of my kart into the front of a faster competitor, and Greeny had some of the shifter karts wondering "where the hell did he come from?"

After scaring the competition into submission, Greeny and I discussed tactics with our highly qualified pit crew over a few TEDs, while Jethro and Todd continued to practise. The boys had tea and practised some more while Greeny, the crew and I discussed tactics over a few TEDs. The boys finished practising and went to bed while Greeny, the crew and I discussed tactics over a few TEDs. Eventually, (about 1:30am I think) we had developed the most ingenious and unbeatable race tactics in the history of kart racing and thus armed, and secure in the knowledge that we could not be beaten, we retired for the night. However, come morning, the tactics of the century had been mysteriously stolen from our brains while we slept. Bugger, the unbeatable tactics were now in the hands of the competition. We don't know what technology they had used to extract our secrets directly from our heads, but whatever it was, it had some side effects. We were all mysteriously suffering chronic headaches, dry mouths and a crook guts. These side effects lasted for the whole day. Filthy cowards, nobbling us like that!

The racing on Saturday was fast, furious and of an incredibly high standard. I know this because I had an excellent view from the back of the pack. (Actually I wasn't even that close to the back of the pack to be honest.) Greeny was treated to a similar view but at least had the benefit of a very fast lady to follow, this kept him closer to the pack than might have been possible if he was trying to chase down the blokes.

The two boys, Todd Bull (Junior National) and Jethro Marwick (Pro Cadets) put in solid performances through the whole day. Although they got off to a bit of a shaky start, (In Jethro's case, because of Dad's mechanical intervention), both put in excellent races in the final and were able to chase down competitors who had been faster than them for the whole day. On the whole the young guys competed fiercely for the entire day and were a credit to the Newman Kart Club. Well-done Guys!

Many thanks to Graham Styles for his tireless help moving Karts, keeping track of when we were supposed to be racing, mechanical assistance and great pushing. Thanks mate.

As for the seniors (AKA Greeny and me) Newman Kart Club has established (or re-established) a reputation as a bunch of piss tanks. This is a huge compliment in Karting circles (even better than being fast!). I don't foresee too much problem in keeping this illusion alive at the Newman Zone meet on 10th September.

On the other side of the coin, it was awesome to see how fast some of these guys really are. My observations suggest that as well as talent and experience, these guys show tremendous attention to detail and Kart set-up, I for one am going to try and follow their example in that regard.

Keep Racing
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