

Karting Magazine

TRACK TEST

78/72



BLOW GNAT - CORSAIR T70 TESTED BY PAUL FLETCHER

As the 1970 International season progressed it became increasingly obvious that the German Taifun class 100 kart had something special. What that something was nobody really knew. It certainly wasn't finish because at that time it was one of the most deplorably finished production karts ever made, but in spite of this, teams that were using them were successful and only Goldstein, who kept faithfully to his Swedish Robardie stopped a Taifun domination as early as June 1970.

First two

After the World Championships that year in Paris, David Ferris and myself decided that if somebody in England had to try the Taifun it might as well be us. Two months later we had one each and this was the start of a major rethink by the British manufacturers. David lent his to a kart manufacturing friend and I sent mine to Blow's of Chesterfield. Blow at that time were making the Viking, which was good on the fast Northern tracks but left a little to be desired on the Continental type twisty tracks. Blow who are noted for their originality as well as quality were very reluctant to copy but they did, adding many improvements of their own and calling it the Gnat. Whether by luck or judgment, they have turned out a kart which is breaking track records all over the country and one which my original Taifun has great difficulty keeping up with. It was with this in mind that I thought it might be interesting to track test a Gnat just to see what makes it tick.

Well plated

At first glance the Gnat looks well proportioned, comfortable and bristling with chrome plating. On close examination the workmanship and quality becomes apparent. All the removable bits like the steering column, bumpers and pedals etc. are all chromed. This particular chassis was finished in green with Blows unique epoxy-resin coating which is notable not only for its hardness but for its anti-chipping properties.

The adjustable steering column is supported at the bottom end by needle roller bearings and the pedals have replacable bushes. How nice to see that the cable ends have proper engineered clevises on them, not like on the majority of karts where the cable is looped round on itself and fastened with those monstrosities called solderless nipples.

Good mount

An excellent point is the construction of the engine mount. The two pieces that fit round the chassis tube are separate from the engine plate and this allows all types of engines to be fitted without having to buy another engine mount. The mount also has inset split nylon bushes for gripping the tubes. No more horrible bits of rubber. All the Gnats are fitted with a 6" two leading shoe drum brakes, Nylite wheels and a large 1 gallon fibreglass petrol tank. The seat is of Blows own manufacture but not suprisingly like an upholstered Taifun.

Wet patches

When I decided the time had come to try the handling, the Fulbeck track had dried partially to that difficult stage where it was wet in patches. The seat felt comfortable and well supporting and the steering wheel felt nearer than the Taifun.

The Corsair engine started immediately with no fuss. Into the first bend—brake—lock rear wheels, must remember that we have an efficient drum brake not discs! The handling feels so much like a Taifun its unbelievable. End of first lap—the big rear Goodyears still not warm with a tendency to spin on wet patches. The steering feels slightly heavy but unlike a Taifun there is no understeer on the wet bits. Lap 2—Goodyears beginning to bite, even gripping well in wet, the handling very predictable, it goes where you put it.

SPECIFICATION

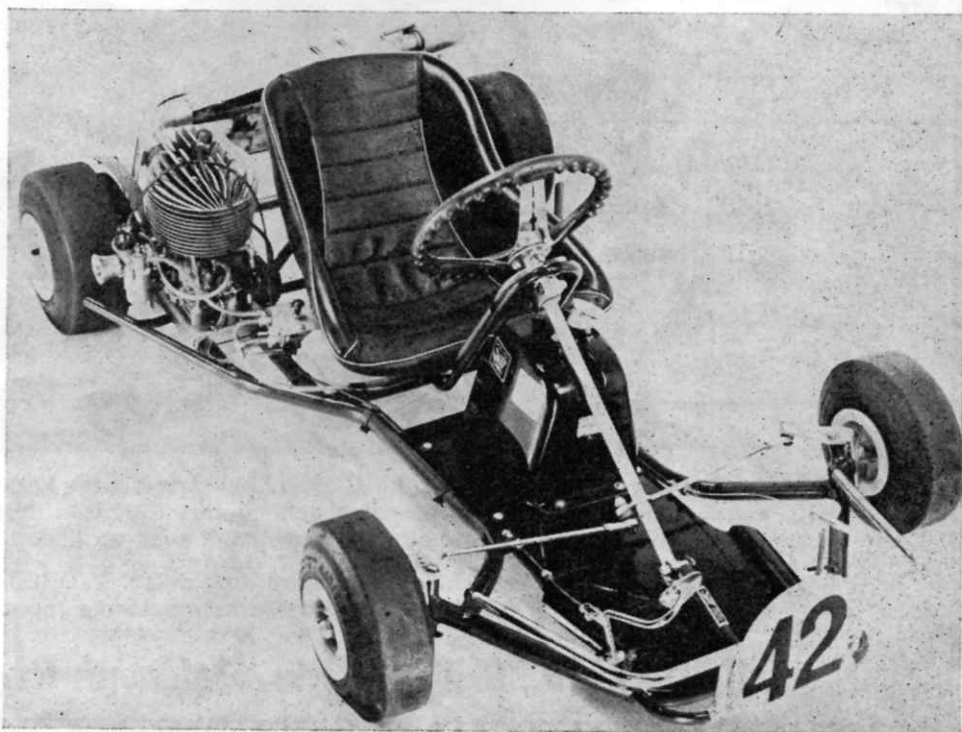
Manufacturer	J. J. Blow Ltd., Oldfield Works, Chatsworth Rd., Chesterfield, Derbys. Tel. 0246-76635.	Rear Axle	1in. dia. 55/60 ton H.T. Steel supported in three self aligning bearings.
Model	Gnat.	Seat	Full wrap round Glass fibre upholstery.
Wheels	4in. front Nylite with taper roller bearings. 5in. rear Nylite with blow spun alloy spacers.	Tank	Fibre glass. 1 gallon capacity fitted with supply & return taps and transparent window to see contents.
Tyres	Continental or Carlisle as standard. Goodyear Blue Streak rears (as tested).	Foot Tray	Fibre glass. Full length.
Brake	Blow Turbofin 6in. two leading shoe. Taper lock Alloy Drum with C.I. Liner.	Finish	Chassis Epoxy-Resin powder coated in various colours. Front, & rear bumpers, pedals, steering column, nerf bars chrome plated.
Engine Mount	Fabricated light alloy quick change, suitable all rotary value engines.	Weight	Front 28lb. rear 76lb. Total 114lb. complete with Dap/Corsair T70 Engine with 150lb. driver (10 stone 10lb.) as tested. Front 76lb. = 35% rear 172lb. = 65% Total 264lb. With Alloy rear axle total weight 109lb. excluding driver.
Steering	12in. dia. Azusa steering wheel. Column supported on split Alloy Bush & Needle Roller. Adjustable for height. 5/16in. steel track rods with RM5 uniball joints. Hardened & Ground King pins with needle roller bearings & brass thrust washers for front stub axles.	Options	Chassis colour, Alloy Axle, sprocket size No. Plate colour.
Materials	Main chassis members Tube Investments 1½in. dia. x 17 gauge 5CM. Chrome molybdenum tube seat stays, steering hoop. Bumpers Nerf Bars etc. ¾in. dia. SMS.	Optional Extras	Goodyear Blue Streak Rear Tyres & Tubes £12.60. Blow Spun Alloy Spacers to suit £2.50. Drive Chain £1.75.
Dimensions	Wheelbase 42in. front track 32½in. (as tested) rear track 33in. (as tested) adjustable 33in. to 34½in. pedals to seat back 42in. (as tested) overall length 6in.	Standard Kit Fittings include	Seat upholstery, plastic No. plates & clips chain guard & bracket, universal exhaust mounting bracket, ignition switch & cable, petrol pipe, sprocket, Brake & Throttle cables. Tyres & Tubes.
		Price	£145 Ex. works.

The Corsair engine has terrific bottom and middle power but limited top end, this is consistent with John Mills tuning for Fulbeck. I decided to come in and find out why the kart handled better in the wet than my Taifun. The only significant difference that could be seen was that the castor action was greater (Lean-back on the king pins) and this obviously accounted for the heavier steering and would stop understeer. I do think that the big Goodyears have brought kart manufacturers and drivers additional problems and the biggest is this tendency to understeer in

unfavourable conditions. The Gnat has gone a long way towards solving it.

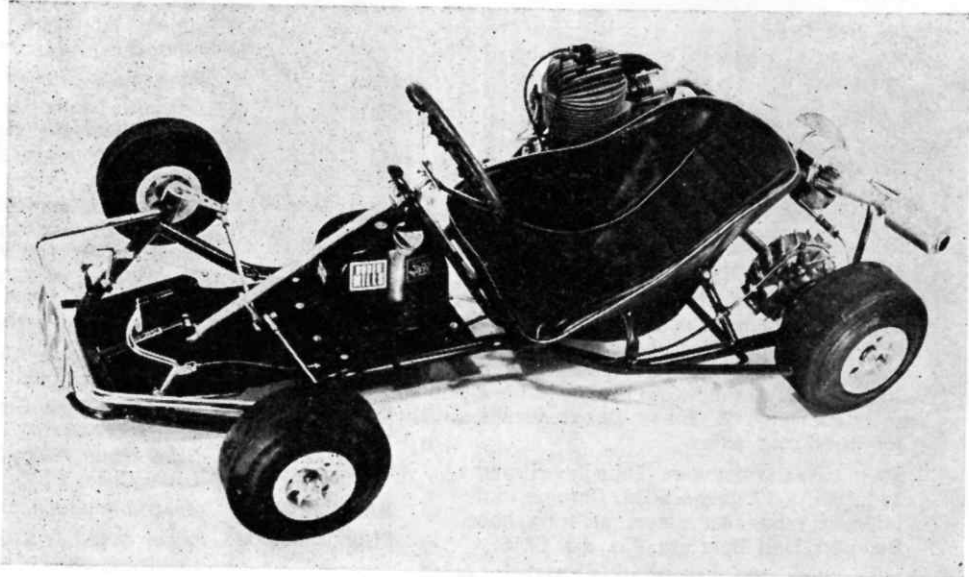
By now the track had dried considerably and the fat Goodyears really came into their own. Corners that 6 months ago were "lift-off ones" were now flat and the combination of Gnat, Corsair and Goodyear proved a formidable combination. The chassis at £158 ex works complete, with "big" tyres (and I mean complete)—can't be bad.

The special epoxy-resin finish enables a kart to stay looking smart when conventionally painted models look sand-blasted. To accommodate fat rear tyres Blow spun spacers are available. Braking comes from an excellent 6 in. drum unit which is finned for cooling.



Blow

GNAT



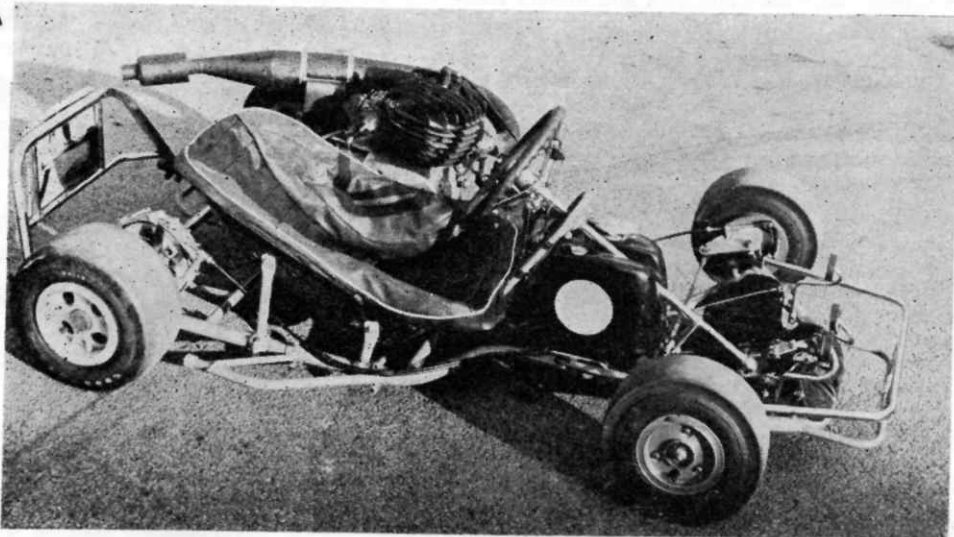
PRICE:—
£145
in
Kit Form
Ex-Works.

THE CHOICE OF THE DISCERNING DRIVER

Kit includes:— Tyres and Tubes, Control Cables ready made up with adjusters, Seat Upholstery, Ignition Cable, Petrol Pipe, Chainguard, Exhaust Bracket, Number Plates and Clips.
Chassis constructed from 5cM High Tensile Steel Tubing for Controlled Flexibility and Longer Life.

Blow

HUSTLER



PRICE:—
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less tyres
and tubes
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Kit Form
Ex-Works

A development of highly successful GNAT. The kart you, the karter, have been asking for, now a reality. Backed by the usual Blow after-sales service this kart is a must for the Class IV drivers for 1972. Already selling faster than any other kart we have ever produced, including the old faithful METEOR.

Don't be disappointed, order now to avoid a long delay. WORLD CUP not so far away. Contact our agents for full details or send 3p stamp to the reputable kart manufacturers.

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