

# TRACK TEST

## Tiger TKM



Politicians these days are expected to declare an interest if they are about to be involved in a debate which might have a connection with their business interests. Ministers were previously vociferously extolling the virtues of products when later they were found to be on the board of directors of the manufacturers!

I do not have any such connections with Fullerton Karts, however my teams in France are using the brand this year, having won the French National Championships on a Fullerton Panther in '95. At the last count I think we own about 10 Fullerton karts in various guises. I am not, however, in the slightest biased!

Terry Fullerton, having seen the previous Track Tests in Karting magazine, invited me to test a selection of current models at PFI on Saturday the 25th May. The weather was windy, with cloud and some sunshine.

Having been to the circuit for the previous test I was surprised to find that, if anything, the grip had deteriorated. The first chassis to test was a Tiger, which is the same model used with such devastating effect by Anthony Davidson at Salbris recently. The chassis was a waisted decanter chassis with a 40mm axle and suitable for a wide range of classes, including Formula A, Formula B and JICA. Since the chassis is a recent development it is not yet CIK homologated so can only be used in classes where this is not a requirement. I



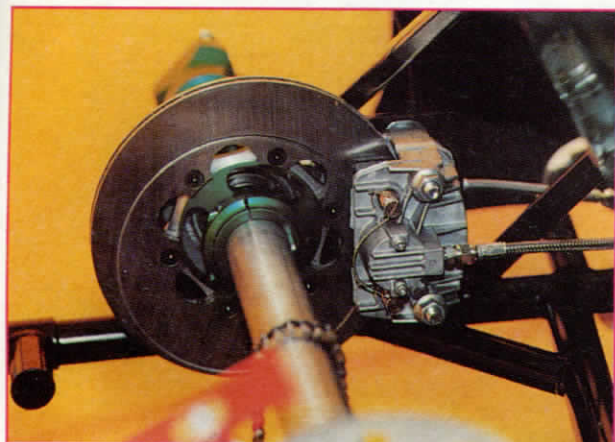
was much impressed with the build quality of the new chassis, something which I know Terry has been working on since his current range was introduced almost 3 years ago.

The Tiger was fitted with a new model Rotax reed engine and YEQ tyres. The engine needed running in which only took 10 minutes and gave me the opportunity to get used to the kart and the circuit before starting to make a fool of myself. The chassis was immediately user friendly and coped with the lack of grip very well. If anything the kart turned in so well that oversteer could be a consequence of too much use of the steering. After running in we stopped to check everything over and changed the set-up to help the oversteer. The result was a well balanced competitive package that gave lots of confidence. By following a couple of locals who knew the track it was easy to brake later than them without losing momentum mid-corner. We then fitted the kart with Dunlops to get an idea of how the kart would perform in Formula A trim. What fun! The grip being much improved, the kart felt really well balanced if a little flexible (we were not running the optional rear torsion bar). For me, with my additional weight, the torsion bar would probably have been useful as the circuit grip increases during the course of a race meeting.

The second test was on a new version of the Tiger, an identical chassis but in 2 bearing form. This kart had a 40mm axle and was destined to be tested by Anthony for the next European round at St Amand. The kart has a second role in the UK and will be supplied in 30mm axle form for the low grip classes such as 100C and Formula B on low grip circuits. We ran the same engine and tyres on this kart as the 3 bearing model. For me it was the best. Many factors combined to arrive at this, though. The grip on the circuit was improving, as was my driving, after a few derogatory remarks from T.F. on the subject! The kart was in fact really good under the prevailing conditions but I'm sure it would have had too much grip for the Dunlops under normal Formula A race conditions with rubber on the circuit. In fact both Anthony and I returned our best times of the day on this chassis which proves, I think, that it is certainly not to be discounted. What impressed me most was its total lack of vices. I am sure it would go extremely well on almost any tyres including the dreaded XLs!

Unfortunately there was not time to test the Puma, which is the Formula A and Super A kart. I am currently using these in France so may well have done more laps on it than anyone else! So far this season we have had pole and fastest lap in both rounds to date plus a race win and teams in the points, so we can hardly complain. We use the kart with more or less the same set-up at all circuits, torsion bar in, castor off, parallel steering. Any complaints, blame the driver!

The Puma is excellent at saving the front tyres and we often find that we use less teeth

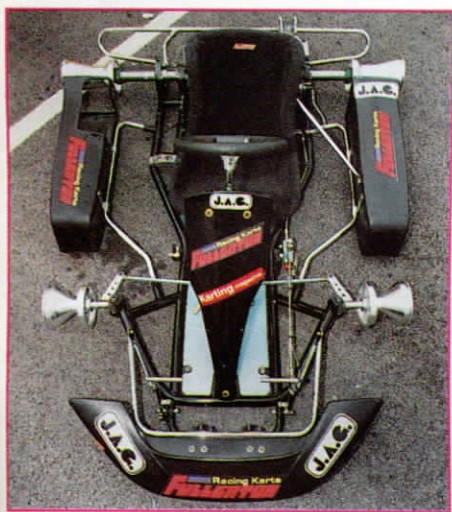


Stopping power for the Tiger

because the kart is so free out of corners. I think that the build quality is probably slightly better on the latest 96 delivery karts than mine which arrived over the winter.

The final test we had time for was on the TKM chassis, the only model in the range not of Italian origin. The kart is delivered in similar specification to the others and is produced under contract by one of the British 'household name' manufacturers. The kart seems to be long enough to accommodate the taller drivers which I know is a complaint often heard of the other leading brands in this popular class. We ran this kart last and as such it had the benefit of the circuit at its best. The chassis is brand new but in spite of this it handled exceptionally well straight out of the pits. I did about 20 minutes on it without stopping because the day's testing was due to end. It was certainly the fastest TKM kart present. The only problem was that the brake overheated. T.F. pointed out that this could be to do with the type of system required by TKM law trying to arrest my vast bulk! I had of course driven it for about double the length of time that would be normal race distance, a far more realistic viewpoint I should say.

There was no more time to test other models, the range is very comprehensive: FORMULA TKM for TKM; TIGER 2, new



The Puma for F.A./F.S.A.

model for 100C, 100B; TIGER, Formula A, B, British JICA; PUMA, Super A, Formula A high grip situations; PANTHER, CIK homologated for Intercontinental A & JICA; PUMA 125, as Puma but with 125 pack including front wheel brakes, gear change linkage etc; PANTHER 125, as Puma 125 but CIK homologated.

Terry plans to homologate 3 or 4 different karts with the CIK at the end of this year for 1.1.97 eligibility, so his commitment seems to be on the increase. Since their introduction the Fullerton karts have certainly upset the establishment and have had very considerable success with drivers like Simpson, Belicchi, Wheldon and now Davidson.

My thanks to the whole Fullerton team who attended the test and to John and Jean Gravett from JAG who were present and provided the engines all of which performed faultlessly. The engine on the TKM kart was particularly impressive, thanks to you all.

Report: George Robinson  
Photos: Chris Walker

#### SPECIFICATIONS

##### PUMA

Chassis: 3 rail waisted, 3 bearings.  
Tube: 32/30 chrome moly.  
Axle: 40mm.  
Axle Components: Alloy CNC machined from solid, anodised green.  
Brake: Single master cylinder, twin calliper, hydraulic with Aerospace hosing.  
Steering: Ackerman, dural anodised track rods, suede steering wheel.  
Bodywork: Full black body kit supplied as standard.  
Engine Mount: Magnesium alloy undrilled supplied as standard.  
Seat: Clear glass fibre supplied as standard, Tillett optional.  
Chassis finish: High gloss black powder coat.



British built chassis for Formula TKM



"TF"

Tank: 8.5 litre or CIK quick release tank.  
Torsion Bar: Supplied as standard with clamps.

##### TIGER

Chassis: 3 rail waisted, 3 bearings.  
Tube: 30mm chrome moly.  
Axle: 30mm or 40mm.  
Axle components: Alloy CNC machined from solid, anodised gold.  
Brake: Single master cylinder, twin calliper, hydraulic with Aerospace hosing.  
Steering: Ackerman or standard positions provided, alloy dural track rods.  
Bodywork: Full black body kit supplied as standard.  
Engine Mount: Supplied as standard, alloy undrilled.  
Seat: Clear glass fibre supplied as standard, Tillett option.  
Chassis finish: Black powder coat.  
Tank: 8.5 litre or CIK quick release.  
Torsion Bar: Optional.

##### TIGER 2

Specification exactly as Tiger except:  
Axle: 30mm standard, 40mm option.

##### PANTHER

Specification exactly as Puma except:  
Chassis: 4 rail CIK homologated.  
Torsion Bar not available.

##### PANTHER & PUMA 125

Specification as 100cc karts plus 125 pack:  
Front wheel brakes.  
Gear change linkage.  
No engine mount supplied.  
NB. Panther 125 - CIK homologated.

##### TKM

Full specification as laid down by Formula TKM regulations.  
The kart is complete, factory built with full bodywork included within the class regulation maximum price.