

# **Gulf Coast Karters (GCKI) Driver Rules**

This guide is written to describe the standards for maneuvers and define the legality of such maneuvers. It is intended to narrow the gray area of judgment with driver violation, and improve the safety of racing. Race Directors, Drivers, Corner-workers, and Flag-personnel should be familiar with these definitions.

Offenses may be unintended or intended. With an unintended offense, the judgment for violation is based on what happens after the offense. With an intended offense, the judgment is immediate.

It is the Drivers responsibility to comply with these rules. It is the Corner-worker and Flag-persons responsibility to report violations, and if necessary, monitor the offending competitors for repeated violation.

## **Straight Sections:**

The Straight is the section between the turn exit point and the turn entry. This includes the braking point prior to the turn entry point on a natural line. The lead Kart does not necessarily control the line on a straight.

## **Turn Sections:**

Turns begin at the actual turn-in point, not the braking point. This point can vary a little depending on the entry line of the Kart - a wide line turns in as much as few feet later than a narrow line. This element widens the gray area of judgment considerably. If the overtaking Kart is on the inside and turns in later, the right-of-way may shift from the outside to the inside Kart dynamically. Either way, the Karts are going to go through side-by-side. This gray area needs to be clear for the Driver and Cornerworker to call. The Drivers must also yield to each other when negotiating a turn side-by-side. It is the overtaking kart's responsibility to safely pass the leading kart.

## **Reasonable Field of Vision:**

A "reasonable field of vision" is that area of the track surface 90 degrees to the right and left side of the head/helmet position of a driver and that distance in front of the driver that totals the 180 degrees of forward vision to a forward distance that would allow reasonable reaction time to execute safe maneuvering or braking so as to avoid unsafe situations or conditions without endangering the safety of themselves or that of the other competitors.

## **Racing Together:**

Two (2) karts are considered TOGETHER when each driver or the other driver's kart is WITHIN THE REASONABLE FIELD OF VISION OF EACH OTHER. The kart that is behind, whether it is an inch or several feet is required to negotiate the turn without endangering or impairing the progress of the kart in front. Conversely, the kart in front should not take a deliberate line of the curve/turn

for the purpose of crowding a following competitor off the course. These rules apply to all karts while on a straightaway, or while entering a turn, during the turn, or exiting a turn.

### **Racing Room in the Turns:**

Racing room shall be that space given to and from each competitor while entering a turn together within the reasonable sight (field of vision) of the ahead driver before entering the turn. **Once the front bumper of the behind kart is beside or ahead of the in front kart drivers helmet area, the behind kart should be considered in the front karts field of vision.** This means competitors may have to alter their speed and/or direction through the turn so as to allow the other competitor to complete the turn at the same time. Sliding into the path of the competitor(s), forcing the other competitor(s) to change direction and/or speed unnecessarily while attempting to negotiate the turn together, and losing position from excessive contact is considered a driving violation and may result in penalties or disqualification.

### **Diving a Turn:**

Diving into a turn is the last moment arrival of a following kart into the path of a competitor already in the process of making the turn, and forcing the forward kart to SUBSEQUENTLY alter it's direction or position as a result, and the late kart is behind that point considered being besides or entering together or in the field of vision of the kart in front when it began it's turn into the curve. The action of the forward kart to avoid a collision should be interpreted as proof of the altered position of defense from the Dive. Diving is not allowed and may result in severe injuries and is considered a driving violation and may result in penalties or disqualification.

### **Place on Track:**

Reasonable racing room of the driver choosing the inside line of the racetrack is that lane (space) and position (place) on the track that the inside driver established when entering the inside lane, including just enough width to the outside to allow for normal movement caused by the track conditions (bumps) and reasonable control. The remaining space/width of the outside lane of the track belongs to the outside kart, allowing for normal movement towards the inside caused by track conditions (bumps) and reasonable control. Allowing reasonable racing room is required of both drivers.

### **Movement, in your Lane:**

It will be the judgment of officials that if any kart (while racing together) changes lanes or creates excessive movement within the lane, to the significant disruption or disadvantage of any other entry, by their own action, will be considered the cause of any incident occurring and face penalties of loss of finish positions or disqualification. This includes any kart that creates contact by abruptly changing lanes just after passing another kart, but not totally clear. It is the responsibility of the passing kart not to interfere with the overtaken kart or karts lane.

**Being Lapped:**

In the event that another competitor is lapping a driver, the driver of the overtaken kart is obliged to give way and allow the lapping kart to pass. A driver must always be prepared for another kart to pass and must therefore be on the lookout for the approach from behind of other faster karts. The Flagmen will attempt to warn of the impending pass with a solid blue flag with a diagonal orange stripe. The driver of the kart being overtaken should slow and "point" to the area of the track the overtaking kart should use to pass. The deliberate blocking of a faster kart (changing lanes, intentional unnecessary braking in a turn, failing to follow flags, etc.) will result in a penalty.

**Lane Changes (Blocking):**

Any competitor, not attempting to pass another competitor, but being passed or about to be passed. May not change more than one lane, after exiting a turn. ANY ADDITIONAL LANE CHANGE THAT BLOCKS ANOTHER COMPETITOR FROM PASSING IS ILLEGAL, WHEN THE FOLLOWING ENTRY IS IN POSITION AND MOTION TO OVERTAKE. The first 50' out of each turn is sufficient distance to choose your racing lane or COMPLETE one lane change. The actual ability of the following kart in speed and position to overtake the blocking kart will be the major judgment to influence the final decision. It is the responsibility of any entry to be aware of disqualification if the action appears intentional.

**Speed Changes (Brake Checking):**

Any driver braking early, going into or during the turn or on the straights with intent to disrupt a competitor to prevent from being passed is illegal.

**Crowding/Chopping:**

If contact is made resulting from the lead Kart moving into the overtaking Kart, the lead Kart is guilty of Crowding. Conversely, if the overtaking kart moves over into the path of the lead kart to help facilitate the pass, "the overtaking kart may also be guilty of crowding. If contact is made resulting from the overtaking Kart moving into the lead Kart, the overtaking Kart is guilty of Chopping. This is usually an intended offense, if it is done on the Straight. As soon as entry into the turn is reached, the entry line belongs to the leading Kart. As soon as entry into the turn is reached, the entry line belongs to the leading Kart.

The judgment is based on what happens next: If the lead Kart leaves room for the overtaking Kart, then there is no offense. If the lead Kart continues to crowd, the offense is sustained and should result in penalty.

If the overtaking kart is able to facilitate the pass without the lead kart having to change direction, then there is no offense. If the overtaking kart continues to crowd and forces the lead kart to take evasive action, the offense is sustained and will result in penalty. Obvious blocking, crowding, etc. is when the driver of

the lead kart looks at the overtaking kart and then moves over on him to negate an attempted pass.

**Blocking:**

If the lead Kart chooses to Defend, which is legal, they are reminded this is a one-move action. They may shift off-line, but in doing so; they automatically provide right-of-way to the overtaking Kart to the side opposite from where they moved. If the defending kart moves back on-line, they may be guilty of Blocking. Blocking is an intended offense. It is the Flag-person's option to call this penalty. It is recommended that the first time is a warning, and the second time a penalty offense.

**Pushing (Bump Drafting):**

On the straight, when the overtaking kart makes contact with the rear of the lead kart to help push him down the straight, this is considered an unsafe maneuver. First time offence will be a warning unless the kart being pushed was pushed out of the way or spun. Seconded time will result in a penalty.

**Turn Cut-off:**

The first Kart into the turn has right-of-way. There will be instances where two Karts will be side-by-side through a turn, and both have right-of-way. It could be due to simultaneous arrival; it could be due to a really late exchange of right-of-way that could not be responded to quickly enough. Both Karts want the Apex, but only one can have it. If the outside Kart chops, it will usually lose by turning sideways. The inside Kart is already going to clip the Apex, but may not have enough grip left to brake and yield. If an accident occurs, it is up to the Corner-worker to decide if there is fault, and what the penalty should be. Cut-off may or may not be intentional. On exit of a turn, it is important to remember that the rules of the straight will soon follow. The entry to the straight should be marked in the same way the entry to a turn is marked.

**Bumping:**

In a turn, when the overtaking Kart enters on the same line as the lead Kart, and contact is made from behind, it may be Bumping. This may or may not be an intended offense.

The judgment is based on:

- If the overtaking Kart was attempting a pass, but backed off and was at the threshold of braking, this may have been unintentional.
- If the bumping was without incident, (no damage to Karts, and no affect to the leading kart's line), there may be a rolled black flag.
- If the overtaking Kart makes contact with the lead kart that does not affect the position of the lead Kart, it should result in at least a warning (Rolled black flag).

- If the Lead Kart is bumped off the track or pushed off line by contact enough to allow the overtaking kart to better its position, it will result in a penalty.

Corner-workers are advised to make this call carefully. This is an intentional offense, however this call requires significant judgment in most cases.

### **Leaving the Track to Better Your Position:**

Passing a kart by putting two or more wheels off the track surface (on the straight or in a turn) will be penalized. Exceptions: If the offender lets the passed kart(s) back around, or the offender was forced off the track to avoid an accident.

### **Karts with Different Set-ups or Driving Style**

Some Karts may be faster than you in areas giving them an advantage. They may brake later in some turns, accelerate faster out of some turns, or be faster through a turn. Likewise, some may be slower. You will get the chance to see both sides through a race weekend of each competitor with the inverted starting orders. Again, use your head. Don't give up the war to win one battle.

### **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:**

Any foul driving, intentional bumping, unnecessary braking, crowding, chopping, diving, blocking, pushing, hand signals or unsportsman like conduct on the race course (and pit area) will subject the offending driver to immediate disqualification. An entry is responsible for the conduct of its pit crew.

### **The Black Flag**

The Black Flag has several uses, which should not be ignored. Rolled black flag is a warning, but not a penalty. Waved black flag for unsportsmanlike driving or possibility of mechanical problems means pit immediately. Failure to adhere to the black flag will result in a penalty, or disqualification.

General Considerations Drivers must realize in Close battles:

If you are in the leading position with a closely trailing competitor and you make a mistake, you are likely to be passed. Say you attempt to pass another competitor in turn 1, but can't quite do it. You are likely to go off of your normal line, and lose speed. If the competitor behind you takes advantage of that, use your head. If he is right behind you, chances are he may be able to overtake you (because of his momentum). He may be able to do this in a place that he would otherwise not stand a chance to pass. Be aware of those around you. Glance occasionally from the corner of your eye, from side to side. The other kart or karts may be just out of your peripheral vision, but beside you enough to cause a problem when entering the turn.

## **Summary of Offenses:**

### Offenses on Straights

- Bump Drafting
- Crowding
- Chopping
- Blocking

### Offense on Turns

- Bumping
- Brake-Checking
- Turn Cut-off

### Unintentional Offenses

- Leaving the Track to Avoid an Accident

## **Intentional Offenses**

- Chopping
- Blocking
- Brake-Checking
- Diving a turn
- Turn Cut-off
- Bump Drafting
- Bumping
- Leaving the Track to Better Your Position

## **PENALTIES:**

### **To be determined by the Race Director**

Immediate Disqualification

Warning - Minor offense, first time (Rolled black flag).

Second time disqualified from that race.

Penalized one or more position, obvious illegal pass or other minor offences (moved back on lap chart).

Disqualified for major violation could result in being ejected from race with loss of race Points and possible racing and suspension to be determined by the Board of Directors.