

## Tips for watching the races

The Xtream Rock Island Grand Prix Presented by The Hemp Doctor provides an exciting weekend of racing action for thousands of spectators each year. Here's how to maximize your enjoyment:

**Who to watch:** Karts race in a variety of weight, engine and fuel classes. The fastest classes will be the Shifter classes. There are local racers in many of the classes.

**What to watch:** Race classes will record lap times during timed qualifying during Saturday practice. This will set the starting order for Heat races and these will be sprints. The finishing order in Heat Races sets the starting order for Sunday Features.

**Safety first:** Stay off the track. Under no circumstances should anyone enter the track during racing. Areas designated as spectator crossings will be opened by race officials during breaks in the racing. Cross the track only in designated crossings and only at designated times. Also, please stand back from the fence and do not sit close to it or put your fingers through it. Areas labeled as No Spectator Areas will be strictly enforced.

**Rain or shine:** Racing goes on rain or shine, so if it rains, grab your umbrella and slicker. Drivers change tires, adjust their chassis and run unless there's a deluge. Wet roads add to the challenge and excitement of racing.

**Beat the crowds:** Arrive early to beat the crowds. Bring a lawn chair so you can sit and still see over the barriers that line the course. Some fans even bring a pop-up tent to protect them from the sun.

### Visit the pits:

Daily and weekend pit passes are available at the pit gates and you can see the drivers and pit crews up close working on their karts. Most karters are happy to sign autographs and talk about racing. Many bring their families along. Thank them for coming and welcome them to the Quad-Cities. General admission to watch the racing is free.

**Attention please:** A public address system has been set up throughout the downtown race area, including the pits. It allows the race organizers to communicate with racers as well as track announcers to tell spectators what is going on in the racing.

**Protect your ears:** Some people will consider these karts loud, especially after a long day of racing. Bring earplugs or take a break now and then from your track-side perch and get something to eat or drink at the Grand Prix Marketplace.

**On the internet:** Live audio of the Rock Island racing action is broadcast on the Internet by [Ekartingnews.com](http://Ekartingnews.com).

**No coolers:** Race organizers ask that you not bring coolers to the track. Glass bottles can be dangerous to both drivers and spectators, and city ordinances require that beer be consumed only in designated areas. There are a number of reasonably priced food and drink vendors at the Grand Prix.

**Learn about kart racing:** Local racers from 61 Kartway, Delmar, Iowa will have a booth in the center of the track. They can answer your questions about kart racing as well as how to get involved at both the junior and senior age levels. This will also be the location of special karting artwork where race fans can have the photos taken in a racing scene done by artist and racer Kate Adams.

**Hungry?** The Grand Prix Marketplace features a wide variety of food and drinks. Vendors are located in the parking lot between Third and Fourth Ave. and 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets.

**Other attractions:** There are other things to do at the Grand Prix besides watching racing. On Sunday there is a Car Cruise-In near City Hall on Third Ave. The Bradley University Society of Automotive Engineers will have a display in the parking lot near City Hall. They will be happy to talk about their program and careers in motorsports. Also in the parking lot, besides food vendors the Quad City Storm professional hockey team will offer Shoot the Puck street hockey. Official race t-shirts will also be for sale.

**No spectator areas:** Several areas along the track have been designated as “No Spectator Areas” because they are potentially dangerous locations. For your own safety, please do not attempt to watch the races from these areas.

**Volunteers:** Most of the people working at the Grand Prix are volunteering their time. Please be considerate and everyone will enjoy the weekend.

**Start/Finish line:** It is located on 5th Avenue. This is where the race starts and ends, and the timers, scorers and race director are located. A LeMans-style start is used from the side of the street for many classes, as well as Formula One and rolling starts.

**Meet the drivers:** Following Opening Ceremonies at about 10:30 a.m. Sunday, children and parents will be allowed on the track at the Start/Finish line for an autograph session. Some might be the NASCAR, IndyCar and Formula One drivers of the future.

**Tracking the races:** The races can be confusing because karts can get strung out on the course making it difficult to figure out who is in the lead. Pick your favorite racer and remember the color and number on his kart. Don't be confused if you see the same driver, or kart, in more than one race. Some have several karts, and they also can race in different classes by adjusting the weight on the kart. Listen carefully to the track announcer for helpful descriptions.

**Turn 1:** This corner offers the opportunity for lots of action. In the first lap of each race, as many as 40 karts squeeze into this corner together. In subsequent laps, the field will be more spread out, but racers will approach the corner at a high rate of speed coming out of a two-block straight-away and heading into the two-block back stretch.

**Back stretch:** The two-block long stretch of the course north along 16th Street is where the fastest speeds will be attained. Speeds will reach 80 mph in some classes.

**Curvy action:** Karters find the S-Curve in the middle of the race course quite a challenge. After taking the right turn on 17<sup>th</sup> Street at the Holiday Inn, they have only a short stretch before turning left onto Fourth Avenue as they head east and then turn right on 18<sup>th</sup> Street to head back to Fifth Avenue. There should be plenty of action through this portion of the course.

**Sponsors:** Their support helps make this race happen as an admission-free event. Please thank them for their sponsorship and show your support by doing business with them whenever possible.