

Performance Racing Industry

The Voice of the Racing Marketplace

Volume 21, Number 9 September 2006

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**DRAG RACING'S
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Engine diagnostic tools are necessary for every engine builder, both at the race track and at the shop, to inspect engine parts and diagnose potential problems.

By Charles Krall

go past 5000 rpm, while the typical V8 race engine won't run below 6000 rpm," said Matt Patrick, Powerhouse Products, Memphis, Tennessee. "Those close tolerances are critical to ensuring you have a properly built race engine."

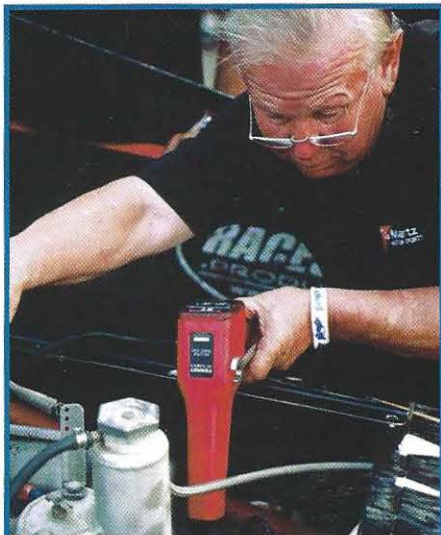
Once at the track, it is important for racers to have the ability to tune the engine. There are tools that are available to allow a peek inside the engine without complete disassembly.

"The borescope comes into play to prevent premature disassembly," said Dave Monahan, Goodson Shop Supplies, Winona, Minnesota, referring to destructive engine failure. "If you get out there and run your hot laps and you get through to your feature, and you're looking at your spark plugs and trying to gauge your air/fuel mixture, you want to be able to look into the cylinder itself. You can get inside that spark plug hole and see if the ceiling of the cylinder has been compromised."

With today's modern electronics, it is possible to have all of the parts and pieces perfectly assembled, but a glitch in the engine management system can negatively affect performance.

"You can put together the best air pump, add fuel and ignition and make it an engine," said Verne Schumann, Schumann, Bluegrass, Iowa. "If the programming and chip aren't on the same page, it doesn't matter. That industry has come a long way in the past 18 years. Particularly to drag racers more so than oval track, the handheld diagnostic tool has become more important than the timing light."

"No matter what you are doing, the diagnostic tool, be it a micrometer or a timing light or the dynamometer, these are all tools to make sure all of the parameters that are being designed into that engine are being met," said Steve Cole, Flaming



Value for money spent is the name of the game for engine diagnostic tools. Top features to look for in these products include flexibility and durability. "We all know in the shop or in the dyno room or at the track, things get dropped," one contact said. "Is it rugged enough to stand the abuse in that type of environment? Generally speaking, if it looks a little light duty, you should think about spending your dollars on something that will take a lickin' and keep on tickin'."

River, Berea, Ohio. "Then, particularly with some of the at-the-track tools, like a timing light, they are there to keep you within the parameters of the engine's operation. That way the power you are buying is being delivered. These tools are there to make sure that you're following the blueprint."

Adcole's Lefemine described the company's CCMM (cylindrical core measuring machine). "This is a gauge that is capable of measuring all the way around the part and measuring every aspect of it. It will measure all of the intricacies of some of the parts that are difficult to measure. It is difficult to do it by hand; you need some sort of computer-

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