

BBC

CLARKSON 'I WISH CARS WERE MORE LIKE QUENTIN TARANTINO...'



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# Top Gear

**GENTLE DEBATE!**

Hammond vs May: "I prefer the 918, old chap. I quite like its... oof!"

AUS TRALIA



**918**  
QUICKER THAN  
A CARRERA GT  
OUR KIND OF HYBRID

**GTO**  
THE MOST POWERFUL  
**FERRARI**  
ROAD CAR EVER!

NEW PORSCHE

NEW FERRARI

# GTO VS 918

**WE'VE GOT THEM BOTH!**

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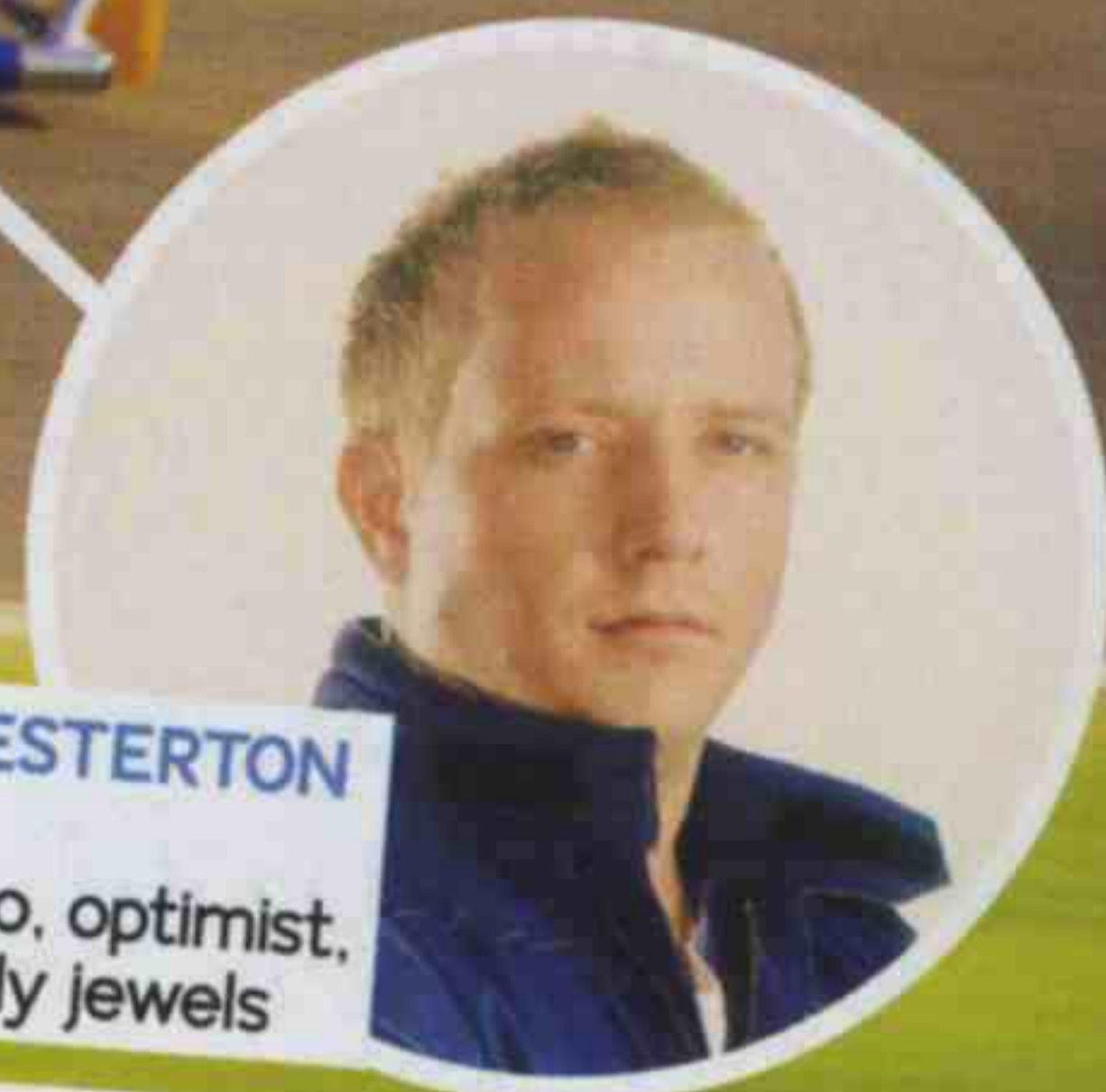
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# Is it okay to punch a kid in the mouth?



**WARREN WHITE**  
Age: 16  
National kart champ;  
holder of 11 titles



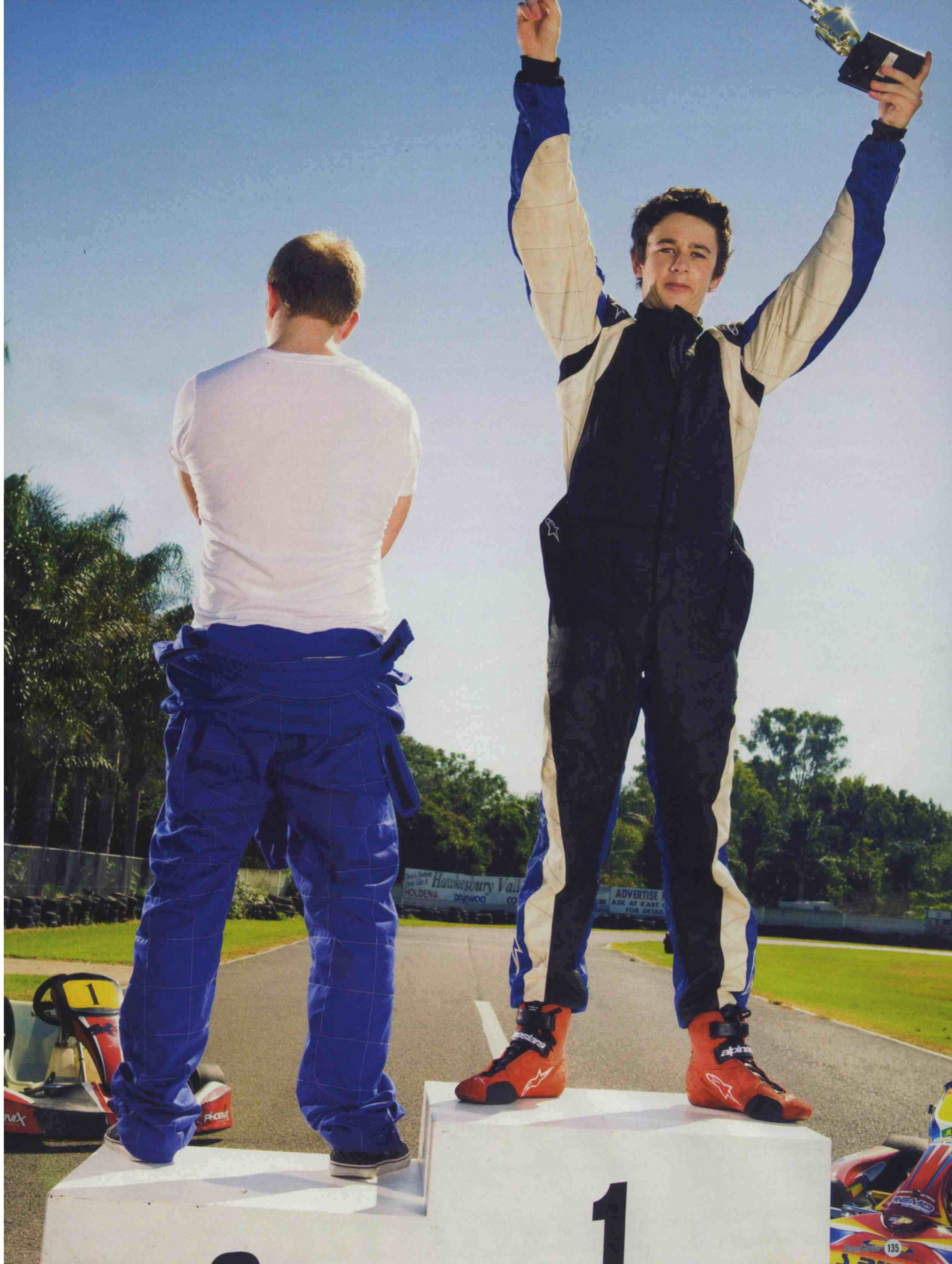
**ANDREW CHESTERTON**  
Age: 26  
TopGear journo, optimist,  
holder of family jewels

I'm asking because I've just been lapped by that pipsqueak Warren White. Again. And he gave me the finger last time around; reckons I was getting in the way. The punk.

Words: Andrew Chesterton Photography: Chris Benny

WHILE SCIENCE HAS NEVER BEEN MY FRIEND – I'm confused by physics, baffled by words like trajectory and velocity, and the only thing I know about power-to-weight is I'm packing far too much of one and not enough of the other – even I can tell something has gone seriously, terribly, horribly wrong.

I'm in a kart challenge – a three-lap race of an 800-metre track. Getting lapped should be impossible. Short of tearing a hole in the space-time continuum, it simply can't be done. There are just not enough seconds.



Which is all well and good, except Warren White's just screamed past me, again, like I'm nailed to the road.

But let's start from the beginning.

I'd recently gone karting for a mate's birthday and, like most blokes who've recorded a few decent lap times, I suffered an ego explosion. My now-inflated head was filled with dreams of an F1 career. That's how Mark Webber and every other decent racer started, isn't it?

There was only one way to find out. I had to test my budding talent against a worthy adversary. Enter Warren White, a 16-year-old racer who, in between studying for his Year 10 School Certificate and trying to grow facial hair, has won nine state championships, one dirt state championship and an Australian title in karts. And next year, while his mates are failing their P-plate licence tests, he'll be racing Formula Ford overseas. Oh, and he's Mark Webber's cousin, and he's planning on following in the Red Bull driver's famous footsteps into F1.

Here's how it'll work: I'll take Warren's kart, and he'll be stuck in a rental. Three laps will decide it, and if I've got even a hint of ability, I'll romp home. It's time to send him back to school. Though, technically, he's already enrolled in one, so... whatever. It's time to beat this kid.

He's brought my ride; a 125cc, 20kW Leopard worth about \$3000. And in a kart that weighs roughly the same as a sneeze, that's quite a lot of power. Warren, on the other hand, will be piloting one of Butterfly Farm's corporate karts - at about 11kW and fitted with racing tyres, it's quicker than a rental banger, but no match for the Leopard. This is Muhammad Ali vs Gary Coleman. My kart accelerates harder and tops out at close to 90km/h, while Warren's peaks at about 70km/h. Lose this race and I'll have to leave the country.

It's almost race time and Warren's transformed. Gone is the polite young man from earlier in the day. I ask him how fast the Leopard is. He looks me dead in the eye and answers: "It's fast, but it won't be fast enough." Guess we'll be playing by prison-yard rules.

As I lower myself into his race kart - the seat had been swapped for a bigger option to fit my, erm, bulk - I give him my best death glare. *He laughs.* Need to work on that death glare. But there's no time to dwell on that now. The flag has dropped. It's go time.

*Jesus!* This thing feels sonic-boom quick. I'm thrown backwards into the hard plastic seat as I scream down a long straight. I hit the brakes and my head snaps forward like my neck might disintegrate. I pull the wheel and my body is slammed into the side of the seat. They're that tough. F1 drivers use karts in the pre-season to prepare their bodies for the intense physical strain of racing.

The kart drags me through five more turns and I'm back on the straight. My ribs are starting to ache, but Warren's nowhere to be seen. So far, so good.



Smoke actually coming from old man's ears as kid rounds him. Again



White blatantly flaunts the keep-left-unless-overtaking rule

Warren looks me dead in the eye. Guess we'll be playing by prison-yard rules

By the mid-way point on my second lap, I'm convinced my eyeballs are going to shake free of their sockets and that knife in my ribs goes deeper with every corner. Worse still, Warren's gaining on me. My kart has evil acceleration, but it's through the corners where he is catching. And there are a lot of corners.

By the final quarter of the last lap, he's right on my tail, sitting millimetres off my kart through the bends, probing for a way past. He soon finds one, sneaking down the outside before cutting in front of me for the final turn. It's over; he's won. I'm devastated.


"You had me on the straights, but you lost it on the corners. On that last lap you were turning in way too early. You could have gone in deeper and turned in later for a better run through the corners," he babbles.

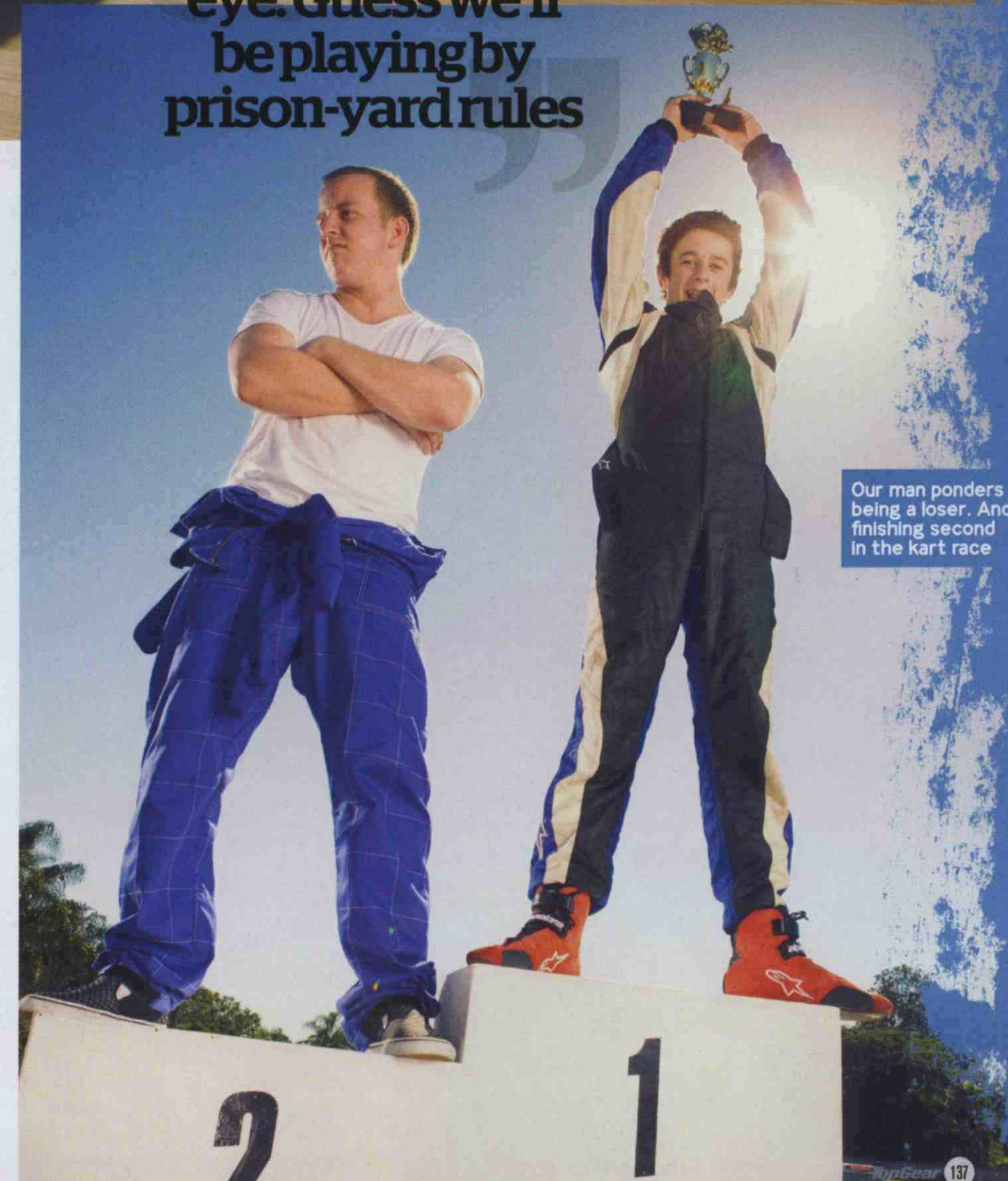
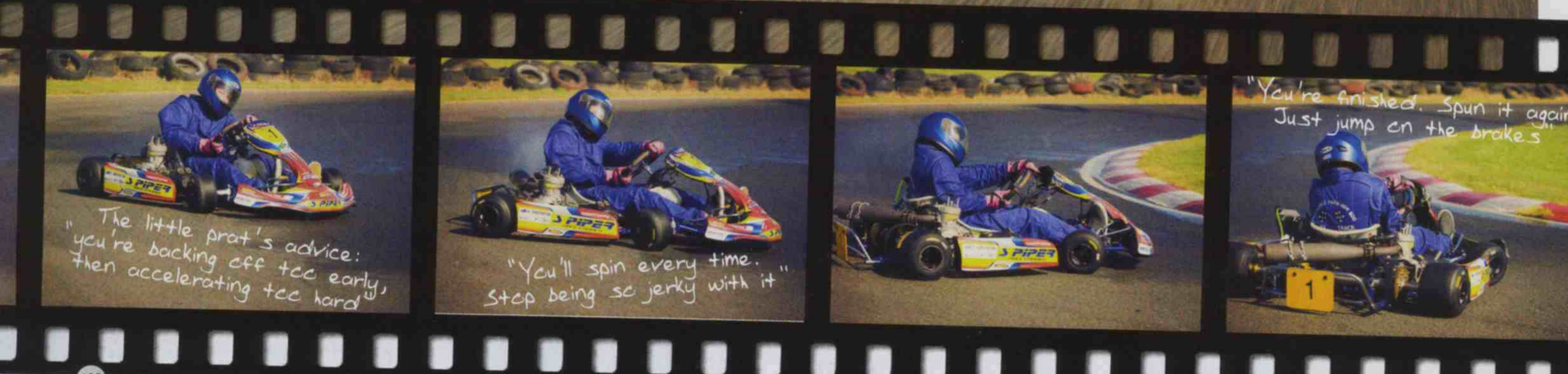
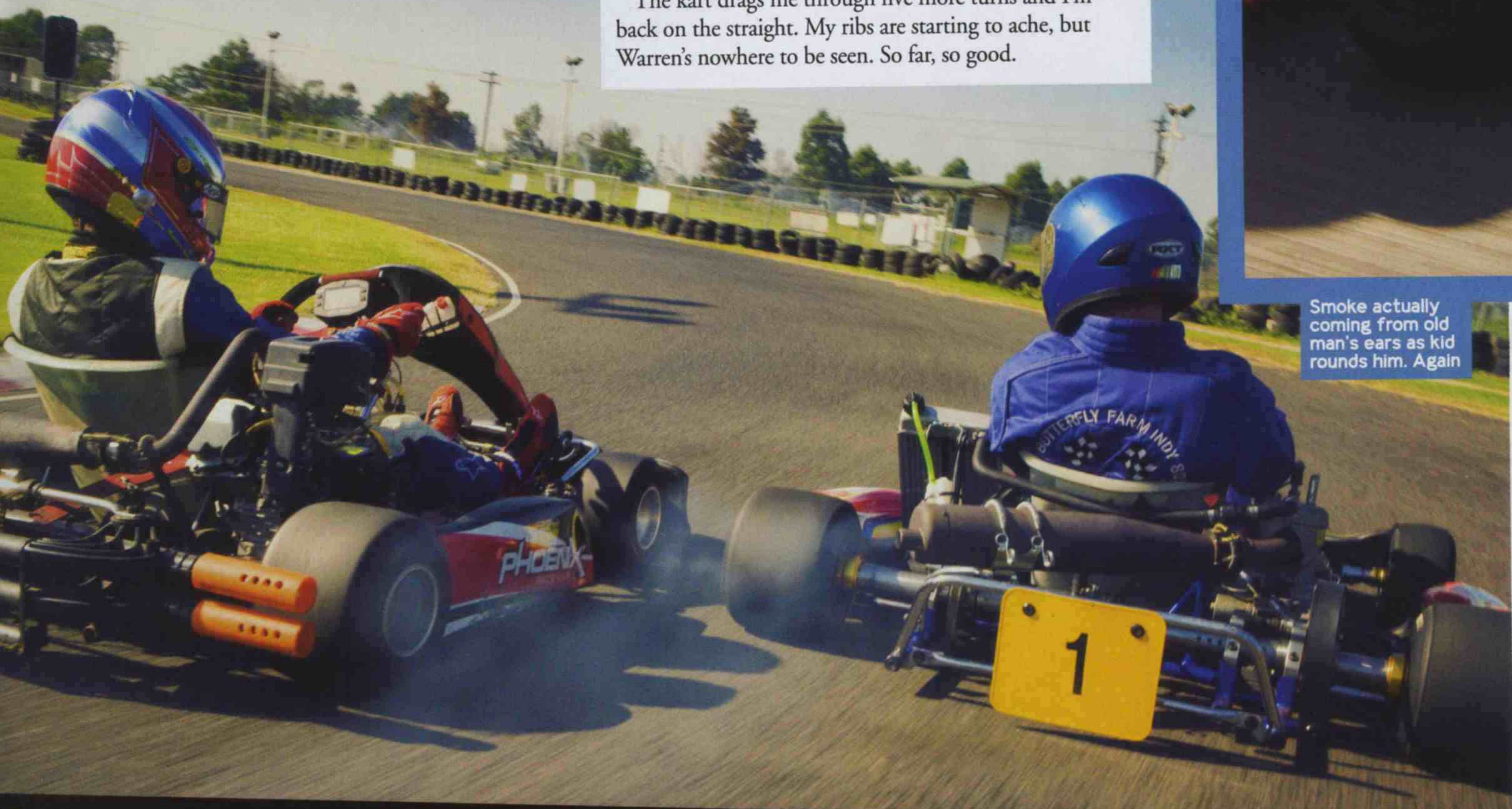
"I was worried for a second. I thought you'd get better in my kart. I thought you'd pick it up more on every lap. But you didn't. *You didn't.*"

And just to rub a little more salt into my wounded pride, Warren suggests we swap karts for another race, with me in the banger and him back in his Leopard.

I foolishly agree, and get ego-crushingly lapped. My body aches and I'll soon develop heavy bruising on my ribs. And I'd done a total of six laps, or 4.8kms. Warren does it at full pace for 35kms most weekends.

"It's so hard on the body. There's lots of bruising, and suffering after the race," Warren says.

He's bouncing around like a puppy with ADHD, and I can face his youthful joy no longer. As I trudge off to the car park, a dark realisation sets in - I've just been beaten, convincingly, by a 16-year-old kid. With no driver's licence. No shame in losing? Yeah, right. 



Our man ponders being a loser. And finishing second in the kart race