



The No. 59 Late Model dirt car of Jake Perkins, of Bellevue, is seen on Tuesday.

11/18 Mitchell / Daily Sun

Chasing Dreams

Villager volunteers to be part of aspiring racer's crew

The Villages Daily Sun

Friday, December 19, 2014

By Joe Pederson

The roar of the engine brings a feeling of zen to Daryl Ware.

When the tires are flat and the suspension needs modifying, the self-taught mechanic takes a breath of fresh air and makes adjustments to the stock car in front of him before it burns rubber again.

"It's therapeutic for me," he said. "Things mechanically fail, and it's my job to diagnose and make it whole. To me, that's therapy."

The Village of Orange Blossom Gardens resident has made a hobby of fixing cars for the past 20 years.

For the past three years, however, the self-described motorhead has been a key part of the Jake Perkins Motorsports crew.

Perkins, of Bellevue, is an 18-year-old with a dream of racing.

Ware, along with several other men, volunteers his time to help make that dream a reality.

Ware joined the team after hearing Perkins speak at a meeting of The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club.

"I was impressed with what he had to say," Ware said.

As part of Perkins' crew, Ware has worked on two stock cars for dirt racing and two stock cars for racing on asphalt.

One of the asphalt vehicles is a custom-built Super Late Model. Its engine is based on a Chevrolet small block. It produces about 600 horsepower and can go up to 140 mph, Ware said.

The stock car has been used in only 10 races in two years, but it requires constant maintenance to keep its competitive edge, Ware said.

"It has to be extremely fine-tuned in order to produce that kind of horsepower," he said. "We change tires three to four times per racing event."

The crew constantly is working toward improving the cars' performance with adjustments to tires and suspension.

Those adjustments can be infinite, Ware said. But it is a labor of love that has captured him.

"I have no plans to stop anytime soon," Ware said.



Daryl Ware, of the Village of Orange Blossom Gardens, helps out as a crew member.