BATTERY CARE

The batteries furnished to Green Prix Teams by greenspaceschattanooga are high quality AGM (Absorbed Glass Mat) batteries. They require only a little care, but it is important to keep them healthy. Given proper care, they can be expected to maintain good performance for from 5 to 7 years.

The battery chargers furnished to teams by greenspaceschattanooga are “Smart Chargers”. They charge up a battery that needs it, then they switch to a maintenance mode to maintain the charge without over-charging the battery. It won’t hurt the battery to stay on it permanently. They will charge two batteries at a time. Again, a very high-quality piece of equipment.

Only two actions are required to properly maintain these batteries.

1. Keep the top of the battery reasonably clean. An accumulation of dirt or dust can absorb moisture which can very slowly discharge the battery by conducting current between the posts. In most school environments, this shouldn’t be a problem.
2. Keep the battery charged. An overnight charge each month will do this well. Every two months even will work, but record keeping might be more difficult. Mark the top of each battery with a number or letter to help keep up with the charging.

It is suggested that one reliable Team Member be put in charge of battery maintenance, after receiving instructions on this duty. Battery care can be the most important element of Green Prix car performance.

Some Don’ts:

Don’t store batteries that have been discharged. As soon as practical after use, practice or a race event, get them on the charger over-night.

Don’t run a battery completely dead. For Practice this can be handled easily. F24s change batteries about each hour or less of practice. For a 90-minute race it is more of a challenge.

TESTING: Use the Volt Meter testing procedure in teacher-resources, or:

Buy a Battery Load Tester, about $35. Set the CCA value to 300. This is high for these batteries, but it allows discriminating between good batteries and great batteries. A great battery will test 100% with this method. A battery good for practice will test 80%. The Battery Load Tester isn’t ideal for this purpose, but the best methods are a bit complex and do use up a bit of battery life.