

# ABkC News December 07

## ABkC Annual General Meeting Report

Although the turnout was quite poor for the Association of British Kart Club's AGM the discussion amongst the fourteen member clubs present was lively. Chairman Russell Anderson had to send his apologies as his team was racing (successfully) in the U.S.A, and Gearbox sub-group chairman Mike Coombs took his place and read Anderson's address. In that, Russell Anderson thanked the members of the steering group, especially Ian Rennison who is standing down after many years as Treasurer. He touched on the two new MSA initiatives of free licences for under 16 year olds, and in offering a project to introduce many more people to the sport of karting. He welcomed the initial success of the new KF classes, suggesting a club thread would start for KF2 and 3 whereas KF1 would likely remain as a class for the purist. For 2008 he will seek to re-define the objectives of the ABkC and make sure there is a clear understanding of what the ABkC wishes to achieve. He said the sub-group work has been to good effect but he would seek much more depth to this activity so elected members have plenty of time to view discussions outside of their own expert field. The report finished by stating that the ABkC is very much part of the MSA Kart Future initiatives and no decisions will be taken without the ABkC fully discussing any proposals.

There was some disquiet from some representatives about the level of information given out for the tendering process for the MSA initiative to broaden karting, and whether adult drivers should be treated differently to juniors in terms of prior experience.

As secretary, Graham Smith reported that 31 clubs were in membership and we were expecting one more to join in 2008. He thanked the seventeen clubs that had already rejoined for 2008. The Association had stands at the London Motorsports Show and the Autosport International, and in fact he had managed to produce the 2008 Start Karting brochure a month earlier than usual. He thanked RDA Communications and Warner Brothers for donating some of the new Lewis Hamilton DVD's to be raffled at the meeting.

The Treasurer's report was accepted, although it was suggested a better rate of interest might be obtained for the deposit account. One delegate suggested clubs could even pool their deposit funds for a better rate of interest. Mike Coombs said he thought the ABkC might be able to augment the MSA initiative in providing financial support to clubs who wanted to introduce 'Racing for Buttons' schemes. Graham Smith reminded the AGM that ARKS had a fund that clubs with ARKS Examiners could apply to, available for publicising karting.

With more nominations than places on the 2008 steering group a secret vote was held to choose the contested positions. The results of the election were:

Chairman: Russell Anderson; Secretary: Graham Smith; 100cc Technical: Neil Hann; Cadet Technical: Paul Klaassen; Gearbox Technical: Phil Featherstone;

Ordinary members: Malcolm Fell (CKC); Mike Coombs (SKRC); Simon Goodfellow (MBKC); Steve Clayton (SYKC); Nigel Edwards (TVKC); Bob Shipman (Warden Law); Colin Wright (FEKC). These members are joined by representatives of the other kart associations and the main championship promoters, as well by MSA executives.

The formal meeting was then closed and informal discussions commenced. The first question was regarding MSA insurance cover for officials and marshals. Warden Law Competition Secretary Anne Laws had had a serious accident during an MSA meeting, and she discovered that because she was not in employment she was not eligible for loss of earnings. Although she was grateful for the MSA

insurers providing out of pocket expenses, despite not having to, she asked that the ABkC negotiated recompense for pain and suffering. It was said that many clubs might not realise the limitations of the MSA insurance cover, and it was also questioned whether many clubs took out similar or better insurance for non MSA practice days for their marshals. The MSA's John Symes had sent a letter detailing improvements in the MSA cover for 2008, which provided for loss of speech at £32,500, a £50 per day hospitalization benefit capped at £500 any one loss, a £100 convalescence benefit and £200 for a broken arm, leg and £50 for all other broken bones capped at £500 any one accident. He said: "The MSA will continue to work with our brokers to provide adequate insurance. For awareness the insurance programme provided by the MSA is significantly enhanced compared to other organizations similar to the MSA." It was agreed to refer the request to the Club Sub-group with a view to seeking enhancements to the MSA cover for pain and suffering, or to take out a suitable group insurance cover. It was also noted that young marshals, not earning money, would also not get the same recompense as employees under the current scheme.

Next it was noted that Mick Barrett is setting up a new association for teams and drivers. It was said that support in the paddock for this is almost unanimous although one delegate said he hoped it would not just be restricted to representation in the big championships. The ABkC has always said it would provide a place at the steering group for any bona-fide drivers association.

A member put forward a request that the ABkC seek a waiver on the requirement for crash tested bodywork on senior and junior Honda classes, the prokarts. This was carried by a majority with two abstentions. The karts in these classes tend to be used longer than in other classes and the manufacturers have been slow to adopt the new pod mounting brackets. Attention was drawn to the MSA article about using clamp-on brackets. In response the MSA said that whilst it would not issue a blanket waiver, any request by a championship seeking a waiver would be looked on favourably.

There then followed a short discussion about the alleged poor driving standards of ICC long circuit racers, where the karts were fitted with short circuit bodywork. The MSA Kart Sporting Committee's chairman Rod Taylor said he would encourage clubs to fit video cameras at corners under the control of the Clerk of the Course to help investigation incidents.

Super One are proposing a KF Heavy class, possibly to replace 100 National, for 2008 and the recommendations of the sub-group were promulgated. The class would be for KF2 on the same tyres, and with a class weight of 175kg, a minimum driver weight of 80kg and no front brakes. There was some concern expressed about having even more classes and it was emphasised that it was not yet an ABkC championship and only currently proposed for Super One. After various requests for changes in World Formula, the ABkC is proposing a reduction in class weight from 165kg to 162kg, but with the starter motor optional. If removed a blanking plate must be fitted and if it is fitted the third bracket must be used. Alan Stirling, representing NIKA and Ulster, said the Northern Ireland would adopt the same joint MiniMax/Junior Max class as the south for 2008. Colin Wright, for Forest Edge, asked for assurances about performance improvements in the Comer Cadet class when the new carburettor was introduced. Peter Gorman, for Daytona, expressed disappointment about teams being able to reserve places in the KF Winter Series even although they had no definite drivers signings. This could prevent other drivers taking up a place. Mike Coombs, for the promoters Shenington Kart Club, said he would look into the matter. Rod Taylor urged clubs and individuals to write to Cheryl Lynch at the MSA with their views on the future of karting. He said it was very disappointing that only thirteen people had bothered to write so far. Mike Stackhouse, for Chasewater, said the ABkC had missed their chance to produce a kart development plan, which had been drafted by Steve Chapman but did not progress. He said such a plan was essential to access government or lottery funding. There were questions about the new FIA Junior Helmet specification, which would almost certainly be permitted in 2008 races in the UK, and be compulsory for CIK racing in 2009 for juniors, likely followed soon after in MSA racing. The AGM and Kart Regional Committee open meeting closed after some three hours of useful discussion, with one member commenting that he could not believe that less than half the member clubs sent delegates to such an important meeting.

(Editor Graham Smith, email [secretary@abkc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@abkc.org.uk))

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