

ABkC News July 2002

Risk assessments and safety for kart clubs

At it's July meeting the steering group spent some time on discussing how to help clubs with formulating risk assessments for their practice and race days. Even running under an MSA permit does not absolve clubs from basic safety and risk assessment and such measures are mandatory for practice days. For instance members of the public must be kept away from dummy grids, parc ferme and of course the track itself. This should be done by limiting access points along with appropriate signage. Only authorised persons should be admitted, for example the driver and up to two mechanics on the dummy grid. Those permitted on the circuit must be signed on and clearly defined by marshal's overalls, tabards etc, with different colours for officials and junior pushers. During senior sessions no mechanics should be permitted trackside except for retrieving karts under official supervision. Signs should make clear that drivers are responsible for self-scrutineering their karts on practice days, unless the club provides a scrutineering service. No Smoking signs and Fire Extinguisher positions must be clear. Officials must follow safe working practice as per the Manual Handling Operations Regulations for instance when lifting karts although drivers and mechanics not employed by a team or track are exempt. RIDDOR, COSHH and accident record-keeping must all be in place. The HSE have a free handy leaflet giving guidance on drawing up risk assessments, or see their website <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/raindex.htm> . The ABkC will include guidance during the seminars planned jointly with the MSA this Autumn, where Clerks of the Course will also be trained in the use of the new points penalty structure.

O Plate Meetings in 2003

Votes were taken on the 2003 ABkC O Plate bids from clubs and the allocations are:

- a) Whilton Mill for all the Cadet classes
- b) Clay Pigeon for Formula TKM, Junior and Intermediate plus Formula A and ICA
- c) Shenington for Rotax Max, Junior and Junior Restricted
- d) St. Athan at Llandow for JICA and all the 4-stroke classes except Cadet
- e) Manchester & Buxton continue to have the gearbox meeting at Three Sisters.

InterNations / GP Plates

Rowrah were allocated the InterNations meeting for 2003. Clubs should note that there are now separate long and short circuit GP Plates for Rotax Max and each can only be used in their own discipline, i.e. the GP Plate won at Pembrey Kart Grand Prix cannot be used on short circuits where only the plate won at the Kartmasters can be used.

Kart Championship Control Panel

Championship organisers need to note that the MSA will only accept applications for 2003 championships when routed through a club or association. A new Kart Championship Control Panel has been formed to vet the applications and resolve any disputes over conflicting series. Paperwork will shortly be sent out by the MSA but notice of intent with an outline of any series needs to be lodged by 1st September. Dates do not need to be given at this stage. Championships will be graded from A

for principal commercial or British Championships down to D for club championships. ABkC championship organisers should note that they must follow the ABkC regulations in the 'Gold Book' unless permission is given for variations.

Used Tyres

No easy solution has been found for the disposal of used kart tyres. The tyre manufacturers can arrange for collection and disposal in loads of 2000 to 3000 tyres at a time, but at a cost approaching £1000. If clubs do not want to pay for disposal they should put in their supplementary regulations that tyres must not be left at the track.

New Schools

It was noted that ARKS have appointed two new kart schools, at Bayford Meadow and Warden Law. Tockwith is expected to be authorised soon. Competition secretaries should note that it is mandatory for under-18's to write their date of birth on the front of their competition licences (N.12.7b). The ABkC is still pressing the MSA to have this done automatically.

Changes in competition licences

There are several changes in competition licencing proposed to the Motor Sports Council, see the Summer edition of MotorSports Now magazine. The ABkC, along with ARKS, is opposing the proposal that anyone not having held a licence for more than five years will have to re-take the ARKS written test. What are not shown in the magazine are the changes from the FIA/CIK. These mean that only salaried professional drivers will be allowed to compete in national meetings in countries where they do not hold their licence. Amateurs will be allowed to compete in International meetings though. The ABkC foresees many problems with this, not least in their InterNations meeting and cross-border interchange between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. There is an existing reciprocal agreement on licences with Motorsport Ireland and it is hoped this can continue. The ABkC will be writing to the MSA to put pressure on the FIA for a re-think.

Tyres and classes in 2004

The ABkC has formed a working party for the 2004 class tyre contracts. The recent shortage of some types of tyres was discussed and measures are being taken to alleviate the situation. The steering group is having a special brainstorming meeting in November to set out a 'road map' for the future direct drive classes, and to propose changes to the 125cc gearbox classes from 2004. Meanwhile the ABkC is confirming that 125cc rotary valve classes will have a stable future in 125 Open until at least the end of 2007 and that all current 125cc engines will have a home in any revision of the classes.

100 National

The steering group decided that 100 National will not have an ABkC national (Super 1) or O Plate championship in 2003 and the class will be dropped out of the Gold Book from 2004. This was decided after looking at the numbers of drivers competing in the class and the decline and growth patterns of direct drive classes. It will still be possible to run it at club level for as long as necessary. With immediate effect the requirement to have the GB mark on the Vega XSL slick tyres is waived, and from 1.1.2003 the GB will not be required on the wets either. However due to the reaction caused by the announcement, the Super 1 have stated that they have put on hold any decision not to run 100 National pending further discussions.

New classes

Rotax Junior Restricted will be formally ABkC recognised from 1.1.2003 and this Rotax variant will go in the Gold Book but no ABkC national series will be run in 2003. The class will use Vega tyres from 1.1.2003. Clubs are asked meantime to recognise the 'MiniMax' seeded numbers from the Champions of the Future series, until such time as ABkC holds its own series for the class. The WTP Cadet class was not formally recognised for 2003, simply because the new MSA Cadet engine is still to be chosen, but the WTP class will be referenced in the box structure at the front of the Gold Book. Clubs will continue to require N.1.3 application to run the class. The Cadet engine evaluations will take place between now and the end of the year and the MSA expect to announce their decision by Christmas. The chosen engine becomes the class for the British Championship from 2004. There will be track evaluations, technical evaluations and commercial evaluations involved.

New tyres for Rotax Max

JAG, the commercial class owners, after extensive testing have chosen the Vega SL7 tyre for Rotax Max from 1.1.2003. This decision was endorsed by the ABkC subject to a final independent track test. The new tyre is said to have about twice the life of the MG, with very similar lap times. The cost will be the same at £85 plus VAT. The wet tyre will remain as the Vega W2 version, at a cost of £100 plus VAT. Tyres will be stamped JAG and an overlap to 31.3.03 for the use of the old tyres at club level only will be permitted.

JICA Clarification

The CIK have brought out an immediate clarification for the measurement of JICA engines, outlawing the alleged practice of drilling holes or slots or otherwise modifying pistons. Although it is not thought anyone was doing this in the UK, the clarification does apply.

Circuit Grading

The MSA has formulated draft proposals for the grading of circuits, from A for World Championship level, B for European Championship level, C for British or national championship level and D for others, designated Clubman. The gradings take into account suitable rooms for all officials and provision of a marshals rest room, size of grid, parc ferme and paddock hard standing, medical centre and showers and toilet blocks.

Farewell Paul!

Before ending the members gave a presentation to the MSA's Paul Gladstone, who is leaving at the end of August. He was thanked for his valuable assistance to the ABkC and to the advancement of karting that he has overseen.

Annual General Meeting Venue announced:

Please note the Annual General Meeting will be held at the International Kart Show at Telford, starting at 2 pm on Saturday 23rd November. Attendees will be able to have refreshments from 1.30 pm and entry to the show is not necessary. Clubs should be sure to have nominations into the secretary and any items for discussion at least two weeks in advance.

Congratulations to all recent ABkC O Plate winners –

Honda Cadet: Bill Casson

Formula TKM: Paul Wilson

Formula Junior TKM: Adam Chandler

Formula Junior TKM Intermediate: James Frost

Junior Gearbox: Jason Dredge

National 125: Carl Millington

125 Open: Chris Grieve

250 National: Mally Witts

250E: Paul Kennings

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