

# ABkC News May 2008

## Steering Group Meeting: April 08

Colin Hilton (Chief Executive, MSA) was an honoured guest at the April meeting of the joint ABkC Steering group and Kart Regional Committee. Some proposals to slim down the size of the meeting were put forward, but none immediately accepted. Colin Wright was appointed Treasurer, following last year's resignation of Ian Rennison. Mike Coombs won the vote to be vice-chairman and he will continue as chairman of the Gearbox Working Group. Simon Goodfellow will continue as chairman of the Direct Drive working group and it was expected Steve Chapman (absent from the meeting) would stay on looking after the Club matters. Dragon Kart Club had their membership application confirmed and actions from the AGM were considered.

### Upturn in new licences

The MSA representatives reported an increase in novice licences for the first quarter of 2008 at 428, compared with 390 last year. Per capita on events and total licences are also showing a good upward trend. Total licence numbers fell to 4687 and novice licences to 635 in 2007, but the increase in Start Karting pack sales indicates the start of an upward trend. For the first three months of 2008, clubs report an 80% increase in tests over the same period last year. Concern was expressed about the numbers of karters going off to try their hand at motor racing, and the need to be responsible in expressing the true costs of kart racing to newcomers, often quite cash-strapped. With all the attention on attracting youngsters into karting, the members were urged to remember to have schemes to attract the older drivers too.

### Chairman's Report

Russell Anderson reported that in future the Kart Championship Control Panel would give automatic renewal to any existing series that met the renewal criteria. He reported on CIK matters, including the outcome of the big debate on whether to allow front brakes in all classes, or mandate simultaneous operating front brakes all round. ASN's from all over the world had virtually unanimously objected, asking for the status quo. So to give future flexibility, as well as withdrawing the proposal, the CIK are only homologating the current front hand brakes for three years. Start line speeds in CIK events are now restricted to between 15 and 25kph coming up to the start line, as well as the drivers having to drive down two separated lanes. The UK is now slightly out of line on the KF2 weight, at 160kg, compared with the CIK's 158kg and the Direct Drive Working Group were asked to make any recommendation on change. Similarly KZ1 weight in the UK is 175kg, against the CIK's 170kg.

### Secretary's Report

Clubs are reminded of the need to honour the MSA and ABkC seeded numbers 1 to 15 in direct drive, 1 to 9 in gearbox, the GP and O Plates and that the only other numbers ABkC clubs should recognise are the Scottish, Irish and Welsh champions. The rules are in Appendix 4 of the Gold Book. Exceptionally the Super One ABkC Cadet championship numbers are honoured because they were historically first, preceded by an 'S' to distinguish from the MSA British Cadet championship. The club and direct drive working groups will be asked to consider if any changes are needed.

### O Plate Bids for 2009 invited . . .

Clubs are asked to send their 2009 'O' Plate bids to the secretary at Stoneycroft, Godsons Lane, Napton, Southam CV47 8LX by 1st September. The strategy will be the same as last year, asking for evidence of local support for the class or classes requested, prizes and formats and a proposed date

and any alternative date for the meeting. Practice at O Plates is not permitted on the Monday to Thursday preceding the event, in line with other national series.

### **Child Protection**

In response to an earlier query, the MSA confirmed it has available FAQ sheets for club Child Protection Officers. The meeting asked that the MSA keep a dialogue open with CPO's, checking and advising on training courses available through local authorities.

### **Lets Go Karting**

MSA Kart Sporting Committee chairman Rod Taylor was unable to be present but entered his report on the Lets Go Karting scheme, of which he is co-ordinator, and the draft Green Paper on the future of karting. Rod revealed that Shenington's bid for the Lets Go Karting scheme has been approved with others in the pipeline and a public launch is to be held in late April or early May. He urged any other club wishing to participate to get in touch with him in the near future. Colin Hilton added details of the £250,000 funding for the new Go Motorsport scheme, following a suggestion from MSA Chairman Alan Gow. Fingal PR company will develop a national publicity campaign.

### **Draft Green Paper on the future of karting . .**

Rod Taylor in his written address emphasised that the draft Green Paper was only putting forward suggestions for discussion. Some of the meeting members said it was valuable in provoking discussion, albeit that some of the topics were rather emotive and did not find favour. Therefore it was agreed that the ABkC members would put forward their ideas for the future of karting and meantime Rod should be requested to delay publication.

### **MSA Reporting . .**

In other MSA matters, it was noted that the MSA recommends zero tolerance on driving standards. The Kart Sporting Committee have agreed that drivers competing in senior classes overseas may continue to race juniors in the UK if they wish, at least for MSA national level racing. Individual requests to mix Rotax 177 and Formula Blue have been agreed and the box structure might need to be revised. A complete re-write of the bodywork regulations, largely to bring in line with the CIK, is being undertaken. Exceptions to the rule, for instance 210 and 250 National gearbox exemptions from crash tested bodywork, will be written into class regulations. It has been agreed that the 2004 – 2006 TKM homologated karts without the fixing points for the crash tested bodywork may use metalwork adapted for the new plastic elements. And from 2009 all the older TKM karts will need to use the new plastic elements, but not necessarily the metalwork.

Some British made gearbox karts can have applications made individually for exemptions to the rule that the bodywork cannot overlap the main chassis tubes. Photographs will need to be supplied at an inspection by a Technical Commissioner. For 2009 steering wheel shapes permitted will fall into line with the CIK, allowing flat bottom versions. Although three litres of fuel is recommended to be available at the end of a race, one litre will be accepted for sampling, but in that case no sample can be given to the competitor.

BS6658 Type A helmets will become ineligible from 1.1.2010, subject to Council, but the Type A/FR will continue to be permitted. John Ryan said the new CIK Junior helmet is unlikely to become mandatory in the UK until at least 2011, as not many manufacturers are making them yet. He added that the CIK are looking into a KF3 restricted class, at similar power to a MiniMax. A suggestion that sidepods from different homologations could be permitted will be considered.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Approval for part funding for new scrutineering tools was agreed. The steering group also agreed to fund a new racesuit and helmet for any club participating in the Lets Go Karting scheme. The AGM suggestion of pooling club funds to one account was rejected, as it was not thought such funds would be large enough to make a significant difference. The treasurer will look into getting a deposit account with better interest rates. It was noted that the MSA have significantly improved the cover for signed on officials, and also that Cumbria Kart Club have taken out a policy to give good cover for officials at all times, including test days. They can supply more information.

## **Direct Drive karting . .**

In Direct Drive matters it was noted that the Honda Technical Regulations would be amended from 1st May to permit the new Honda engine, fuel tank, exhaust and valve springs. There was some discussion about the Rotax recall of cylinders taking place in some other countries. It is by no means certain what will need to happen in the UK as with 3000 Junior engines in use it is a huge task. An announcement will be made in due course for any change taking place effective 1.1.2009. Russell Anderson apologised on behalf of Dunlop for the shortage of Cadet KT3 wet tyres. This was due to a manufacturing change at the factory, with little notice, and out of his control. He has had stocks air freighted in for Stars and Super One. The decision about whether to use the narrower rear tyre in KF3 needs to be made by June.

## **Comer Carbs . .**

There was a long discussion about the problems that have arisen with the use of the Tryton carburettor in the Comer Cadet class. John Ryan for the MSA explained the need for a change, to try and eliminate the high resale value of so-called 'special' Tillotson carburettors. The testing of the carburettors was completed satisfactorily to the MSA's requirements, but the durability of the carburettor in use was a matter for Zip. The MSA are permitting the use of an alternative needle and seat, and allowing the carburettor to be used either way up. John Ryan added that the problems have taken everyone by surprise and were being taken very seriously. Russell Anderson asked him to convey the meeting members' displeasure with the use of the Tryton as at present. Subsequently the MSA, Stars and Zip agreed to have experts available at the upcoming Stars meeting. The saga continues!

## **Gearbox karting . .**

The gearbox representatives deplored the recent issues surrounding supply of the MH tyres for the 250 National class. The competitors at the first round of the Super 4 would have to use XP5, but the MH is now in stock. The gearbox group will consider if 250 National would be better served with open tyres, five or six inch allowed. Disc protectors are likely to be mandatory in all non-gearbox classes where the disc is level or below the chassis, for 2009, and the gearbox group would consider if and how this could be applied to gearbox classes. They will also consider whether electro-mechanical aids to gear-changing should be permitted in KZ1 next year, to follow this year's CIK regulation change. Currently it is banned through a regulation in Appendix 4 of the Gold Book.

## **Championship matters . .**

The committee were fully in support of the ABkC Rotax O Plate continuing to be held at Clay Pigeon this year, despite a call from the Team and Drivers Association to re-consider the venue. Responding to a question from an earlier meeting, it was demonstrated that having parc ferme fuel is not legally practical in this country. It was agreed that the Honda and WTP O Plates could take National B licences so long as the drivers had got their five novice signatures. But requests for waivers to not use control fuel at the Cadet O Plates was not agreed. It was confirmed that the Honda and World Formula O Plate does not need to have control fuel. There was some dissent about the cost of the control fuel, especially for the more fuel hungry gearbox classes.

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

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