



NEWS

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Steering Group Meeting June 2011

The June meeting was held at the MSA Motorsport House. This is the meeting where any changes in 2012 class regulations are proposed, discussed, and if accepted will in due course be promulgated in a newsletter. Also the format of the following year's O Plates is decided and bids sought from clubs.

2011 O Plate Meetings

The new format ABkC O Plate festival held at Rowrah on the end of May bank holiday weekend was deemed a great success, so bids from clubs are invited for a similar event in 2012. The proposals should be in detail and confirm that the event will be televised, and on the same weekend. If possible the gearbox classes should be included, but in case this is not possible bids from clubs for the gearbox classes are also invited. Rowrah also had a hog roast and live music, and various mechanic and ladies races in the evenings. The ABkC will take a fee of £200 plus £5 per driver. Bid proposals from clubs should be with the ABkC secretary by 15th September. This is a great opportunity for clubs to host a prestigious championship meeting for all Cadets, TKM and Rotax classes.

The Gearbox O Plate at Sherington was also successful, with almost £1000 worth of prizes, but the entry level was a little disappointing. Drivers enjoyed the longer races.

CIK Matters

The chairman reported that the CIK is considering having a 'national' KF class in an attempt to cut costs. The KF2 and KF3 European championships next year will not have qualifiers but two events both counting towards the title. This was in response to the fact that all drivers who qualified for the north and south finals this year automatically were already in the European championship meeting. There will also be a World Cup for the classes. The FIA is also asking ASN's not to approve NEAFP (national events authorised for foreign participation) from 1.1.2012 for any drivers who do not have an international licence. This is in response to concern about drivers under the age of their 13th year who are being encouraged to race in quasi-international events, sometimes trying to attract children as young as 7 years of age. The Mini-kart (equivalent to Super Cadet) series in the WSK is likely to be the hardest hit, also the Rotax Micro/MiniMax Festival being held in Portugal this year.

Championship and Tyre Contracts

In response to the MSA extending the British Championship contracts for a further year, so that the new championships can take effect with the new Cadet engine in 2013, the ABkC is also going to extend all its national championships and tyre contracts for 2012. This is with the exception of the KF2 British Championship class, as a decision on its future will be taken after the single event title race in October at PF

International, which does seem to be attracting a lot of interest. Also the ABkC is going to set up a club development fund, in the hope it can be used to help the clubs that are currently struggling for entries. The ABkC is helping to support the clubs that are running the Lets Go Karting scheme.

Shows

The ABkC with ARKS has booked a booth at the BKIA Karting Pavilion at the 2012 Autosport International Racing Car Show. The ABkC and ARKS is also likely to have a stand at the new MotorSportsUK show at Coventry in early November.

Kart Safety

A very useful Kart Safety meeting has been held at Whilton Mill with attendance from clubs, circuits, the NKA, ABkC and MSA, and some of the discussion was reported on at the steering group. Clubs and circuits are reminded that if they are hiring their facilities to third parties, they must ensure insurance is in place to indemnify the MSA from any claims. There was a discussion on traders insurance. Clubs and championships should ensure that all commercial teams and traders have appropriate public liability insurance cover in place, by asking them to sign a form of confirmation and indemnity. Ordinary individual racers should check if their household insurance covers motorsport activities, otherwise they really need to take out separate public liability insurance. Think of the consequences if for instance an awning flew off in the wind and caused damage or injury. The RIDDOR regulations are to change in September when all notifications must be made on line, through the www.hse.gov.uk website on the Incident Reporting page. The current information telephone line will cease and be replaced with a FAQ page on the website. CIK kerbs came in for some criticism and it has been pointed out that varying the voids and angling the channels to draw karts over can help mitigate against running them. The MSA has had 50mm axles that have broken tested by a lab and continues to press the CIK for a thicker minimum wall limit. In gearbox there is an immediate ban on 50mm axles unless the wall thickness is a minimum of 2.9mm in the 210 National and 250 National classes. As always, there was a debate on poor driving standards and first corner incidents are too common and can cause a lot of expense.

Club and Marshal of the Year

Applications for Club of the Year and Marshal of the Year are invited, and kart clubs should route through the ABkC secretary.

Regulation changes for 2012

Rotax and JAG have notified the ABkC and MSA of likely changes for next year. Some of these will be promulgated in the next newsletter but one is the introduction of a new optional steel isolating mat for the exhaust. The tyre rotation as marked on the tyres will become compulsory next year, as

is already the case in EuroMax. And the Super One is likely to restrict the choice of oil in Rotax to only one make, or at least a limited number, to make fuel testing easier and quicker. Of course Comer Cadet and KGP are already restricted to one choice of oil.

There could be some further changes to minimum driver weights for juniors as well.

Tal-Ko have indicated that there is very little likely to change in their regulations. No changes are to be made to the ABkC tyres for the Honda Junior and Senior classes in 2012. Although a request to study alternatives was made, no data has been received in time. The possibility of requiring the homologated gear ratios and exhaust pipes for the Super 4 only in 2012 is to be discussed, but it is not likely to be enforced at club level just yet. The new Dunlop DEM tyre for the KZ2 UK class came in for some criticism because of high wear characteristics at certain tracks on cold weather days so the DEH is being considered for 2012. A candidate club to try out a race on DEH is sought. Tyre shortages for the Cadet classes was highlighted but the importer is doing his best to mitigate against the effects of the tsunami in Japan by air-freighting in tyres at his expense. They promised to step up the quantities and noted two ship loads are on their way.

Cadets

The MSA representatives said that tendering for the 2013 Cadet engine is necessary as the previous contracts will come to an end. A working group has been formed which will consider the applications and make a recommendation to the MSA Chief Executive. The number of entrants in Super Cadet has been disappointing although support is promised for 2012. The MSA is reviewing the current Super Cadet regulations. Clubs are asked to inform the ABkC Secretary if they can run Super Cadet. Could clubs please respond as soon as possible, and if they are unable to offer Super Cadet give the reasons why.

It should be noted that plastic rear bumpers (RPS) are not permitted in the Cadet classes unless they have passed a CIK approved crash test, currently none have been put forward. Easykart Cadet have a waiver for this year.

Bambino

Bambino was another class meriting a discussion. The MSA has a working group looking at Bambino issues including the merits of a one engine / one tyre class. All weather tyres are being evaluated.

Transponders

The MSA is in discussion with AMB and TAG Heuer to ensure cross compatibility of transponders and decoders, so competitors can use either make. The MSA representatives wished the ABkC to remind clubs that if they are using transponders for timing, and publishing timed results, or using time penalties, that they must have a licenced timekeeper.

Green Paper

Of course there was a long discussion about the Green Paper and the comments received, as well as the draft proposals of the Kart Sporting Committee who will be reviewing all of this at their next meeting, before reporting back to Kart Committee. The ABkC has always supported the concept of one national championship issuing the seeded numbers for a class, but is not in agreement with proposals to significantly decrease the number of championship rounds or entries in national and British Championships. It believes it is useful to have alternative championships running at a national level, so that drivers can try competing at a higher level before going onto the premier series. The ABkC also wishes to continue with its own championships and tyre contracts.

In any case it is proposed that the Gold Book will be restricted to having the regulations for the main stream classes only, and the minority class regulations will be on the MSA and ABkC websites. The ABkC agreed to cut out the non-core classes from its How to Start Karting brochure, so the perception of too many classes is reduced.

Under Age Mechanics

Some concern was noted about the use of minors (under 18's) for mechanics and whether they hold letters of permission from their legal guardians and whether they are being permitted to work in live circuit areas. Additionally the need for CRB checks for team members running youths under the age of 18 was discussed.

Licensing of Parents/Guardians

An entrants licence will be required for all minors (youngsters under the age of 18) from 1.1.2012. Either a team will have to enter a driver, and take responsibility for any fines or penalties, or the parent or guardian will have to purchase a PLG Entrants licence. It is expected that the licence will cost about £16.

Lets Go Karting

The MSA and ABkC subsidised Lets Go Karting scheme for 2011 is fully up and running, but so far only five clubs have taken advantage of the grants for new Honda Cadet karts. These karts are available from JKH and there are plenty in stock. To join the scheme please contact Rod Taylor (rod@rtaylor0.orangehome.co.uk). New leaflets have been produced and the cost of the taster session can be adjusted to suit local requirements, it is no longer a requirement to charge £5. Some clubs offer further longer sessions and repeat visits so the newcomers can prepare for the ARKS test. To re-iterate on the Honda Cadet offer, the MSA offers a £1000 grant, the ABkC a £500 grant (plus VAT if necessary), and the club needs to loan the scheme an initial £1000 plus VAT. That purchases two fully race prepared Honda Cadet karts, one to use in the Lets Go Karting sessions, and one to sell on for the subsidised price of £1250 plus VAT. Once sold the money is obviously returned to the club account so they can purchase a replacement. The MSA and ABkC are offering grants to the first ten participating clubs and ARKS are offering a free ARKS test to the first 20 purchasers of karts.

British Schools Karting Championship

As you may know the BARC has now taken over the promotion of the BSKC with Mark Turner at the helm. He is keen to involve ABkC kart clubs. If every current driver of school age could get a couple of school mates to form a team of three and enter, who knows, a good proportion might go on to join the club and take up MSA racing. About 450 teams take part, but there is plenty scope for expansion and ARKS are helping to sponsor the new series due to kick off in September. ABkC are considering whether to also help offset some of the costs to keep this worthwhile scheme going. It costs £45 per head to participate, starting with qualifiers. Then there are eleven regional and the National final, involving some 500 teenagers. So you may hear from Mark offering leaflets for your club signing on area, please help him promote the series and enlist an enthusiastic new audience of novice karters to club kart racing.

(Editor Graham Smith, email secretary@abkc.org.uk)