



NEWS

March 2013

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March Steering Group Meeting

The Steering Group met at Donington, new members including Martin Bean, the well known Clerk of the Course, Stan Woods from Northern Ireland and Colin Lipscomb from Llandow were welcomed. Sadly Mike Coombs has resigned from the group, he was thanked for his valuable contributions over many years. Gary Walker, who runs the Lets Go Karting at PFI, and Dan Parker from Zip were guests on this occasion. It was noted that the article about grass roots karting that had been requested of the MSA had come to successful fruition. The banners for the shows were used at Kartmania and Autosport and the MSA had issued a letter to clubs with their valued opinion on employer liability insurance for clubs.

CIK Matters

Russell Anderson reported that the CIK had held an extraordinary meeting to discuss KF engines plus the issue of under-13's racing abroad. There was no real conclusion to the engine future, the Vice-President wants a very simple engine, the manufacturers want to keep the power valve and have a float carburettor. The CIK have contracted the promotion of their championships to WSK for five years, the organisers are expected to cease their own international series albeit continue with an Italian series from 2014. The lack of cross border racing for youngsters, especially for the smaller countries, is causing much angst and Jean Todt visited the meeting and said he would accept any new evidence in writing from ASNs. For the 2014 tyre homologation there will be a Prime (medium) and Option (Hard) with a mandatory minimum life in km. The CIK has decreed that brake discs can only be modified by the manufacturer. CIK championships will start on track on Wednesday's now, so much for economy. C Licences may be accepted with ASN approval. Central fuel storage is banned and on board cameras will no longer be used. KZ will have a super pole with new tyres. France has submitted a proposal for disabled driver racing. The new General Secretary has now left the CIK, the Technical Manager has moved to the FIA so almost all know how has gone.

National Championships

Russell Anderson has been having discussions with the MSA and after the meeting the MSA issued a press release stating that it has asked the ABkC to promote the national championships through to the end of 2016, thereafter the MSA will tender for all the championships as well as reviewing all class homologations. In other words 2017 could see a thinning out of weak classes.

Tyre Contracts

Legal advice to the ABkC is that either all classes must have tenders issued for tyres, or all classes could have an internal review of the tyre choice, it would not be legal to treat differently each class. The latter route fits well with Rotax and TKM. Formula Cadet and the KF Classes are recognised MSA

Classes. A decision is expected soon and a group will be set up to do the review. It was noted later at Kart Committee that nearly all tyres have bar codes now and software for clubs is sought to streamline the checking. Some clubs are already having the drivers write their slick barcodes down on the scrutineering card, then checking post race, instead of marking the tyres.

Appointments

Nigel Edwards was appointed as Vice-Chairman, Chairman of the Direct Drive group and representative to the MSA Regional Committee in place of Mike Coombs. Phil Featherstone will take over as Gearbox sub-group chairman and Steve Clayton continues as the Club sub-group chairman.

Non MSA Racing

In noting that the kart licence numbers have dropped again to 4253 in 2012 compared with 4520 the previous year, this led onto a discussion on the increasing prevalence of non MSA racing. It was said that the problem will be survival of small clubs as circuits seek to maximise income and revenue. Several issues were highlighted: the upfront costs of MSA racing; the new championship structure being unlimited if visiting club meetings; so-called championships being publicised that do not have MSA championship permits; Inter-club championships detracting from home club racing. It was noted that the premier arrive and drive series are attracting good numbers. Safety standards at certain circuits are very questionable even although this is not the business of the ABkC. Steve Chapman noted his new Junior Tyro class is very economical. The Club sub-group will look into the matter and report back. Later on the following week at Kart Committee there was another discussion on the falling numbers of licence holders, and suggested that clubs could ask those who do not renew membership the reasons why and ask if they could become officials if they or their offspring had stopped racing.



Shows and Insurance

Autosport Show was successful and the Kart Pavilion won a best stand award (see picture above). Clubs are urged to visit their British Schools Championship regional finals to attract new members and the final will be at Whilton Mill on 16 June where volunteers are needed to help publicise MSA racing. Steve Chapman said he was drawing up a syllabus for karting at schools and offered it out to all. It was agreed to ask for a stand at KartMania this year, and the Autosport stand is re-booked. Insurance packages for teams, and for Dad and Lad teams is now readily available. Public Liability insurance for teams is mandatory in the Super One and clubs are asking for the same. The MSA are concentrating on their 'Year of the Volunteer' possibly to the detriment of publicising Lets Go Karting, and clubs are urged to put on a show for the National Motorsports Week in June/July.

Timing Systems

A comparison of the TAG Heuer offering and a new offer from SuperSports in conjunction with MyLaps was circulated. SuperSport are offering the up to date Orbit at a preferential starting price of £1000, more if sector timing is required, and of course the existing decoder and transponders are used. Live timing to a £1 app on a phone is available and there are no monthly charges at all. Telephone support is on tap especially at weekends. Clubs should all have received the offer by email. Other similar systems may come along soon. SportTimingServices are willing to give detailed prices to any club, the TAG Heuer system has been successful in Super One and now at PFI.

Membership/Club Development Funding

26 clubs have renewed membership and the remainder are being chased. £500 grants from the new club development fund were approved for North of Scotland Kart Club and Cumbria Kart Club. Clubs are asked to put the current year on membership cards, apparently some are being presented when drivers guest at other clubs without a date. The on-going problems at Whilton Mill were noted and discussed. The ABkC will give membership to whoever gets the racing going again.

Presentation

Chris Herring came to give a presentation on the proposed Circuit of Wales at the heads of the valleys, which would cater for full FIA standard and has had MotoGP booked in for September 2015. He hopes to have a 1200m international standard kart circuit.

Technical

The group expressed concern if new classes came along for 2014, feeling there is enough classes already. Compatibility of IAME, Comer and Honda is so far looking positive, there is a problem with the IAME pull cord breaking but IAME are working on a solution. The choice of Bambino engine and tyre is undergoing a legal process and introduction is likely to be 1st July now. Axle breakage issues are still on-going with the MSA trying to get the CIK to take notice and go towards a thicker walled axle rather than rely on an expensive homologation process. Photos of potentially serious accidents have been sent to the CIK and acknowledged. Cost reduction ideas are being debated, bodywork costs are cited as one important issue for attention. Super Cadet regulations will be removed from the Gold Book next year. Tyre testing regulations are being drafted, following a similar system to fuel testing. Suppliers would provide a GC analysis sample to be used in comparison testing. A discussion on whether to have a standardised position for an ignition kill switch is being debated. There was a batch of Cadet wet tyres before Christmas which proved not to work in the cold weather. Dunlop have agreed to exchange used and unused wets for competitors, the first replacement batch is already in use and another 1200 tyres air-freighted in were almost ready for

distribution. Russell Anderson apologised on behalf of Dunlop for the problems. The new TKM wets are also proving problematical in some hands apparently. On gearbox it is proposed to remove the regulation allowing side tanks, and discussion is taking place about seats in long circuit. Requests for the use of Vega tyres in 250 National from two clubs were not supported, as the regulations are fixed for the year. Currently only Bridgestone, Maxxis and Dunlop are permitted in the class but Vega can be added next year. The British Superkart Association have amended the 125 Open regulations to specify the modifications permitted and only allow certain types of carburettors. This is likely to be adopted by the ABkC for 2014 also. A problem with the use of KZ2 karts in 125 Open, and hence not conforming to bodywork/sidebar/front bumper regulations needs examination and resolving.

MSA

A series of mid week evening seminars for Clerks is being arranged for April. It was noted all clubs must appoint a person to be trained as a marshal Training Co-ordinator, so that the marshal and observer training can be enhanced. The ABkC is to ask the MSA for more child friendly publications as a high percentage of kart licence holders are of a young age. Later at Kart Committee the MSA noted they are making much more use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter with Jess Fack appointed last year as MSA Development Officer. Also post steering group meeting, Kart Committee suggested strongly that clubs must not use a blackboard for signalling numbers to drivers with a black or black and orange flags, and really the number should be the same size as that on the karts. This is to be referred to Race Committee as it applies across the board. Starting procedures were discussed along with the feedback received during consultation. There was no issues regarding starting the race when the red light goes off, no green needed. But the suggestion of breaking formation immediately rather than over the line is likely to be dropped.

Championships

John Hoyle for Super One reported on a successful finale to the year with the awards at Autosport presented by Kelvin Fletcher, Paul Di Resta, the MSA's Rob Jones and Helmut Vogslam of Rotax. No less than 477 unique drivers raced in the series during 2012 and there are already 364 registrations booked, 20 more than last year at this time. MiniMax is the largest class but unfortunately KF2 is going to prove unviable with insufficient entries. There is a proposal being debated with the MSA to have the KZ 125cc gearbox class as the MSA British Kart Championship, where interest is already good. The ABkC would make sure it would not clash with the Super 4, e.g. differentiating the seeded numbers. John Hoyle is building a new race centre truck for this year and new tool boxes will be supplied so that entrants can dismantle their engines without recourse to their own tools. Heats will now count for points. As the CIK have not agreed to allow the IAME Cadet O Plate to be a support at the PFI World Championships a new date for the O Plate is being sought. Instead a special KF3 Cup race will be run at PFI. The ABkC O Plate organisation at Rowrah is proceeding well.

The next meeting will be in late June at the same venue.

Membership Renewals

Nearly all clubs have now renewed for 2013, many thanks. Just one or two to go – you know who you are!! Up to date listing on the website, Members section.

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