



NEWS

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From the February Steering Group meeting

One of the largest ever steering group meetings was held in February with guests from a non-MSA circuit (Richard Lock – Ellough Park), a driver (Andrew Rees-Reynolds), Martin Capenhurst of Kartmania and George Robinson representing JAG. The MSA sent Race, Speed & Kart Executive Cheryl Lynch and Technical Executive John Ryan, a total of 24 attendees. Nigel Edwards was elected as the ABkC Vice-Chairman. To start the meeting off Chairman Colin Wright asked for views from recent club meetings and the responses seemed to indicate quite healthy entry levels. He reported that he and Secretary Graham Smith had a productive liaison meeting with the MSA Acting CEO Rob Jones and his senior staff a week or so earlier although currently the MSA have requested the output remains confidential. The group spent the morning discussing how to improve and grow our sport as kart competition licence numbers have been dropping 10% year on year, not good for a sustainable future. (The MSA pointed out there has been a drop in all disciplines except Historic Car racing.)

Problem issues to address:

The issues identified include:

- Too many financial barriers to entering the sport – ARKS Pack, ARKS Test, Medical especially



- Drivers want a pleasurable experience at a race meeting, treated as adults by officials, not berated at Drivers Briefings
- Some MSA fees and fines are excessive and off-putting eg for non-production of licence, for putting the meeting on the International Calendar so a foreign driver can enter.
- Some other motorsport events and motocross are often over-subscribed, why not karting?
- Clubs should offer an informative experience for spectators by having a lively and informative commentary



- Non-MSA meetings often give more track time for a similar entry fee (because of smaller entries and amalgamating classes), are some MSA clubs too greedy in trying to accommodate so many different classes?
- ‘Amateur’ club drivers are forced to race against top ‘professionals’ sometimes World Champion level enhanced by top team support. Should there be a split between amateur and professional in the class groupings?
- Non-MSA circuits are less concerned about regulation upgrades, eg by not requiring the latest airbox yet still scrutineer to MSA safety standards and use MSA regulations (albeit relaxed or an older version).



- Especially at major events, team awnings are all closed up and spectators cannot see in. NASCAR and some MSA championships give good examples of mandatory open pit garages or awnings and drivers willing to chat.
- Revision of the Judicial system to a 'Referee' or model on the International system where the Clerk refers a judicial to the Stewards for a decision, the only further appeal is then to the Motor Sports Council and likely to be denied.
- Vastly improve the ABkC publicity by a re-design to a modern website, making much more use of social media outlets, local leafleting (the ABkC is producing 1000 leaflets for each club to be distributed to local hotel racks).
- The operating costs at non-MSA meetings are less, eg no per capita insurance to pay
- Can MSA meeting permits be more flexible eg starting and stopping the on permit part to allow other activities
- Could Clubman / Tyro power restrictions be increased so more classes could have licence issued on the day?



Economy TKM Clubman class at Sherington

Questionnaire on its way

It was decided to send a questionnaire out to clubs to find out their views. There is a grave concern that more circuits will turn to non-MSA racing, with the possibility of the loss of more clubs to the MSA and ABkC. We have already lost Beccles (Ellough), Kent (Lydd), Warden Law and Durham & Yorkshire (Teesside) to this. If some of the above can be fixed then maybe we can stem the tide. The items identified will also be passed to the MSA

Kart Committee to start the change process and the ABkC has set a target of reversing the trend over the next 1 – 2 years.

Development Grants

Only one club applied for a 2014 Club Development Grant so Llandow was awarded £500 towards their new Orbit timing system. Other clubs should ask the Secretary for the application form to go to the next meeting in early June. The British Schools Karting Championship was once again supported with a cheque for £1000 plus vat towards their promotion costs. Clubs are requested to check the BSKC website (www.bskc.co.uk) to see if they can support their local event and publicise MSA karting.

News – CIK / DBS

It was reported that the CIK are proposing to have a simpler, lighter engine for the KF classes from 2016, possibly without a starter and clutch, and to use a decompressor to aid push starting. This could save a considerable amount of weight and some prototypes are being trialled. The MSA is carrying out a review of the application of the DBS (used to be called CRB) system for checking adults who work with minors. Apparently there have been some changes in the system which could impinge on the necessity or otherwise of officials being checked. The ABkC has concerns about the duty of care that officials and team personnel should have towards children. We have been led to believe that events whereby individuals are in the proximity of minors for a minimum of four consecutive days may well need to have DBS (previously CRB) checks as a legal requirement, we would advise anyone concerned to contact your local DBS authority for further clarification. At the moment this probably only includes such as Super One, Kartmasters and CIK events.

Regulation Proposals

The MSA has asked for members thoughts on whether an Intermediate class should be introduced in the future for say 10 – 14 year olds as the range of Cadet driver weights has such a wide spread. This is something the BKIA have requested and comments are invited. A proposal to limit direct drive karts and CIK classes including KZ1 but not KZ UK, 125 Open, 210 and 250 to a maximum of 107cm wheelbase will be put to the next MSA committee meetings to bring it in line with the CIK. Somewhere the limit got dropped out of the Blue Book in the past and left only the superkart length. There was some discussion on the application of the 2014 Honda engine technical regulations and the changes allowed to restrictors. The ABkC has called for

the senior X30 number plates to be changed to white plates with black numbers as currently they conflict with the ABkC's Rotax Max 177 class. It was reported that there are four new 250 National engines or kits available for 2014, the Gas Gas, Viper, DEA and THR.



Three of the new 250 National engines for 2014

MSA Regulation Changes & News

The MSA have re-issued the Karting Table of Penalty sheet and Clerk's Decision Sheet as there was an incorrect reference. Clubs should put in the fine they plan to use for non-attendance at Drivers Briefing (£50 recommended) and add to their 2014 regulations and display on their notice boards. There has been some confusion about whether Kart Circuits have to use the new double waved yellow but the MSA confirmed that Kart circuits do not need to use double waved yellows. In answer to a question the MSA representative confirmed that the new track limit rules do not apply to long circuit karting as well as not applying to short circuit as Section U has its own rules. In future clubs will have to make a return to the MSA of how many drivers raced in each class, so the results can be collated to aid future decisions. The MSA will be sending out a form to be returned with the per capita insurance return. The MSA have added a new strand to their Club Development grants called Club Support and encourage applications. Richard Vincent-Smith has joined the MSA as the Assistant Legal Officer and he will

deal with National Court issues. They are recruiting a Training Officer and an IT Manager. As at 31st January 16,146 licences have been issued compared with 15,560 at the same time last year. The total number of licences across all disciplines in 2013 was 32,649 compared to 33,342 in 2012 but the total number of permits issued was almost the same. 308 clubs responded to the MSA Club Survey, the biggest difficulty experienced is in recruiting new members. A report will be issued in due course. RDO's are to set up individual events in their own regions this year for National Motorsports Week which is to be held between 5 – 13th July.

Club & Championship Matters

It was agreed that the ABkC will help set up a Drivers Association and Andrew Rees-Reynolds kindly agreed to help with the task, and represent drivers at the Steering Group meetings. Concern was expressed about the proliferation of inter-club so called championships or challenges which do not have MSA permit approval. Unfortunately the Honda Challenge which was to have issued the ABkC Honda Senior and Junior seeded numbers has had to be cancelled due to lack of support. The S1 Winter Cup that was to have been held at PFI in early March has also been cancelled due to insufficient support but the first rounds of the Super One incorporating the ABkC National Championships are eagerly awaited. Martin Capenhurst said he would like to resurrect the InterNations Championship, and perhaps invite other countries outside of Great Britain to send teams for certain compatible classes. The BKIA said half their membership has taken up the BKIA insurance scheme and they are stressing the need for teams with trucks to have an Operators Licence. Their AGM will be set up shortly.

Finally . . .

The Steering Group will be reviewing the responses from the Club Questionnaire before their next meeting in early June and reviewing the progress of the changes requested to the MSA to help grow the sport back up. Clubs are reminded once again that there are club development grants available both from the ABkC and the MSA. As always we want to hear from your club and the competitors.

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