

## **Minutes of the ABkC Annual General Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 at Donington**

**1 Apologies:** Rob Jones (Chief Exec MSA), Martin Bean, Dan Parker, Phil Featherstone, Steve Clayton, Russell Anderson, Carol Blanchard, Debbie Sellers, Cheryl Lynch, Darren Clarke, George Robinson, Ian Rushforth, Colin Lipscomb.

**Present:** Colin Wright (Chair & Forest Edge), Graham Smith (Shenington), Nigel Edwards (Trent Valley), Eddie & Tracey Davies (Dragon), Mike Stackhouse (Chasewater), Rob Dodds (Forest Edge), Martin Capenhurst (FP4K), Kelvin Nicholls (Bayford Meadow), Peter Catt (BKIA), Paul Klaassen (Shenington), Malcolm & Marion Fell (Cumbria), Steve Chapman (Rissington), Steve Wren (Lincs), Ian Rennison (Clay Pigeon), Paul Skipp (Clay Pigeon), Duncan Masters (RAFMSA), Graham Butterworth (Hunts), Keiran Crawley (Whilton Mill).

Guests & Steering Group members not representing clubs: Chris Pullman (CP Consulting), John Gravett (JAG), Will Tew & Will Alderson (Alpha Timing), Sue Fairless (NKF), James Mills (JM Racing), John Hoyle (Super One), Euan Jeffrey (CRG), John Ryan (MSA)

All present gave a brief review of their attendance at recent race meetings.

**2 Approval of the 2014 Minutes and Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising not on the agenda. Approval proposed by Cumbria KC and seconded by Whilton Mill KC

**3 Chairman's Report:** Colin Wright said that as we close to 2015 the year has produced some great racing across the UK. Kartmania was well supported and had a real buzz about it, it was good to see more trade support. Clubs report a drop of around 10% and license holders are down again, however if we look wider then with A&D, Club 100, F100, IKR, Daytona the overall sport is in a good position. We, the ABkC and MSA cannot afford to be complacent, we need to strive to attract the Seniors back to regulated karting, we cannot afford to see these dwindle and leave us with a junior discipline. 2016, with the dropping of medicals, introduction of libre to suit smaller clubs and the ABkC petitioning for the removal of the ARKS test we could see an upturn in drivers within regulated MSA karting. The introduction of the new nosecone could be a gamechanger, it will change mentality but will need some added bodies from clubs who may already be struggling for volunteers, some guidance from the MSA as to a standard of monitoring would be important. We need to build relationships with IKR as both sides can "feed" each other and improve our shop window when ever increasing costs are hampering many staying MSA, some clubs are to be applauded for looking into tyre passport systems that would require driver to run more than 1 meeting, this is common in IKR and in all higher echelons of Motorsport, we NEED to action and support to keep this high cost down and it encourages people to race more. Both the ABkC and the MSA need to be more effective in making decisions quicker, the world moves so fast, our customers have other options and we need to be mindful and responsive to them. We need guidelines in responding in a timely manner as business' do to their customers, it's not professional or courteous to take so long. For 2016 the MSA will run a 6 month review of karting and perhaps we need to take some learnings from IKR events who are able to respond quickly to local customer needs and address in a timely manner, if we can jointly get that right we could see our "side" of the sport grow for the highly affected senior grids. Approximately 5, maybe 6 clubs seem to be doing very well numbers wise and we need to be relevant to them, arguably they are successful business' and do not need the ABkC or even the MSA to continue their success, drivers want grids and a well run meeting. The smaller clubs are the ones that really need our help, the MSA has been very proactive at funding these clubs via the development fund and yet numbers are still down, perhaps money is not the answer! Perhaps we and the MSA need to work closer with those clubs to see what advice, assistance and learnings we can pass on. Yet clubs need to at times help themselves. In Martin Capenhurst we have a great Club Committee leader and yet no clubs respond when Martin reaches out with our offers of help? The ABkC should be a force for change, an organisation that strives to implement and embrace the new, failure to do that will render us impotent and irrelevant in today's busy world and the pull on our customer's time. So as we close 2015 we have seen some clubs increase, many struggle and some looking to build out their IKR offering to maintain a profitable outlook, some of the consistently biggest seniors grids this year have been there and all credit to them for giving the karters what they want and when, we perhaps need to learn from that if we are to have a successful 2016! I desperately want EVERY club to succeed, the smaller friendly circuits where fun seems to come first, to support those club committees who try their best to grow the sport with their passion. I visit many of the smaller clubs and IKR and passionately hope that we can do everything we can to help these clubs, if they chose IKR to survive then we should still work with them and see the sport succeed. We need to be relevant to these clubs all across the country and really help as much as we can to see them survive and more importantly prosper! There is a perception that the "bigger more fashionable" clubs are favoured, this perception has to be disproved and 2016 should be when we really start delivering more value to the smaller clubs! I am open, stand for openness and transparency, we need to communicate with our customers, inform them and they will come with us and submit ideas. Personally I would like to see O plates split down and single classes going out to more clubs, 2016 we see Bayford host Honda Cadets and I

fully expect them to put on a stunning event with potentially record numbers, Forest Edge running 177 will replicate that and see possibly a C final for the class. The smaller clubs deserve a chance, if we don't give them our commitment then we are only thinking short term and the damaging effects of that over the longer term are not worth considering!

Comments following included John Hoyle said karting as a whole is strong but new people need a better incentive. Nigel Edwards added the MSA sport is too complicated. Martin Capenhurst said that apathy in clubs is a problem. Not enough offered to help at the ABkC Information stand at Kartmania, he emailed 225 circuits and clubs to compile a register of events and only got 3 replies. Clubs had free stands but only seven took it up. John Hoyle added it was good to see TKM drivers kitted up. Keiran Crawley commented that drivers come from all over the UK to race at their favourite (big) club which must be detrimental to small clubs, social media has changed the perception of where best to race.

**4 Secretary's Report:** Graham Smith said we had 29 clubs in membership again this year only NATSKA did not renew in 2015 but have now re-joined for 2016. We thank the clubs for their support of the ABkC. The clubs reported a total membership of 4049 which is down a bit on the 4436 reported in 2014 and licences are likely to be down a hundred or so again too (170). We have issued five newsletters throughout 2015 to keep the clubs informed of developments and proposals, also mostly printed in the magazines. We sponsored club karting at 2015 KartMania with seminars and advice to newcomers and both ourselves and the MSA were kept very busy and we will be at Autosport again, but on the Super One stand. The website is getting inquiries for DVDs and brochures at a rate of about 1400 per annum, from prospective new kart drivers. The Start Karting brochure was re-printed and distributed as usual and the 2016 version will be out for the Autosport show and available for clubs to use in their own promotions. Our promotional videos were all refreshed at the beginning of the year and are available on Youtube through our website. The club development fund allocated the full amount of £5957.50, and there will be £3045.00 available for 2016. It was noted that the MSA has also supported kart clubs with £32,000 from club development. We work closely with the MSA and have representations on all relevant committees. Initiatives supported include Race n' Respect, coaching courses, child safeguarding and we were pleased that medicals for short circuit karting are no longer required after our lobbying. The Clubman and Libre regulations mentioned last year are now on the MSA website. A year long project to find a new exhaust for Honda Cadet which is the most popular class in the UK was finalised with the exclusive three year agreement going to DEP Pipes. They are now available from a variety of relevant outlets. Thanks go to Kelvin for this work and for the revised 2016 Honda Technical Regulations and new scrutineering tools which will be available shortly at a subsidised price to clubs that have Honda Cadet.

**5 Treasurer's Report:** Graham Smith also gave the Treasurer's Report and distributed the audited accounts through to 31 October with thanks to Marion Fell for carrying out the audit. The tyre income for prize funds tends to straddle accounting periods so the 2015 accounts show income at £14308.01 (£45519.35 in 2014) and expenses at £29377.13 (£30505.23 in 2014 plus £200 for cheques later found not to have been cashed) so a loss of £15069.12 (compared with a profit of £14814.12 in 2014). The amounts vary depending when the tyre funds are paid in, which will amount to £20,300 of which £17,255 is their support for their classes in the national and British championships in Super One and Super 4 direct to the drivers and the remainder as support for our club development fund. So stripping out tyre prize funding the loss on the year is £8039.12 compared with a loss of £443.68 in the previous year. Much of that loss is due to the £5000 sponsorship of the Kartmania show, to allow kart clubs to continue with free stands and to promote karting at our information area. The cheque account stood at £3658.10 and the deposit account at £21989.44 at 31st October. The prize fund and club development funds are lower due to reduced entries in some classes of the Super One. Miscellaneous income includes O and E Plate concession fees.

#### **6 Constitution Changes put forward by the Steering Group:**

- a) Amendment to the Constitution Section 6 to add a Honda Class Technical Representative to the Steering Group. Trent Valley proposed that the Honda Cadet Class representative be added to the Steering Group as a non voting position with all in favour. Rob Dodds then queried why IAME (JMR) were not invited to steering group meetings. Graham Smith said that unlike Rotax and TKM, the X30 class was not also an ABkC class and promised to send James Mills information about the benefits of becoming affiliated.
- b) Amendment to the Constitution Section 6 to add a Drivers Association Representative to the Steering Group: Some queried why it was necessary to have a Drivers Representative when each class owner already keeps in close touch with drivers in their classes and that surely clubs should canvass drivers opinions and pass them on to the steering group when asked. Graham Smith explained that John Pike had set up a Facebook page and a website which was almost ready. Cumbria proposed, seconded by Chasewater, that the position be left as a guest position meantime and not a permanent post. Carried with a majority of 12 clubs.

**7 Proposal from Forest Edge Kart Club** seconded by Camberly Kart Club that from 2017 tyre contract monies collected from the class tyre suppliers cease going to the national championships and be used to generate club karting and be actively used for the member clubs. Nigel Edwards said that clubs should approach tyre and class importers for prizes, they are usually willing to help. Ian Rennison said that Super One are taking a profit on selling tyres and the biggest expense for competitors is tyres. He added that there should be a method for tyre funds supporting the clubs and not the S1 'elite' drivers. John Ryan said the Cadet tyre tender seeks promotion and support for clubs. Graham Smith explained that from 2017 all current Junior/Senior classes will have to be homologated along with their chosen tyre if they wish to continue (and new classes can also be proposed) and the National Championship class owners (Rotax, TKM and X30) will then choose a promoter for their National Championship so ABkC will no longer have a 'tyre contract'. The ABkC will have to find another way of getting funds to support the club development fund. John Hoyle said in IKR many are allowed to choose the fastest tyre and spend more on tyres than in MSA. Sue Fairless said some IKR circuits only allow a hard (long life) tyre. Nigel Edwards said that having the same tyre at all clubs in a class is the glue that keeps us together. Malcom Fell queried the future of the ABkC National Championships. Graham Smith said we are joint 'class owners' of Rotax and TKM and will have a say in the choice of national championship promoter. The vote was taken with no clubs in favour and eight against.

**8 Nominations for the 2016 Steering Group:** Only the chairman position required a vote to be taken, the secret vote was in favour of Colin Wright (18) over Nigel Edwards (10). The 2016 Steering Group will therefore consist of Colin Wright (Chairman), Graham Smith (Secretary and Treasurer), Nigel Edwards (Vice-Chairman), Keiran Crawley (Direct Drive Technical), Paul Klaassen (Cadet Technical), Kelvin Nicholls (Honda Cadet), Phil Featherstone (Gearbox Technical), Grahame Butterworth (Hunts), Rob Dodds (Forest Edge), Malcolm Fell (Cumbria), Colin Lipscomb (Llandow), Martin Bean (Buckmore Park), Steve Wren (Lincs) and Martin Capenhurst (FP4K) was co-opted at the following steering group meeting. In addition, there are representatives from the BKIA (Peter Catt), MSA/ABkC Championship promoter (John Hoyle), the MSA Bambino Championship (Dan Parker), the Scottish, Northern Ireland and Northern associations (Carol Blanchard, Stephen Tosh and Sue Fairless), and the two non-voting Presidents Steve Chapman and Russell Anderson. Tal-Ko and JAG are able to send observers, as does the current Driver Representative John Pike.

Nigel Edwards queried whether all nominees were in fact committee members of their clubs and whether that should be a condition. It was agreed that should be the case, so they can report back to their clubs.

The formal meeting was closed and an informal **Question and Answer** commenced with a presentation by Alpha Timing on their new tyre barcoding add on to their timing system. Will Tew extolled the virtues of their software and acknowledged the enhancements that came from FKS e.g. tyre scanning, chassis and engine scanning, and maintaining the database. He said adding the data scanning system to a club already having their timing software would probably cost an extra £40-50 per month. He noted that Alpha now supports both Mylaps and TAG Heuer transponders and decoders. The Q&A continued.

**1 Counterfeit Suits and Brakes** (put forward by Keiran Crawley). Keiran said there are a lot of counterfeit race suits around, exact copies of major manufacturers and very difficult to tell the difference at a glance but the material is poor. CRG have taken steps to counter this. Colin Wright said he has already informed the MSA and John Ryan said they have warned scrutineers and that there are also counterfeit FHR devices etc. The FIA is clamping down through the use of holograms. He agreed to put out further information on the subtle differences. Keiran also highlighted there were fake brake discs and pads coming in. John Ryan said the MSA will consider homologating brakes in all classes as a counter measure by the Kart Tech sub group. **Action John Ryan.**

**2 O, E & GP Plate Eligibility of Drivers:** (From Forest Edge). Colin Wright said that an instance was Ben Barnicoat winning two GP plates that might not be seen in action and that drivers aiming for these plates should have previously raced in the class in that year. He proposed that FE would want to limit the eligibility of drivers in the 177 Max O and E Plates. James Mills said that having it open allows for more entries and Mike Stackhouse suggested it was just a consequence of an Open Championship. Colin agreed to withdraw the proposal.

**3 DBS Checks** (Forest Edge): Colin Wright said that parents often leave their children with a team or mechanic for a weekend, they are probably not DBS checked. He has a quote from the ICO of £300 p.a. to set up the ABkC as a checking authority with a per application fee of about £35. John Ryan said that this has been discussed at Kart Committee. Colin said if something goes wrong there will be a horrendous situation. James Mills asked what happens if a mechanic fails the check. Grahame Butterworth said he has come across people in other areas that seemingly should pass but don't. John Ryan said the new Director of Development would be looking into

safeguarding of minors across all motorsport. Colin proposed the ABkC become an umbrella licencing body for DBS checks for non licenced officials and mechanics who are maybe freelance and cannot obtain a check through an employer. The cost would be £300 per annum so long as we do at least 100 per annum and each would cost about £35 plus say £5 admin which could be done by his wife. It could be voluntary to begin with then phased in as compulsory. All were in favour of proceeding.

**4 Request from Whilton Mill for any and all clubs can attend Steering Group meetings and be eligible to vote.** No one was in favour of this suggestion, a club can always send an observer.

**5 Request from Whilton Mill for Comp Secs to be MSA licenced.** It was said that discussions have already started with the MSA to consider this request. Malcolm Fell said it could allow for an easier way for redress against abuse of a Comp Sec. Steve Chapman said there would then be a record on an MSA database. Steve Wren said competitors have refused to accept a decision from a Comp Sec. It was agreed to proceed. (Need to clarify whether it refers to the club's Comp Sec or the Secretary of the Meeting, who could be different and vary.)

**6 Race 'n' Respect Seminars:** Chris Pullman urged club chairpersons and Comp Secs or Secretary's to attend the forthcoming seminars. There will be a roll out for all classes in 2016 and a re-launch at the Autosport Show.

**7 ARKS Test Future:** Malcolm Fell asked about the progress on petitioning the MSA to remove the ARKS test and replace with a free club run competency test as agreed at the last steering group meeting. Colin said he would be meeting Simon Blunt next week to discuss. ARKS Chairman is invited to the next Kart Committee to discuss. Ian Rennison explained his system for checking IKR drivers. Mike Stackhouse said not all IKR circuits were as particular or competent.

**8 Team Entrant Licences:** Rob Dodds asked about the progress of making Team Entrant licences compulsory. Kart Committee are discussing the issue. After some discussion John Hoyle agreed to add the question to his Team Registration form, along with the question on them having public liability insurance. **Action John Hoyle**

**9 Marshalling Standards:** Duncan Masters has been concerned about the varying standards of club marshals and observers and he has been appointed by the MSA to set a standard for them and will be asking for support and help in his task. Malcolm Fell said the NKA have an excellent training package of a higher standard than the MSA's.

**10 Track Limits:** Grahame Butterworth asked about the new 2016 track limit regulations and how they will be applied. It was said explanations have been given with photographs in the ABkC News and clubs are urged to review where their white lines are and if necessary to adjust with MSA permission. The meeting closed with Colin giving thanks to all attendees.