

Association of British Kart Clubs Annual General Meeting Minutes 27.3.18 (Draft)

1 Apologies: Carol Blanchard (North of Scotland), Duncan Masters (RAFMSA), Lynn Healy (Lincs), Jim Thornsby (Lincs), Tracey & Eddie Davies (Dragon), Ian Rushforth (Superkart), Bob Wilson (Cheshire).

Present: George Robinson (Chair), Graham Smith (Shenington & Secretary), John Ryan (MSA), Cheryl Lynch (MSA), Paul Klaassen, Nigel Edwards, Grahame Butterworth, Malcolm Fell, Sue Fairless, Rob Dodds, Dan Parker, John Hoyle, Martin Bean, Phil Featherstone, Steve Chapman, Martin Capenhurst, Phil Featherstone, Gary James, Paul Skipp, Kelvin Nicholls, Steve Wren, Ian Rennison, Mike Stackhouse, Mike Topp, Tim Norwood, Phil Shorrocks, Jim Bee, Stephen Tosh representing the following 13 clubs: British Historic, Buckmore, Chasewater, Clay Pigeon, Cumbria, Dunkeswell, Forest Edge, Shenington, South Yorks, Super One, Trent Valley, Ulster, Lincs. George Robinson thanked those attending for coming, some a long distance, and welcomed all.

2 Approval of the Minutes of the 2016 AGM held on 13.6.17: Proposed by Malcolm Fell, seconded by Rob Dodds, all in favour and there were no matters arising other than on the agenda.

3 Chairman's Report: George Robinson said since his appointment at our last AGM in June last year, much has been happening in the world of British Motor Sport. It is further proven that Karting is a very different sport to all other forms of Motor Sport under the jurisdiction of the MSA. In 2017 we saw a testament to the greatness of British drivers proven at the World Championships with overall victory in both Senior & Junior classes, not forgetting that second & third places in Juniors were also British. The MSA hosted their annual hospitality for all MSA committees at the World Championships which was a real eye opener for many of those that support other disciplines. The MSA has also seen a change of Chairman, Alan Gow after a term of 12 years in office, handed over the reins to David Richards who is being very pro-active in our sport. I believe this signals the beginning of a bright new future for the governance of Motor Sport in the UK. Alan Gow did a masterful job on behalf of the MSA, however Motor Sport is a fast-moving industry & David Richards has a new approach to the challenges ahead, Karting is very much on the radar as one of the areas that needs attention. To this end David Richards has appointed a specific working group to identify, prioritize and confront the issues peculiar to our sport of Karting. Last week there was a meeting at Richards' headquarters, which included a group of people from all branches of the sport. This Kart Working Group Chaired by MSA director Ben Cussons, assisted by Richard Lock & Anthony Hamilton proved to be very proactive and lasted for 3 hours. It is clear the MSA is keen to support and grow karting and this dialogue was an opportunity to convey many of the challenges and opportunities in our sport. We can expect the MSA to be more commercially aware, keen to embrace the early learning benefits of Karting and open dialogue with Leisure Karting venues to empower them to host staircase of talent events, thereby widening the public knowledge of Karting as a true & valuable branch of British Motor Sport. A clear differentiation between Club Entry Level Karting & top of the game racing where we are proven to be the best in the World. With this in mind it is clear that the licencing system needs to be reviewed without delay, plus devolution of regulation to reduce the number of infringements reported to Motor Sports House. Karting has vastly more events under permit than any other MSA discipline, we need to have Officials with a high level of training, that command respect at race meetings, thereby giving our paying customers a professionally managed event that puts the fun factor back into the sport. We need to open dialogue with the Commercial Stakeholders to ensure that measures are put in place to control the cost of Kart racing at all levels. Reports of "Telephone number budgets" for a few can only intimidate many potential customers to the point that they believe that they cannot compete compared with say £10k for a national championship season whether Super One or high level IKR. Karting elitism should only apply at the very top of the game.

4 Secretary's Report: Graham Smith said we currently have 26 clubs in membership and welcome back FP4K who have rejoined and the British Historic Kart Club who have joined us for the first time. The biggest clubs like Trent Valley, Super One, Forest Edge, Super One, BHKC are on the highest fees and we are awaiting the renewal subs from Trent Valley, Hoddesdon, Ulster and North of Scotland. We thank the clubs for their support to keep what is the kart Regional Association recognised by the MSA in funds. Once they join the number of drivers in membership will likely be very similar to 2017, something like 4100. We issued newsletters to clubs in July, October and December with updates and information to pass onto committee and drivers. The demand for posting out brochures from inquiries on the website continues unabated, some 1200 to 1400 per year. We helped fund Kartmania and paid to be at Autosport again.

But MSA kart licence numbers continue their slow decline, with 3404 in 2017, including 481 new licences, and 512 start karting packs sold, with 450 tests of which 66% were for under 16's. For information I started keeping records in 1990 when there were 4648 licences but likely a much greater percentage of seniors. Churn or retention remains a big problem. However the Super One, which is permitted through the ABkC, is enjoying something of a resurgence in entries, except for the OK classes.

On the Steering Group, Peter Catt leaves us after the BKIA was dissolved, leaving no formal group representing the kart trade, and Gary James is taking over as rep for MSA Superkart championship from Ian Rushforth, who we thank for all his valued advice and help. The number of offers to host our O and E Plates was rather disappointing last year.

For whatever reason the ABkC officials have had no or very little meaningful negotiation of improving our sport and taking forward the ideas from the ABkC, which is frustrating. Maybe the David Richards working group will move things along. Nevertheless between ABkC and Kart Committee there have been useful steps forward including:

- No medical requirement for short circuit karting, so most can race immediately after ARKS
- Requirement changing so only one ambulance needed even if entry over 100
- Referee system for Clerk of the Course hopefully coming next year
- Approval in principle for MSA to reintroduce the ProRacer card, giving exemptions to IKR drivers from ARKS, awaiting further discussions on the best way forward.
- Flexibility on Clubman and Libre class regulations
- Racing coming soon for Bambino

But some items like the one rule book for karting have stalled with MSA not yet finding a resource to do some cut and pasting from the Blue Book ready for editing. Other ideas are in the pipeline.

5 Treasurer's Report: Graham Smith presented the 2017 annual accounts to 31.10.17 which was audited thanks to Marion Fell and which had been circulated by email to all clubs and attendees. It showed a loss of £8352.15 compared with a profit of £9304.42 in 2016 but these figures are dependent on when the class and tyre prize and club development fund money is paid to the account, prizes primarily for Super 4. So after stripping out the effect of that money the profit is £2802.85 compared with £2026.92 for 2016. Income for the ABkC is from club memberships of £5500 (£5425 in 2016) and some from O Plate concession fees amounting to £2430 (£2973 in 2016). We had £3212.50 from tyre suppliers including the MSA in lieu of Cadets for the Club Development fund. For 2018 to date the income from clubs is £5050, this does not include fees awaited from for example Trent Valley, Ulster, Hoddesdon and North of Scotland. We had a net worth of £32,747.31 at the close of the 2017 accounts and as of yesterday we had £31832.19 in the bank of which £5065 belongs to the 2018 Club Development Fund. There are debtors of £100 for brochure adverts plus outstanding subscriptions, and creditors for various expenses.

The approval of the Accounts was proposed by Stephen Tosh (Ulster) and seconded by Paul Skipp (Clay Pigeon) with all in favour.

6 Nominations for the Steering Group: Chairman: George Robinson

Secretary: Graham Smith, Direct Drive: No nominations; Cadet: Paul Klaassen; Gearbox Technical Expert positions: Phil Featherstone. Seven general places: Martin Bean (Buckmore), Grahame Butterworth (Hunts), Nigel Edwards (TVKC), Rob Dodds (Forest Edge), Malcolm Fell (Cumbria), Paul Skipp (Clay Pigeon), Jim Thornsby (Lincs), Steve Wren (Lincs) and Grahame Butterworth volunteered to take the Direct Drive position therefore no voting required. As well as the above the Steering Group has the two Honorary Presidents; representatives for the British/MSA & National Championships – John Hoyle, Dan Parker, Gary James; for other kart associations – Sue Fairless, Stephen Tosh and Carol Blanchard; Honda Group – Kelvin Nicholls; Rotax & Tal-Ko observers and MSA.

7 Approval of an amended Constitution put forward by the Steering Group: The proposed amended constitution had been circulated to all clubs and attendees and Graham explained it took account of various comments that had been received since the last revision in 2015. Club votes are changed from two each to one each, voting at the steering group is restricted to elected members and associations, the BKIA no longer exists and is removed, more emphasis on the classes 'owned' or joint owned by the ABkC, and more emphasis on the duties of the committee. The adoption was proposed by Grahame Butterworth (Hunts), and seconded by Ian Rennison (Clay Pigeon) with all in favour.

The formal AGM was closed at 1145 hours and an informal Q&A followed.

A George Robinson opened the informal part of the meeting by asking whether we need to find a representative of the **kart trade** to be co-opted to the Steering Group. John Ryan said the MSA intended to assemble a trade group and will be proposing this to the MSA Board. Ian Rennison asked that circuit owners be represented. Others said we already have a good traded involvement and in any case wait for the MSA decision.

B Future Role of the ABkC: Graham Smith asked that the perennial question of whether we remain primarily representing MSA kart clubs or change to represent either drivers, or all karting be settled. During a long debate comments included:

- We should represent all karting
- We run to MSA regulations therefore we represent the MSA clubs
- Why do we need to be involved in other aspects of karting
- We should continue with the reason the ABkC was set up for
- We should put more focus on helping struggling clubs, and maybe organise a street race, have more involvement in Kartmania
- There are many benefits of ABkC for clubs, interpreting and amending regulations, clubs do not always take advantage of the expertise in the group, why not?

- Co-operate more with NKA
- Most focus on MSA club karting, not top tier championships
- Small clubs are not good at marketing, they need more help or danger of disappearing, both ABkC and MSA need to home in on these earlier
- For instance Libre and Clubman class structure offers flexibility for small clubs
- It should be easier for clubs to mix MSA and IKR on the same day (note currently the IKR needs separate insurance by a different body to the club)
- Reduce the cost of starting in MSA karting
- Teams put off newcomers with such large fees demanded, should club meetings ban teams? And maybe practice in the morning, race in the afternoon. But some families rely totally on teams eg no garage facilities
- Some IKR do not allow MSA licence holders, thus encouraging them to move on
- Why did MSA stop supporting Lets Go Karting, and can it be re-instated?
- The extra cost of running IKR over MSA is the cost of having licenced officials, experienced volunteers often help out at IKR
- Lack of communication or knowledge of who to ask regarding what can be done within the rules
- No ARKS Schools, rely just on ARKS Examiners
- MSA get involved with marketing and the ABkC Start Karting brochure
- Mixed opinion coming back from NKA, the indoor side less keen for encouraging progression to MSA

In conclusion it was agreed that the newly amended Constitution is the correct role for the ABkC in representing MSA kart clubs but to have better communications and more open (publicised) channels for advice to clubs and drivers, be even more accessible.

C Kartmania: Martin Capenhurst requested more ABkC involvement at Kartmania, he would ideally have liked the two organisations to merge. He said he needs more support from the kart trade and community, he needs to add car displays to balance the books. There were further suggestions of organising a street race but some cautioned it can be difficult, expensive and safety is a concern. The BHKC suggested that modern karts join in with them at some of their demonstration events. Clay Pigeon outlined their observation system to allow many new drivers to practice on a Saturday morning and race in the afternoon in their IKR events. The request for funding help was deferred to the Steering Group for consideration.

D British Championship Venues: Stephen Tosh for Ulster / NIKA asked why the Super One did not visit Northern Ireland region. John Hoyle said it was very expensive and it could be off putting for too many competitors, George Robinson said the solution was for NIKA to find sponsorship for travel and accommodation.

E Honda Cadet Monetisation: There have been discussions in the Steering Group about how to take in income to the ABkC from our Honda Cadet class, to assist with promotion and prizes for instance. Suggestions included:

- Sealing of engines, tenders for sealing agents who would pay for the privilege
- Licencing engine builders stickers/advertising on the engines
- Pooling and re-distributing engines at the start of each event
- A new ABkC badged carb restrictor with an enhanced fee
- Engine rebuilder to be marked on scrutineering card
- All engines in MSA racing to have a one off ABkC TAG fixed, say sold at £10, barcoded and recorded for origin, rebuilds etc.

The last option was favoured and Kelvin promised to seek feedback from the Honda Group. **Action Kelvin**

F Esports: It was noted that Super One is in partnership in 2018 with a concurrent KartSim ESports simulator streamed racing (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3kUuMVMBo> for the replay) and should MSA and ABkC get involved with this side of racing. Apparently the MSA had been giving consideration of an involvement last year. It was agreed that this should be pursued by the MSA and not let this slip. **Action Cheryl and John R**

G Upgrade Cards: The Blue Book did not have it in this year, but it will be in 2019. Meantime the MSA has printed quantities for clubs to request.

H Grid Kids for GP: Cheryl noted the MSA was in discussion with Silverstone about supplying Grid Kids for the F1 Grand Prix, they would be from licence holders aged 7 - 10 and would be given a F1 style kart suit to keep.

The meeting closed with thanks to Graham for organising the lunch and to Ann for the cakes and George's daughter for the brownies and to the MSA for the room.