



NEWS

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What’s new in 2016

This year sees a number of very significant changes for our sport, such as the introduction of the CIK front fairing block to improve driving standards, the new exhaust and tools for a more level playing field in Honda Cadet, the Race ‘n’ Respect campaign to improve manners all round and the relaxation on needing a medical for short circuit racing. New licences are up, but we are still losing too many existing licensees each year so we must target that issue. The MSA along with ABkC, ARKS and NKA are starting a review of karting for the future, since it is some time since the last big review, resulting in the Green Paper and consequent regulations.

News from the March Steering Group meeting

At the March Steering Group meeting there was concern that parents, drivers and mechanics are not understanding some of the basic regulations. The ABkC will shortly take delivery of our new booklets, ‘Racing Rules Explained’, which is mostly pictorial and aimed at juniors and their parents. We will also put a pdf on our website. Discussions continue with the MSA about compulsory entrant’s licences for commercial teams and DBS checks for mechanics. Super One will be asking for Entrants Licences from teams this year. The MSA is also looking at the draft Team Charter document that was developed by the ABkC. The ABkC has had to shelve its plan to become a DBS checking authority for the time being because the number required per annum is just too high to be viable in the short term. Jonathan Day, the MSA’s new Director of Development, is undertaking a complete review of Child Safeguarding which could result in a much more targeted approach to DBS checks for officials. Another MSA appointment is Kate Adamson as Safety Director who will work closely with John Ryan, now promoted to Technical Director with our congratulations. As clubs will be aware, the MSA wrote to all clubs reminding them about the use of social media after an unfortunate instance recently. In his letter Simon Blunt said: “Abuse, aggression, intimidation, or bullying must not be tolerated at motorsport events. Equally there should be no room in our sport for abuse,

aggression, intimidation, or bullying online. This includes inciting, whether intentionally or unintentionally, ‘trial by social media’ following an incident.” Please make all your drivers, teams and officials aware of the guidelines which are here: <https://www.msauk.org/assets/msasocialmediaguidelines-6.pdf> Simon Blunt added that the MSA would absolutely support any club taking action against someone transgressing these guidelines even if the club decided to ban someone for a race or more. The ABkC asked for the MSA to issue a protocol on sanctions, and maybe some more training for officials on the subject.

Driver Representative

Please note our Driver specific website address is www.abkcdrivers.org.uk and note we are looking for a Driver Representative, an active driver, to attend our steering group meetings and give a view from a driver’s perspective. John Pike who has served in the role for the last two years and set up the website, is relinquishing the role due to pressure of work once a replacement is found. Please address CVs to the Chairman or Secretary for consideration. We thank John for his valued input.

Front Fairing Review

A review of the penalties for the displacement of the Front Fairing in Juniors and Seniors has been held and Council agreed to change the penalty from 10 places to 10 seconds. The original penalty had shown up anomalies with putting the penalised driver behind those who maybe had only done a lap or less. The other penalties that were changed from 5 place to 10 place have also been changed but Kart Committee have asked that clubs that do not have timing can use 5 place penalties again. Also Kart Committee have asked that the 10s penalty be replaced with a deletion of fastest time for a Timed Qualifying session, as 10 seconds can put a driver from near the front to near the back, rather more severe than intended. The ABkC has called for guidelines to be published to help clubs administer the front fairing system, e.g. asking drivers to come to the pre-grid with the front fairings off the kart or at least loose, so that they can be fitted under inspection to

eliminate cheating such as the use of glue. It is recommended that the designated Judge of Fact scrutineer takes a photograph (showing the kart number) of any displaced fairings at the end of a race, and maybe having all drivers remaining in their karts until the post-race inspection is complete.

Judicial Trial

The Judicial Trial of using a triumvirate of the MSA Steward, a Clerk and a Club Steward continues to be available for clubs this year. The ABkC view is that this is more appropriate for larger championships if they can find the manpower and a move to a referee system is better for club racing. A system of no appeals for 10 second penalties in heats is recommended and under review.

ARKS

The ABkC had asked for a review of the ARKS system. Simon Blunt, the MSA General Secretary told the steering group that meetings had been held and he said that the MSA was strongly supportive of the need for a competency test for new drivers and consequently a body to supervise the system, so why re-invent ARKS. However the system does need refreshing for the digital age and this will be addressed. ARKS gave a presentation at Kart Committee.

Class Stats

MSA karting licences for the whole of 2015 were 3656 and at the end of February this year stood at 2374. There were 487 new National B licences and 42 new Bambinos in 2015 with 659 Start Karting packs sold and 573 tests taken. According to MSA statistics from club returns the Honda Cadet class was the largest of all with 3226 entries in 2015 with IAME Cadet at 3062. The stats show a continuing shift from Rotax to X30 classes with for instance Junior X30 having 7.7% but MiniMax and Junior Max still over 10% each. Some clubs still do not seem to be supplying class numbers to the MSA after each meeting. There is a mandatory return form on the MSA website and they should be sent to Charlotte Moore, who is Cheryl Lynch's new assistant. Her email is charlotte.moore@msauk.org There were two applications for club development funds but clubs were asked to apply to the MSA Club Development Fund first as it is said to be healthy and now giving grants up to 85% of the cost of a project. A very significant amount of funds has been granted for kart clubs in 2015.

Data Protection registration

Many clubs will already be registered with the ICO for data protection but clubs are reminded that although many will be exempt as clubs holding only their members information, anyone using CCTV must be registered. Details on www.ico.org.uk Don't get caught out!

Financial Report

The financial report circulated showed balances of £9804.49 in the current account and £22017.15 in the

deposit account. Two Super 4 drivers and 16 Super One drivers have not yet banked their prize cheques amounting to £2597.50 which seems surprising. Quite a few clubs had not re-joined for 2016 and these are urged to continue to support the ABkC and its liaison with the MSA. By April only two or three clubs are still absent and of course their members cannot take place in ABkC championships or be invited under certain permit conditions to race meetings. We thank all the clubs who continue to support the ABkC, it is your association.

Honda GX160 Scrutineering Tools

The new scrutineering tools for the Honda Cadet engines are due to be released from Dartford Karting very soon. We would like to apologise for the delays, the setting up of the scheme has taken longer than expected. We would like to thank Kelvin Nicholls and Martin Collards for all their hard work on this project. The ABkC Secretary has asked all clubs if they wished to order a set of tools to let him know and so far only thirteen have responded. The ABkC will put in a grant of £50 for each order and pay that directly to Dartford Karting. Following a MSA Club Development request from the ABkC, the MSA will provide a grant of £120 per order from a club, paid to the club on showing a copy of the invoice and quoting reference CDF/2016/C3 plus a letter or your receipt showing current membership of the ABkC. That means between the MSA and ABkC member clubs are getting two thirds of the cost paid. Engine builders and parents will be able to purchase the tool sets from Dartford Karting at a commercial price.

International Guest Drivers and Cadet Tyres

The ABkC has long campaigned for a reduction and explanation of the NCAFP fees required to put a national event on the International Calendar and allow a driver from outside the EU to compete. It would appear there is not going to be any change from the MSA after Simon Blunt explained that a few years ago the MSA rationalised the fees across all disciplines which put the karting fee up. It was agreed to give up the request. The ABkC has asked the MSA to issue guidance to Clerks of Courses to make sure meetings are declared DRY as soon as possible to prevent Cadet drivers from using wets on a dry track. The MSA is planning to issue a tender for a nation-wide tyre barcoding database system, for the use of clubs. Eventually this could allow for adjoining clubs to set limits on the number of tyres allowed in a season.

Flag use and Driver Ages

As members will have read in the MSA Magazine the National Court held an investigation into the premature halt of a race by the simultaneous use of the red flags and a chequer. Kart Committee concluded that in these circumstances the chequer should not be used at that time and that the red flag rules were probably fine. The chequer should then be waved after the incident is over and if the race is not to be continued. There was also a

discussion on whether senior age limits should be revisited, but again the current regulation was thought to be satisfactory. There have been some instances of judicial inquiries on whether a driver passed another whilst a yellow flag is displayed, when the slower driver is for instance recovering from an incident. In this case the recommendation is to use a white flag, seemingly not so much used in kart racing.

Cadets, counterfeits and 2017 New Classes

On the technical front the MSA would like to extend the use of a method of monitoring when one kart bumps into another to the Cadet classes, as is now in use with the displaceable front fairings in Junior and Senior. Investigations are being made to see if Cadet karts can take the CIK block, or whether some other method will be required. There will be a Cadet kart manufacturers meeting in April to discuss any change in Cadet chassis regulations for the 2017 homologation. The MSA is also taking advice on the issue from the FIA Safety Institute. Because of counterfeit and poor quality spare parts for brakes the question was asked if all kart brakes should be homologated. The decision from the ABkC was such a move could limit driver and trade choice and possibly lead to higher prices so the MSA was asked not to proceed on this. Scrutineers have also been asked to look out for counterfeit suits where a genuine homologation number has been used illegally. These suits are generally of a poor quality. The MSA gave notice that Hoddesdon Kart Club and BMR have been given permission to offer a Swiss Auto 4-stroke fuel injected class in Formula Libre this year, but only by hiring engines or modifying existing older engines. BMR will be applying for a new 2017 class for this engine and there are several other applications for new 2017 classes. Kart Committee had a discussion about how to limit the number of new classes in the future, should there not be any innovation involved to attract new drivers rather than just shift them from one class to another. The continuing problem of the huge difference in age and maturity in the Cadet classes has been discussed once again, and consideration given to having an intermediate class. The proposal for the time being is to undertake tests on splitting the class by age, with the younger ones having a lighter weight and a more restricted engine, and opening up the restrictors for the older half and slightly increasing their kart weight. Tests will have to be done. It should be noted that the X30 classes have made the CIK plastic Rear Protection System mandatory from the end of March. The 2016 regulations were delayed whilst discussions went on about the new X30 ignition system and loom. In fact the Kart Committee have referred back to Kart Technical requesting a review of whether all karts should adopt the RPS at some point in the future. Views from clubs and drivers to the ABkC would be welcome.

Regulations

The MSA is waiting for manufacturers to supply details of interchangeability of bumpers and plastic to see which are identical other than having different homologation numbers. Once received the MSA can compile a list to publish. This is now allowed for in the regulations. There is a proposal for a change of regulations to permit carbon composite floortrays to be a minimum of 1.1mm but a definition of carbon composite was requested. Mylaps brought out a new X2 transponder last Autumn to replace the TranX160 without reference to the MSA and so it was not initially approved for use. The first test had problems and another test has recently taken place and a decision is expected imminently although it can now be used so long as not mixed with the TranX160. Some small issues have arisen in the Honda Technical Regulations, probably due to replacement parts with different part numbers coming from Honda and Kelvin Nicholls is looking into these matters. If necessary, an amended set of Honda Technical Regulations will be issued.

Bambino

The possibility of having races for the Bambino class continues to be explored. The MSA has given permission for some clubs to have a Bambino club championship this year, so long as it is at a single venue. The MSA championship has been well over-subscribed so there are a lot of disappointed children and parents wanting to compete in a championship.

Gearbox Kart Regulations on bodywork

Discussions are taking place for revising gearbox kart class regulations for so called 'Bubbles' and long circuit bodywork, also whether there should be a regulation on the seats allowed for all karts if used in long circuit racing. The review of long circuit bodywork should include input from all superkart manufacturers, not just those in the UK.



Congratulations to all our recent O Plate champions. The next steering group meeting will be held in June so clubs please send to the Secretary any items on which you need to have a discussion.

As always comments from clubs and competitors are very welcome.

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