

## Minutes of the 2016 ABkC Annual General Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at Coventry

**1 Apologies:** Carol Blanchard, Duncan Masters, Kevin Meynall, Eddie & Tracey Davies, Steve Wren, Russell Anderson

**Present:** Nigel Edwards(TVKC – chair), Graham Smith (Shenington), George Robinson (FEKC), Mark Riman (SKRC), Lesley Allen (SKRC), Paul Skipp (Clay), Ian Rennison (Clay), John Hoyle (S1 Club), Paul Klaassen (SKRC), Marion Fell (Cumbria), Malcolm Fell (Cumbria), Sheryl Borton (Grampian), Jim Thornsby (Lincs), Phil Sharrocks (South Yorks), Steve Clayton (South Yorks), Gill Spire (Hoddesdon), Kevin O'Malley (Hoddesdon), Ian Ward (Bayford), Jay MacKay (North of Scotland), Martin Bean (Buckmore), Mike Stackhouse (Chasewater), Rob Dodds (FEKC), Darren Clarke (Whilton Mill), Grahame Butterworth (Hunts).

Guests & Steering Group members not representing clubs: Steve Chapman, Peter Catt, Stephen Taylor (Cadet father), Kelvin Nicholls (Honda Group), Martin Capenhurst (FP4K), Sue Fairless (NKF), Tony Brinkworth (BHKC), Chris McCarthy (Karting Magazine), Ian Rushforth (Superkart), Dan Parker (Bambino), Phil Featherstone.

Nigel Edwards welcomed the delegates and guests present and said he was very pleased with the turnout of 14 clubs. All present briefly introduced themselves.

**2 Approval of the 2015 Minutes and Matters Arising:** Approval proposed by Cumbria KC and seconded by Forest Edge, all in favour. In Matters Arising Malcolm Fell asked about the progress for licencing of Comp Secs. Nigel said it was still on the agenda with the MSA and he would be pushing for an answer. **Action Nigel Edwards.** Malcolm Fell asked for the decision on replacing ARKS. Graham Smith said that that ARKS gave a presentation to Kart Committee and both they and the MSA agreed that any replacement would have to have a formal structure and that ARKS served the purpose. Malcolm said ARKS tests costs are a barrier to entry and club officials in his view could adequately assess the competence of a new driver without cost. (From Kart Committee minutes: "The Chairman thanked Mr Chapman for a good informative report. The Chairman felt that clubs need to support the ARKS system more. Some Committee members commented that their clubs do have an ARKS test incentive scheme" (which reduces the cost).)

**3 Chairman's Report:** Nigel Edwards said he was acting chairman since Colin Wright resigned last September. We still have issues with communicating with the MSA. Rob Jones has now given the ABKC the opportunity to discuss the future and steer the ship in terms of Club Karting. Steve Chapman said since the Green Paper, not much had changed with the MSA. Steve Clayton said his club was in a dire situation and felt the MSA should be given one last chance then break away. Another said there is a severe decline in 'lad and dad' karting. Rob Dodds said the MSA personnel are never available for advice. Another stated that statistically a high proportion of licences has a PG and thus the MSA seem to see karting as only a youngster's sport. So, from Nigel's point of view he said he was frustrated with the MSA and we now have an opportunity to go forward and perhaps even take over the licensing from clubs. He is disappointed with the lack of progress.

**4 Secretary's Report:** Graham Smith said we currently have 27 clubs in membership but FP4k and RAFMSA have both promised their membership fee will be sent. Thanks to all the loyal clubs supporting their organisation in its efforts to liaise with the MSA and improve our sport. Membership of clubs has largely held up despite the entry turn down with 3964 reported in 2017 so far compared with 3974 in 2016 and 4049 in 2015. We issued regular newsletters, mostly emailed now, and the website generates some 1200 to 1400 requests for information on karting per annum. We post out start karting leaflets and were posting DVDs but now only post a DVD if there is a demand as it is available online anyway. Time is spent on our Honda Cadet class which is the most popular class in the UK, and we welcome the input of the Honda Cadet group chaired by Ian Ward and represented on our Steering Group by Kelvin Nicholls. Thanks to Kelvin for continually looking for ways to reduce the costs on preparing the engines, although engine builders seem to constantly find ways of having parents pay excessive fees for engines. We have contracted with the Super One Series to hold our national championship for Honda Cadet for three years but as far as the other classes are concerned we leave it to the class owners to negotiate their own deals with the championship promoter. Therefore, we are no longer in the loop for drivers prize money in these classes although thanks to JAG and Tal-Ko for continuing to support our Club Development Fund. Unfortunately, as the MSA now holds the contract for the Cadet tyres we or the promoter no longer has any access to the promotional funds from Dunlop, or indeed from IAME for the Cadet engine contract. We can only hope that the MSA can use the considerable funds raised for the good of karting although there is little evidence of this so far. Rob Jones has promised to make up the shortfall in the Club Development fund though, so we will see. Amongst all the other grants to clubs we subsidised the Honda engine tools to clubs, and got the MSA to do the same through their development fund. However, we hear the MSA budgets are now under severe strain. We showed at Kartmania and Autosport and in 2015 considerably sponsored Kartmania for the good of karting generally, not so much for 2016. As the March MSA Kart Committee was cancelled due to the lack of resources within the MSA various consultation and decisions are all on hold until the next one this

month but the Kart Technical continues to do good work and propose regulation changes onto Kart Committee. We are represented on both these important committees and at Regional Committee where we have voting rights and gives the ABkC the equivalence of a Regional Association for karting, noting that any club that organised events must be a member of a Regional Association or for karting, the ABkC.

**5 Treasurer's Report:** Graham Smith presented the 2016 annual accounts to 31.10.16 which was audited thanks to Marion Fell and which had been circulated by email to attendees. It showed a profit of £9336.92 compared with a loss of £15069.12 in 2014 but these figures are dependent on when the class and tyre prize money is paid to the account, which will no longer happen. So, after stripping out the effect of that prize money the profit is £2026.92. This compares with a loss of £8039.12 in 2014, largely because of the sponsorship of Kartmania. Income for the ABkC is from club memberships of £5500 and some from O Plate concession fees amounting to £2973 and a donation from Shenington KRC for £500 from their E Plate meeting. For 2017 to date the income from clubs is £5400, the club development fund stands at £4552.50 and have received or about to receive various O Plate concession fees. We have also had income from sales of the Racing Rules Explained booklet which we paid the printing costs although the MSA declined to subsidise. I have copies of the book here is clubs would like to stock up, price £3.25 per book. After taking of our current known commitments and the club development fund we shall have £27128 in the bank. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Cumbria KC and seconded by Shenington KRC.

**6 Nominations for the 2017 Steering Group:** As only the Chairman and Cadet position required a vote to be taken, the secret vote was in favour of George Robinson over Nigel Edwards, and the Cadet in favour of Paul Klaassen over Rob Dodds. All of these gave brief presentations to support their bids. Nigel had said the organisation needed to change its identity, brand and start with a clean sheet. Both George and Nigel were asked their view on leaving the MSA and running karting, Nigel said maybe in the future, but not now, maybe in the future. George responded by saying an organisation would need £0.5M in the bank, good staff and hit the ground running efficiently from the start. They were asked what their style would be in the MSA negotiations and whether for Nigel being both Kart Committee and ABkC chairman could lead to a conflict of interests. Nigel responded that it could be on occasion hence a strategic move would be to have a different Chairman and have an additional representative at MSA meetings. During the Cadet position presentations, there was some discussion on the Cadet tyre issue where club drivers are apparently having to purchase new sets of slicks for each meeting due to an alleged 4 – 5 tenths drop off between meetings. This is being investigated by the MSA and if necessary re-tests could be carried out. Rob Dodds said in his view the wet tyre should have been changed to a much softer tyre to work better in the rain and prevent drivers using it in dry or nearly dry tracks. Both Nigel and Rob were also proposed for the seven general positions where no vote is required (although there were two late nominations (not included by willing to be co-opted). Keiran Crawley gave his resignation just before the meeting and Colin Lipscomb (Llandow) had previously send his resignation. The 2017 Steering Group will therefore consist of George Robinson (Chairman), Graham Smith (Secretary and Treasurer), Nigel Edwards (Vice-Chairman), Vacancy (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), Paul Skipp (Clay Pigeon), 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 vacant Driver Representative. There was a general view that clubs should only have one vote each, not two, and questioned whether to continue to allow the BKIA to have a vote. **Action Graham Smith for Steering Group to propose a constitution change.** A vote of thanks was given to Nigel Edwards for stepping in as chairman when Colin Wright resigned.

**7 Date of next AGM:** Graham Smith asked if the delegates wished to give the Steering Group formal permission to not hold another AGM in 2017, which would otherwise take place in the Autumn per the constitution, as this one was held 6 months late. By overwhelming vote of show of hands this was not agreed therefore there needs to be a 2017 AGM this Autumn.

The formal meeting was closed and an informal **Question and Answer** commenced starting with the four items put forward by the Steering Group as their priority objectives, asking for comments.

## **1 Simplifying Club Racing** Suggestions

- Club Championships not needing to be approved by MSA.
- Clerk of Course in charge. No MSA Steward required.
- No CIK Classes.
- Single rule book.
- National A level as now.
- Embrace IKR racing but don't try to take over or unify.
- What is the difference – red tape, upfront costs, ARKS test and pack (why not on -line?)
- Trade is a problem – sport too controlled by them.
- Tyres are a problem IKR often use cheaper, longer lasting tyres.
- One-day racing – morning practice followed by afternoon racing.
- IKR does feed drivers into MSA.

A comment was made as to why JAG was supporting Super One with half-price tyres but not supporting clubs. He was asked if the club has asked JAG for support as they put in £100k of support to the class each year.

Single Rule book – all were in favour.

ACU Gold Star helmets for club level? – a majority but experts say no conclusion – vote was no.

IKR allows older non-MSA karts to be raced so long as they are proved to be safe.

Two tiers needed – start at club level driving, then move into top division.

## **2 Hands-on Kart-only training days for clubs and Officials**

Suggestions:

- Train and Buddy system/mentoring at clubs on race days.
- Steve's Clerk's handbook – many tips in this. Keen to elaborate on this at a training day.
- Treat entrants as customers – speak to them properly and politely. Train officials accordingly on how to speak; training on people skills. MSA training booklets are inadequate on this.
- Use a non-motorsport speaker from an alternative sport.
- Scrutineer gives first impression of club. Very important to get right.

## **3 Development of Low-cost Championships**

Suggestions:

- One view was it dissipates club racing and there are too many championships already.
  - MSA permits for round-the-clubs championships.
  - Date clashes.
  - But visiting championships help struggling clubs with entries.
  - Scotland wants 'A' plate recognition again – just for Scottish clubs.
  - No Club championships – just have touring championship instead.
  - Top club champions for to a one-off "Champions Meeting".
- Conclusion – no need for more championships

## **4 Focus on ABKC to be more directly geared to drivers**

Suggestions:

- Most drivers don't know what the ABKC is.
- Most attempts to form a Drivers Association have failed.
- Need to find a better way to get drivers views but remain a club based organisation
- Clubs (should) represent drivers.
- Could clubs send a driver to the ABKC Meetings.
- Ask drivers opinions – what are their priorities.
- Could Clubs offer alternative race formats.
- Driver organisation might not prioritise getting new people.
- Some clubs do driver surveys and consequent actions and projects based on the result.
- Drivers don't engage or come to meetings.
- A club did a large mail-shot resulting in 9 new members.
- Revert to one-day race weekends, but how do newcomers practice?
- Simplify transition from IKR to MSA if driver has prior experience.
- MSA process too slow in decision making.

Steve Taylor wanted to know how many clubs asked their drivers how to vote and whether they will now tell their drivers how they voted.

## **5 Clay Pigeon – lack of officials – clubs are having to pay a lot for travel costs**

Suggestions:

- Lack of support for CIK Judicial at club meetings
- Shorter period of training
- Class owners eg Mills, JAG, Tal-Ko should pay for eligibility scrutineering officials.
- JAG have tried to licence their staff without success. They put in £100,000 per annum promotion.
- General shortage of officials.
- Too much paperwork.
- Potential young scrutineers prefer to get better paid in teams.
- Do we ask the entrants if they want to be officials?

## **6 BKIA Future**

Suggestions:

- Peter Catt suggests a new organisation replacing ABKC, ARKS and BKIA. He feels frustrated by lack of officials. Some felt a new organisation would offer a new start. Some felt MSA are emasculating the ABKC by losing our grandfather rights. Others feel MSA serve the clubs and have that duty.
- Make the partners (BKIA and ARKS) more effective and speak as one voice.

## **7 Go It alone**

Suggestions:

- Achieving very little impact with MSA
- ABKC not listened to enough, some advocate a new organisation.
- Kart Control board was a very strong group – now abandoned.

## **8 EU Proposal on Insurance (Vnuk)**

Suggestions:

- If drivers need insurance would their insurance be graded according to their safety record or their frequency of competition.

## **9 Kartmania**

Suggestions:

- Martin Capenhurst said he has to take out a loan of £15,000 to pay the show rent deposit every year and if not possible due to his changed circumstances that would mean no show. He has considered going to a circuit for the show but trade attendees are against that and will not support if a local shop is there. NKF offered to loan £5000 if ABKC could loan £5000 (was agreed later). He hasn't previously taken out cancellation insurance but could look into it. Martin had a vote of thanks for all his efforts.

Meeting closed at 1510.