



NEWS

February 2009

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Secretary - Graham Smith:

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Steering Group Meeting February 2009

Being the beginning of a new season, many of the items put forward for discussion were left with the specialist sub-groups for consideration before the July meeting. Others were more urgent, requiring instant decisions. Chairman Russell Anderson welcomed John Hoyle, who would in future represent Super One, and Peter Jones, standing in for Carolynn Hoy of Stars, as well as Martin Capenhurst who now represents the British Kart Industry Association. Chris Walton was a welcome visitor from Durham & Yorkshire Kart Club.

Appointments

First of all Nigel Edwards was appointed to chair the direct drive sub-group, replacing Simon Goodfellow, and complimenting Mike Coombs (gearbox sub-group) and Sue Fairless (club sub-group).



The ABkC Stand at the Autosport Show

New classes

John Ryan reported on the measures being taken to reduce the power of the new Easykart Cadet class so it is compatible with the other Cadets.

KF class amendments

Russell Anderson reported on the CIK meetings, where the late change to Super KF and amended KF1 regulations have given the MSA and ABkC a headache. It was decided to keep to the 2008 KF1 regulations but with the addition of mandating a 9cc head volume (11cc with plug insert) as per 2009 CIK regulations. This could save competitors purchasing new cylinders when there is only one year of the current engine homologation left. But we will continue to allow any KF2 homologated exhaust in the KF1 class. All the KF classes will have to use the new clutch, and the new clutch checking procedures of

3000rpm engagement and no slippage above 5000rpm. It was agreed to purchase some of the clutch check dataloggers for use in the championships. Another debate was about which carburettor to use in KF3, as the CIK have awarded a one year contract to Tillotson for their championships. It was agreed to keep to the Tryton, which every competitor will have already. All these proposals were further ratified at the following Kart Technical and Kart Sporting Committees.

Kart Future: Draft Green Paper response

Another ABkC sub-group has been working hard on the association's response to the draft 'Green Paper', proposals for the future of kart racing. This was submitted onto the chairman of the Kart Future group, Rod Taylor, who also chairs the Kart Sporting Committee.

Publicity

Secretary Graham Smith reported on the association's stand at the Autosport International Racing Car show, and the high level of interest shown especially by youngsters. 20,000 Start Karting brochures had been purchased for 2009, the cost shared with ARKS.

Reports were received on the MSA initiatives of Go Motorsport and Lets Go Karting, which has had an amazing 3,000 youngsters trying a kart in 2008. At



the show, ARKS announced they were putting up to £10,000 of £25 vouchers into the scheme, the vouchers being redeemable at any ARKS School. *(The adjacent picture shows Graham Smith launching the ARKS scheme with MSA Chief Executive Colin Hilton.)* It was reported that kart licences were up by

3% but participation was up 9% in 2008.

Graham Smith also thanked all the clubs who have renewed their memberships.

Tyre prices, eligibility checks etc

Discussions with tyre importers regarding a limit on 2009 prices in exchange for an extension to contract to match with the length of the championship contracts had been earlier agreed by email. Despite the higher cost of transport, raw materials, and especially the adverse exchange rates, the prices were contained sensibly. For comparison a 1990 tyre price list shows very similar prices to today, thanks partly to the ABkC's competitive tendering process. Concerns were raised about how often tyre importers seem to run out of stock, and measures were suggested to counter this in future. The treasurer reported the Association had purchased a full set of KF tools and gauges for eligibility checking in the championships, and the bank balance was very healthy.

Direct Drive group class proposals

The direct drive group were tasked with investigating and reporting on the following topics: KF5 – which is KF3 (with a 12,000rpm limit) for younger drivers being trialled in the Benelux countries; KF3 with 15,000 rpm limit for senior drivers being a proposal from track owner Paul Fletcher; Honda Cadet class weight which is under review again after a lot of parent response to the earlier decision to keep it the same; the entry age for Junior Max and its alignment with KF3 and a Super Cadet class proposal put forward by John Mills Racing. It should be emphasised that the minimum age for Junior Max in 2009 is the 13th birthday, and club competition secretaries must ensure this is adhered to. Only competitors in International races would be able to race at a slightly younger age, but must still adhere to MSA regulations at all other UK meetings. Requests had come in for changes in the World Formula class, and it was agreed to keep the regulations the same, leaving optional the engine upgrade kit and new rev-limiter, but opening the class to use either Bridgestone or Dunlop tyres in 2010. This is to provide tyre compatibility with some prokart classes.

Rotax new steel clutch

Rotax importers J.A.G. had entered a request that only the new steel clutch (see diagram opposite) should be permitted in the Super One Series ABkC national championships, and this was agreed and put forward to the MSA for approval. The reasoning is that only having one clutch type to try will reduce costs in the long run for competitors and it is also hoped that it will result in less maintenance, and be easier to check for eligibility. It is very likely that only the steel clutch will be permitted across the board in 2010 and J.A.G. are currently offering a discounted price.

Club matters

The Club Sup-Group is working on kart circuit grading criteria proposals, and the class criteria for either being included, or taken out of, the 'Gold Book'.

Gearbox matters

The Gearbox Sub-Group chairman reported on the background to opening up the tyre choice in the 250 National class, and said that only certain slicks would be permitted in the Super 4 championship. These are listed on the ABkC website www.abkc.org.uk

Since it is becoming harder for drivers who are in their sixteenth year, but not yet 16, to qualify for the 125cc

gearbox classes through the Junior Gearbox exemption route, a request to drop that requirement for drivers, who must nevertheless hold a National A licence, was agreed by the MSA with immediate effect. This does not apply to long circuit, where drivers must be a minimum of 16. D.1.8.4 will be amended, applying to ICC UK (KZ2 UK) and KZ1 and D.2.8.4 for 125 Open.

Clubs, drivers and teams are all invited to send comments on any draft proposals listed above, to secretary@abkc.org.uk.

Congratulations to the first of the 2009 ABkC O Plate winners, brothers Sennan Fielding (KF3) and Josh Fielding (KF2). Remember all official seeded drivers are shown on the ABkC website, clubs must not permit any others in the ABkC or MSA classes.



At the Autosport Show, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes CEO Ron Dennis gave some illuminating insights into his relationship with Lewis Hamilton, interviewed by Murray Walker.

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

