



NEWS

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News from the June Steering Group meeting

Several very welcome guests attended the June Steering Group meeting. Paul Fletcher, the owner of the PF International circuit and race team gave his views of the state of karting at present and the effect on his circuit. Keith Barton and Richard Lock from the National Karting Association reported on recent liaison meetings with the MSA, and offered support to grow even more ties between our organisations. Their circuits have reported a very good year, offering a karting experience to between 4 and 5 million people. He said that with the right co-operation more could be fed up into MSA racing, probably mostly from their outdoor circuit members. He added that the structures are there but some of the links are missing.

Circuit matters

We started with the usual round up of recent circuit visits by members. Reports were of good meetings for the big championships - the CIK European and Kart Grand Prix at Donington and the Super One at Buckmore Park which offered a massive welcome to the participants. Some reported an increase in some classes – Max 177 was one such quoted – and a downturn in some others. IKR meetings are getting good entries and the F100 championship was cited as a massive success. However overall the MSA meetings are down on participants this year compared with last, and our efforts during the meeting were directed to getting back market share. The MSA General Secretary Simon Blunt was present for the governing body and he had recently visited Shenington and Forest Edge. He found many examples of the traditional ‘Dad and Lad’ entrants. He said the MSA needs to take the lead on the initiative to licence teams and mechanics. Some concerns were raised about the extra cost and complexity at club meetings but this was countered by the need for all involved with racing to be accountable, especially those going on live areas such as the dummy grid. It was said that many ‘mechanics’ are under the age of 18 themselves and therefore minors themselves.

Another issue is the need for professional teams to be properly insured and carry out appropriate risk assessments. Apparently the UK is about the only country that does not insist on teams being licenced, and some like France will only allow licenced mechanics on the grid. The ABkC is also working with the BKIA on an update for the Teams’ Charter.



The new Vortex, TM and IAME prototype ‘OK’ Engines

Barcoding App

Other issues raised included the projects by ABkC, RGMMC and FKS on having a device on the kart to show when contact has been made with another kart. If successful this could be an effective tool to stop loading and pushing. Colin Wright has developed an application for Android that will check bar codes so that tyre use can be tracked, and to check ownership of tyres that are left behind, a growing menace and expense for kart circuits. The app can be obtained from the Chairman.

Medicals, Historics and the MSA

The Motor Sports Council has approved in principle that there is no need for medicals for short circuit karting from next year if the self-certification is valid. Kart Committee will now draw up regulations to put this into effect. Council have also approved the use of the CIK Guidelines for Historic Kart demonstrations. Clubs can

apply for a historic kart demonstration waiver under regulation U.1.5 from now on. Kart Committee will also be given proposals for a regulation on track limits in karting, probably following that already adopted in car racing. There will be on-going discussions with the MSA about improving their response to current issues and working together to increase participation.

Club Development Funds

One application for the Club Development fund from South Yorkshire Kart Club was approved with a grant of £500 towards a new lap timer/counter. Again there were very few applications received, but clubs should also remember the MSA Club Development Fund has cash waiting. It only takes a few minutes to complete the form which is on the MSA website, so why are more clubs not applying for these grants?

Kartmania

The ABkC is partnering KartMania this year with a substantive grant and in return will get floor space for displays and club stands as well as extra publicity. The MSA has also confirmed a grant and attendance. The NKA will have a presence at the show which is held at the end of November at Silverstone. There are exciting plans to have seminars for officials and the working group will release more information as time goes on.

CIK Matters

The new version of the 2015 CIK front fairing was said to be a big improvement but the karts have to be monitored as they come in off the circuit. There will be a trial in the UK soon, and tests against the MSA steel bumper. Proposals for introduction early next year in non-gearbox Junior and Senior classes will be put to Kart Committee for ratification along with appropriate sporting regulations for penalties. There is no proposal to introduce into gearbox karting next year. Clearly there will be a cost to the competitor in the short term, but in the long term a big saving is anticipated due to less accident and pushing damage to the front fairing. We recommend that if a driver is replacing a front fairing (and the bumpers) then they should consider buying the new type if not already fitted to the kart. They could still use the old non-detachable bracket until March next year. The new 'OK' CIK engines will have a demonstration at the CIK European Championship meeting being held at PF International in June. They have no clutch, electric start or battery and need a push with the engine decompressor active to make that an easy task. The proposed CIK technical regulations are available on their website and will cost €2500 plus vat complete with ancillaries. The CIK have also proposed a new Intermediate class for 11 – 13 year olds using the

950mm Cadet type chassis. That discussion will go the next World Council.

MSA Matters

The MSA's new Child Safeguarding Policy has been published and is available to download from the MSA website. Clubs should note the need to have Child Protection as a standing item on their committee agendas in future and the need for the Club's Child Safeguarding Officer to complete a checklist for every event. Clubs can share a Child Safeguarding Officer or have more than one. There are helpful flow charts available from the MSA and this will be backed up with various explanatory fliers in the near future. The Judicial Trial is on-going and proposals for next year will be put to Kart Committee. Discussions have been held about arrangements for the new National Championships due for application in 2016 and commencing in 2017. Eligible direct drive Junior and Senior classes are Rotax, TKM and X30. All junior and senior direct drive classes have to re-homologate for 2017, and there is the opportunity for new classes to apply in the same way that X30 was introduced in 2014. If the class is too small or no homologation application is received it will be included in Clubman (for low power) or Libre. In the very near future the MSA will be issuing a tender for the 2017 Cadet tyre. The successful applicant has to provide tyres to manufacturers of Cadet chassis mid summer next year, so they can use them in trials for the 2017 Cadet chassis homologation. Discussions are continuing about how to work with various years of homologation for bodywork and the associated steelwork. Proposals will be put to the next Council that the steel front and side bumpers can be interchanged if the manufacturer confirms they are identical even with different homologation numbers, and on an MSA approved list. Generic regulations for Clubman (previously called Tyro) and Formula Libre are expected to be published imminently. A minimum driver weight is proposed for Cadet drivers, probably set at 27kg, and will be coupled with the opportunity for waivers to remain in Bambino if the driver is not big enough. An application for Max 177 to be eligible for special plates like O and E is being put forward. All gearbox karts whether long or short circuit will need to have valve caps fitted in 2016 onwards. The ruling on gearbox Nassau panels or 'Bubbles' is also being revised as is the gearbox rear bumper regulations. This is because there have been instances of a front fairing going under the rear bumper of a kart and preventing braking, leading to a serious accident. Bambino karts may have to conform to a minimum weight next year. All new proposed regulations will be published for consultation on the MSA website so clubs and competitors should check regularly.

Race n' Respect

The Race n' Respect campaign is proving successful in MSA Bambino and Cadet Championships and will be rolled out across the board next year with packs going to all clubs. Team managers, mechanics and parents are gradually getting used to not being able to signal to their drivers during races, and there have been some penalties and warnings applied so far.

On Board Cameras

The MSA are proposing extending the regulations about on board cameras and this is out for consultation until 3 August, please make comments without delay if you have any:
<https://www.msauk.org/assets/japcameraregulationproposalsv5050515.pdf>

Start guidelines

The Kart Committee are drafting guidelines for standing and rolling starts, please let Nigel Edwards have any comments (nigel@tvkc.co.uk).

Honda Cadet

Notice is given that there will most likely be a new exhaust needed in Honda Cadet and possibly in all Honda 4-stroke classes in 2016. The design is still being finalised but details will be given in the October newsletter. Also the use of a non-return valve in the fuel breather pipe will be mandatory in 2016 onwards (as well as in long circuit karting). This is to help prevent a serious fire. There have been several instances of flash fires on overturned karts from the fuel in the carburettor but if the fire extended to the fuel in the tank it would have been much more serious. These non-return valves are quite low cost and are common in car racing classes, for instance an example is found by searching for "8MM NON RETURN VALVE FUEL TANK BREATHER VALVE" on Ebay.

TKM and Rotax

Tal-Ko and JAG gave notice of changes in their classes envisaged for 2016, obviously including the Rotax EVO engine parts. Preferential prices for the EVO parts will be maintained into 2016 but only for existing registered engines. More details will be publicised from these companies before long and finalised in September. MiniMax will not be eligible for the EVO parts other than the change of colour for engine crankcase, cylinder head and the new con-rod. It can be noted that there are no changes to existing regulations for TKM but the legality of ceramic axle bearings is being reviewed as is the definition of 'exotic materials'.

250 National

One application for a 2016 'up to 180cc engine' and one application for a new 250 engine have been received by the MSA and subject to inspection will be eligible for racing for no points and prizes this year and to be integrated into the class next year. Tuning will initially be restricted on the 175cc engine and the weight for such karts will be announced in due course and before the 2016 regulations have to be submitted.

Marketing

The working group is working on publication of a new guide to Junior Drivers and Parents as already used in various other countries and the draft can be found on www.tyrokarting.co.uk and downloading the Racing Rules from the tab on the top left corner.

Championships

A very successful O Plate has been held for Rotax and Cadets at Rowrah and now we are looking forward to the O Plate for TKM classes at the TKM Festival on 8/9 August and the new E Plate at Shenington on 18/19 July. It should be recalled that the new E Plate is the MSA Plate for England in the same way Scotland has the S and Wales the C. It will be universally recognised at all MSA clubs, and clubs should ensure they have an E to use at the start line for warnings etc, as well as GP, O, S and C. The KZ UK gearbox O Plate is at Rowrah on 30 August and the 250 National at the Midland Championships at Rissington on 5/6 September.

Clubs are reminded that the X30 and Junior KGP classes are not eligible for special plates and any such requests must be refused.

O and E Plate Applications invited for 2016

Clubs are reminded that applications for the 2016 O and E Plate meetings must be with the Secretary by 23rd September in final form. The applicants will receive an invite to the Steering Group meeting on 8th October to put forward their proposal. As a reminder the criteria for the 2016 ABkC O Plate meetings could include single classes being run at all different clubs. These meetings are an opportunity for smaller clubs to run a prestigious event, even if just a single class at a normal club meeting and clubs are encouraged to think about applying. It is hoped that we can receive some unique and innovative proposals bearing in mind the need to have a good entry and support from the class owners. The E Plate needs to be a single event.

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