

11, Shipley Court,  
Liphook,  
Hants.

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Liphook 3203

Dear Members,

I am writing this special newsletter to you in order that all our Members shall be clearly aware of the situation in which the Club finds itself at present.

Some four years ago we were informed that we would shortly have to cease racing on our old circuit, since the Airport had development plans of their own for that area. We commenced negotiations with Dart Aircraft Ltd., who own the Airport, and with the Local Planning Officer. This latter was necessary since there was nowhere else on the Airport which we could use. This meant we had to construct a new circuit and thus would require Planning Consent. At about this time basic agreement as to the terms of our occupation of a new piece of land was reached. We applied for Planning Permission. It was refused. We appealed and were told that subject to certain limitations consent would be given if a further application was made. This we did three years ago and permission for use of the land as a Kart Circuit was granted last January. But. A measure was imposed upon the Airport by the Hampshire County Council with the agreement of the Minister, a 'Direction under Article 4 of the Planning Act' which said you may use that part of the Airport for Karting but no-one may use any other part of the Airport.

You will, no doubt appreciate, sympathise possibly, that Air Vice Marshall Bennett considered this an encroachment upon his Civil Rights, since the restriction was placed on the whole Airport as a result of an application from one of his Tenants for use of a small part of the Airport. So he said he would not accept such a restriction. Full stop to our circuit. We appealed to Hampshire County Council, both by letter and by many personal visits, to both the Area and County Planning Officers, and to the County Clerk's Office. This resulted in the gathering of a great deal of information, history of Blackbushe Airport and considerable sympathy from very helpful officials. But no relief from Article 4.

Through our architects, Ivan Nellist and Ian Blundell, we took our problem to the House of Commons and finally to the Minister himself. Again sympathy but this time accompanied by the information that there is no machinery for appeal against a Direction under Article 4., unless the Local authority, who asked for the Direction can be persuaded to ask for its removal. Which they would not do.

We informed the A.V.M., and, quite rightly in my opinion, he exploded. So began months of negotiations to try to get either the Hampshire County Council or the A.V.M. to change their mind or to try and find a way round the problem.

Meantime the A.V.M. had been given to understand that once we had a lease, even though a period of time were mentioned in the lease, we were there for ever, protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act or the Rent Act. Another problem to be overcome.

I discussed these points with our Solicitor, P.M. Blandy of Blandy and Blandy, and he assured me that we could arrange a lease which would not be so protected. So after more visits to the A.V.M., the solicitor, and so on, it was finally agreed that we would draft a lease in terms acceptable to the A.V.M., and giving adequate protection to both the Club and Dart Aircraft Ltd., for a 10 year period, and that we would continue to try to get the Article 4 Direction removed.

It took three months and much negotiation with many visits here and there with the Draft Lease passing to and fro, like a shuttlecock, with amendments and alterations, and amendments to the alterations, but we arrived at agreement by both parties.

Briefly, the actual terms of payment are that we pay an annual rental of £174 plus rates, plus one third of our receipts from Admissions Vehicle Parking and Seating - at our Public Meetings - and we must hold at least six of these per year. There are also agreed rates to be paid in the event of our subletting our circuit to someone else, for say sprint meetings, to a Film Company and so on. It is up to us to sublet or not. All rates to be reviewed at December 1970.

The Solicitors finally said 'go ahead with your construction' last week. Work was as you know put in hand, in order to try to be ready for the B.B.C. Television Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November. As you know we only had sufficient work completed to make it possible to hold that all important meeting, and we will need a great deal more help and money to make it the most super circuit in the Country. We will need a great deal more hard work by many more members than has been the case in the past, but now that you can see the circuit coming to life, I am confident, that you will all make a strong effort to help in every way possible.

Present finance allows us to start work only, and it is simply because we have found a Contractor, Sparkes Brothers of Feltham, who will take some money now and more later, that we are able to get the surface down. We have spent some £1,000 so far on preliminaries and after paying our down payment of some £2,000 will require a further £2,000 or so over the next year. We have plans for early completion of the paddock, lapscorer and timekeepers box and a clubhouse. You will see why we need much help and hard work. After that provided that we maintain the high standard of our meetings, the Camberley atmosphere, and the effort such that our Income is no less than for the last year or so, we will be able to manage. We are so confident that we have already in mind what future developments can be made to improve the circuit. Nevertheless offers of money as a loan or gift will be welcomed, as will any suggestions for raising money. Talk to Robin Grieve. He holds the purse - Tightly.

I feel I should let you know that the lease is Personal to the Trustees Roy Mullender, Robin Grieve and myself and is held by us on behalf of the Club. In law we are personally responsible for the rent etc., and for compliance with the terms of the lease. I hope that we may be able to get some form of indemnity from club members to cover this. Someone might like to think about this aspect.

We have scheduled 18 meetings for 1967, but these do not include further possible B.B.C. Saturday meetings, or the one or two specialties at present in the melting pot, or the still possible Brands meetings and a Hill Climb jointly with Rochester and Chatham. In order to carry out a successful and very full programme for 1967 - very full when you consider practice days on top of those mentioned - we shall require more help, both at circuit and in 'sub-organisations' as for instance the Smith-Churchill Entertainments group.

With 250 members at 150 karts per meeting we have 100 members left over! If we could rely on, say, 30 of these at each meeting we would find life so much more easy. So easy. Some of the jobs are tedious, or lay one open to all sorts of abuse (etc) from, say, the bloke whose kart has just been rejected by the Scrutineer, and so on. But all the jobs are necessary, and, well done can be very satisfying. So how about you helping the Scrutineer, or the Paddock Marshall, or the Lapscorers, or somebody during the next year or two? If all our members gave just 3 days duty per year, some of those who work so hard now might be able to get their kart started - race even.

Some members will no doubt be disappointed that they were not able to take part in the T.V. races - me for one - but please bear in mind that this was not an ordinary meeting, that we shall receive a fee from the B.B.C., that more B.B.C. meetings may follow, and that this was a wonderful opportunity to launch our new circuit with the best possible publicity, leading we must hope, to better attendances at our normal meetings.

All reports so far from competitors, friends, B.B.C., and so on are excellent. The National Team boys (and Alan Churchill) were delighted.

Our next meeting is only a few weeks away, on 11<sup>th</sup> December, and we may well get a practice meeting in before that - if sufficient help is forthcoming. Practice days will have to be properly organized otherwise we could have 60 karts dashing round in chaos and someone hurt. Members are reminded that it is not possible for them to just go to the circuit as and when they please. Only when properly organized practice is arranged.

Only with your fullest co-operation can we run successful meetings and pay for our circuit. The success of the Club depends on the best possible support from every member throughout the period of our lease.

I would like to say a word about the Dinner & Dance. In the past, tickets have been sold with the greatest difficulty. This

year, most of the tickers were gone in a flash, a month before the date. Wonderful. A measure of the Club's increasing appeal, but so disappointing to those who cannot get a ticket. We have already planned that next year's do will take place in a very much larger hall seating some 300 and where we can provide a floor show to the Camberley standard. To those disappointed, we say sorry, but we can only budget on previous performance. Bear in mind also that in order to get a booking at a reasonable venue a years notice is necessary nowadays, in order to get an acceptable date - let alone the date you require. We would have liked to have seen everyone present. Next year perhaps.

To those who have given their time, be it in organization or with shovel on circuit, in working parties painting notices, attending the Contractors putting in drains and so on. Thank you. Without you the Club would be sunk.

I wish you all a very successful and enjoyable Karting 1967, with the full co-operation and help of all members I think I can promise it.

Yours sincerely

John Barr