

# NATIONAL AUTOGRASS SPORT ASSOCIATION LTD



## Chairman's Meeting

11<sup>th</sup> April 2015

Venue: Metro Inns Birmingham Road, Walsall

Start time 11am

## MINUTES

- Apologies** – S Wales, Essex, W Wales, E Anglia, CGTRO, Kent, Dales, Scotland  
Absent – did not receive apologies N Yorks, Yorkshire, N Ireland, Southern Ireland,  
Attendees: N Wier EM: Darryl Smart Glou: Ray Wyeth Southern: Tony Griffiths WML: S Langley MAP  
M Cooper NW: Nick Stokes Shropshire: Simon Jackson Wilts: Carole Shaw Fenlands: D Tomkinson, E Ashley  
Simon Bentley , Margaret Allen.  
Discussion took place about lack of attendance, and change of quorum.
- Minutes of the Chairman's meeting Feb 2015** – R Wyeth – asked if minutes taken at nationals meetings –  
Simon said In past maybe not as much as should be but lessons learnt.  
S Langley provided feedback re fixture book from his league – book works well maybe glossy cover to be  
more attractive  
Others agreed. Discussed how good the Speedworth one at NEC was very good.  
Website – keep it as it is no need to gloss it up – Simon confirmed always trying to improve on what we do  
have.  
Pairings draw at Nationals all going ahead, R Wyeth asked if using last years equipment Simon confirmed  
that it is in the leagues hands.  
S Langley reported back that his league would prefer ladies to race with ladies and rather mix ladies classes.
- Adoption of the minutes of the Chairman's meeting Feb 2015** – proposed R Wyeth second Darryl Smart
- Treasurers Report** – Deposit Account £48,103.27          Current Account £6587.48  
Insurance premium paid in full now £116,000 – only had 8 lost meetings so far this year
- Membership / licence report** – 10.4.14 3605 members 10.4.15 3472 – down by 113 so far but some licence  
Secretaries may still have some to pass to Barbara. Signing on sheets need to be back with Elaine within 7  
days with correct postage and not send recorded delivery. Proof of postage might be a good idea. Discussed  
problem with postage. Scan and email be a good back up.

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## 6. Directors Report

Those of you who were at the last meeting will remember that there were no directors in attendance for the majority of the meeting. This was an experiment, in response to previous feedback that the presence of the directors might be inhibiting free discussion between the Chairmen. Ray asked what brought this on, *Simon said that it was an idea Ted Shillito had brought up after last meeting last year it seems that the meeting was just a case of chairman v directors and were not becoming constructive.*

We've now noted the feeling from the last meeting that the Chairmen would prefer to have a director present so we're adopting a different approach today:

- The directors' report is drafted and approved by the Board in advance
- One director is nominated to deliver the report, answer any questions that can be answered immediately and note other feedback to be taken back to the Board – *Tony asked if it would be Simon – Simon said probable as he is the chairman and closest.*
- Unless there are other matters that require his or her attention, the director will leave the meeting once the directors' report has been dealt with.
- For the remainder of the meeting, any issues for the Board's attention will be noted as before by your Chairman, Ernie.

Ernie has provided the Board with a detailed report from your last meeting and issues arising have been dealt with as follows:

### **Meetings between Nationals hosts and NASA Liaison Directors**

We were asked if minutes were taken at these meetings. The directors don't arrange for formal minutes to be taken because of the cost and inconvenience of the secretary attending, but the directors take notes to report back to the board and the hosts are free to take minutes if they wish.

### **Disciplinary issues**

We were asked for more information regarding the disciplinary case against Cameron Mills C9. All chairmen were issued with a detailed statement which you were able to share with your members if appropriate. *Tony said maybe statement should have come out sooner, Simon said the statement originally was too much information however had got good feedback. How much information should be given out ? very difficult.*

### **Nationals 2015**

Some concerns were expressed at the meeting over issues within the West Midland League affecting the 2015 Nationals. The directors responsible promptly met with the league's Nationals committee and have been assured that the league is fully focused on delivering the best possible Nationals.

### **SCRUTINEERING PANEL**

New team working well, and a lot of good communication. Class 2 and 4 need team leaders. A lot of enthusiasm in the country and a lot of pre scrutineering going on. Mark Empson is in charge of experimental cars. Mark is working behind the scenes on class 1 and 2. All clubs need to make sure all cars qualifying need to make sure all cars are correct and Vernon and the team will be more than help if needed. Tony asked if the cars that do fail scrutineering at the nationals is noted and a list provided afterwards. Log Booking cars is the way forward.

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**Roll Cage** – NASA’s basic specification for tubular rollcages requires the use of steel tube, minimum outside diameter 1¼” (31.75mm) with a minimum wall thickness of 2.5mm. To allow for manufacturing tolerances in steel tube, the regulation for 2015 states that the ABSOLUTE MINIMUM wall thickness at any point must be 2.3mm. It is clearly stated in the regulations that the tolerance is only allowed to take account of local variations in the material used and that it is NOT permitted to construct a roll cage from material specified at under 2.5mm wall thickness. It is stated that every bar in the roll cage must, at some point, measure 2.5mm or above. However, practical experience has now proved this last requirement to be impractical to verify in every case. Therefore the spirit and intention of this rule will be enforced by taking measurements throughout a rollcage and, if there is evidence that the material used is entirely below the required 2.5mm wall thickness, or if at any point the wall thickness is found to be below the absolute minimum of 2.3mm, the cage will be deemed non compliant and the car will not be permitted to race. A similar approach will be applied to the alternative material allowed in NASA regulations; ie 30 x 30mm x 3mm thick box section steel

## **CLASS 6 ALLEGRO ESTATE P3EM**

This car, owned and driven by Louis Gutteridge, was brought to the Board’s attention as not complying with rule 2.1 of the Class 4/5/6/7 rule book that excludes (with certain named exceptions) “dual purpose vehicles” and “station wagons”. This car only has been given an exemption to compete until the end of the 2015 season. Consideration may be given to clarifying the rule concerned for 2016 onwards. For example it may be thought acceptable for three door saloon-based Estate bodysells to be used in Classes 4 and 6, but excluded from Classes 5 and 7 due to the possibility of using Estate shells to gain a rear weight advantage. Feedback is invited via the scrutineers’ committee.

## **EXPERIMENTAL CLASS 2 CAR VW POLO NASA 5**

This car, owned and driven by Bob Ellis, was initially authorised to be used during the 2014 season, but did not appear until the opening meeting of 2015. The car has now been examined by the NASA experimental co-ordinator Mark Empson. Various changes to the car were requested, which have all been completed, and the car is now authorised to compete as an experimental Class 2 until the end of 2015.

## **WEST WALES LEAGUE**

Warren has been assisting the West Wales League and Penhow club to come to a mutual agreement to move forward as a league. There are issues still to be resolved but the Board has confirmed that Penhow club members have been issued with NASA licences as part of the West Wales League and therefore have the right to race as West Wales League members for the 2015 season. They will be included in the League’s national allocation figures and must be given the opportunity to qualify alongside other league members.

## **NATIONALS FILE**

The Nationals file has now been updated to the 2015 edition after discussions between the Board and the two 2015 hosts. One further change has been made; the file still includes the requirement for “spotter towers” to be erected at the host’s expense, but as the function of the “spotters” has now largely been assumed by the camera marshalling team, there is an option for the hosts to agree with the liaison directors to dispense with the spotter

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towers. Mal asked Ernie's view as a marshal who has been on the towers, Ernie does think they are needed they do get a good view. Simon said the file says you must have towers so the file has now been changed so you do not have to - obviously compromise needed with board, marshalls and hosts.

## **UKAC PRE-ENTRY PROCEDURE**

The Board has approved, with effect from the first 2015 UK round, a change in the system for collecting prepaid entry fees for individual UKAC rounds. These were previously paid direct to the host club or league. The fees will now be paid into a dedicated bank account set up by the UKAC committee. This will provide competitors with a consistent system for entering events and will make it easier to administer refunds or credits should an event be cancelled. The host club or league will be entitled to the income once their event is under way; they can opt to receive a cheque on the day or a bank transfer on the Monday morning after the event. S Langley asked if people had come through the gate on the Friday and then the meeting gets cancelled does everyone get their money back or just those that UKAC have taken entry from? Simon asked UKAC to clarify that.

## **PLANNING ISSUES/14 DAY RULE**

The Board has received a few requests for advice from clubs who are either having issues with their local authorities' interpretation of the 14-day rule or who are considering the implications of the rule when seeking new venues - for example should they rely on the 14-day rule or seek planning permission at the outset? The Board's ability to advise is restricted as there are so many local factors to take into account and the answers will often depend on the relationships between individual clubs and their neighbours and local authorities. However, we'd like to encourage clubs to share information and experiences which could be of help to fellow chairmen. Dave Mansfield - field have 28 days for change of use, equestrian events on LM track they count as 1 separate day, therefore they are only allowed to have 7 as motorsport is classed as 2 days. (ie as they use the field on Saturday to set up etc) All clubs need to be made aware.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA ISSUES**

The Board has been concerned about the extent of abuse directed at the Board as a whole, individual directors and other officials, mainly through social media. We recognise that this is an issue which doesn't only affect our sport, but we are not prepared to tolerate a level of abuse that will make it even more difficult to find people to dedicate their time to serve the NASA members. Therefore any internet or social media postings that are considered excessively abusive or derogatory, or that bring the sport into disrepute, will be investigated with a view to disciplinary action.

We don't mean to challenge members' freedom of speech and we're always happy to accept constructive criticism, but we want members to recognise that there are limits to acceptable behaviour. When abuse is received that begins to affect the families of volunteer officials, that line has been crossed.

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## **NASA DOCUMENTS**

You are reminded of the importance of submitting documents to NASA within the timescales laid down. In some cases there are fines set out in the members' handbook for late submission of forms and we may reluctantly have to start implementing these fines if we continue to have problems.

In particular, track inspection forms, risk assessments and accident reports are vital evidence if an accident occurs. These need to be received by Pat Patrick within seven days of every meeting. These forms are required to show that the conditions of issue of the event permit have been complied with. Therefore if the forms aren't received, permits will be suspended until the forms are up to date.

## **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS**

Unfortunately some clubs have been on the receiving end of claims submitted by "no win no fee" injury solicitors. These claims are referred to NASA's insurers and the insurers may instruct solicitors to defend NASA and the individual clubs' interests. Problems have arisen as these claims may surface some time after the original incident, claims may relate to injuries that were not reported at the time, and not all the paperwork to support the clubs' defence has been available.

We have therefore obtained clarification from the solicitors on the time that documents must be retained. This covers signing on sheets, track inspection records, risk assessments, accident report forms, etc.

Normally an injured party has three years from the date of an accident in which to claim for personal injury. However, when the injured party is a minor under the age of 18, then the three year limitation period does not commence until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday – i.e. they have until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday to bring a claim. In the extreme case, if a Junior is injured on his 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, a claim could be made 9 years later! Also, in exceptional circumstances, the injured party might be able to convince the court that the limitation period should be extended beyond three years.

Therefore NASA, and individual clubs, need to retain essential records for at least nine years.

Discussion took place what if a 2 year old spectator fell down a hole and don't bring a claim till 21 ? Simon said that surely we would know about it before then – Simon will ask the solicitor. Simon said all members must be made aware if you make a claim your licence is removed. One person went down the no win no fee scenario now wants to race but cant get out of it with the insurers/solicitors.

## **MARSHALLING AND SAFETY ISSUES**

It has been agreed that a black/green board will be trialled to display the numbers of cars receiving a black or green flag during races. Discussion took place that ideal place is the finish line. All chairman present want it to be on the finish line. Ray said all drivers should be made aware marshalling and flagging will be more strict.

Simon Boddy (CGTRO League) has accepted the position of assistant NASA Safety Officer, reporting to Warren.

7. **Nationals 2015** – Tony confirmed all going well. Tony wanted feedback on WHAT if it rained off, Mal said depending on safety you would have to cancel, but it would need to be run ie reserve date. Discussion needs to go back to members if they would want a reserve date.

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8. **Nationals 2016** – Simon said there is a two way road now and Amco on both sides now. Simon asked if the finals can be put into a hat and the classes go out randomly S Bentley said that it would need discussing with the board.

10. **Correspondence**:- NWL – request for Director Present – sorted

- Southern League – Risk Assesment – Ray asked for a standard form for all clubs confirmed that Warren is on with this and Ray would speak to Warren with input.

11. **Log Book** – Diane to keep to up to date.

12. **AOB** – Discussion took place about the log book how long would it last mal said stock cars have tags but do

Not have the amount of cars at a race meeting. Log Books will be work in progress. What if people take the Tag off to be vindictive, a lot of areas need to be looked into and Vemon and Gareth are doing this.

Dave Mansfield suggested all amendments to the rule book go on line and then the amendments are there for ease for following year.

MEETING CLOSED 13.10 pm

Please forward any items for the Agenda for the following meeting 14days prior to Diane Tomkinson

Diane.tonky@btopenworld.com

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