



# **NASA MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER**

## **Issue 11 – May 2018**

***At last the 2018 Autograss season is under way – the weather has continued to plague us right up to mid-May, with some events that looked good to go being either wiped out or suffering from tricky conditions after an overnight deluge. But now we're looking forward to the third Bank Holiday weekend of the year, and with it the first major championship events. The North of England Championship at York this year incorporates the first round of the British Autograss Series, while the UK Autograss Championship kicks off at Hereford. A week later the All Ireland Autograss Series has its first round hosted by Down Autograss, while the MAP Open, still one of the biggest stand-alone events, takes place at Dodwell.***

***We wish the best of luck to the host clubs and leagues, and all the officials, competitors and supporters, at these big events and look forward to the season stepping up a gear with plenty of club racing scheduled in the coming weeks.***

### **NATIONALS ALLOCATION ACTION**

The number of cancelled meetings in the early part of this season caused a lot of concern about its impact on the allocation of places at this year's National Championships.

For those who don't know how this works, places are allocated pro-rata to the number of registered cars that have raced in the period up to the cut-off date, which this year was Sunday May 20. There are 40 places, plus reserves, allocated in each of the ten classes. The defending champion has the option to defend the title, and each of the 20 leagues is guaranteed at least one place in each class – conditional on the league having had at least one car race in the class. That means, in most classes, 21 places are accounted for, leaving 19 places to be allocated pro-rata to the number of cars racing for each league. It's important to realise that we base this on cars that have actually raced, rather than on licences issued.

This is done by analysing the signing-on sheets for every meeting run up to the cut off date (excluding any BAS or UKAC rounds). That's where we knew we'd have a problem this year. At the time of the April League Chairmen's meeting only one event had run anywhere in the country. It has turned out that we were right to be concerned; although most leagues have now run events, two leagues haven't been able to put on a meeting before the cut-off date, so the usual system just wouldn't work. It's not practical to extend the allocation date as this is just the first stage in the process.

The Board therefore agreed a proposal which was then approved by the League Chairmen. This year's allocations are being based on last year's numbers of cars. This does NOT necessarily mean that the actual places allocated will be identical to last year. A couple of factors make this year's calculations slightly different. Last year only 7 of the classes had defending champions; this year all 10 champs have confirmed that they will defend their titles. That means that, in three classes, there were 20 places to allocate last year, but only 19 this year. The other difference is that one club (Bredon Hill) has changed leagues this year. This has been dealt with by adjusting the base number of cars in the classes affected by



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deducting the Bredon Hill cars from Gloucester League's total and adding them to Wiltshire League's. With only 16 cars involved, this was expected to make fractional differences to the allocation calculation.

The actual allocations will, as last year, be delivered to league secretaries in sealed envelopes before the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. That gives each league the choice whether to let their members know how many places they're racing for, or keep it secret until their qualifying meetings are completed.

It's then up to each league to select the drivers to fill their places in each class. We'd normally ask leagues to confirm all their qualifying drivers by Monday 18 June. We've extended that date to Monday 2 July, giving leagues an extra couple of weeks to run qualifying rounds, if they need to.

This will restrict the time for the final stages in the process; reallocating any places that leagues were unable to fill (effectively moving drivers up from the reserve list), then staging the random draw that places drivers in "pairs" for their heat races, and then getting the entry list into the race programme. Therefore it's now doubly critical for leagues to return their "R101" forms before 1 July if they can, or if they run a qualifier on 1 July, the form must be submitted immediately (by email, and by first class post).

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### **MORE ACTION ON CANCELLATIONS**

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The number of cancelled meetings this year has had more of an impact than just on the National allocations. Most important for us is the effect of club finances. So far there have been 59 meetings cancelled this year, of which just 5 so far have been rescheduled. The sheer volume of cancelled meetings means that there's not enough time in the calendar to reschedule most of them.

Normally, if a club cancels a meeting, the insurance premiums for that meeting will be lost unless the meeting can be re-arranged within the same system. However this year, to do what NASA can to help the clubs hit by cancellations, the directors have agreed that the insurance premiums for all meetings cancelled up to the end of April will be credited back to the clubs. This will make a dent of just under £5,000 in NASA's cash reserves (money put away "for a rainy day", of which we've now had plenty!) and will put that money where it's most needed, back in the clubs.

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### **NASA EGM**

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Just a reminder that the next NASA committee meetings are coming up on Saturday 9 June at Walsall. The league chairmen's meeting will be preceded by an EGM, to approve NASA's 2017 accounts (the accounts will be emailed soon to all league reps). It's important that we get a quorum for the EGM, at which only registered "full members" of NASA can vote. If any league reps can't make it, or need to clarify their voting status please get in touch.



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### **SCRUTINEERING UPDATES**

Tagging compliance is still an issue causing problems for our scrutineering team. Many instances are still being noted where car numbers, owner details and recorded tag numbers aren't lining up, despite all our efforts to ensure that data is checked and kept up to date.

NASA's database of "blue tag" numbers is regularly emailed to club and league scrutineering contacts, and any scrutineer or club/league official may request an up to date copy by emailing [tagging@national-autograss.co.uk](mailto:tagging@national-autograss.co.uk).

We'd like to see clubs checking this database against the cars/tags presented to them at scrutineering for every meeting, but this rarely seems to be happening so we'd appeal to all clubs to play their part in keeping these important records up to date.

The scrutineering team is ready to get the "red tag" process (the more comprehensive record of vehicle construction) but is holding off at the moment until there is more confidence in the record keeping procedures.

One point that's been clarified is the recording of tag numbers in drivers' licences. In every other case it's forbidden for you to amend your own licence – any changes must go back to the issuing NASA registration secretary. However, there's no alternative to asking drivers to update tag numbers in their own licences. So if you buy or sell a car, or have a car re-tagged for any reason, please update your licence and the information will then be verified by the scrutineers at your next meeting.

### **OTHER COMPLIANCE ISSUES**

Observations at the early season race meetings suggest that we need to remind some of you again – please ensure that your NASA licence is signed, and has a clear and up to date photo of you in it, before it's presented at scrutineering and signing on.

We've also had problems with late night incidents and disturbances at one racing meeting (at least) so we're looking to the clubs hosting two day events to ensure that any facilities are properly policed. When a beer tent or bar is provided we see no justification for this continuing after midnight at the latest. We're looking for voluntary compliance with this at the moment, but it's likely to become a condition included in event permits in future.

### **MOTORSPORT WITH ATTITUDE**

NASA recently attended the press launch of a new motorsport show, "Motorsport with Attitude", which is being planned with a bias towards short oval racing and other grass roots events. The show itself is to be held at the Peterborough Arena (on what used to be called the East of England Showground) on February 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> 2019. We'll keep you all updated on NASA's plans to participate in the show, but we can expect that there'll be scope for a lot of



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Autograss cars to be displayed. The short oval racing community have already jumped on this as their major promotional event for 2019.

We'd like to thank Chloe Reynolds, Lyndsey Allen, Harry Ashley, Lee Forster, Liam Evans and Kevin Chaffe for bringing their cars to Peterborough on a Friday to participate in the launch and photo shoot.

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### **GDPR**

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Not the most exciting of subjects for our newsletter, but this is something that all clubs should be aware of. We're sure that all of our members will have been bombarded by emails over the last couple of months, sent by organisations to comply with GDPR (the General Data Protection Regulation), or possibly using this new rule as an excuse to update their marketing databases!

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) is an EC regulation that comes into force in the UK on 25 May and replaces the existing UK Data Protection Act 1998.

All organisations who hold personal data on individuals need to comply with this regulation, which includes NASA and all our clubs. The good news, though, is that most of us will still be exempt from registering under the new rules, just like we were under the old Data Protection Act.

The exemption which covers us says that "data processing" is exempt if it is "carried out by a body or association which is not established or conducted for profit and which carries out the processing for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership or support for the body or association, or providing or administering activities for individuals who are either a member of the body or association or who have regular contact with it". That covers NASA pretty well! We'd have a problem if we used, or sold, our membership database for marketing purposes, but we have no intention of doing that!

To comply, we need to publish a "Data Privacy Policy" which will appear on the NASA website. If clubs want to adapt this for their own use, please do (contact Jeffrey Parish if you'd like a copy of NASA's policy in Word format).

There has been lots of information and guidance published on GDPR compliance, much of which is just designed to worry you, but the most useful and practical guide that we've seen has been published by the MSA for its affiliated clubs. If you'd like to be reassured of your club's compliance, we recommend that you read this; [\*\*MSA GDPR Guidance\*\*](#)

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### **BREATH TESTING GUIDANCE**

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Some practical issues have arisen in respect of the timing of breathalyser tests at events. NASA's recommendation is that drivers should be tested (at random, or maybe not so random when the tester has reason to believe there's a high risk of offending) in the holding lanes coming up to the startline. Any driver who fails a test at this point will have shown an



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undeniable intent to race in that condition, and will receive an automatic 12 month ban under NASA rules.

Random testing before the start of a race meeting still has its place as an option open to clubs, but is likely to be inappropriate at events where drivers have signed on the previous night (including the second day of two day meetings). A driver who fails in these circumstances, despite being signed on, may still take their own decision not to get into the race car on that day, and if so it may be the case that the only enforceable penalty will be exclusion from that event.

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### **GREG MORGAN AND KEN HAMMOND**

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Sadly, we must again make exceptions to our decision that we'll no longer include tributes to NASA members in our newsletters (a decision we took mainly for fear that we'd leave somebody out).

In recent weeks we've lost two of NASA's pioneers – members of the select group of people who, without their contributions, NASA would not exist in its current form, or maybe even at all.

Greg Morgan served the sport on many levels over the years; club and league chairman, NASA Chief Marshal and other capacities too numerous to list.

Ken Hammond was another West Midland League member (for many years a Cwmdru Class 10 racer under the unique number C1111) and was a leader among the group of far sighted individuals who travelled the country in the early 1970s, achieving the seemingly impossible task of convincing a wide variety of grass track racing organisations to come together under a single National governing body.

We send our sympathies to all of Greg's and Ken's friends and families, and express our appreciation for their major impacts on our sport's history.

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### **NEWSLETTERS ...**

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*Any comments on this newsletter, or information or issues you'd like covered in our next issue, please get in touch – email [jeffrey.parish@national-autograss.co.uk](mailto:jeffrey.parish@national-autograss.co.uk)*