

# BRITISH FEDERATION OF PEDAL CAR RACING



## BRITISH PEDAL CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

### Minutes for BFPCR Annual General Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2008.

Meeting opened, 11am

#### Present:

Dave Relton (DR) ; Antony Hawkins (ADH); Jes Featherstone (JF); Chris Featherstone (CF); Alistair Brown (AB); John Relton (JR); Gary Hollingsworth (GH); Nigel Crompton (NC)

1. Apologies were received from: Roland Jones; John Scholey; Robert Allen; Geoff Brown; Matthew Tooke; Gary Richards; Darren Carter; Neil Carter; Rachel Carter; Rob Fulford; Bill Gratrix; Mark Williams; Simon Gare

2. Minutes of 2007 AGM:

Were read and agreed as a true record of proceedings

3. Chairmans's Report:

Dave stated that he had been unable to attend more than a handful of races over the past season due to scouting commitments but made the following observations:

The feedback he has is that the BPCC is running fairly smoothly and we have come a long way in the last 5 years from car parks to proper circuits and also from the point of view of making the sport as safe as it could possibly be. Also, the championship is now much more competitive.

The over riding concern is still about the attraction and retention of junior teams and we still need to improve on this.

Big thanks for all this must go to the Dobson White Partnership who allow us to race at the venues we have with the numbers of entries we have at present.

Scrutineering has also taken a major leap forwards in the last few years and this, combined with the sponsorship, has made a huge difference.

The planning of the championship has been taken with long term aims and objective in mind and, therefore, any changes made from this point onwards should be "fine tuning" and not "change for the sake of change".

Dave expressed his thanks to the outgoing committee and all the race organisers for their efforts and hoped that next season would be just as good.

4. Treasurer's Report:

(Full balance sheet will be available)

All the races run by the BFPCR (i.e: all the Championship Rounds except Margam) at least broke even.

This is partly due to people not claiming money back from such things as "recycled" trophies and the like.

This money should be a good proportion of paying the 2009 insurance.

The BFPCR currently has around £2000 in the bank (obviously 2009 insurance must be paid out of this and is likely to come to around £700). So the sport is reliant on the sponsorship of the Dobson White Partnership and if we lost this we would have to think very hard about such things as entry fees.

Antony announced that he is stepping down as treasurer.

## Open Discussion Topics:

**5.1:** Proposal for adding that each car must supply a volunteer to help set up and take down the circuit to be added to the rule book.

### **PROPOSAL ADOPTED**

GH: Said that he thought this was all part and parcel of pedal car racing anyway.

JF: Said that the situation at the end of Curborough where GCR had been abandoned by the other teams to do this virtually all by themselves had brought matters to a head.

***Those present unanimously agreed that this needed adding as a new rule.***

**5.2:** Request for clarification on definition of front lights.

Much discussion ensued – particularly surrounding the situation at Margam where the lights had failed.

DR: Said that at most races drivers gain their night vision as darkness falls and different drivers have different seating positions.

GH: Said the question was: Are front lights for seeing or for being seen by?

JR: Asked how this would be policed as scrutineering is done during the day.

AB: Stated that GCR ran lights designed for the driver to see where he was going with.

JR: Said that the British Standard on bike front lights is just for 3 LED's. And we would not have a standard to work to because we were effectively asking for more.

CF: Said that he understood the purpose to be so that people could see the cars coming. Those teams who choose to fit high powered front lights to give themselves a competitive advantage during the hours of darkness were welcome to do so.

JF: Said that the problem at Margam was that the circuit was lit very brightly with 2 large lighting towers. When one of these had failed it was sudden total darkness.

NC: Suggested that solar lights could have been mounted in the tops of the cones at Margam so the edges of the track were lit up even in the event of a failure.

DR: Proposed the following addition to the rule book:

*Rule 13(e): Front lights should provide some assistance for forward visibility.*

JR: Stated that the cost argument is these days a non – starter. The high beam front lights on the Revolution car cost £1.99 from Tesco's for example.

**5.3:** Proposal that the BFPCR fee be reduced for single – car entries at their first race.

### **PROPOSAL ADOPTED**

After much discussion, the following was adopted:

**BFPCR Registration fee will be £25 still.**

**The race entry fee will be £12.50 per car (£15 at Margam £25 at Shenington of course) for teams registered with the BFPCR.**

**For teams not registered, the entry fee per car will be £12.50 more per car (i.e: £25 usually; £27.50 at Margam and £37.50 at Shenington).**

This gives teams the option of doing just 1 race for a reduced rate but means it is worth your while paying a BFPCR fee if more than 2 cars are entered for 1 race or more than 2 races are entered for 1 car.

**5.4:** Discussion on promotion of pedal car racing.

**5.4a: (Rockingham):**

DR: Said that the event had been poor this year as there had been nothing “hands on” or even a chance to look at the eco-marathon cars. Pedal power was completely missing!

AH: Had spoken to the organisers and we were welcome to exhibit if the event went ahead. We might even be the most exciting exhibitor there...

DR: Said that there was a potential car park for running demonstration events.

CF: Suggested that we could have some cars running and one being rebuilt in view of the public to show how simple it was to build a pedal car.

JF: Said he was happy to rebuild cars at this event because it would be the week after Shenington and it wouldn't hurt to strip the cars down and rebuild them anyway.

DR: Said that the practical part of the BTEC award could be covered by pedal car racing.

AH: Said that he had pencilled in that week to take as holiday for this event in 2009.

**5.4b: (general):**

JF: Said that promoting the 7 – round DWPBPCC as a whole was hard. Promoting events such as Shenington as 1 – off to get teams interested and then introducing the idea of more races though the year seemed to be yielding better results.

GH: Has distributed a basic CD of pedal car racing to many scout groups for the scout car nationals and has gained 3 or 4 entries. He has also copied the Shenington publicity to many Explorer units in the area who have pedal cars.

Recently 105<sup>th</sup> Manchester have been on local radio and TV to promote themselves and the sport and there is possible coverage of the 2010 Scoutcar Nationals at Manchester Velodrome on the cards.

They will be promoting pedal car racing at Youth events in the future.

NC: Stated that they hope to have a “pool” of cars available for these events.

AH: Re-iterated that the problem of doing this is always storage and transport.

NC: Suggested getting schools involved to help build cars.

JF: To send GH a set of photos etc to be turned into a promotional multi – media CD.

**5.5:** Request for clarification on “all – round visibility”.

**PROPOSAL ADOPTED**

JR / JF: Said that the problem this year was mainly with the Normandy Explorers team at Blackbushe who continued to put drivers back into the car with dangerously low visibility. In 2007, Crude Engineering had continued racing with very poor visibility from their car during wet races and had eventually demolished Sketty during the Margam 24 hour which had effectively ended their championship aspirations.

JF: The problem is policing this because, except for Shenington, we have only 1 or 2 marshals.

DR: Said that for safety's sake this does need policing during a race.

ADH: Stated that there is a need to remind team managers that if they have a problem they need to take it to Simon during a race not afterwards.

JF: Suggested this needs to be added to the driver's briefing.

DR: Suggested that this needs to be highlighted to car designers, particularly as cars are tending to head towards being fully enclosed these days.

ADH: Suggested a “crib sheet” could be produced for race controllers to run through at the driver's briefings.

**5.6:** Proposal that PC3, PC4 and PC0 cars racing in the 24 hour race should have the last 12 hours and the final 6 hours scored as separate races.

**PROPOSAL ADOPTED**

DR: Said that he could not see what the benefits would be.

ADH: Could not see any problem with the proposal but did not think it would affect the results of the championship much.

JR: Said that, as long as the total lap score was still used to give PC3 teams their overall position for the 24 hour race (and in PC2 and PC1 classes for example) he had no objection.

JF: As the organiser of the 24 hour race, had no problems with the idea – it might even attract a few more junior teams.

Proposal was adopted for a 1 year trial period with the following proviso's:

1: Teams must use only the same car (that had originally been scrutineered at the start of the 24 hour race) for both portions of the event

2: Teams must use only the same drivers (that had originally been submitted on the team sheet at the start of the 24 hour race) for both portions of the event

3: The two portions would be scored thus:

The 1<sup>st</sup> 12 hours: 31 – 25 – 20 – 16 etc

The last 6 hours: 20 – 16 – 13 – 11 etc

Giving 51 points total for PC3, PC4 and PC0 cars at the 24 hour race.

4: The total laps done during the 24 hours will still give these teams their overall positions for calculation of PC1 and PC2 championship points.

**5.7:** Proposal that PC3 and PC4 championships would be scored on the best 5 races of the season including the final round

**PROPOSAL REJECTED**

CF: Had looked at the results and could not find a recent example of where this would have made any difference what so ever.

DR: Said that we had tried many different ways of working this out in the past and adopted all sorts of different competitions (North / South / Sprints etc) and nothing had “stuck”. Also, the points system already accommodates teams who have a “disaster” or miss a round. Revolution had won PC3 this year and only entered 6 races for example.

No one present could see a reason to change the current system.

**5.8:** Proposal that PC3 and PC4 teams should score points ONLY in their class and PC1. PC3 teams should not score points or win trophies in PC2 unless they paid an extra fee

**PROPOSAL REJECTED**

DR: Said that if an under 12's team beats an under 16's team then this is an incentive for the both teams.

AH: Stated that this makes less sense if they are still allowed to compete for overall positions.

DR: Said that race organisers could still award the trophies as they see fit (for example – the Welsh 10 hour already works in this way as the Welsh '24 did) but the points must be kept as they are.

**5.9:** Proposal that a “Life Membership” be created

**PROPOSAL ACCEPTED**

JF: Will investigate some suitable boxed medals.

DR: Will look into getting certificates.

Geoff Brown and Adrian Toms were put forward unanimously as worthy recipients.

6: Nominations to the 2009 committee:

The following were elected unopposed:

Rob Fulford  
Roland Jones  
Mark Williams  
Matthew Tooke  
Darren Carter  
Simon Gare  
Gary Richards  
Jes Featherstone  
Chris Featherstone  
Antony Hawkins  
Bill Gratrix

DR: Reminded everyone that standing for the committee should represent a commitment to attending committee meetings.

7: 2009 Race Calendar:

**WAS UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSED BY THOSE PRESENT**

JF: Reminded everyone that Killay are hoping to run a scout – car event before the Welsh 10 hour in May.

DR: Said that it needed to be made clear that a scout car event was not run by or for the BFPCR and that cars which passed scrutineering for a scout car event would not necessarily meet the standards required for the 10 hour race.

JF: Said that the running of this event was entirely up to Killay and it was their call whether to add another event on the front, even if the BPCC race was shortened to 9 hours starting at 3pm (for example). But we did need to know the schedule as soon as possible.

JR: Pointed out that BPCC teams would need to be setting up their pits during this event. Indeed, it is usual for several teams to set up the night before because a team needs a lot of back up for a long race.

All: Clarification is to be sought from Bill Gratrix on the schedule for the event.

A discussion followed on the state of play of scout cars.

GH: Said that 50% at least of the cars racing in scout car races would not meet the minimum standards required to be allowed to compete in the BFPCR run events. Scrutineering did, however, take place and the standard was better than it used to be.

GH: Said that there was still a mentality (perpetrated by the leaders as much as the racers) in scout car races that it was OK to bump and barge other competitors off the track and that this was pretty much allowed to continue.

JF: Said that this was the very reason that Swebbelli had pulled out of scout car racing after the 2000 Scout Car Nationals.

## **8: 2008 European Championships Report**

2 teams (BAR and Great Central) made the trip to Reana del Rojale for the European Championships. Generally, the event was very well organised (as long as you can accept the more relaxed attitude to time keeping and the need to comply with any rules!). Day 1 was run on a narrow tight and twisty circuit set out in the car park of a sports centre, which was a little disappointing, but this was more than compensated for by the fast, challenging circuit through the streets of this pretty little village on Sunday. Due to the excessive heat (even the locals were dunking their heads in the fountain after their stints on day 2) the races were curtailed somewhat and the totals were 6 hours on Saturday and 4 on Sunday. The only real disappointment was the number of cars taking part. Despite assurances to the contrary, no cars from France turned up at all and the total on the track for most of the weekend was never more than seven. For the final race on Sunday, half a dozen more Karbyk's joined the fun – many of them dressed up in the same style as the French tend to do – and this race, in the late afternoon, had a lot of atmosphere. It was a pity there hadn't been this many teams racing for the whole weekend. It was a shame, given the obvious effort that had gone into the weekend from Paolo and his team of helpers and their sponsors, that there were not more competitors.

Racing in Italy is subtly different to racing in the UK. Although the cars are, in theory, required to comply to the IPCS there is no scrutineering and cars were allowed on the track with dodgy brakes and no frontal protection on chain rings at various stages of the weekend. Also, push starting is still allowed and, indeed, encouraged. I would definitely recommend making the trip to Reana del Rojale in 2011 when the Italians are scheduled to host the championships again.

### On to 2009...

Once again the European Championships are in a slightly dodgy position because it is France's turn to hold them and we have little communication from that part of the world. It is assumed that they will be in St. Etienne de Chigny and that the Euro's will be calculated on the 1<sup>st</sup> and last 6 hours of their 24 hour race – a format which worked very well in 2006 and allowed teams to partake in just the European Championships or the entire classic distance depending on their ambitions. On the other hand, we have no guarantee that any of that will happen at all! At present there are no plans to put in a "joint effort" to get cars there because this back – fired on the very people who put themselves out to do it this year. The withdrawal of one of the three teams who had previously committed themselves to contributing to the van hire left us out of pocket to the tune of £500. Because of this, that risk will not be taken again. If anyone wants to take on co-ordinating a joint British effort to get to France in 2009, feel free, but it won't be the people who did it this year.

### ...and 2010

Plans are already afoot to hold the Euro's in the UK during 2010 and Silverstone has been put forward as a potential venue subject to a few other things falling into place. The thought being that we would like somewhere which has on – site catering and camping. Planning is in very early stages at present.

### To sum up:

Racing abroad is very special. The chance to pit your engineering skills against those from other countries has to get the juices flowing. The pride with which you prepare and present a car that is going give foreigners perhaps their only impression of British pedal car racing really has to really concentrate the mind and the respect you earn when you do well stays with you for a very long time. If you get the chance to race abroad then grab it with both hands. But... Exactly as the situation was 2 years ago. The European Championship ideal is alive and well everywhere except in France.

9: Any Other Business:

DR: Expressed concern about the trophies that had not been returned this year. In particular the PC0 championship trophy still had not been awarded. Wondered if a rule could be enforced that teams who do not return trophies from the previous season should not be allowed to keep them in the future.  
JF: Stated that the overall BPCC trophy had come back in a bad condition at the end of 2007 meaning that Radioactive Racing only received the (restored) trophy a month before they had to give it back.  
DR: Suggested that for teams who were unreliable they should have a photo taken with trophies and then hand them back for safe keeping as Geoff Brown had already had to replace one which had “gone missing”.

It was agreed that team managers need to be aware that trophies must be returned in good condition at or before the last race of the season and if they were not going to attend then they must be sent (by post if necessary) to the race organisers in good time.

**Date of 2009 AGM:**

**The AGM of the British Federation of Pedal Car Racing will take place at 11am on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009**

JF: Said that he would not organise this again given that he had given up his weekend to do so with the resulting poor turnout. Suggested that the new Chairman (when elected) should call it.

Meeting closed, 1.35pm