

BRITISH FEDERATION OF PEDAL CAR RACING



BRITISH PEDAL CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Agenda for Committee meeting of 12th November 2005.

Note that subject to the agreement on certain AGM proposals, some of this agenda may be moved to the AGM. These parts are highlighted in **RED**.

1. **Election of officers to the committee.**
2. Reading of the minutes for meeting of 30th January 2005.
3. **Lap Counting & Marshalling.**
 - Review of progress.
 - Availability and formalisation of baby-sitters. (CTF)
 - Proposal to get one-marshall per team for at least one race per year. (from General discussion).
 - i) Proposal from Antony Hawkins.

We should adopt a formal procedure for dealing with complaints about lap counting.

One suggestion for such a procedure being:

Potential errors in the count that race officials are alerted to during the course of racing (or immediately afterwards, to allow for "last few minutes" errors) should be investigated (after the race - we can't do it during!) and the results altered if the logs provide clear evidence of an error, regardless of whether or not any positions are affected and regardless of whether or not this cannot be completed until after presentations have been made (i.e. if there are disputes on the day we should not be afraid of leaving the results as provisional at the time we all go home). It should be noted that the logs cannot always provide conclusive proof of errors because they cannot differentiate between, for example, a missed lap and a long pit stop, etc.

Anything else should be dismissed. This would include (for example) anyone claiming a week later that their score is wrong, and any potential discrepancies indicated by the logs after the event but which were not reported by the team during the event.

Team managers should be keeping a periodic check on the auto system anyway, to ensure their transponders are still attached. If someone believes they've spotted a discrepancy, it should be reported as soon as possible to the race officials AND THE TIME NOTED - this will make it easier when checking the logs as it will give us an idea of where to start looking.

Reason for proposal: *Even when seemingly working fine, the auto system can occasionally miss laps (typically fewer than 1%). It is often difficult to spot these from the logs simply because a long gap could be a missed lap or a long pit stop. Trying to remember these things after the event is generally very difficult*

4. **Insurance.**
 - Current status and cost of 2006.

5. **BFPCR Fee and Race costs.**
 - i) Proposal from Roland Jones and Neil Carter.

That there is a reduction in the cost of entering cars for teams with more than two cars.

Last year a proposal was made for reduced fees, for multiple teams, and PC0 entries. The following was accepted:-

"At the discretion of the race organiser, discount may be given for teams of more than 2 cars or solo drivers. These discounts are not valid for late entries."

With the exception of Thurmaston and Swansea, race organisers have chosen to use their discretion not to reduce fees for these entries. This is regrettable as it does not encourage solo riders, and teams, particularly junior ones with multiple cars.

My proposal is that Junior teams running three cars or more have their entry fees reduced by a percentage to be agreed in advance, for all races.

Further more, all PC0 entries have their entry fees reduced by a percentage to be agreed in advance, for all races.

ii) Proposal from Antony Hawkins.

We should adopt a formal procedure regarding registration and race fee refunds.

Further I propose that the policy should be that any and all registration and race fees are non-refundable. The sole exception being, if an event is cancelled then all race entry fees paid should be refunded. This is how fees have been dealt with (informally) up to this point.

Reason for proposals: *Firstly, having a written policy means all teams know the conditions of race entry before they make an entry. Secondly, race organisers use booked-in numbers to decide in advance how many trophies to buy, how many race programs to print, etc. (Even how many toilets to hire in some cases in the past!).*

Background:

It was recently pointed out to me that we have no written or otherwise publicised policy on registration and race entry fees in the event of teams asking for refunds for non-attendance or any other reason.

iii) Proposal from Antony Hawkins:

I suggest that late entry surcharges remain in place, possibly with a very late entry surcharge applied for entries made in the final week before a race. Late entries should remain acceptable at the sole discretion of the race organiser. I further suggest that entries received after the deadline for entries can be made to start at the back of the grid.

Reason for suggestions: *This combination is aimed at further encouraging on-time entries, which will help race organisers when preparing official entry lists, manual lap scoring sheets, race programs, grid orders and everything else that is normally printed in the final week before the race.*

iv) Proposal from Neil Carter:

Over the last couple of years, as an organization we have worked hard to strengthen the links with the BHPC. This has culminated in them racing at the last race of the season at Curborough. At their AGM, it was proposed and accepted that BPCC members should be able to enter BHPC races at the reduced membership rate. I would like to propose, that we return the proposal, and allow any team made up from current BHPC members not have to pay BPCC registration Fee.

6. Confirmation of 2006 Race Calendar.

Round 1: Sunday April 9th. Castle Combe (100 miles).

Round 2: Sunday May 7th or 14th. Wombwell (1 + 2 + 3).

Wombwell is the new venue. This is a carting track up in Barnsley which combines a smooth race-track like Preston/Blackbushe, with some Thurmaston-style corners thrown in for good measure!

Round 3: Sat/Sun June 24th/25th Margam 24-hour.

Round 4: Sat July 22nd Preston Sprints.

Round 5: Sun July 23rd Preston 100 miles.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP: Sat/Sun August 19th/20th St Etienne (Tours, Fr). TBC

Round 6: Sat September 2nd South Berks Sprints (Blackbushe).

Round 7: Sun September 3rd South Berks 5-hour (Blackbushe).

Round 8: Sat September 16th or 23rd Curborough TBC

Additionally, it to be noted that the "Race Organiser" may not necessarily have to be the person who books the circuit.

i) Proposal from Antony Hawkins:

That we publicise the 2006 European Championship within the BPCC now in an attempt to find as soon as possible who is interested and how many cars and people that will entail. The St. Etienne venue has ample free camping. At the last count junior drivers were not permitted, however we should contact the French organisers and ask if this rule can be altered or suspended on condition of responsible adult guardians managing any team with junior drivers.

Reason for proposal: *Firstly, you can never start organising overseas trips too early. Second, it would be very positive if a European Championship featured more than one car from each country that wasn't hosting the event. It would be fantastic if it were the BPCC that made this happen and the logistics of getting to the French event make this possible.*

Background:

From 2k4 AGM minutes:

"We have more details on the 2005 Europeans but as yet no news regarding the exact date or whether there will (be) junior classes. When this is known, all the details we have will be published. Neil Carter expressed the view that if not, it would be better to concentrate on 2006, possibly in Holland, with a view to taking several teams.

"However, it seems necessary that someone needs to attend, even if to race a Karbyk, so all volunteers welcome!"

Given that what happened in the end was 3 of BSE and 1 of GCR went to Monza to race a Karbyk, it is now time to concentrate on 2006 (in France not Holland, probably third weekend in August), with a view to taking multiple teams.

7. Rules, Scrutineering and Enforcement.

Just a check/review and formalisation of the new disciplinary rules discussed at the brief meeting which took place in June:

Minor offence: 1-minute time penalty.

1st major offence: 3-minute time penalty for team.

2nd major offence: driver is prevented racing again that day (even if it wasn't their first time).

i) Proposal from Gary Richards:

That in the rules about brakes, the line "braking system components should be securely mounted" is added.

ii) Proposal from Gary Richards:

That "lights must be securely mounted to a stable base" should be included in the lighting rules.

Additionally, that the rules on lights should be further specified with regards to colour, constancy, position and direction.

Gary has expressed concern about two other points. The first is the use of "fully enclosed" cars with regards to possible communication and visibility issues. Secondly concern about the use of "Red Bull" type drinks and caffeine tablets at the 24-hour race.

The question is whether either or both should be banned outright.

iii) Proposal from Jeremy Featherstone:

That the Race Controller should be provided with a notebook in which to record disciplinary incidents/complaints and the actions carried out.

This can be kept in the lap counting "suitcase" and the duty clerk of the course can have it at each race (usually this will be Simon I expect).

It would also provide a fairly easy look-up for such things as finding similar infractions in the past and what the penalty was together with if there is a particular mis-demeanor that one team / driver is regularly committing.

Gary has records showing which cars regularly performed well or badly at the brake tests so it makes sense that Simon could have a similar record of behaviour on the circuit.

iv) Proposal from Neil Carter:

The abysmal performance of the auto lap counting system at Curborough 2005 was virtually certainly due to the proximity of the generator creating huge quantities of EM (electromagnetic) noise.

The system has previously experienced major problems when in the vicinity of Wi-Fi computer wireless networking equipment (at Panasonic a few years ago).

At other venues during 2005 there were a few other dropped laps - we believe less than 40 out of 32,500 counted (not counting computer crashes).

Given all of the above it is quite possible that the missing laps are also down to the system being confused by other EM interference, such as one might experience from mobile phones, bluetooth devices, 2-way radios, car telemetry systems, etc.

Therefore in future the lap counting system (loop and hardware) should have an exclusion zone around it from which transmitting devices are banned (precise size to be determined in conjunction with Neil, who for these purposes may be considered the technical expert).

There should be no need for anyone to be in the exclusion zone at all once the loop is set up, with the exception of people driving cars over the loop, and repairs in the event of cars crashing on the loop. The laptop and lapcount display can be set up outside the exclusion zone to retain the ability to display lap information to all interested parties.

Therefore in turn, any EM-generating device on any car - telemetry, 2-way radios, mobile phones, etc - must be guaranteed to be completely idle whilst passing the loop. For phones this means switched off, for radios and telemetry this means inactive and not transmitting.

Whenever we suspect that it may be EM transmissions causing laps to be lost (from any car unlucky enough to be passing the loop at the time), I further propose that transmitting within the exclusion zone should be an offence punishable by the deduction of a lap.

NB. Note this is not a proposal to ban progressive developments like telemetry, merely a pointing out of the need for such systems to be "EM-silent" whilst near the loop.

8. Championship Rules.

- i) Bob Robinson suggests that the 30% rule should be reconsidered for the divisions, due to the fact that division 2 can particularly involve a large range of abilities with potential new PC1 teams each year. The next proposal contradicts this proposal:
- ii) Proposal from Antony Hawkins:

In order to score any points in a race, all teams should complete a fixed percentage (precise number to be decided) of the overall winning distance rather than a percentage of each class winning distance. Surpassing this single distance would automatically qualify the team for points in all eligible classes.

Reason: Calculating a single threshold figure derived from the leading score, rather than one for each class, is much simpler for record keepers after the event and for team members during the race. Additionally, the percentage rule is not intended as an F1-style method of excluding slower cars, it is intended to ensure that teams do not score points for completing a single lap (for example) but do at least have to put in a reasonable amount of effort. In classes with only one car racing, the current rule would permit that car to take maximum class points for a single lap.

- iii) Proposal from Antony Hawkins:

At races where our rules prevent any team(s) from competing for the full race duration due to their class (e.g. PC4 and PC0 restrictions in 24 hour races), the minimum points-scoring threshold should be reduced proportionally for the affected team(s). This reduction would not extend to teams who failed scrutineering and were forbidden from racing for any period as a result, or teams stopped from racing through transgressions of any other rules, breakages, etc.

Reason: The proportional reduction is proposed to overcome the problem faced by teams forbidden from racing the full duration of races such as 24 hour races.

- iv) Proposal from Antony Hawkins:

In order to name a champion in any class, the leading car in that class must have scored points in that class in over 50% of the races in the season.

Reason: In sparsely populated classes it is otherwise possible for two teams to compete in different races from each other and therefore reach the end of the season with both on equally high points totals, whilst never having competed against each other. In very sparsely populated classes it may be possible to finish with the highest score in class having raced in that class in only one or two races. I believe both cases would be insufficient grounds to declare a 'champion'.

- v) Proposal from Antony Hawkins:

We should adopt a standard rule set about the allocation of points at sprint events;

We should additionally adopt a standard rule set for deciding positions in the event of a tie in sprint events.

9. Classes and Divisions:

i) Proposal from Antony Hawkins and Darren Carter:

A general review of divisions and the sub series, to consider how well (or otherwise) these are working and how effective they are (or are not).

Specifically I propose that PC1 and PC2 Divisions be dropped with immediate effect.

Reason for proposal: *Since their introduction, divisional relegations have been exclusively limited to teams who have raced zero, one or two races in the season (2003: 3x 0 races, 2x 1 race, 2x 2 races; 2004: 6x0, 1x2; 2005: 7x0). These teams have not prevented slower-on-track but significantly more frequently attending teams climbing higher in the overall tables. Division 2 winners and the vast majority of promotions* have been new teams or those who were in division two due to racing very infrequently the previous year and who had returned on a regular basis. These same teams have always finished very high up their native age classes and respectably high in the age class(es) above their own as well (where applicable). In short, the divisions appear to achieve nothing, certainly nothing close to their originally proposed intention. As such they serve no purpose and are merely a confusion.*

**At least 20 of the 21 promotions, as far as I can make out. The only possibly arguable exception being Barlestone car 30 (of PC4): 4 races and 43 PC2 points in pre-division 2002 left them 16th in the PC2 class and thus in PC2 division 2 when divisions were introduced. In 2003 they raced all 8 events to finish 7th in PC2 and also win promotion from PC2 division 2.*

DC writes:

I propose that we get rid of divisions. At every presentation since they were introduced people stand around wondering what they are being presented for. Nobody appears to understand what they are for nor have any interest in them at all.

Looking at previous results a number of things become clear, firstly the teams that are promoted appear to always be teams that are new, or have decided to race more races.

Demoted teams are always those that race 1 or 2 times or not at all. Certainly nothing to do with fighting relegation or battling for promotion. The introduction of the Under 14 class has effectively given the youngsters much more to aim for and I believe the Divisions are neither needed, nor wanted.

10. Presentation of Classes on Cars.

From Neil Carter:

Background

At Thurmaston, a problem was found with the existing rules as they stand. Car was changed at the last minute to be run as PC0. Whilst this was entered correctly on the team sheet, no-one else appeared to be aware of the situation including the race controller, any of the other PC0 riders or other PC1 teams. Some time into the second race, when it was suspected that this car was running solo the race controller was asked as to the status of this car, it then took a further 30 minutes to receive confirmation that this car was running PC0. This effectively gave a disadvantage to all the other PC0 riders as they were only racing the cars previously entered as PC0. Despite requests at the time and subsequently, there appears to have been no will on the part of the committee to introduce a rule change to avoid this circumstance happening again. Nor was it I understand discussed at the previous committee meeting. For this reason I am sending this to you as a formal proposal to be discussed at the next agm

Possible solutions

There are a number of possible solutions to avoid this problem in the future. One is to announce any changes to the race entry. This has the potential problem that a race official may make a mistake, leaving two teams both in the right, but one disadvantaged.

Another possible solution is to place stickers on the car at scrutineering identifying the PC0 and PCF cars. Unfortunately this has the same problem of the possibility of the scrutineering team making a mistake. As you are probably aware stickers have been used in a voluntary way at the last few races but unfortunately these have been used for all cars and are all similar in look and design.

As all age classes are readily identified by the plate on the car because of the colour requirements of the plates, unfortunately because of the overlapping nature of the PC0 and PCF classes this is not possible.

My proposal is that team managers should ensure that the following class markers are fitted to any cars running in the corresponding classes.

Proposal 1

PC0 - a black triangle 3" high and wide on a white square 4"x4"
PCF - a white circle 3" dia on a black square 4"x4"

Proposal 2

PC0 – run with their age class colours reversed, ie a PC1/0 rider runs with black on white
PCF – append an F to their number.

11. Any other business.

12. Next Meeting.