

MINUTES OF THE SOUTH EASTERN MOTO CROSS COMBINE HELD AT BLINDLEY HEATH ON WEDNESDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2003

PRESENT : 20 Delegates were present representing the followings Clubs :- Brighton, Crawley, GEST, Greenwich, Horsham, Sidcup, Twickenham, SE Marshals and John Bramall from the TSM.

CHAIR : Mr. Eddie Herd took the Chair and congratulated Mr. Brown on recently being elected as a Director of the ACU.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE : Apologies were received from John Powell, Kevin McDavitt, Peter Burton and Myra Hayden. Jim Wood added his apologies for non attendance at the last meeting due to his internment in hospital.

2004 DATES : The meeting proceeded to discuss fixtures for the 2004 season, a list of the final fixtures having already been circulated to delegates. It was agreed that delegates would go back to their Clubs and submit championship rounds to the Secretary by 8th January so that they could be submitted to the TSM by the Press Date of 10th January.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING : Mrs. Clarke apologised that she had not been able to send the previous minutes out before this meeting so delegates took a little time to digest the contents and Mr. Horton proposed they be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings with Mr. Lane seconding. Carried.

MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM :

NFU Land Search : Mr Lane picked up on the previous minutes and refuted the fact that the Greenwich Club had been slow about taking up the land offer and that in fact they had been waiting for the landowner to get back to them and when contact was finally made they were presented with a fait accompli. Mr. Bushell confirmed the land had been used for an East Kent Schoolboy meeting but it had been cancelled half way through because of bad weather.

Winterpick Farm Meetings : A letter had been previously circulated from the Greenwich Club questioning some of the steps taken by the Combine regarding the expectation of lottery funding. Mr. Herd said he felt lessons had been learnt from the whole saga and he wished the matter now to close, Mr. Claridge agreed with this, he had subsequently found out at the London federation for Sport that everyone had had their application's refused and the whole of the London area was in disarray. Greenwich have applied again and it will take 13 weeks to get a decision. He suggested the Centre should bail out the Combine if it was short of funds. Mrs. Clarke queried just who had applied for the funding and Mr. Claridge said Nick Hooper had on behalf of the Combine. Mr. Batten asked if there were any Clubs present wishing to run a meeting for the Lottery Funding and no one offered so it was agreed not to apply. Mr. Clarke wondered if funding could be applied for to train both youths and adults and Mr. Bushell thought the money would be better spent in talking to schools about the sport rather than running an event. Mr. Batten asked if the Combine was still short of funds or had all the Clubs donated a £100, Mrs. Clarke replied that only 5 had done so. Mr. Frank Dixon confirmed there was still a bill outstanding for some £700 that had to be paid to FH Dixon Contractors. Mr. Batten asked if he could buy the chestnut palling and stakes bought by the Combine, It was felt there was some 33 rolls of chestnut and 300 odd large stakes, Mr. Batten would submit a written bid price for the equipment to the Secretary. Mr. Brown said, wearing his Centre Treasurer's hat , that the Centre had as much money as it wanted and he had trouble spending it so he did not feel the need to apply for lottery funding. Mr. Claridge asked for it to be minuted that he had said nothing should have been done until the money had been agreed. There had always been a doubt in his mind that it might not succeed. Mr. Wood said that Nick Hooper and himself had done a lot of running around and did not get any thanks. Mr. Herd reminded him that the Centre Board had thanked him and closed the discussion.

Practice Days : Mr. Herd had taken this matter up on behalf of the Combine but still had no reply from the ACU at Rugby. He knew that the new Directors were going to look at the whole question of affiliations.

Expansion of the 4 Centres : It was agreed to leave this matter in abeyance again because it was known the Directors were looking into it but it was confirmed that it would be in order to go ahead with the broader scheme for the 2004 season.

ACU Moto Cross Committee Positions : Mrs. Clarke said that she was pleased to announce Roy Humphrey's and Eddie Herd had both been successfully re elected.

Under 17 Engine Size Restriction : Mrs. Clarke said she would leave this matter until later when extracts were read from the ACU MX Committee minutes.

Riding Numbers : It was agreed the diamond shaped KTM background plates were illegal and should not be accepted at scrutineering.

TTC's : Mrs. Clarke was concerned that no definitive ruling had emerged from Rugby on TTC's and that everyone seemed to be following different practices.

Rogue Riders : Mrs. Clarke showed some samples of wristbands she had obtained, Mr. Yan Dixon said that Golding Barn used strong paper ones and that he would made enquiries and report back to the next meeting.

Day Licences : Mike Askins of the BYMX Committee had withdrawn his ideas of doing away with one day licences.

Inter Centre Supercross : Mr. Herd said he thought there would be teams of 4, one of which was to be a BYMX rider and it would be held at the Weston Arena. Mr. Brown said that most riders were going there anyway and he proposed we did not support the team with expenses. But Mr. Batten thought we should carry on our good track record of sending teams from the SE.

NOISE : Mrs. Clarke said that Rugby did not seem at all interested in taking the initiative and that if the day was to go ahead it would only do so if we organised it. It was agreed we should write to Rugby offering the venue for a National Sound Inspectors Training Day and ask someone from Rugby to take the course and to incorporate a session on how to use the new equipment that has been proposed. It was thought a Saturday or Sunday before the first meeting would be ideal.

WEBMASTER'S REPORT : Mrs. Clarke reported there had been an average of 47 visits a day to the site during November, 52 in October and 57 in September. Mr. Bramall asked that the site carry an advert for the TSM.

ACU MOTO CROSS COMMITTEE MINUTES :

Medical Requirements for Motocross : The Committee will not state the minimum number of First Aiders required to attend Motocross events as all courses and events are different and require vastly different staffing levels. However clubs should be advised to produce their own health & Safety documents and provide their own minimum requirements for the type and size of events being run.

Mr Humphrey spoke to Mr Askins [BYMX] about the use of ropes at Schoolboy events. It had been suggested that a second rope set at a height of 18 inches would be of assistance to smaller machines. Mr. Dixon was sure this would create further complications and many clubs would not be able to implement this. The Committee agreed that the current guidelines on rope height and width if adhered to are quite adequate to catch all size of riders and bikes. Clubs must ensure that the wrecking fence ropes when erected are put at 2' to 2'6" high and that the posts are no more than 15' apart, as per the handbook instructions.

2004 ACU Handbook Amendments : Solo Riders, 15 years of age may ride machines up to 250cc 2 stroke or 450 cc 4 stroke in adult races. At 17 years of age riders may ride open class machines.

Technical Panel : Mr. Crawford reported that helmets with seatbelt type fastenings are not recommended for use in motocross.

The National Clerk of the Course and Stewards Seminar will be held at the ACU Offices on Sunday 25th January.

Mr. Batten said he had been informed if he had not been a National Clerk of the Course within the last 2 years he could not apply so he has not, Mr. Herd said he felt this had now been changed and that anyone could apply.

CENTRE CHAMPIONSHIPS :

Covers : Mr. Wood said there was still an outstanding payment from an advertiser of £200. Mr. Batten said he had already obtained some photos of this year's winners for future publication.

Awards : Mr. Batten has chased the return of all the trophies, this year's Junior, Jody Barnes will be presented at the GEST function whilst, Rob Mead [4 stroke] and Danny Beamish [Expert] will be presented at the Twickenham do but Paul Pelling [sidecar] had not yet indicated where he would like his one presented.

New Structure : Mr. Horton proposed the discontinuation of the 4 stroke championship and the introduction of a 125/250 4 stroke Junior Championship. Seconded by Mr. Brown who felt the Juniors deserved extra recognition for contributing larger sums to the budget of meetings. Mr. Bushell thought the matter should go back to the Clubs for discussion but the vote was carried. A question was asked as to whether this new race would earn Expert points, Mr. Batten would find out.

Advertiser's Banner : This was still ongoing.

SCRUTINEER'S SEMINAR : Mrs. Clarke said that the ACU would only pay Andy Crawford's travelling expenses and nothing else, it was agreed to write to the Centre for reimbursement of the balance. It was felt there was a need to hold another one, perhaps this time in the evening and the Secretary would enquire of Rugby if they could perform one of their new look ones which came from Rugby to the centre, March was suggested but not 24th when the Trials Combine were meeting.

THE SPORTING MOTORCYCLIST : Mr. Bramall said he was always striving to make it better each month, news was now coming direct from Rugby on the bigger issues but what he would really like from the Combine is a monthly report which might also have a knock on effect of encouraging more spectators to events. Mr. Horton agreed to write something on the new structure of the Championships. With regards to regulations tba's would no longer be acceptable and there was no reason for late submissions as he would take a year's events in one go if it made life easier for Club Secretary's. Mr. Burrell agreed to send out templates electronically so that Clubs who were on the internet could e mail their regulations direct to Ken Piles thus saving on errors. Mr. Wood said he had tried to make the regulations more rider friendly and will submit a trial one to the Combine for approval.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS : Mr. Wood confirmed he would print the rider handouts again in 2004 but that they would need amending to cater for the new Championship. Mr. Bramall appealed for more photos for the TSM as Paul Durbajlo has packed up. Mr. Horton queried again the term paramedic and whether it solely applied to the NHS – Mrs. Clarke said she would check her notes. Mr. Brown reported insurance will rise next year to £10.50 with test days at £5.85. He also announced the ACU have a shortfall in their insurance budget which the Matcham's case has highlighted, they are now inundated with scatter gun cases where people try on claims with a no win no fee solicitor and unfortunately the ACU has to pay an excess of £10,000 for any claim, they have budgeted they will need a figure of £50,000 in 2004 to cover costs to meet the shortfall and it has been decided to levy every rider 50p to go into a contingency fund to cover this. Mr. Batten thanked Mr. Brown for this inside information which helps us to understand the workings of Rugby and wished him well in his new post. He attended the Recorder's conference in December where 70 riders were deleted from the Experts list, non from this Centre and the new list will appear in the TSM in the near future and he urged all clubs to make sure their Secretary of the Meeting has a copy to refer to.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING : AGM followed by a business meeting on January 28th.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 11.30 pm.