

**MINUTES OF THE SOUTH EASTERN MOTO CROSS COMBINE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2007 AT BLINDLEY HEATH FOLLOWING THE AGM**

**PRESENT** : 16 delegates were present representing the following Clubs :- Crawley, GEST, Greenwich, Sidcup, Twickenham and YDP Racing. Also present John Bramall and Andy Wood from the TSM and Jim Wood ( London Federation of Sport Rep ).

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** : Apologies were received from Roger and Roslyn Brown ( Brighton ).

**CHAIR** : Eddie Herd took the Chair.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** : Jim Wood asked for the minutes to be amended to reflect John Claridge and not himself had spoken about the DEFRA curtailing motor sport activities on farmland. He also pointed out his reference to new regulations regarding grants was still in the proposal stage. Chris Parish also asked for the word " admitted " to be deleted in the paragraph regarding the 65/85 classes to be replaced with "reviewed and reformed so that " The minutes of the previous meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006 having been circulated it was proposed by Yan Dixon and seconded Chris Parish they be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings. Carried.

**MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM** :

**2007 Dates** John Bramall said he had not been at the last meeting but felt the TSM was being continually overlooked as a medium of communication for example there was a reference that the good news about new tracks should be publicised but only mention of being in T & MX News. Les said he took the point and apologised, John agreed he would put something in the next TSM promoting the new tracks

**Championship Dates** : Les apologised saying he had left his list at home but would circulate it via e mail ASAP. He confirmed he had a response from everyone saying 3 clubs had offered to run a sidecar round but that Sidcup's one would again be within their Sidecar Clubman's round. Last year there had been complaints from top 15 riders who, under the Clubman's rules could not be accepted for the meeting until after the closing date and then only if there were places left so depriving someone of a chance to compete in the SE Centre Championships. It was mutually agreed not to include the round this year at Sidcup. John mentioned because Oxshott might not have the manpower to run a meeting did not mean the track was lost for good. Les confirmed he had given Peter Batt from Witley the Oxshott Club details for them to follow up but John felt Witley needed an initiative from the Combine to follow it through. After some discussion as to what this should be it was agreed the Secretary should write to Witley and ask if they needed any assistance. Yan felt the track needed at least 3 days work with a machine to bring it up to regulation standards regarding 2 way traffic and that the size of the car park prohibited a large entry so making a meeting unviable.

**High Viz Jackets** : Roger brown was not present to comment but Les said he had not delivered the jackets to Roger yet but would do so before the season starts.

**Clerk of the Course Seminar** : this had been booked for February 14<sup>th</sup> at Blindley Heath with Peter Burton and Eddie Herd taking the seminar. Start at 7.30 sharp and 2006 Handbooks and the Blue Safety booklet would be needed. Between 12-15 were expected to attend.

**Technical Officer's Licences** : Marge read her letter to Dr. Paul King which was copied in to Jim Parker and Roy Humphrey. Eddie said that Roy Humphrey had been talking about a new Technical B certificate that would just enable someone to scrutineer a bike at the meeting but not go on to measure a bike or sound test it. Peter Burton thought about adding to the Clerk of the Course Seminar but it was agreed this would make the evening too long and hurried. - Dr. King had telephoned and Marge had explained exactly where we were coming from and what we would like on the curriculum for MX and Enduro Technical Officers. Subsequently she had received an e mail agreeing to send us the solus MX/Enduro question paper for us to use, it was agreed that Peter Burton and Roger Brown would run a seminar with Marge to sort a date out towards the end of March or beginning of April with the Foreman Institute, she would also put something in the TSM and write to the Enduro Combine inviting them to come as well.

**Banner :** Les confirmed he will have them for the beginning of the season, he appealed to clubs for the artwork of their badges.

**WEBMASTER'S REPORT :** Jamie Clarke reported all was going well and from his statistics we were averaging 80 visits a day to the site. He would put the 2007 season dates and championship rounds up when he gets them and he has been plugging the permanent number scheme.

**NUMBER PLATES :** Les said he had e mailed round to see if there was any objections to going into the 200's has some riders had higher numbers in the UMX series. Agreed to extend the Juniors from 199 – 299. He said last year's numbers had until 31<sup>st</sup> January to buy the same number again and after that he would release them to the waiting list. Eddie thanked Les for his work collating everything and increasing the Combine's revenue.

**ACU MATTERS :**

**Moto Cross Committee Minutes :** Marge said she now thought she was getting a stable supply electronically of the minutes and asked the meeting if they would like her to circulate them on as soon as she got them. Agreed.

Marge said she had received the missing set of September minutes and she read out the pertinent points even though they were somewhat out of date :-

a) Plastic Fencing

The Committee discussed a sample of plastic and three strand steel wire paling fencing received from Jersey MCC along with the rules from the French Federation where the fencing is allowed. Mr Higgins and Mr Williams Have Witnessed the fencing used at French tracks and will gather more information on the use of this as 'off track crowd control' or whether it could be used comparatively as chestnut paling alongside tracks protecting spectators.

Eddie said the Committee have now reviewed this idea and felt there was not enough known about how the plastic might age so it would not be followed up.

b) Risk Assessments / TTC's

It was agreed that at some time in the near future the Clerk of Course would be required to complete a risk assessment for all events. Professional opinion suggests that the rulebooks cannot cover all eventualities and that every course is different.

An information sheet will be provided for risk assessments to ensure these are carried out correctly at all times and more emphasis will be made at training seminars to show how a simple risk assessment could in some instances make an event safer and easier to organise.

It was discussed and noted that track inspectors should be marking compulsory marshal points on TTC's.

There was some discussion and Marge was worried that nothing was being cascaded down to the Clubs or trainers, Ken was sending out Risk Assessments with permits but the enhanced one devised a couple of months ago has not appeared as yet. Eddie said Clubs should not worry as every situation was different and Risk Assessments did not have to be standard but Marge felt if there was new information out there we should all have copies to make our own decisions whether we want to be up todate or not.

d) Natural Zone

The committee agreed to change the course guidelines with regard to neutral / safety zones. In that if a risk assessment is carried out some areas of a course may not require a neutral zone whilst in other areas it is possible a far wider zone or run off area may be required.

The following points were discussed from the December Meeting Minutes :-

a) Fuelling Areas

It was brought to the attention of the Motocross Committee by the Environmental Panel that no rule regarding refuelling is currently shown in the Motocross section of the ACU Handbook. The following words are to be used.

'SMOKING OR THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES WHEN REFUELLING IS FORBIDDEN'

b) Bio Fuels

Mr Luscombe joined the meeting briefly to discuss further the Bio-Ethanol fuel that can now be used in motocross and the British Championship in 2007.

For 2007 the ACU Handbook **Motocross SR 11.J) Fuel Specification** will be amended to read as follows:

1. Unleaded petrol is permitted, see ACU/FIM Fuel Regulations for physical properties, fuel test costs and penalties for non-compliance.
2. E85 Bio-Ethanol Fuel pump fuel is permitted, see ACU/FIM Fuel Regulations for physical properties, fuel test costs and penalties for non-compliance.
3. Pre 75 machines may use normal road side pump leaded petrol (BS4040 max lead 0.15g/litre and Pre 65 machines may use Methanol.)

In the event of a protest against fuel specification an additional fee of £400 must be submitted with the protest and protest fee. In the event of the protest being upheld the additional fee will be returned and the cost of the fuel test charged to the other party. (See also ACU Fuel regulations as detailed within this Handbook).

c) FIM Sound Levels

It was brought to the attention of the Committee that the FIM had recently issued a press release stating the new sound levels for 2008 which will be as follows:

96 dB/A - 2 stroke machines  
94 dB/A - 4 stroke machines

The ACU Motocross Sound levels will replicate these from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008. Mr George, ACU Press Officer, will be asked to issue a press release stating this change.

**MOTOCROSS RIDER GRADING SYSTEM :** The 2006 Motocross Recorders meeting was cancelled due to a poor response from Centres and Motocross Clubs. It was agreed that a new system for recording and grading would need to be in place for the future. The new grading system would be controlled and operated from ACU Head Office and eventually the expert lists will be published on a website, this will be accessible for riders, clubs, officials etc. Centre Motocross Recorders will be asked to send rider upgrade lists to the ACU Head Office for the Committee Secretary to update the Rider Grading System. A Recording panel will be set up to include the Motocross Secretary, Mrs Webb from the South Midland Centre who has a lot of experience and is pro-active with the Rider Grading System and a member of the Motocross Committee to oversee the changes. Mrs Webb will continue co-ordinating the Centre input to ensure that the existing system doesn't lose momentum. It was recently agreed that the top 10 riders in the Premier Class of the BYMX Championship and top 3 in the Intermediate Class would be granted expert status; however it was now decided to widen this group to the top 15 premier riders and the top 5 intermediate riders. The top 10 AMCA Championship riders in each AMCA Championship class will also be accepted for expert status. The Committee felt that the Sidecar Grading System should be reviewed the Secretary was asked to write to the Sidecar MX Association for their views on the matter.

Les expressed some concern that the Office would either not be able to cope with or understand the system.

**MOTOCROSS NEWS BULLETIN :** The Committee Secretary has been gathering a database of individuals and Clubs involved in the organisation of Motocross events. The Committee have recognised that some important information is not being passed down from the Centres to the Clubs and Club Officials in the traditional manner and this needed to be addressed. The Motocross Committee will create a News Bulletin to be circulated to all Clubs and Club Officials to keep them updated on current and new information which may affect the way in which they organise and run events.

Marge said this was exactly what we were worried about regarding the risk assessments and lets hope things improve in the future.

**OTHER ACU BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS :** It had previously been discussed that the Committee look into sanctioning Ladies, Classic, Twin Shock and Veterans British Championship in the future. Following more discussion the Committee decided to include an Evolution class for post twin shock

machines. The Committee agreed to write to all ACU Motocross Clubs to enquire if they would be interested in running any of these Championship events. Ideally these events would be run in conjunction with or as a stand alone prestigious event.

a) Correspondence received from Eastern Centre

The Eastern Centre had written to the Committee to express their views on fixture date clashes. The Committee were also aware that some Clubs within the Centre were concerned that they had been unable to obtain Permits from the Centre for various reasons.

The Committee discussed the matter at length and concluded that they have an over-riding responsibility to ensure the development of the sport of Motocross within the ACU at every level. It was felt that it is no longer acceptable for a Centre to attempt to impose dates on Promoters and Clubs or to ration fixture allocations or the content of meetings in any arbitrary way. It is accepted that the Centre has traditionally acted in what it firmly believes to be in the best interest of the sport but that this can now be seen as being counter productive in a number of different ways. It is felt that the holding of "Dates" meetings as a forum for the Clubs to meet and to discuss and agree among themselves their fixtures is a very valuable function. However, where clashes seem to be unavoidable then it must be left to the Clubs involved to resolve the issues.

With other rival organisations offering seemingly attractive alternatives to the ACU it is essential for our bureaucracy to be kept to the absolute minimum if we are to retain the loyalty of our existing Clubs and encourage others to return to us.

AFTERNOTE: Following a number of subsequent discussions, the Committee are grateful to Mr Armes and his colleagues for their actions in resolving a representative case thus avoiding the necessity for any intervention at National level.

There was some concern expressed that we did not want date fixing to be done centrally and we would fight any such moves strongly.

Regional Seminars

The Committee propose that the Regional Motocross Clerk of Course & Steward Seminars should be amended to ensure all Motocross Officials are trained to the same level.

The seminars from 2008 will be held regionally (not by Centre) by the same instructor(s) to ensure a consistent standard in the delivery of the course. The new course will combine some basic training to allow the officials to include a Club Technical/Scrutineer License to cover basic Sunday morning Club Motocross Scrutineering.

The emphasis of training in the future will be on the responsibilities of the Clerk of Course and his overall management of an event. The importance of risk assessment will feature very high at these seminars as well as removing the reliance of the traditional appointed centre steward in many cases. Event secretaries will be invited to attend where possible.

The first of these Regional Seminars will be held in January / early February at ACU Head Office.

Eddie said we would not have to worry as he was a member of the MX Committee so we would be able to continue holding our seminars as before.

Child Protection Act: Mr Percival asked for clarification on the Child Protection Procedure at events. Mr Humphrey confirmed that the ACU has in place a Child Protection policy and all clubs and officials should refer to and follow these guidelines. The Secretary was asked to circulate to all Members of the Committee copies of the policy. It was suggested that it might be advantageous to circulate copies to the 2007 Championship Organisers that have competitors under the age of 18 years. General Secretary's after note: Please refer to the ACU Handbook, National Sporting Code, paragraph 6.13.

Self-declaration forms are completed by Clerks of the Course and Coaches at training events. The Secretary was asked to obtain this documentation and circulate to the Committee.

Marge reminded everyone if they had a Child Protection incident that they should report direct to Gary Thompson at the ACU as he was our Child Protection Officer.

i) Race Director

Discussions took place regarding Race Director's. The Committee felt that in some circumstances and in particular for some Championships, the appointment of a Race Director would be of some benefit. However, in order for a Race Director to be officially appointed the rules would need to accommodate this position. The Committee felt that the rules should be amended to make provision for a Race Director. It was noted that some Road Racing clubs have been appointing Race Directors.

There was a lot of discussion regarding this idea with Eddie pointing out at the moment the ACU rules do not allow for the appointment of such a position, he also intimated it was only discussed as there were concerns about the standard of organisation of a particular series.

**Press Release :** Marge read the Press release quickly which related to the new noise levels and it was agreed she would e mail round to the delegates any more she gets electronically.

**THE SPORTING MOTORCYCLIST :** John Bramall said the fixture list will be printed in the next TSM. Andy Wood added that any pre event publicity was welcome as a lot of readers support events things like what plans you have for your track this year or what events you intended to run would be useful.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS :** Les felt our Centre was on the receiving end of quite a lot of the monthly benefits being paid out by the ACU Benevolent Fund and he proposed we make a similar donation to last year of £250. Seconded by Peter Burton. Carried. Jamie suggested we publicise our action saying the money has come from income generated by the riders via the permanent number scheme and was being donated to help those injured in our sport that had hit hard times. Eddie asked Alan if the Centre would match the donation and Alan replied that was a matter for the Treasurer to ponder and propose, agreed to add it to the next agenda of the Management Committee for discussion with a view to suggesting to the other Combines that they could follow suit. Jim said he attended a meeting in November where it was suggested that London be divided into 5 regions. The scheme where clubs had to put up at least 30% of the costs of a project was not successful because clubs did not have that sort of money up front. He also added that money was very tight at the moment as most was being channelled into the London Olympics. Andy said that he had a positive response from DEP, Blingstar and Freestyle regarding advertising in the Championship Covers for 2007. He was now gathering together various artwork and pictures were needed of the award winners in action. Yan said he had another contact for a start gate that could be hired but that it did not come with manpower provided. Jamie and Colin talked about their recent visit to Rugby to attend a Chief Marshals training day. It was felt to be very biased towards Road Racing with not a lot said about Offroad but Chris Reeves ( GP Chief Marshal ) had attended and intimated he might organise one for National Off Road Event's Marshals. Colin was worried there might be something sinister behind some of the ideas and we may be caught up in generalisation of the job and compulsory raining. Peter asked if there was going to be noise testing at every meeting @ 96 dBA, this was agreed and it was mentioned that Tony Ford would be insisting on 94 dBA for fourstroke machines in 2007. Dave Parry talked about the new idea of inserts in silencers which are reported to reduce noise levels by a couple of decibels and wondered if the Centre should have a stock which they could sell on to anyone who failed the noise test. Marge said she had been contacted by the UMX organisers to see if anyone in our Centre would like to run a round as they were short of organisers this year. No one showed any interest. Marge also read a memo from the ACU appealing to Clubs to run alternative British Championship events bolted on to their meetings for Ladies, Twin Shocks, Classic, Evolution and Veterans.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING :** Marge to try and book the room for sometime in April and let delegates know.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 11.15 pm.