



NASA MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 15 – New Year 2020

Happy New Year! After a year's gap since our last Members' Newsletter, we're kicking off 2020 with the intention of again bringing you regular updates on what's going on behind the scenes in Autograss, with some insights into the discussions and decisions of the NASA Directors. During 2019, rather than wait to assemble everything into a newsletter, we decided to release news as it happened through social media, which we admit reaches many, but by no means all members. There was a lot going on during the past year, to the extent that if we'd tried to round it all up into a newsletter, some of it would have been out of date before you'd read it. There's been some feedback though that the newsletters have been missed, so this year we'll work out a regular schedule that will mean we're reporting back to members after each board meeting. As we've always said, your feedback and views are always welcome, whether you make your thoughts known in the traditional way through your league representatives, or if you prefer you can always speak direct to any of the directors on any issues that concern you.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We were delighted that two new candidates, and one returning former director, stood for election to the Board at the AGM last November, and all were successful in being elected by your league representatives. That means that we now have our biggest ever board of directors, with eleven members to share the workload. Last year we started with nine directors, but unfortunately Jason Baker had to resign due to other commitments early in the year, leaving us with a board of eight for most of the year.

The first board meeting after the AGM always allocates directors their specific responsibilities for the year, so here's the list of directors with their main allocated jobs for the year (not, of course, a full list of everyone's jobs)

Margaret Allen – Treasurer and insurance co-ordinator

Barbara Harper – Membership registration and licencing co-ordinator; Nationals administrator

Heath Luck – New director shadowing other "departments", with focus on scrutineering

Vernon Mackenzie – Scrutineering and technical regulations; NEC show co-ordinator

Jeffrey Parish – Company Secretary, statutory compliance, members' handbooks, fixture lists and other documentation

Pat Patrick – Race permits, race meeting safety documentation

Phil Rogers – Marshalling

Darryl Smart – New director shadowing other "departments" with focus on marshalling

Martyn Tinker – Safety and track construction

Diane Tomkinson – Board and association secretary; website and social media co-ordinator

Ray Wyeth – Marshalling and safety



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The directors who'll be liaising with the Nationals hosts were selected; the Men's Nationals directors will be Di Tomkinson, Martyn Tinker and Pat Patrick, assisted by Heath Luck who'll be on the Yorkshire Dales organising team, while the Ladies' and Juniors' directors will be Ray Wyeth, Phil Rogers and Barbara Harper.

The directors responsible for liaison with the major championship series were also selected; for the BAS these will be Di Tomkinson, Phil Rogers and Daryl Smart; for the UKAC Barbara Harper and Martyn Tinker and for the All Ireland Series Jeffrey Parish.

NASA OFFICIALS

Most of the senior NASA official positions were filled at the AGM and we'd like to welcome the new NASA Chairman (in formal terms, the chairman of the League Representatives' Committee), Graham Bennett, who of course is the Gloucestershire League Chairman. The Vice Chairman is Ernie Ashley of Shropshire League, who brings previous experience as chairman to the position. The NASA Assistant Scrutineers are Dave George and Ady Taylor, both continuing in their existing roles. Stuart Thomas was re-elected as NASA Chief Marshal.

The Deputy Chief Marshal's position was not filled at the AGM, but one volunteer came forward during the meeting (Phil Preece) so, pending any other nominations, this position will be filled at the first chairmen's meeting of the year.

Other helpers will be appointed by the relevant committees or the board.

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

During 2018 and 2019 we introduced an independent disciplinary panel, headed by Barry Holloway backed by other league chairmen. At the same time we removed the published disciplinary tariff from the members' handbook, partly to give the new team time to develop their own approach, as approved by the league chairmen's committee, and partly because the old tariff could never cover every possible disciplinary issue.

We've now reached the stage that the disciplinary panel, having dealt with multiple issues during the past year, has stepped into the role of an appeal panel, and initial disciplinary penalties will again be issued directly by the board of directors. The increased number of directors for 2020 has enabled us to form a disciplinary sub-committee, comprising Martyn Tinker, Pat Patrick and Darryl Smart, with other directors stepping in to cover any conflicts of interest. These directors will investigate any disciplinary complaints or reports and recommend action to the full board. If this action results in an appeal, then the case will be referred to the appeals committee. This achieves our objective of having two entirely separate disciplinary and appeals panel to ensure that cases are dealt with as fairly as possible.

The independent panel have finalised a tariff to be applied to cases of technical irregularities, which have been the majority of matters they've dealt with this year. We've added a



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summary of this tariff, and a list of members currently subject to bans, at the end of this newsletter.

We don't propose to revert to publishing a fixed tariff for other offenses, which will be dealt with as appropriate, but any incident involving physical violence is likely to receive a full ban from NASA events of anything from five years to a lifetime ban.

AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL

As we write this, the Autosport International show at the NEC is only a few days away. NASA will once again be represented. The main NASA stand will be in place on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th January, in the same location as last year – the hall that will be occupied on the Thursday and Friday by the Engineering show. There'll be the usual wide variety of cars on show, and again we're not releasing a list of these in advance as we don't want to spoil the surprise when you get there!

NASA has also been invited to fill two separate slots in the Live Action Arena, which will feature one grid of Class 7 and one grid of Class 8. There'll be one show on Thursday and Friday afternoons, and four shows a day on Saturday and Sunday.

More show details, and ticket booking information, are available at www.autosportinternational.com

MOTORSPORT WITH ATTITUDE

The other main winter show that NASA is involved in will be Motorsport with Attitude, to be held at Peterborough Arena (the former East of England Showground) on February 1st and 2nd. This show, which was very successful on its debut in 2019, is focused on the grass roots categories of motorsport, particularly oval racing. So far around 30 NASA drivers have confirmed attendance but there is scope for many more to be accommodated, either as static exhibits or in the outdoor live action shows. At this show we're aiming to demonstrate the full range of Autograss machinery, so lower budget and previously raced cars are very welcome, with the only conditions being that they must be tidily presented and fully compliant with NASA rules. If you're interested in being involved, please register as soon as possible by completing the online application form, which you'll find at www.racer.one/NASAforms.html. Full details of the show are at www.motorsportwithattitude.com.

JUNIOR CHANGES

The reduction in the minimum age for all Junior classes from 12 to 10 years takes effect from the beginning of the 2020 season, and a number of changes have been made to accommodate this.

The Junior testing procedure has been updated and will now consist of three stages. An initial scrutineering and safety check, which includes checking the fit of the driver into the car, the use of all appropriate safety kit and the reach of controls, will need to take place before the



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Junior's first race meeting. This is mainly to avoid the need for any Junior to have to be turned away from their first race event because of any safety related modifications being needed. This check can take place at a club's race venue, or at any other suitable venue on private land. Several clubs are already organising Junior testing days, in some cases combined with pre-season scrutineering, and we expect some clubs to be inviting neighbouring clubs and leagues to participate in their test days.

The main test, which includes basic tests of car control and flag recognition, can be carried out either before race day, if facilities are available, or at the Junior's first race day. The final stage of the test will need to take place at the first race meeting attended by the new Junior, which will be completion of observed laps of the race track, behind a safety vehicle.

Other changes include identification of new Juniors by carrying a black cross on a 6 inch square yellow background on the back of the race car – in other words the same as the "novice cross" used in circuit racing. The members' handbook specifies that this should be carried by all new Juniors in their first season of racing, but we've also advised that, initially at least, it should be carried by all Juniors under 12 years old.

A guidance sheet to assist clubs, and the parents of new Juniors, to prepare for their first events has been issued, and we've also appended this to the end of this newsletter.

One final point which we've made before but is worth repeating; the change to the Junior age is an illustration of how the traditional chain of communication within NASA is designed to work. The proposal was made by a member from the floor at an East Anglian League meeting, was raised by his League Chairman at the next NASA meeting and was thereby elevated to the directors' agenda. So if any member has an idea which they feel would benefit the sport, the route is there by which your idea will at least receive due consideration.

STOCK HATCH STATUS

After discussion for a number of years, the Stock Hatch class has finally been adopted as an official NASA class for 2020. The decision was taken by the directors following a unanimous vote in favour of this move by the League Representatives' Committee.

There will need to be a transitional period and it's been agreed that Stock Hatch will not be included in the Men's and Ladies' National Championship meetings for 2020 at least. One major factor in this is that the stand-alone Stock Hatch Nationals for 2020 had already been awarded by the Stock Hatch Steering Committee to Sturton & Stow club, who have planned a major two day event (on July 18th/19th) around this fixture – it would therefore not have been fair to Sturton to remove this meeting, or reduce its status. The transitional period will also allow time to discuss any changes to the format of the Nationals meetings to accommodate an extra class, and will allow leagues that haven't in the past run a Stock Hatch class to build up numbers so that the National allocation procedure can, when the time is right, be applied to truly representative numbers.



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At present there is no official national rule book specifically for the Stock Hatch class so the transitional period will also be needed to review and update the rules issued by the Stock Hatch Steering Committee, and to integrate these into the NASA technical rule book format.

Following this change, questions have been asked about the status of the Formula 600 category, which for 2020 continues to be recognised as a “club class” regulated by its own committee within the NASA Class 8 rules. However, NASA will be meeting representatives of the F600 class during 2020 to discuss future progress.

TYRE RULES

The change in the tyre rules proved to be the most contentious matter that the Board and the scrutineering team had to deal with during 2019. Initially the implementation of the 2019 rules was deferred from 1 January to 1 July to allow members time to use up any “old stock” tyres that didn’t comply with the new rules. When 1 July arrived, there were clearly issues with the supply of tyres compliant to the new rules, and concessions were made to allow the old tyres to be used in most events up to the end of 2019.

It needs to be absolutely clear that the extended transition period ended at the end of 2019, and no further concessions will be made in 2020. This means that tyres that don’t comply with the current rules may NOT be used at any NASA event during 2020 and doing so will result in disciplinary action. This includes any event promoted as a practice or test day.

In simple terms the only effect of this is that green-stamped Maxsport tyres, except for wet-weather pattern tyres, may not be used on drive wheels in any class. The “wet pattern” tyres (Hakka, Hakka 2 and RB1 patterns) are not affected, and you can continue to use any tyres (subject obviously to the basic NASA tyre rules) on non-drive wheels. Tyres that previously qualified as “Option B” were also unaffected by the 2019 changes and may continue to be used – please check with local scrutineers if you need clarification of the eligibility of any specific tyre.

FORM FILLING

We’d like to remind all club and league officials that the forms that you need to submit your 2020 details to NASA are all now to be completed and submitted online – the final deadline is 31 January but we really need them as soon as possible.

There’s one form with details of all your club and league officials, which is vital as it forms the basis of our official e-mail mailing lists for the year. The second form sets out how you’d like your insurance charges for the year to be invoiced, and lists all the race days you require insurance for (i.e. all dates submitted for the fixture list, except for those that are designated as reserve dates, which would only be used to replace cancelled meetings). This form needs to be submitted urgently as insurance invoices are due to be sent out on 1 February. All clubs and leagues will have been sent the link to the online forms, but please contact Di Tomkinson if you’re in any doubt.



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There's still one form that will need completing and signing on paper, which is the NASA "full membership" form, which one representative from each league needs to complete to become the voting member for formal company purposes – effectively these people become the "shareholders" of NASA, who are the ones who hire and fire the directors! We've now removed the need for these forms to be renewed annually, but we'd like to start 2020 with a full set, so we'd ask all leagues to return the form they were given at the AGM (we'll send out copies by email to anyone who needs them).

SCRUTINEERING UPDATE

You'll all have heard discussion of "pre-season scrutineering" and suggestions that this may become mandatory in future. At present it's considered impractical to implement and enforce this nationally, but all leagues are being encouraged to introduce a pre-season scrutineering procedure on a voluntary basis. Any leagues who do take this up will be offered NASA support and, subject to availability, members of the NASA scrutineering team will attend. Leagues that maybe have insufficient numbers to support a dedicated day are encouraged to join forces with their neighbours.

There are two main reasons why a pre-season scrutineering procedure is desirable. The first is that there is simply insufficient time on the average race day for every car to be scrutineered thoroughly for compliance with all aspects of NASA rules. If every car could be fully documented, and tagged as being compliant, at the beginning of the season, then there'd be less of a problem with the usual race day approach of focusing on basic safety checks.

The second reason is that we're keen to avoid any situation where a car has to be turned away on a race day because of scrutineering issues – it will be far easier for members if any problems can be rectified at their leisure before their first race meeting of the year.

All league chief scrutineers are being urged to contact Vernon Mackenzie to discuss how they can introduce suitable procedures locally. In some leagues, pre-season scrutineering is an established and effective procedure, and to take one example, the Southern League have said they're willing to advise any other league on how they've made this work for their members.

TRACK CONSTRUCTION AND SAFETY

An updated version of the NASA track construction regulations will shortly be available. The plan is for this to be issued to all Safety Officers at their February meeting, and it will also be available to download from the NASA website. There are only two major changes from the 2019 version. Tracks using Heras fencing, which in the past has been used as a replacement or addition to the required catch netting (i.e. midway between the main safety fence and the spectator fence) may in future use the Heras fencing as the spectator fence – in some situations there will be less chance of debris clearing the fence if it is located further from the track and closer to the spectator area. The other change is that an additional wire rope will be required to be fixed to the top surface of the posts in the main safety fence – which is already done by some clubs but has not previously been mandatory. This change has arisen from an



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incident when a Specials racer suffered a shoulder injury after a fence post intruded into his car.

Another change is that the track inspection form completed by Safety Officers at every race meeting will be re-formatted to emphasise its role as a risk assessment. One risk that will receive much more prominence is that of flying stones, which has been the dominant factor in public liability insurance claims over recent years. Clubs will need to assess the risk of stones on their racing surface and arrange suitable mitigation – eg. stone picking sessions before and maybe during race days – within reason, of course, so that it can be demonstrated that the club has taken reasonable measures to reduce a risk without being expected to eliminate it altogether.

2020 FIXTURE LIST

The 2020 fixture list booklet has now gone to press and will be available for members to pick up on the NASA stands at Autosport International and Motorsport With Attitude. Clubs or leagues wanting a supply for their own members can also collect them from the shows. The fixtures have already appeared online on the NASA website – go to <https://www.national-autograss.com/fixtures>

The fixture list is as packed as ever, with 250 race days listed (a slight increase on the 243 days in 2019) plus 19 reserve dates. There are 167 single day meetings, 17 two day events with separate days' racing, one three day event, and 23 single meetings over two days (two Nationals, five BAS and UKAC, three All Ireland rounds and seven stand-alone events (the North of England, MAP Open, Fastest Man on Grass, Stock Hatch and F600 Nationals at Sturton and North Wales respectively, plus annual cup meetings at Cork, West Waterford and Mallow)

We have one definite new track to look forward to; Down Autograss' track near Newry, delayed in 2019 by the length of the planning process, should open its doors at the end of March and is scheduled to host the first All Ireland series round. Severn Valley club have also listed meetings at a new venue, although the location and details of this are still to be confirmed.

The fixture list is spread over 36 consecutive weekends between Scunthorpe's test day on 22nd/23rd February and Nottingham and Forest dates on 25 October, although reserve dates extend a couple of weeks into November. Sunday 7th June is scheduled to be the busiest day of the season, with no fewer than 14 different meetings planned. Once again Southern Ireland, as well as being the biggest league in terms of membership has the busiest schedule, with 27 meetings planned, while CGTRO and East Midlands each have 20 race days on the list.

Once again, let's hope that the weather doesn't interfere too much with the fixture list and that all our members, however many meetings you're able to travel to, find plenty of opportunities to enjoy your racing.



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NATIONALS UPDATE

We hope that everyone has the National Championship dates for 2020 firmly in their diaries at this stage. Yorkshire Dales Autograss Club will host the men's Nationals at their well established Thornborough venue on 1st and 2nd August 2020. You'll find all the news about the meeting on the club's website www.ydautograss.co.uk and on the dedicated Facebook page they've now launched for the event.

The Ladies' and Juniors' Nationals will be hosted by Radford Autograss Club at their Radford home venue on 5th and 6th September 2020 and again there'll be plenty of news coming your way in the run-up to the event.

At this stage no decisions have been taken on the hosts for the 2021 Nationals events, so we'll be encouraging any club or league with an interest in these to get in touch so that NASA can offer any help needed in getting their proposals together.

MALLOW DEVASTATION

Sadly the New Year brought one very unhappy story for Autograss; many of you will have seen images of the destruction wreaked on Mallow Autograss' track in the Ballyhoura Mountains by intruders in the early hours of 30th December. A large proportion of the facilities and equipment that the club had assembled in recent years to make this relatively new venue a showpiece one for the sport was destroyed. We have every confidence that the Mallow club's members and friends will bounce back from this blow, but in the meantime you may have seen that a "GoFundMe" fund raising page has been launched on behalf of the club to help cover some of the financial losses – although nothing will replace the work and love that the Mallow members have put into the venue. The fund raiser has already attracted many generous donations from Autograss members in both the UK and Ireland, and we recommend all our members to support the club in whatever way you can afford.

NASA MEETING DATES

Dates have been set for the NASA committee meetings at Walsall for 2020; these dates are for the League Representatives (Chairmen's) Committee, the Scrutineers' Committee and the combined Marshals' and Safety Officers' Committee, all starting at 11 am:

Sunday 16th February
Saturday 18th April
Saturday 13th June
Saturday 10th October

The NASA AGM will be on Sunday 29th November.

We'd urge all leagues to ensure that they have officials in the appropriate positions who are committed to attending these meetings. It's especially important that Safety Officers should



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attend their meetings as they are key to our continuing efforts to improve everybody's safety, and are the people at the front line in implementing the risk assessments that we agree with our insurers.

NASA WEBSITE

We hope everyone has had a chance to visit the new-look NASA website which was launched during the 2019 season – we're very grateful to Lee Smith for coming forward as a volunteer to take this on, and for all the work he's put in so far to develop a website that does justice to NASA. There are still plans to add more material to the site so that it becomes the essential resource for information about NASA and Autograss, so any suggestions of additional features and information that could be added will be gratefully received.

NEWSLETTERS ...

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



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Appendix 1 - NASA DISCIPLINARY TARIFF

Disciplinary Tariff for cars, owners and drivers with performance enhancing parts or modifications contrary to class rule books

A Three-Part Tariff mechanism for parts contrary to the rule book.

Part 1 DRIVER TARIFF

The driver of the car 3 Month Ban if not the registered owner from the date of infringement (open season) (Clause 3 can also apply)

Part 2 REGISTERED OWNERS & CARS (as per registered tag number).

Registered owner, the car and its components 6 Month ban (Open Season).

The engine, gearbox etc can be matched to tag number by way of a seal or mark or just noted to prevent swapping said parts to donor chassis during ban period if required.

If the car or major components (parts marked or noted by a senior scrutineer) from the car including tag number are sold or transferred during ban, the ban travels with the car, and or its components. Tag numbers **CANNOT** be removed or changed during ban period. The Board would reserve the right to have sight of banned components with intact tag or seals at any time during the ban, tampering removal or failure to give sight of equipment tags or seals as per ban could lead to a ban period being extended.

The 6 month ban also remains with the registered owner at the time of ban even if registered tag number owner, is changed. (Tag numbers, seals or marks cannot be changed or removed during this period without written approval of the board)

Part 3 EVENT/ LEAGUE / CLUB OPTION

It is up to the event organiser to add extra penalties such as Nationals to be missed following year or BAS, UK points removed along with league or club points should that event, club or league choose. This tariff can apply to either or both 1 & 2.

Open and Closed race calendar regarding ban periods as follows:

Open Season

1st March each year and continues through to 31st October

Closed Season

From 1st November each year and continues through to 28th February

TARIFF MECHANISM PERIODS

If a Driver / Owner / Car receives a ban the length of ban period refers to open season but will include all closed season periods.

Driver Example

1st September 3-month ban then that drivers ban will last until 1st April.

Owner /CAR Example

1st September 6 Month ban then the Owner / Car ban will last until 1st July



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Appendix 2 - SUMMARY OF NASA DISCIPLINARY BANS IN FORCE

This list identifies drivers currently banned from holding a NASA competition licence, together with the clubs they were identified with at the time the ban was issued. For clarity, some aspects of the bans have not been listed (eg where a car/tag number has been banned for a different period to the driver, or where there are specific exclusions from certain events)

Drivers not permitted to hold licences as a result of legal action or ongoing insurance claims:

Sarah Johnston (Teifi)
Christopher McCracken (Down)

Drivers and others subject to disciplinary action related to physical violence

Kaiden Cheetham (York) – until 27 May 2021
Jake Williamson (North Shropshire) – until 2 August 2022
Steven Williamson (North Shropshire) – until 2 August 2022

Drivers subject to automatic 12 month ban for failing alcohol testing

Ross Fisher (Penhow) – until 7 April 2020
Dave Jones (Severn Valley) – until 19 May 2020

Drivers subject to disciplinary action related to previous technical infringements

Tim Harber (Severn Valley) – until 16 October 2021

Drivers subject to disciplinary action for use of non-compliant tyres after 1 July 2019

Jack Chafer (Solway) – until 1 March 2020
Mark Gilder (Radford) – until 1 March 2020

Drivers penalised under automatic tariff for technical infringements at 2019 National Championships (as modified following appeals if applicable)

Conner Griffiths (Severn Valley) – until 11 May 2020
Aaron Middleton (South Somerset) – until 11 May 2020
Dan Heath (Pennine) – until 11 May 2020
Mitch Hollingsbee (Invicta Kent) – until 11 May 2020
Jenny Houlihan (West Waterford) – until 1 April 2020
Leanne Huschka (Solway) – until 15 June 2020
Toby Chamberlain (Bredon Hill) – until 1 March 2020
Georgia Beatty (North Wales) – until 1 March 2020
Ethan Long (West Waterford) – until 1 March 2020

Registered car owners penalised under automatic tariff for technical infringements at 2019 National Championships (as modified following appeals if applicable)

Jack Houlihan (West Waterford) – until 15 June 2020

Drivers penalised under automatic tariff following post season scrutineering for British Autograss Series and UK Autograss Championship (as modified following appeals if applicable)

Adam Saunders (Wessex) – until 20 August 2020
Fiona Mauchland-Duff (Scottish Borders) – until 15 July 2020
Alex Fretwell (Sturton & Stow) – until 15 July 2020
Kelly Read (Whiterose) – until 15 July 2020



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Appendix 3 - JUNIOR INFORMATION SHEET

The following information should assist you in being prepared for your first race meeting

- You must take part in a Scrutineering and safety check prior to racing and prior to race day. This can be arranged through your club or league officials. The purpose of this is to make sure the driver seating position is correct and safe, that all controls are within reach and that you can stop and start the car in an emergency.
- You must complete the Junior Test which includes answering questions on what the flags mean, and a simple driving test to ensure you are in control of the car.
- A black cross on a yellow background must be displayed at the back of the race car to indicate that the driver is a novice or under 12 years of age – this must stay on your car until your 12th birthday.
- You will have to wear gloves and a suitable neck restraint. Helmets will be checked for fitment and condition and NASA will continue to seriously recommend that fire retardant race suits are worn.
- The host club at the Junior's first race meeting will arrange two or three laps to familiarise the driver with the track and marshals' posts, etc. This will be mandatory so please make the organisers aware that you are there.
- It is highly recommended that you walk from the pits to the start line to make yourself familiar with the layout of the venue, track entrance and exit.
- The signed-on parent or guardian on race day is responsible for the Junior and should be available at all times in the pit area. They must ensure that the Junior knows where they are going and what they are doing at all times.