

NATIONAL AUTOGRASS SPORT ASSOCIATION LTD



**Mudflap update
14.5.2023**

The recent announcement regarding fitting of mudflaps has caused a large response from our members. The chairmen were contacted and called a meeting where the matter was discussed. They then sent some proposals to the board who have met and considered them in detail. Both the board and the chairman's group are agreed that the introduction of mudflaps is a necessary addition to the control of stones and mud leaving the track and hitting spectators and other drivers.

The expected trials of the design of mudflaps have been severely affected due to the number of meetings that have been cancelled already this season. As a result of this it was agreed to extend the time for trialling to take place until September the 4th 2023. Over this period there will be the opportunity for volunteers to carry out suggested ways of mounting mudflap to their cars in an effort to come up with the best solution. Whilst it is easy for the casual observer to comment on changes within the sport, the background to this rule change has been building over the past few seasons.

We obtain our insurance through a broker who has worked with the sport for a long time. They are very supportive and understand the ins and outs of Autograss racing. Over the past few years, you will have seen extra fencing go up at venues in areas where stones are an issue. Also, spectator areas have been moved back to provide a bigger distance from the track. This was instigated by the safety team and is reviewed regularly. It has helped us maintain a good relationship with our insurers but the issue of stones leaving the track whilst much reduced still happens.

The chairmen have discussed mudflaps over the last year and as part of our insurance renewal process the insurers were informed, we were looking into them as an additional measure against stone claims. Late last year the board received a letter from a member who had been hit on the head by a stone. They pointed out the risks to spectators and the fact it was a regular occurrence. Once an official letter of this type is received, we must act. At the first few meetings this year we had a high number of complaints of injuries caused by stones. By the 21st March the board expedited efforts to investigate mudflaps. The constructors and scrutineers discussed the design of them, and several cars trialled them. A start date for the rule to be adopted was set at the 1st July. Unfortunately, due to the large number of race meetings cancelled this year the expected number of cars available to run these trials never materialised.

As we had already informed the insurers about the inception date, they were contacted for their views going forward. Their response in writing is interesting and reinforces the point that we as a sport must really tackle the issues with stones. The broker used as an example a house that gets flooded, and a claim is made. It gets flooded again in a short period of time and a claim is made. A third flood occurs, and this claim triggers a response from insurers that can be either your premium goes up or more likely they will remove cover for flood risk.

Autograss and NASA are no different in that respect. Repeated claims for the same issue WILL trigger action on their part. There are very few companies that will insure our sport. At present we are in control of our own destiny. Should the number of claims trigger the insurers to cancel just the stone element of the policy then the burden would fall on the clubs and would be too risky to

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continue. To go to another insurer would be very difficult because in effect we have been refused insurance and would have to declare that fact. Stone injury claims are our biggest single problem, each individual claim adds to the total and we are duty bound as a board to take the matter seriously. It's also pertinent to point out that each public liability claim triggers an excess currently standing at £2500.

Your chairmen are fully aware of the situation and the boards responsibility. The recent announcement regarding fitting of mudflaps has caused a large response from our members. The chairmen were contacted and called a meeting where the matter was discussed. They then sent some proposals to the board who have met and considered them in detail. Both the board and the chairman's group are agreed that the introduction of mudflaps is a necessary addition to the control of stones and mud leaving the track and hitting spectators and other drivers. The expected trials of the design of mudflaps have been severely affected due to the number of meetings that have been cancelled already this season. As a result of this it was agreed to extend the time for trialling to take place until September the 4th 2023. Over this period there will be the opportunity for volunteers to carry out suggested ways of mounting mudflap to their cars to come up with the best solution.

Finally, the mudflaps are part of an overall policy to reduce injuries as much as possible. Fencing and bigger distance from track to spectators are also part of that package. With that in mind due to the urgent need to implement the initial phase of improving fencing, the board have agreed that we will assist smaller clubs to achieve this. Further details of this will be released shortly.

Clubs wishing to ask for assistance should send an e mail to Callie Cooper and Jason Baker so we can coordinate a response.

Many thanks
NASA Board of Directors

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