

## **Scottish Sprint & Hillclimb Championship – Chairman’s Message #16** (Oct ‘13)

The Championship AGM was held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October at the Huntingtower hotel in Perth. Three of the executive committee positions were up for re-election (Vice-chair, Sprint Co-ordinator and Secretary). Prior to the meeting, I had accepted the resignations of the vice-chair, David Reid, the Sprint co-ordinator Graeme Bremner and our secretary Jennifer Bremner. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all three of them for their tremendous efforts and input during their time on the committee.

There were very few nominations received for the vacant posts (within the specified time limit), but nonetheless, those received were duly approved by committee and I am delighted to welcome two new faces to the committee, along with one returning name;

- Vice Chair – Graeme Bremner
- Sprint Championship Coordinator – Iain Scoular
- Secretary – Leslie Scoular

I’m very pleased to see some “new blood” on the committee and am confident that Iain and Leslie will settle in well and bring some fresh ideas. Having Graeme remain on the committee, albeit in the new role of vice-chair is most welcome as his wealth of experience and knowledge of our sport is in my opinion vital to the success of our Championships.

The final results for all three championships were presented to the Committee and as is the usual procedure, both the Sprint and the Hillclimb Champion have been invited to join the committee for 2014. Congratulations to David Reid for winning the Sprint Championship (and the Speed Championship) and to Jonathan Rarity for winning the Hillclimb Championship – for the 5<sup>th</sup> time. Well done to all award winners – I hope to see you all at the awards dinner dance at the Athol Palace in Pitlochry on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

Each year the two discipline champions are invited to join the committee to ensure that driver’s views and opinions are suitably represented on the committee. This is of course in addition to your club reps. Each club that runs a championship event is also represented on the committee – so you all have multiple representatives present to ensure your views are heard. I would urge you all to use them!

We are also in the fortunate position that many of the committee are drivers/competitors that compete in either one or both disciplines – so there should always be a choice of committee members to approach at events if you want a chat or to bring up any concerns.

I know when I started out in this sport, I was baffled by the complexity of the “Blue book” (officially called the MSA British Motorsports Yearbook), how it tied in with our Championship regulations and it’s relevance to what we do. It covers all the MSA sanctioned motorsport disciplines so is a rather hefty book but it provides all the necessary rules covering the way our speed events are organised and run, the safety requirements for competitors and vehicles as well as license requirements and a whole host of other important details. It also

provides names and contact details for Championships, Officials and a who's-who of the MSA.

It is available for down-load on the MSA website ([www.msauk.org](http://www.msauk.org)) and you also get a copy sent to you along with your license. I urge you all to familiarise yourselves with the contents as this is the cornerstone of our own championship regs and indeed the SRs (supplementary regulations) for all speed events.

A large chunk of your event entry fees goes directly to the MSA – to provide the vitally important liability insurance cover for the event. It's therefore not surprising that the MSA insist that all events, along with the people and vehicles taking part meet the requirements laid out in the blue book.

The scope for our championship technical regs to stray from these rules is therefore very limited if not impossible and boils down to only being able to tighten the requirements of the blue book. Basically we have to fit in to the categories laid down by the MSA, but are free to determine class splits within the three divisions that we run. At this month's meeting, the committee approved the setting up of a working group to look at the technical regs for 2015 and beyond; with the aim of attracting more historic vehicles as well as a reviewing the current structure. If you have suggestions or ideas please pass them on to the committee via your club reps or the Champions.

Earlier this year, we lost one of our long-standing competitors – Graham Cowie, after his fight with cancer. He will be missed by many – as will the sight of his gorgeous Mk1 mini around the paddocks. Our thoughts are with his family. Graham's wish was to expand the historics class and I hope we can honour this.

Date Change of September 2013 Boyndie sprint; In early July this year I received an email from ADMC's president to inform me that their September Boyndie sprint weekend had to move out a couple of weeks due to circumstances beyond the club's control. The MSA sign-off on our Championship calendar at the beginning of the year when our Permits are granted (one each for Sprint, Hills and Speed) – and insist that any change in this list has to be approved by them and by all registered competitors in that championship. MSA approval was indeed granted within a few days, and a circular put out to all registered competitors to gain approval of the date change. The response was very poor – in fact only 41% of sprint-registered competitors responded (and some against the change) so unfortunately these final two rounds at Boyndie had to be dropped from the Sprint Championship this year. I have been in communication with the MSA over this issue (as have co-ordinators from other Championships) and I am hopeful that we can change this ridiculous and frankly unworkable rule for future seasons. Unfortunately I recently heard that the MSA Chief Executive Nick Bunting has resigned – so his personal promise to review this may get stuck in the cogs somewhat!

Championship regs for 2014; There are no major changes for the 2014 regs – at the March committee meeting the issue of running methanol in competition cars was discussed and clarified and the wording will be altered slightly to make it clear that it's use is allowed in the C division only (which ties up with the blue book).

Website/flatchat/social media; Earlier in the year, the Flatchat forum was hit by spam and shutdown. Through the valiant efforts of Eric Kiltie, Peter Locke and Iain Anderson it was resurrected and moved to a temporary location (where it still resides). It appears the forum was missed by many and brought to light the fact that electronic communications and social media such as discussion forums, twitter and facebook are much-used by many. The Flatchat forum up until it crashed was not under the control of the Championship committee and survived only due to the efforts of a few people. With the resurrection of the forum by Peter and Eric, it was felt that a more cohesive and structured approach was required and the committee whole-heartedly agreed. As such, a working group of committee members has been put together to look at the options available to us.

Speedsport Contributions; Now that Speedsport is in electronic format, the intention is to produce more issues during the season giving improved coverage and reporting of events – but this needs contributions. I would urge any budding journo's amongst us to get your event reports / stories in for publication.

Next committee meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2014

I'll bring this message to an end with a reminder to you all that the preferred method of communication for all Championship matters is email, followed by the championship website. I urge you all to ensure the email address you provide on your membership renewal is current and in regular use.

I wish you all the very best for the forthcoming festive season and look forward to seeing you at the awards dinner dance in November.

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