

BRITISH FEDERATION OF PEDAL CAR RACING



BRITISH PEDAL CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Minutes for BFPCR Annual General Meeting of 11th November 2006.

PRESENT:

Geoff Brown (GB); Matt Tooke (Radioactive Racing); Simon Blay (Radioactive Racing); Gary Richards (Scrutineer); Robert Allen (Bristol Racing); Darren Carter (BAR)
Neil Carter (Vice-chair); Antony Hawkins (Treasurer & GCR)
Dave Relton (chair & Revolution); Jes Featherstone (secretary & Swebbelli Racing)

1: Appologies:

Cliff Polton, Chris Featherstone, Bob Robinson, Simon Gare, Roland Jones, Mark Williams, Rob Cockcroft; Gavin Smith; Andy Chant; Bill Gratrix

2: Minutes of last AGM:

Were approved as correct
Proposed: NC. Seconded: GB
Unanimously approved.

3: Chairman's Report:

Dave Relton based his report on the last 10 years of progress in the BFPCR:

10 years ago, we set out to improve the credibility of the sport.

To this end we have made progress in such areas as moving away from "cones & car park" type circuits and into venues such as kart tracks.

This has led to some extremely favourable comments from members of the public at places such as Sherington and Curborough and we now have a sport which appeals to spectators.

We still have a wide range of vehicles racing but also lots of teams taking part in Apollo's which has allowed more people to get a competitive start in the sport which encourages new teams to take part. We should also give credit to teams starting from scratch with their own designs of cars and taking the fight to the Apollo runners (which, because there are a good few of them, have really set themselves up to be beaten!).

Better tracks such as Sherington do have a cost implication but this is outweighed by the benefits of racing these more suitable circuits.

Some teams still have a problem with 2 day events but overall the variety of 1 day and 2 day races is good and the points scoring system now means that the championship is more likely to stay "alive" longer in the season and teams missing one race still have a chance to do well.

Curborough running into the dark was a brilliant plan and will be repeated.

The speed differential between the fastest and the slowest teams still gives grounds for concern but the newer tracks which offer a little more space and better visibility are helping this become less of a problem. Also, in general, the driving and scrutineering standards are vastly improved from what they used to be which has made the sport much safer in the last few years. Teams are now accepting the scrutineers word as final.

The lap scoring has also moved on with no major arguments over the score in the 2006 season – any slight discrepancies have been settled amicably and without fuss.

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There will always be a few complaints but we shouldn't let this cloud the quality of racing which is competitive and fair.

This sport is made by the enthusiasm of all the teams – both the winners and the losers and also from the hard work put in by the race organisers and officials.

Pedal Car Racing is a sport which is all about teams and team work. Many teams in the past and the present (such as Chain & Sprocket, Crude, Great Central and Yello Velo) have done well or even dominated the sport but the team who have really put it all together in the last few seasons are the committee and Dave hoped that more people would join this successful team in the future.

4: Treasurer's Report

(A full balance sheet will appear elsewhere).

Jes Featherstone was pleased to announce that, for the 2007 season, the British Pedal Car Championship have received sponsorship from the Dobson White Partnership.

The turnover for the BFPCR this year was £3269.75.

Next season's public liability insurance has gone up 10% to £635 if we stay with the same company.

Taking this into account, the "profit" from races (which goes to pay this bill) has come up about £300 short.

AH: Stated that we should not reduce entry fees because of the sponsorship but that the races / registrations must still break even otherwise they will only have to go up again next year and to a higher level than they are at now. He thanked NC and JF for donating the trophies for the last 3 rounds of the season (from "recycled" stock!).

AH: The race fees do actually pay for the races (if insurance is discounted and trophies added in) so these are at about the right level.

AH: Proposed to increase the 1-off registration payment to £25 per team (from £12). This will still allow a team to run as many cars as they choose at as many races as they choose during the year but will directly pay for the increase in insurance.

JF: Pointed out that this extra £13 was not a great deal out of the budget needed to run a team for a season.

AH: Pointed out that the multi-car discounts at present made it cheaper to enter 4 cars than 3 cars at any race and proposed that this was reduced.

The following change was proposed by AH and seconded by NC:

"The BFPCR Registration fee will be increased to £25 / team / year and the race entry discount will be changed to 25% if you enter more than 3 cars. (i.e: enter 3, get 4th car free)."

The proposition was carried unanimously.

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5a: Discussion on attracting new teams

- DR: Was interested in the progress of the run of standard cars which Oaktec were thought to be producing. No one was able to report any further progress
- NC: Stated that we are now covering more events than ever between BAR and GCR including Ringwood, the Castle Combe BAE race and various cycle festivals.
- DR: Suggested that we look into sharing venues with scout car races in the future to show them the other side of the sport.
- N.C: Suggested offering the winning teams in each class at the Scout car nationals a free entry to Curborough at the end of the season.
- G.B: Wondered if the level of sophistication in the sport might actually be putting new teams off.
- AH: Stated that comments from new teams such as 105th Manchester and Harrogate-4-Youth indicated that this was probably not so.
- N.C: Wondered about proposing a “pairs” class again but at present field sizes did not warrant it and we would be in danger of swamping ourselves with too many classes.
- D.R: Suggested that one race of the season should be nominated as the “British Grand Prix” as always used to happen at the Wolverhampton 6 hour race. It is slightly galling that Ringwood use this title for what is, in effect, a biannual charity race.
- N.C: Suggested this could be Blackbushe day 1.
- D.R: Would prefer that this is the Curborough race as it is easier for spectators and sponsors to get to the circuit.
- R.A: Wondered about the possibility of acquiring cars from Ringwood seeing as some of these are only used once every 2 years and stand idle the rest of the time.
- Action: JF to contact Mike Leach to find out the state of play with the Scout car nationals and what age classes they run these days (we assume in line with the scout age ranges).

The following was proposed by NC and seconded by AH:

“A free entry to the Curborough BPCC race will be offered to the winning car in each class at the Scout Car Nationals in 2007”

The proposition was carried unanimously.

5b: Discussion on communication

Discussion centred around the need to inform team managers (and everyone else) that pedal car news exists in electronic format.

This is to be highlighted on the forum and home page.

Hard copies will still be sent to people who have not asked to receive them electronically.

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5c: Discussion on Addresses to send Race Entries to.

- AH: Stated that he was still quite happy to take entries in the PO box but this could be at race organisers discretion.
Before the entry forms are issued at the start of next year, race organisers need to inform Antony what address they would like to put on them.

5d: Discussion on Lap Counting Equipment

- N.C: Work is ongoing. The hard ware is now reliable.
There have been problems with power supply when the system is to be run from a generator as getting "clean" 240V is a problem.
Shenington next year will therefore use the mains supply as it is worth setting this up for a 2 day event.
- J.F: Stated that the only complaint he has is that the lap counting staff are unable to add in laps as it is running. This leads to pieces of paper stuck to the side of the monitor with lap scores to add to those on the screen.
- N.C: Confirmed that this facility would be added by the start of the 2007 season.

5e: Proposal that the handing of anything to or from a moving car should be banned on safety grounds

- G.B: Said he was guilty as charged. But is this a problem if done responsibly.
- N.C: Suggested that this is already covered by the "dangerous driving" rules.
- R.A: There was an incident at Preston this year where a (full) water bottle was thrown from a car, bounced in the pit lane, and knocked over a lit stove at the back of the pits so if this is covered by dangerous driving then it has not been picked up on.
How about having a dedicated place where this can be done safely?
- D.R: Suggested that this was highlighted at the safety briefing before races.

The following rule change was proposed by NC and seconded by DR:

"The handing of bottles to and from cars should be done responsibly and outside of the pit area."

Motion carried.

5f: Proposal (from Robert Allen)

- R.A: Is it possible to finish timed races the first time the lead car crosses the line after the time has expired rather than exactly on the dot of (say) 6 hours. This might make race finishes easier to pick for the drivers.
- D.R: Cycle races (and HPV races) are usually designated as "1 hour plus 2 laps" for example.
- J.F: Sports car races finish when the leader crosses the line as Robert suggested.
- N.C: Said that this would create more problems for the lap counters.

The options will be put on the forum for comment from the teams.

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5g: Proposal (from Liz Hawkins)

To abolish the card licenses.

Few team managers keep the cards. Many of them lose them, and all the numbers are kept on a data base anyway.

The license system will be unchanged except that they will only exist in electronic rather than physical form.

Proposal carried unanimously.

6: Election of new committee

D.R: Expressed disappointment that various members of the committee had attended few meetings and suggested the meetings stay at the current venue (Rugby) as previous attempts to move them to other parts of the country had met with little support.

The following were elected to serve on the committee for the next year:

Chris Featherstone	(Castle Combe race organiser)
Simon Gare	(unafil)
Roland Jones	(Sketty)
Mark Williams	(Shenington race organiser)
Rachael Carter	(unafil)
Jes Featherstone	(Curborough race organiser)
Darren Carter	(BAR)
Robert Allen	(Bristol Racing)
Bill Gratrix	(Welsh 24 hour race organiser)
Antony Hawkins	(Blackbushe race organiser)
Gary Richards	(unafil)
Neil Carter	(unafil)
Dave Relton	(unafil)

All were elected unopposed

7: Presentation of 2007 Race Calendar

J.F: Presented the calendar and outlined the changes.

Preston has been dropped after feed back from the championship regular teams was over whelming in this matter. This year there was only one team there local to the track (Oaktec) and then only for one day (Saturday). A.H. stated that this was also an "on the day" entry so we went to the circuit not knowing if anyone from the local area was supporting the event or not.

On the Sunday, the nearest BPCC regular team to the track was Radioactive (and Swebbelli) and there was only 1 team closer than them (105th Manchester).

The Shenington circuit is well placed in the country and has been very well received by the teams. It is expected that more teams will support this venue than supported Preston.

The day/night format at Curborough exceeded all expectations and will be continued for 2007.

It is hoped to provide more cover in the shape of an open sided Marquee or Marquette for the after season BBQ's in case of bad weather.

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- A.H: Stated that he had a friend with a burger van and offered to investigate whether she would be willing to come along and do an “all you can eat for a fiver” type option to save teams catering for themselves.
- J.F: Stated, as someone who has a hand in many cars, that Margam Park is now the only track where the cars and the tyres take serious punishment due to being the tightest circuit with the roughest surface!

8: Report on 2006 European Championships and plans for 2007 and the future.

(Report in full to be found in appendix).

A query was made over the age ranges for European Championships taking place outside the UK.

9: Any Other Business

- A.H: In response to a query from Chris Featherstone, Antony will set up a facility so that Chris (and others if they wish to volunteer) can upload photos to the website in an effort to update the images or the sport which can be downloaded.
- N.C: Reminded everyone of child protection issues concerning not publishing details of juniors racing.

Meeting Closed 1pm

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Appendix 1:

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www.pedalcars.info

RACING CALENDAR – 2007

SUNDAY, APRIL 15th :	100 MILES / 6 HOURS (BPCC ROUND 1)	CASTLE COMBE
SUNDAY, MAY 13th :	6 HOURS (BPCC ROUND 2)	SHREWSBURY
SATURDAY 23RD – SUNDAY 24TH JUNE:	SWANSEA 24 HOUR RACE (BPCC ROUND 3)	MARGAM PARK (PORT TALBOT)
SUNDAY, 1ST JULY:	BAE CHARITY CHALLENGE (6 hour race - non BPCC)	CASTLE COMBE
SUNDAY, 15TH JULY:	NEW MILTON GRAND PRIX (2 hour race - non BPCC)	NEW MILTON (HAMPSHIRE)
SATURDAY, 21ST JULY:	1hr + 2hrs + 3hrs (BPCC ROUND 4)	SHENINGTON
SATURDAY, 22ND JULY:	100 MILES / 5 HOURS (BPCC ROUND 5)	SHENINGTON
SATURDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER:	1hr + 2hrs + 3hrs (BPCC ROUND 6)	BLACKBUSHE (BERKSHIRE)
SUNDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER:	6 HOURS (BPCC ROUND 7)	BLACKBUSHE (BERKSHIRE)
SATURDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER	1hr + 2hrs + 3hrs (day/night race) (BPCC ROUND 8)	CURBOROUGH SPRINT COURSE (LICHFIELD)

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Appendix 2:

Report of the Meeting of European Pedal Car Federations & the 2006 European Pedal Car Championships

20th August 2006

THE MEETING

This is an overview as the meeting took place during a 24 hour race and, obviously, for several people present the race was the most important thing happening at the time.

In 2007, the European Championships will take place, as planned, at Blackbushe over the weekend September 1st / 2nd.

The races will be a 1hr , 2hr , 3hr on the Saturday and then a 6 hour on the Sunday totalling 12 hours of racing as previously agreed.

In 2008, we are invited to Italy.

Not to Monza but to a more "St Etienne type" circuit (*think Wolverhampton East Park crossed with Ringwood*) near Trieste.

To cut costs for travelling teams, Karbyk are offering to supply identical cars to everyone (Except, one would imagine, Aolos Team.) as an option.

As Paolo said "All the English teams would have to do is fly Stanstead to Triest on Ryan Air".

So this has been thought about.

Date would be mid-August 2008.

We now have contacts from a team of most friendly German girls who drove the 24 hour race in a comedy banana and we are trying to get hold of a Belgium contact which has come via the French.

We also have an e-mail address from the Aolos pedal car team (who are very much the same standard as mid-field BPCC teams such as GCR).

Suggest also that we have contacts in Holland and (via the BHPC) other places.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2006

This is what happened for the 2006 European Championships, compared with what Paolo (Karbyk) and others thought would happen:

- The European Championships were to be judged over the first and last 6 hours of the 24.
- Actually, they were judged over the first six and the last 5 hours 50minutes because the race started at 5.36pm on Saturday and finished (bizarrely!) at 4.50pm on Sunday.
But the 2 teams contesting the Euros alone (both the Italians) were not given the green flag to start their day 2 battle until 11am on the Sunday.
Minor point. Never mind.
- The European Championships were to be judged on speed alone.
- No. And this is the major point.
Having agreed this at every meeting since we started having them, the organisers decided to ignore this completely and judge them with equal weighting on speed and "aesthetique".
"Aesthetique" is judged by a team of judges and is totally up to their discretion so it has about as much to do with pedal car racing as Torvil and Dean would have had with speed skating.

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All very nice but it's not what it's about.

Therefore, although the combined laps over the first and last 6 hours were:

1st – Aolos Team (IT)	380
2nd – Milou (FR)	378
3rd – Apollo Racing (GB)	375
4th – Karbyk (IT)	374
5th – La Godasse (Fr)	352

The European championship was awarded thus:

1st –	La Godasse
2nd –	Milou
...	
9th –	Aolos Team
...	
12th –	Karbyk
...	
15th –	Apollo Racing

Like I said, Apollo Racing was formed with the sole intention of racing in the “vitesse” category of the 24 hour race so this bothered us little and was no surprise (someone with a clip board looked at our pit for a few moments and said “rein”!) but Karbyk were extremely annoyed and had been complaining lots about various aspects of the race during the previous 24 hours anyway.

No French team showed up for the 2005 Europeans leaving Karbyk with a very angry sponsor indeed.

We exchanged many greetings (let their drivers try our car and stuff) with the front running French teams and they were all mad keen for us to come back next year.

But when Alistair pointed out that the championships were in Britain next year it was just like a total “does not compute” sort of moment.

The Italians, however, are very impressed with what we do and how many times a year we do it and how long we do it for and seem very eager to be at Blackbushe next year.

The German girls are also up for it but they would need a car providing.

(Can't think who's job that might end up being...)

I'm not wanting here to detract in any way from what was, for us, the crowning achievement of our pedal car careers to date. We won the 24 hour race very much against the odds. There was no doubting that from any of the teams we were racing against and the British (or rather English as they had decided we were representing) are now the most respected pedal car racing nation in Europe especially seeing as the average age of the foursome was 19 (with just the one driver over 17). That is not an exaggeration.

But the conclusion we can draw is that, in the absence of ex-president Yvon le Marie, the French federation do not have any particular interest in making any changes to the way they run the event to come in line with the UK and Italy or in racing outside of France.

Basically the European ideal is alive and well apart from, to be honest, in France.