BRITISH FEDERATION OF PEDAL CAR RACING

BRITISH PEDAL CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Minutes for BFPCR Annual General Meeting of 28th October 2007.

Meeting opened, 11am

Present:
Dave Relton (DR) ; Antony Hawkins (ADH); Jes Featherstone (JF); Geoff Tooke (GT); Chris Featherstone (CF); Jonathon Scholey (JS); Darren Carter (DC); Gary Richard (GR); Alistair Brown (AB); Jacob Spencer (JSp) ; Caitlin Spencer (CS); Matthew Tooke (MT); Fiona Tooke (FT); Simon Gare (SG)

1. Apologies were received from: Rob Fulford; Mark Williams; Geoff Brown; Roland Jones; Phil Wilkinson; Rachael Carter and Robert Allen

2. Minutes of 2006 AGM:

   Were read and agreed as a true record of proceedings

3. Chairmans's Report:

   A full copy of this will be posted on the website and published in due course.

4. Treasurer's Report:

   (Full balance sheet will be available)
   Turnover for year 2006 / 2007 was about £2800.
   The BPCC effectively made an operating loss of £600 for the 2007 season.
   This was offset by £1000 sponsorship from Dobson White Partnership and this will be increasing to £2000 for the 2008 season in recognition of the fact that the BFPCR has now taken on the financial burden of organising and running the 24 hour race.
   Revenue is slightly down due to the reduction in junior teams.
   Revenue from the online shop is now up to 30% of the total.

   JS: Asked if there were any other ways of saving money.
   ADH: Replied that we don't really spend anything we do not currently need to and we have reduced the costs of things such as trophies over the past few years.

5. Open Discussion Topics:

   5.1: (Roland Jones): Proposal that print – outs of provisional race results should be made available to teams after each race and at regular intervals during endurance events.
   Proposal Accepted

   General view of the meeting was that this should be made available as soon as the technology becomes available and as soon as various modifications in the pipe line to the lap counting system effectively mean that this is worth while.

   S.G: Stated that a large white board with the scores posted at intervals is a good back up in the event of a failure of technology.

D.R: Said that most team managers check their own lap scores and those of their closest rivals but this would be a good thing to work towards.
CTF: Pointed out that having the secondary monitor back again would remove a lot of the problems with congestion around the lap scorers.
ADH: Said that the current computer could only take 1 monitor and that the secondary monitor had been possible originally because the system was working off a lap top. The lap top itself had proved unreliable.
S.G: Offered to find a donation for any hardware needed to bring this on line.
S.G: Suggested that we open up an area of the forum where people could offer suggestions as to what they would like to see from the system and work out their implications both in terms of finance and time.

5.2: (Antony Hawkins): Proposal that provisional results will be available online for the period starting 7 days after an event and ending 14 days after (they may be available earlier but will remain provisional until 14 days have elapsed from the event).

Proposal Accepted

ADH: Said that he could not guarantee exactly when results would be available on line after any race so the current 3-day period put teams who might only look on the website occasionally at a disadvantage as far as raising any issues was concerned.
AB: Asked how difficult it would be to put results on the forum.
ADH: Replied that time would still be the issue.
CTF: Asked if it was possible for the lap counting software to be able to dump results into a text format for easy putting on line
JF: Pointed out that, if and when print outs were available at the end of races this might become redundant

5.3: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that timed races should end when the lead car crosses the line for the first time after the time limit has expired.

Proposal Accepted

SG: Said that he did not see that this was a problem.
JS: Pointed out that all the flag waver needs to know is which was the lead car
DR: Argued that this should be easier now that the lap counting is to be further developed.
JR: Asked if we could have a “last lap” board.
ADH: Wondered if this could be a “last lap” air horn. Or a horn to show time was up.
DR: Said this might cause confusion
SG: Repeated that this really should not be a problem.

5.4: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that measures should be put in place to ensure that the racing rules are applied more consistently than they have in the past

Proposal Accepted

AB: Asked if this whole matter comes down to basic tolerance and sportsmanship
JS: Accepted that the problem is a lack of man power.
Bristol Racing would like to see a clear system of rules and penalties and a group of people put in place to enforce them.
ADH: Said that everything comes down to man power
JF: Advised that the term “staffing levels” should be used because not everyone is a man
JS: Asked if several team managers getting together would constitute a valid complaint

DR: Said that, in the case of a dispute, members of the committee who were present could be called on to make a judgement
JS: Pointed out that this was all very well but procedures for this sort of thing must be written into the rules
DR: Stated that Revolution had dropped out of Shrewsbury (BPCC round 2) this year because Crude were racing when they had admitted they could not see where they were going and therefore they considered it dangerous to proceed
SG: Made it clear that this had not been made known to him up until now and if it had been made clear he would have done something about it
JS: Said that this sort of thing was exactly why this was important. With the championship so competitive, every single point earned at every race was now important right through the season so all rules must be enforced equally at all rounds.
SG: Rules must be clarified and sent out to all teams before the start of next season in the form of a "hand book".
SG: How about requiring every team to provide a marshal for each race?
SG: How many marshals are required to run an event in addition to the clerk of the course?
CTF: Said that the Ringwood race has a space on the entry form where you could volunteer for specific duties and that every team was required to have at least 1 volunteer.
Each team could be asked to marshal for 1 hour or help with the lap counting for 1 hour.
Could this be added to our entry forms?
JSp: Said that junior teams might struggle to find extra support for these jobs as their adults have a responsibility to care for their youngsters
JS: Said that Bristol would find it hard to bring an extra person to each race due to cost and logistics involved for a team such as themselves.
ADH: Proposed that each race organiser should come up with the number of people required to run any particular race
DR: Said that the supply of a marshal for at least part of a race should be made mandatory.
AB: Suggested that if no one from a particular team had helped out during the race, any complaints from that team regarding the race should not be addressed.
DR: Summed up with the following:

"The rule book is to be clarified and approved at the February committee meeting and is to include procedures for complaints or queries. Any proposals for changes or comments must be received by January 1st 2008"

5.5: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that cars which pass scrutineering and receive no additional modification prior to and during racing are deemed legal throughout that round.

Proposal Rejected

DR: Said his first reaction was that this might compromise safety
ADH: Pointed out that you could conceivable submit a car for scrutineering with an electric motor hidden under the seat and, under this proposal, as long as the scrutineer failed to pick up on it then you would be perfectly within your rights to run that car for the entire race.
JS: Said that the problem had arisen if a car was not legal due to length / width etc and the team had not been told. It needs to be made clear who is responsible.
DC: Said that it is the team's responsibility for their car being legal and could the team manager be asked to sign to that effect.
CF: Reminded the AGM of the previous proposal for a scrutineering "tick list" for team managers which was never implemented.
JF: Asked if this could be put in place now, especially for new teams.
JS: Proposed that all challenges as to the legality of any car should be made before the race.
GT: Pointed out that you don't really see the other cars until the race has started and they are all going round.
DR: Suggested that cars could also be checked after races.
JF: Said that this would require a "parc ferme" situation to be enforced.

DR: Summed up with the following:

"Compliance [of the car with the rules] is the responsibility of the team manager. Complaints as to a cars legality must be made to the clerk of the course and will be dealt with after the race. Scrutineering is primarily to check the safety of the vehicle but other dimensions will also be checked. Team managers will be required to sign as to their car's legality on the team sheet."

5.6: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that "organisers discretion" causes inconsistencies in the application of rules and should therefore be removed.

Proposal Accepted

General view of the meeting was that any changes to the regular rules regarding the running of an event must be announced prior to the start of a race.
Organisers must refer to at least 4 members of the committee present at the race before exercising discretion in this matter

5.7: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that a new and less ambiguous rule book should be created to remove inconsistencies in the application of rules

Proposal Accepted

DR: Said that this had already been covered under (5.3) and the meeting was in agreement with this.

5.8: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that each driver in a team should have to drive at least once during any sprint race

Proposal Rejected

ADH: Said that, with the lack of a clerk of the course at round 6 this year and therefore the need for himself to be in race control for the entire first race of the weekend, this would have meant that GCR would have been disqualified from the event as a penalty for stepping in to help out when no one else was there. Other teams have found themselves in this position in the past and may well do so in the future.
CTF: Said that it would bring a new dimension to the short races but, apart from having a marshal assigned to each and every team, how would we police it?
DR: Pointed out that one of the reasons the current (1,2,3) sprint format was brought in had been to give a solo or a 2 man team the chance of winning a race against fully crewed opposition.
JSp: Asked what would happen (as had happened to Swebbelli in the past) where a team member becomes ill or injured and therefore unable to race?

5.9: (Bristol Racing): Proposal that British Championship requires expansion and has the following proposals to achieve it:

5.9.1: The appointment of a "Development officer"

MT: Suggested the post of "publicity officer" should become a "publicity team" of more than one person.
CTF: Suggested (and volunteered for) the post of "communications officer" who's job is to make sure that all the information is distributed to all teams as and when necessary. This would leave the job of editing Pedal Car News to the publicity officer.

DR: Reminded everyone of the need to contact teams we are “losing” rather than just concentrate on the new teams who are joining the championship.
JR: Asked about the current status of the scout car nationals.
JF: Replied that from the evidence we have, and from talking to 105th Manchester, almost all the cars and teams regularly competing in the scout car nationals have unfortunately fallen far below the standards which now exist in the BPCC. But that doesn’t mean we should not be promoting the BPCC to them.
DR: Has a lead on a publicity event at Rockingham in early July. This is a 3-day event including places to run demonstrations aimed at promoting projects to schools. At this event were the very people we need to target, namely the CDT teachers themselves not the head teachers. We need to re-educate people away from the “soap-box derby” principal.

5.9.2: Holding a race or races in a more public environment

JF: Asked for this to be held over until the race calendar was announced.

5.9.3: The creation of a pool of cars available to rent for new teams

CF: Said that the problem with this was the storage and transport of cars.
DR: Said that this was a non-starter if the “pool cars” were not competitive. All you did by lending someone a “shed” was to dishearten them and put them off.
JS: Said that they would be happy to make the 2nd Bristol Racing Apollo/F available to other teams on occasion that they were not using it next season for a small contribution towards transport costs.
DR: Suggested that, between us, we ought to be able to provide at least 1 decent car per race for people to try and the logistics could be dealt with as and when they arose.
GR: Asked what happens if the car gets trashed
JF: Said that this is always the chance you have to be willing to take in this case.
DR: Wondered if there might be a problem if a car is too much on the pace and therefore too difficult to handle for an inexperienced team. Therefore any cars for loan would need to be fairly forgiving to drive.
DC: Pointed out that not all fast cars are easy to drive and cited the example of BSE’s car which is very fast but very tricky to drive.

5.9.4: The creation of a "newcomers" category (effectively a “Rookie of the Year” award).

GR: Asked how you define a “newcomer”
DR: Said it was any team which had not raced previously
JS: Said that this definition needs to be carefully written into the rules.
FT: Pointed out that this category must not allow teams to just jump up a class. For example, Swebbelli’s PC2 team will be a PC1 team next year but they will not be “newcomers”.

5.10: (Jes Featherstone): Proposal that the PC3 teams 18-hour rule at 24 hour races should be reviewed in the light of comments received from PC3(F) teams at the 2006 Welsh 24 hour.

Proposal Rejected

JF: Had been asked by Pink Ladies to bring to the attention of the AGM that PC3(F) teams were unable to compete in PCF class with teams in an older age category due to them being forced to sit out of the race for six hours.
DR: Said that this was a safety issue. His contacts in cycle racing already think we push our youngsters too hard.
JR: Agreed and likewise opposed any change on behalf of Revolution

DR: Said that the rule was implemented as an overview and should not be revoked for one particular circumstance.
JF: Admitted that both Sketty and Killay had spoken to him or Roland and were in favour of keeping the rule in place.
JS: Said the rule must remain in place for safeties sake but is there a mathematical way of making it a littlel fairer.
DR: Wondered if there was a way of proportionally adding laps to PC3 team's scores
JR: Stated that all PC3 teams are aware of this rule and accept it.

6. Nominations to 2008 comittee:

The following were nominated unopposed:

Jes Featherstone
Rob Fulford
Mark Williams
Roland Jones
Rachael Carter
Simon Gare
Chris Featherstone
Darren Carter
Robert Allen
Bill Gratrix
Antony Hawkins
Gary Richard
Dave Relton
Jonathon Scholey
Mattew Tooke

7. Presentation of the 2008 calendar:

JF: Outlined the changes to the calendar for 2008 and stated that the September race was hopefully going to be very much in the public eye but nothing could be made official until it was set in stone.
ADH: Said that there was a strong possibility of racing returning to the centre of Leicester in July 2009.
JF: Said that this was one of the reasons for moving to a 1-day event that July weekend in readiness.
CF/JS: Suggested that the points for the 10 hour race should be increased slightly (perhaps with 30 for the winner instead of 25). This was generally accepted.
JF: Suggested that PC2 teams should be allowed to run with up to 5 drivers in the 10 hour race. This was generally accepted.

8. European Championships

ADH: Said that, generally, all had gone well despite being short staffed at the races themselves.

The 2008 championships are 70% sure to be in Trieste over the 2nd weekend in August totalling 12 hours of racing. This will be known for certain over the new year period.

Antony and Liz are driving down in a van and offering space to pedal cars on a 1st come 1st served basis. It is suggested that drivers fly down there.

JS: Asked if the idea was for individual teams to go or for us to construct a "Team GB" from the best drivers in the UK and then arrange these into teams reflecting their abilities.

ADH: Said it was impossible to decide until people had committed themselves and this needed to happen as soon as possible after the race date had been confirmed.

9. Any Other Business

None

10. Date of next AGM

The 2008 Annual General Meeting of the British Federation of Pedal Car Racing will take place on Sunday, November 2nd 2008 at 22nd Rugby Scout Headquarters, The Kent, Rugby

Meeting closed, 2pm