

MINUTES OF 3rd ACU EASTERN COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE MEETING of 2021 HELD 12th August 2021
at Needham Market Community Centre

PRESENT: Mr P Armes: Mr J Hearn: Mr. C Ralph: Mrs. L Ralph: Mr. P Nash: Mr. A Foskew; Mr. M Beadle
Mr A Wright: Mr A Hay: Mr C Cook.

1. Mr Armes opened the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Mr. A Penny. Mr Dopson had hoped to join the meeting via Zoom, but the Wi Fi signal was not working.

2. Previous Minutes:

It was agreed that the previous minutes were a true record. Proposed C Ralph; 2nd J Hearn.

3. Matters Arising:

Update of the provision of Stewards:

Trials: Appointed Stewards for all Championship events, or by request of the organiser, or on an ad hoc basis if deemed necessary by the Trials Committee;

Enduro: All Championship rounds and as Trials for other events.

Grass Track – At all events.

MX: Agreed for ECC Championship Rounds and then as the other disciplines for other non-championship events.

Cost to be met by the organising clubs.

CR reported that there will be no evening Trials at Blaxhall this year.

C Cook raised the question of levies- PA explained that this is ongoing and will be discussed by discipline Chairs and the Centre Treasurer. This will be a Board discussion/decision. All but Trials now run on basic permits.

AH reported that so far this year levy income was £450, well under the normal figure. He also confirmed that the £50 kickback on basic permits is not received until the end of the season at the earliest and probably into the next year.

Amendments – PA confirmed that the calendar on the website was up to date.

PA reminded at present that the rules of the Centre state that all Centre restricted and Open Permit regs must be published in the Gazette. There had been none for a recent Halstead event and none for the last three Sudbury events. He will take this up with the Sudbury Club. M Beadle acknowledged this on behalf of the Halstead Club. One possibility for this could be that new people are taking on roles and there are no handover/ instructions. LR stated that in her opinion, job descriptions should be available for new postholders for all Centre jobs. PA – that is something that could be discussed at the Sustainability meeting on 1st September. Together with the future of the Gazette. CR stated that the funds currently held in the Gazette Fund maybe could be utilised for other Centre purposes.

Insurance levies – these had been coming in on the ACU forms and not the Centre forms.

4. Permits Issued and amendments to fixtures:

This had been dealt with in matters arising.

5. Gazette regulations and Entry Forms.

Discussion re 90% of entries are now online, therefore do we need to publish supplementary regs in the Gazette or indeed an entry form? A declaration can be downloaded and signed at the event. Following that, do we still need to publish a paper Gazette? CC and PN both said that they thought that we would need a paper version for a few years yet. Further discussion on these items will be placed on the next Board Agenda.

6. 2021 Calendar and Centre Championship updates:

CR – 5 rounds of the ECC MX had taken place with three to go. All current positions for the Expert, Junior, Rookies and Club Championships are on the Centre website, Lewis Tombs leads the experts with Luke Parker 2nd.

Callum Murfitt leads a very close Junior Championship from Ryan Gardiner. There are some very good up and coming youngsters. Callum Murfitt, Ryan Gardiner and 15-year-old Liam Bennett have all been upgraded to expert status. Baylis Utting was also upgraded earlier this season.

To date, a total of 46 experts have scored championship points, and 52 juniors. All events still fill up very quickly. The experts do have a longer period of time to enter.

There has been a Forum arranged via Zoom on 28th October to gauge rider opinions and it will be the role of the next MX Committee to set the Championship Rules for 2022. Forum has been advertised on Facebook and ACU Eastern website and will be advertised in the next three event programmes.

Discussion took place over round 5 at Blaxhall where some National riders entered in advance of the upcoming British Championship at Blaxhall. This had rather spoilt the championship for local riders. PA commented that it would be worth the MX Committee thinking of a way that this could be avoided in the future.

Trials – C Cook stated that there were no changes regarding the way Championship events were run. He also stated that there would be no more Trials in Spanseys Wood.

7. Steward's reports:

Braintree Trial 'B Class Championship' on 13th June – Comment from A Foskew that there was no 50/50 route. CC explained that there had been no entries so this had been not necessary. Steward A Penny; well-run trial with good entry run under Covid restrictions.

Essex and Suffolk Trial A Class Championship– 18th April. Steward C Dopson – A well organised event, entries limited due to parking space, all ACUE championship class entries accepted.

Woodbridge Trial Open – 2nd April. Steward E Hood – some of the lower routes were a little too hard.

Chelmsford Club 18th July– Ladies and Girls Trial Championship. Steward A Penny – Well run event. Good sections for all abilities. Excellent prize presentation.

GW Racing Grasstrack – 26th June. Steward A Foskew – No trophies awarded as meeting abandoned due to both ambulances having to transport injured riders. No County Ambulance available. Meeting cancelled at 5pm.

Discussion re GT 140 Class. CC commented that the riders are all of a similar speed and maybe the number of riders in the races should be reduced for safety reasons. Discussion re the specified width of tracks and the numbers permitted. PA suggests that this is something that ought to be referred to Rugby.

Enduro Blaxhall Sprint – Steward A Penny – Good event with a well laid out track which catered for all classes. No start time was stated on the regs.

Grass Track- Chick Garrod Memorial Meeting at Gosbeck 31st July.

Steward A Foskew who stepped in as Steve Brace was unwell. Event suspended for 45 minutes due to heavy rain. All riders were allowed a siting lap when racing restarted. Conditions did improve and the event ran well with all riders enjoying the meeting. Directions to the event had been good. 2 electric bikes did 2 demo laps and this will also happen at the next Grasstrack.

8. Sub Committee Reports

MX:

Reported that both Lyng and Blaxhall had enjoyed bumper crowds at both rounds. CR stated that there had been events at Wakes Colne, Wildtracks, Peterborough on the same day at Blaxhall and that he would like the ACU to not issue permits for clubs within a one-hundred-mile radius and this affects the number of spectators. A discussion took place and PA stated that he had requested this many years ago for a 50-mile radius with no agreement from the ACU. The consensus was that this would likely be the same outcome should the question be raised again.

Youth MX:

CR advised the committee that Donna Secker had not been happy regarding the clash with an event coming up at Wakes Colne. CR had tried to mediate but neither club could change and it had been left with club organisers to decide what to do. CR also reported that no results had been available for the last NSJMCC Round as their timing equipment had failed and that manual lapscoreing had to be used.

Trials:

PN – reported that a few Championship rounds had been held. Commenting on the previous minutes when the Turkey Trot date had been mentioned, CC stated that the Braintree Club would not be running any Championship on their date. There seemed to be some misinformation regarding this.

It was notified that the Trials Section of NSJMCC would not be running any Trials as Patrick Kibble and James Newstead have stepped down. They are willing to help anyone willing to take over however. All the dates that were arranged by them are now available.

Wymondham Club – there is an issue with the landowner's insurance at Middleton and for the moment, the insurance is suspended by the landowner's insurance company until all activities there can arrange the same level of cover. C Dopson is assisting the landowner with writing a 'one fit all' risk assessment. The Trial may go ahead – PA is aware of this.

PN announced that Lockton's are pulling out of Motor Sport and that Sport Insure have also pulled out and that there will be big changes in the insurance market next year.

Trials Report from CD:

PA mentioned that up to date Risk Assessments of May 2020 and July 2021 are both on the website and it is up to clubs to utilise which one fits their purpose.

Trial at Lowestoft on 3rd September is confirmed and being run by Nick Ogden.

There are 4 A Class, 4 B Class, 6 C Class and 1 D Class rounds left to take place.

Discussion over an event where 91 entries were accepted where the maximum number stated on the permit had been 70. Note was made that Covid rules changed between the issue of the permit and the event and that at the time, P Armes had been unavailable due to illness.

Trials Forum – will take place in 2021. Date to be confirmed.

Officials Licences – MX can attend online seminars – LR asked to chase this up with the other discipline departments at Rugby.

Grasstrack:

Gosbeck landowner has asked for another event to be run as there is a new field available. (9th October)

Donut Grasstrack running on 22nd August and has obtained some sponsorship from G B Finch.

GW Racing holding a one-day Championship at Iken on 29th August. Subcommittee will meet in the lunch break.

Enduro:

JH reported that all is going well with good entries. Braintree Club is sending a team to Italy for the 6 days, Luke Parker and Will Hughes in the team. Mark Hughes is Team Manager. PN stated that paperwork to get the bikes back in the country has been difficult with so much information to be provided. PA will speak to Rugby to see if they could help by using the 'Elite Sportsman' rules

9. Correspondence:

LR had received an alert from Rugby regarding gold stickers not being present on some helmets when being scrutineered. She has circulated this to all clubs. There used to be sheets of stickers available to scrutineers but that no longer seems to be the case and helmets must be approved and stickers obtained via Rugby. At this time, the onus is on the scrutineer to remove the helmet from the rider and hold until the end of the day. The rider must either borrow or purchase a helmet that has the correct sticker in place.

10. Any Other Business:

C Ralph announced that he has informed the MX Committee that he will be standing down as MX Committee Chair at the end of this year, and from all commentating, race reports etc. He has informed the MX Committee that the new Chairperson will be part of the Competitions Committee.

Mrs Ralph also added that she is also standing down at MX Committee Secretary, and all other duties apart from Centre Secretary and Comps Secretary. She will be giving 12 months' notice from these roles at the Board Meeting in November.

There being no further business, Mr Armes thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 10.04pm.

Next meeting –Thursday 21st October via Zoom at 7pm