

Minutes of the sporting trials open meeting held at Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, on 22nd May 2010, at 14-00.

Ian Wright as Chairman of the meeting welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said that the aim of the meeting was to get a consensus of opinion on the subjects discussed or at least a direction to follow.

Clubs

Risk assessments. Richard Milne has produced a risk assessment for NPTCC sporting trials, Ian Wright has discussed various amendments with Richard and the final version is to be issued to all clubs for their use. The Risk assessment is to be reviewed after a year and if necessary amended/ updated. The version issued to clubs is a guideline and can be varied as required by the Clerk of the Course for their event. We need to look forward and look at possible changes that are required before they are forced on us. We as a sport need to start operating in a more professional way.

Driver Training. We need to make sure all drivers entering the sport under go a training programme to ensure they are capable of competing in the sport safely. Novice drivers once competing are to be mentored by the nearest competing Red class driver during that day. Most accidents that occur are as the driver exits the section or is driving between them. Not all drivers have been to all sites therefore we will recommend to clubs they sign post a safe route between all sections as well as a poster sized site map with the hills on. Passengers are also to undergo training as to their role in the way the car operates and how they may change position in the car to facilitate safe competition. The Trials Manual is to be updated and re issued to all clubs and drivers.

Officials and Marshals training. We need to ensure that all officials and marshals are capable of doing their job on the day. A way is required of training marshals on the day of the event if they have not marshalled before. The back of the Hill score card has a lot of information on it but this needs reviewing to ensure it is current and helpful. Officials' training is also important.

Clerk of Course needs to be shown how to

- 1: Ensure all sections are well set out with no four wheels out sections by using extra pairs of poles or crossed poles.
- 2: Benefits of wide sections and how to set them out.
- 3: Layout a section to enable drivers to exit the section safely at the end of their attempt.

Secretary

- 1: Ensure the Supplementary Regulations and all relevant paperwork is sent to all relevant possible entrants
- 2: All entries are acknowledged by mail, e-mail or phone.
- 3: Final instructions are sent out.
- 4: Provisional and Final results are produced and sent to all relevant recipients.

Scrutineer

- 1: To make sure that the competing car is up to standard and safe for use on the day, report back to the competitor any minor or major faults found.
- 2: To check vehicles as required during the event.

Marshals and Judges of Facts Marshals are very important people in the running of the event. Richard Milne brought to the meeting a question as to whether marshals were Judges of fact and produced an extract from the Blue book to facilitate his position. *See appendix for further details.*

Health and Safety Forms It was decided that we produce a proforma for use at trials in case an accident occurs. The form is to have spaces on it for clubs to fill out with the following information on it:

Full address and post code for site

Map reference for the site

Details of nearest Hospital

Details of route to nearest hospital with A&E dept and also a map with the route from site to hospital marked on it.

Details of Event

Protocol of who is to call emergency services.

Also a variant is to be produced to be sent to the Area police control centre pre-event.

Event Paperwork Most of the supplementary Regulation paperwork should be the same for all events. It is proposed that a standard version be produced with the club having a summary sheet to change with details of venue, entry fee, Officials etc for them. Clubs have also been lax in their sending out acknowledgement of receipt of entry, final instructions, results etc. This needs to improve. All of these can be sent out electronically to as many entrants on e-mail as possible. The method of return of entry needs further investigation, it is suggested that entrants fill in and return their entry forms electronically but bring a paper copy fully signed to the event. Electronic payment maybe beyond the costs of clubs but BTRDA may have to set up a central account, and then pay clubs out of it, as cheques are being phased out.

Governing body / Rules

Blue book G1.3 named officials competing in events. Sporting trials.com is bad at this and the situation needs resolving. Competitors are able to claim BTRDA points for filling these positions.

Tyre List Vredestein have withdrawn the Sprint+ from production. The Firestone F560 is only on batch production and is difficult to source. There is a choice out there with up to 7 manufacturers making the size of tyre we require. Graham Martin is to be asked to look into the situation and the tyre types available. It is suggested we have up to 3 tyres available from different regions of the world. We are to look if possible for tyres with inferior grip, then phase out the Vredestein and the Firestone.

Three second rule N.P.T.C.C. is the only club finding this rule a problem based on the actions of one individual. Also they had written to the committee with this and received no reply. Apologies were given to the club for this poor response. Marshals are the way this rule is applied and it is necessary that they are trained in their job to understand the rule and apply it properly. Marshals and Drivers are to be reminded that no rolling back is allowed. 750 MC have been using this rule for over 15 years, it was brought in to stop drivers digging large holes in the sections. At the N.P.T.C.C. 2 day event drivers were informed there would be a zero tolerance on stopping and four wheels out but these rules were ignored during the event. The drivers present had no problems with the rule just the poor application by marshals. It is proposed that this item goes on to the next Sporting Trials committee agenda with the view of helping N.P.T.C.C. with the implementation of the rule and in sorting out the individual concerned.

Four wheels out Most four wheels out scenarios are caused by poor understanding by the Clerk of course of this rule. Clubs need to ensure that enough pairs of poles are available at

each hill to ensure that there are no issues with the operation of the rule. Again ensuring Clerks are trained in the laying out of hills will help.

Minimum age for drivers At present the minimum age for drivers is 16 with a passenger who holds a RTA licence and is also a sporting trials driver. It was suggested that we ask for this to be lowered to 14, but those present felt this would not be a safe option.

Competitors

Combined weekends. We have already in the calendar the Cornish weekend. It was proposed we add more. If clubs wish to join together and organise a trials weekend there should be no problem.

Passenger seating. There is a problem with this and the rule needs clarification/changing. The committee are to look into producing a pictorial leaflet of how a passenger should sit.

Etiquette. A number of drivers seem to be unaware of the Etiquette during a trial especially at the end.

N.P.T.C.C. provides rakes for drivers to assist in tidying up the sections at the end. It is proposed that the last group on a hill stay to clear the section and help to restore the ground damage if necessary, with one driver taking all the scorecards back to the paddock to enable scoring to be completed.

Crash Helmets Those present were of the opinion that crash helmets were not required in the sport. It was asked if we could set up a central point for accident reports to be sent to. This is already done to the M.S.A, so all accident statistics as to type and severity are already held.

Cars

Eligibility and scrutineering. At best scrutineering can be described as haphazard with some clubs having an excellent scrutineer and others not so good. The main suggestion is that all cars be issued with a log book with a photo. In the log book are sections for the scrutineer to fill out with any fault found and then the next scrutineer will be able to sign off that it has been remedied. A section will also be included to say if the car has been eligibility checked during the year. If the log book is not produced on the day then drivers will not be able to take part. Committee are to look into the production of the log books and any new rules required. A list of checks is to be produced for scrutineers to enable a more consistent level of scrutineering.

Diff tests The test using a standard set of rollers is best described as useless. ACTC have produced a set of rollers which are individually braked. This tests for non free operating diffs by the application of the brakes at different speeds. The Butterfield test which involves jacking up the vehicle and then seeing which way the opposite wheel rotates when the other is snatched is just as effective.

We are to look into more random testing during the year, with the honesty approach of testing. Julian is to arrange to borrow the ACTC rollers during the year.

Ballasting Ballasting is used by some drivers to balance up their cars because their passenger is lighter than themselves. A see saw test has been tried out by Mark Milne to look at a cars centre of gravity on three different cars. Julian and Ian Wright are to try this on their cars and compare the data with Mark's. At present this is only a fact finding position and not a

way to new rules. Two things that came out of the discussion was that the carrying of two tyres on the back should be banned and that the maximum overhang of 1/3 the wheelbase behind the rear axle should be reduced. This last item will require rule changes from the M.S.A.

Noise The sport in general needs to keep the noise level down. We have lost good sites due to excessive noise from cars. Drivers are trying to get the noise level produced by their cars down. The noise test as per the Blue book is unworkable as we do not run our cars at low engine loads and partly closed throttles. Noise tests are to be carried out to try and see what noise levels are produced.

Tyre pressures Northern Ireland has dropped the 1psi advantage for live axle cars due to a live axle winning over there for the last two years. We are to try it out for Green class drivers at a convenient trial.

Other

Promotion of sport. Ours is the best kept secret motorsport in the country. We need to promote the sport to motor clubs and their members that currently have no dealings with us as a sport. A promotional pack along with a visit to clubs on their club night is a start but we need to get a much better video of our sport so we can hand it out to people so they can view what occurs. Making a good video will entail spending money but as we are always financially in the black at year end, we should be able to get money from BTRDA to pay for it.

We only got this far on the agenda as we ran out of time on the day.

Appendix

At the meeting I could not find the relevant section in the 2010 blue book as the numbering system had changed. Subsequently I have found it in the 2010 book, under Section (G) Officials page 113. Subsection 10.1 to 10.2 all sub section included. It also comes under section (T) Trials page 339 results subsection 7.1 inclusive. Marshals are appointed to adjudicate on the observed section. And give the penalty points as required thus making them Judges of facts.