



NASA MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 6 – February 2017

Welcome to our second newsletter of 2017.

We're gearing up for the start of the season. The first round of committee meetings at Walsall is just a few days away when your league representatives will have the chance to discuss any issues that members have been bringing up at local level.

Our technical team is progressing with a very busy schedule of rollcage measuring and tagging visits so that we can now be confident that all owners of existing cars will have had at least one opportunity to get them tagged in time for the first race meetings of 2017.

It's no secret that the NASA Board of Directors still has a very heavy workload to get through to ensure that everything's running to our satisfaction and, more importantly get every aspect of the sport running as smoothly as our members have a right to expect. From scrutineering and rulebooks, through safety and marshalling to disciplinary and constitutional matters, there's a lot of work in progress that we'll be updating you on during the year. We'll be making use of social media and the main NASA website to bring you any urgent updates as the season gets under way, so please keep checking online.

If you've been leaving your licence application to the last moment, please don't leave it any longer. Your local club needs you and, weather permitting, we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in action at the early season meetings.



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NASA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Here's another reminder of the dates of the NASA national committee meetings for 2017, with the first meetings coming up a few days after you will have received this newsletter.

League Chairmen's Committee, Scrutineers' Committee and Combined Marshals' and Safety Officers' Committee (all 11 am starts)

Sunday February 19

Saturday April 8

Saturday June 10

Saturday October 14

The 2017 NASA AGM will be on Sunday November 26 (12.00 start).

We'd like to take this opportunity to once again urge ALL leagues to send at least one representative to each of these meetings.

Although we're increasingly using our website, social media and these newsletters to keep members informed, the Walsall meetings are still the most effective forum to ensure that consistent standards are being followed throughout all the leagues and clubs, and to allow your members a chance to influence NASA policy via their own choice of representatives.

AUTOSPORT SHOW

NASA's year began as usual at the NEC Birmingham for the Autosport International show. Once again in our unbiased opinion the Autograss cars were the stars of the show; the 24 cars displayed on the official NASA stand, plus a few others on neighbouring stands, once again set a superlative standard. The Class 7 and 8 drivers appearing in the Live Action arena, not forgetting the Class 4 and 6 representatives, were sensational and contributed to perhaps the highest level of serious public interest and enquiries that we've experienced at the show.

We'd like to thank again everyone who helped by preparing and presenting cars at the show and all those who helped on the stand and behind the scenes in the live action. We're looking forward to working alongside the other short oval racing organisers to present an even better show in 2018!



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2017 LICENCE APPLICATIONS

The medical declaration "tick box" on the 2017 NASA licence application form has been generating quite a few queries, so we'll try again to clarify exactly what we want, and why.

Firstly, we only need any medical declarations from those applying for racing licences. At the moment they're not required for members' or mechanics' licences.

The single tick box on this year's form is an interim measure. Following legal advice we needed to include a medical/disability declaration and ideally we would have asked a series of specific questions, which would be consistent with other racing organisations. However, to do this would involve completely changing the format of our licence forms, which wasn't possible in the time available, so we adopted the single abbreviated disclosure for this year.

The objective is to identify any disability or condition that would drivers to be a danger to themselves or others in a racing situation. Although we haven't finalised the detailed medical questions we will adopt in future, they're likely to be along the following lines.

- a) Do you suffer from epilepsy or sudden attacks of disabling giddiness or fainting?
- b) Are you suffering from any defect in movement or muscular power?
- c) Do you have any false or missing limbs?
- d) Are you suffering from any disease, medical condition mental or physical, or disability which is likely to cause you to be a source of danger to yourself or others on the track or on any part of a race venue?
- e) Are you unable to read at a distance of 25 yards in good daylight (with glasses if worn) a UK vehicle registration plate?
- f) Are you colour blind?

NASA may not adopt the questions in this exact form, but we hope this gives you a clearer understanding of the types of condition that we need to be disclosed.

In the meantime, if the box on the 2017 form is ticked, we need you to submit a doctor's letter with your licence form. This will be kept confidential and will only be seen by the NASA registration secretary and registration co-ordinator. In some cases it might be necessary for the NASA board to make the final decision on whether to issue a licence. If this does occur you'll be asked for your consent before any information's disclosed to the Board.



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2017 LICENCE APPLICATIONS *(continued)*

We've also been asked if there will be any equivalent disclosure required when taking out a day licence. We're preparing a day licence application form which includes the above medical questions and, if approved, we intend to implement the new form this year. The procedure shouldn't be any more time consuming than the existing day licence form; we've observed a similar procedure being followed at a non-NASA short oval venue. Anyone who wishes to take out a day licence and can't answer "no" to all the above questions will need to be prepared in advance with a doctor's letter and will need to be willing to submit this to club officials on the day.

THE VNUK CASE

This is something you all may have read about in the press, where it's been reported, more or less sensationally, as something with the potential to close down all motorsport in Europe. NASA, like other motorsport bodies, have been monitoring the situation without being able to do anything about it, but recent developments mean that we now need to bring you up to date.

The background, as briefly as possible, is that Mr Vnuk was a Slovenian farm worker who was knocked off a ladder by a tractor and sued for damages. The tractor was uninsured and the case eventually reached the European Court of Justice, the highest court in Europe.

The judgement the court handed down in September 2014 was a shock to both the EC and national governments, because it interpreted the European Motor Insurance Directive differently to the way it had always been understood.

The Vnuk judgement effectively means that every vehicle in the EU, whether it is a tractor or a race car, must have mandatory insurance on private property. Currently, UK and Irish law only requires motor insurance for the use of vehicles on a road or any other public place. Insurers have said that unlimited third party 'competitor to competitor' insurance is effectively uninsurable and will not be made available.

This judgement could have a disastrous effect on not only motorsport, but also agriculture and many other businesses. The potential effect is so drastic that we, along with many other organisations, believed that it was bound to be resolved at a high level.



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THE VNUK CASE *(continued)*

There's no possibility of appeal or change to the ECJ judgement. The situation could be corrected through an amendment to the European Motor Insurance Directive which would clarify in what conditions motor insurance would be required. The European Commission promised in June 2016 to take the necessary action.

However, the reason why the threat is now being taken much more seriously is that it's become clear that the EC has since done nothing and is not making any commitment to take the necessary action. Although the UK is scheduled to leave the EU this may take several years and the future shape of our relationship with Europe is unclear. The UK Government can't ignore the Vnuk judgement and so the UK and Ireland are currently both faced with the same potential crisis.

As a result the UK Government launched a public consultation in December 2016, which seeks the public's views of some alternative courses of action that could reduce, but maybe not eliminate, the potential damage that Vnuk will cause. The Irish Government, as far as we are aware, has taken no formal action yet.

What can NASA do to help?

Firstly, there's an online petition which, as with all such petitions, may or may not be effective, but we urge all our members to sign this (many of you may already have done so).

The petition is here:

<https://www.change.org/p/the-rt-hon-chris-grayling-fight-vnuk-the-eu-judgement-threatening-to-kill-uk-motorsport>

We'll reproduce the link on the NASA website and Facebook page.

The UK Government's online consultation doesn't specifically focus on the threat to motorsport, but we, along with other motorsport bodies, propose to respond to this near to the closing date of 31 March.

Otherwise we need to monitor the situation and prepare ourselves to work alongside other motoring organisations if any further response becomes necessary.



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ALCOHOL TESTING LIMITS

Those of you who have studied the 2017 members' handbook or attended recent NASA meetings will know that we've now reduced the allowed alcohol limits on breath testing. The previous limit was based on the road limit for England, which is higher than that in many other counties, including Scotland, and professional advice to NASA was that the limit was inappropriate for racing situations. We have now adopted a limit based on the European professional drivers' limit, which is as close to a zero limit as it is possible to enforce.

The limits are now:

- 9 microgrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath (old limit 35)
- 0.02% Blood Alcohol Content for adults (old limit 0.08%)
- any positive reading for minors aged 18 or under (no change)

The lower limits mean that the types of breathalyser previously issued by NASA for club use, or many of the alternative units that clubs have been permitted to acquire themselves, are no longer suitable for providing accurate and evidenced test results. NASA's team have been evaluating a professional standard machine and we'll be recommending that this machine is rolled out nationally for the 2017 season, with at least every league having one machine available. More information, including the costs of the new machines, will be given to your league representatives at their February meeting.

We're obviously aware that a few members have been discussing and commenting on the case of Karl Mosley, who received a year's ban from racing having failed a breath test carried out to the old limits.

As there's been some criticism of NASA's inflexibility in not allowing an appeal against the length of Karl's ban, we should remind you of the rule under which Karl was banned. This is a completely separate rule from NASA's normal disciplinary procedures where individual circumstances may be taken into account in determining penalties and considering appeals.

The NASA Members' Handbook (both 2016 and 2017 editions) states: "If a member fails this test, then he/she may take no further part in the event. ... In addition, the club will notify both the League and NASA. The member will be subject to withdrawal of their licence for a 12 month mandatory period: the only right of appeal being outlined below (namely medical)"



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ALCOHOL TESTING LIMITS *(continued)*

This is a very clear rule that's been in the book for a number of years and neither last year's Board nor this year's had any power to override this rule in an individual case. Therefore, although Karl's personal conduct has been exemplary ever since the unfortunate situation arose, the rules allow the directors no flexibility.

We hope that, with the new rules being effectively a zero tolerance of drinking before racing, there'll be less chance of a driver being caught out by a breath test in future, but the fixed penalty with no appeal remains in place.

Members have been asking when NASA will commence testing for drug use. The equipment, the operator training and the protocol for testing are all in place and, although we'll not be publicising when and where testing is likely to happen, it could be at any event from now on.

INSURANCE COVER FOR MEDICAL PERSONNEL

All club secretaries and safety officers should be aware that their NASA event permit applications and track plans should be submitted to NASA (via Pat Patrick as before) together with evidence of the appropriate levels of insurance being held by their contracted medical service providers.

We've had some clubs asking us to confirm the required cover. The most recent levels advised by our insurers are:

- Employer's liability - £10 million. We understand that the legal minimum is £5m, but our insurers' advice was that £10m is a more appropriate limit.
- Public liability - £5 million for a paramedic service, or £2 million for a basic first aid service (applicable if any clubs are contracting their paramedic separately from their first aiders)

Another reminder of Pat's address to send your documentation to:

Mrs Pat Patrick
Rainbow's End, South Side, Kilham
DRIFFIELD, East Yorkshire, YO25 4ST



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GUIDANCE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

We've received several enquiries from clubs over the winter about the approach they should take to photographers wishing to work from restricted areas.

Signed on photographers have two options. If they hold a NASA licence and are not working commercially, they may be given approval as an "official club photographer" and sign on the officials' sheets. They may then have access to restricted areas where other officials can work – eg marshals' posts and startline, subject to obeying the instructions of marshals and the safety officer.

Photographers wanting access to other areas, or not holding a NASA licence, must sign on the IN3 form and present proof of appropriate public liability insurance as they won't be covered by NASA insurance. We recommend £5 million cover, as required by some other motorsport venues, but the minimum acceptable is £2 million. They may then access otherwise prohibited areas with due regard to the risks – eg if they stand behind the armco it must be in an area away from the racing line. The risks will vary from track to track and we recommend photographers to prepare their own risk assessments to prove their understanding of the risks. Any inexperienced photographers or those unknown to the host club should be restricted to areas where they can be supervised or monitored by officials.

Any photographer who wants to work from public spectator areas is of course free and welcome to do so without being signed on. Safety officers should however keep an eye on any potential risks, for example ladders or platforms being erected in spectator areas that could pose a risk to either the photographer or other spectators.



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ROSE SAVAGE

We were very sad to hear that Rose Savage passed away on 1 February. For many years Rose had been an essential part of the St Neots Autograss Club where she'll be sadly missed by all the club members and all past visitors to St Neots' track.

Rose and husband John, despite brief memberships of other local clubs, were deeply involved in St Neots' growth into one of the most successful clubs in the country. Rose was an extremely competitive driver in the club's earlier years and later saw her sons Barry and Ray, followed by grandson Gavin, become leading specials drivers, both locally and nationally.

Rose will be best remembered, though, for her tireless work for the club. Typically she'd look after signing on before moving on to lap scoring, points keeping, commentating, feeding the marshals and first aiders, and finally organising trophies. Away from race days, as a long serving assistant secretary, she was the generous and reliable person who any club member or official could call on for help. Rose would show equal dedication in helping St Neots' sister club at Cambridge and on her family's travels to other clubs, Rose's help and advice was always offered. Our members in East Anglia and beyond have lost not only a most valued helper but also a much loved friend.

We extend our sincere sympathy to John, Ray, Barry, Gavin and their families, and to all of their friends in Autograss.

SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE

During the 2017 season the scrutineering team will be working to bring you some new rule books. They will be steered more towards the individual classes, they will be easier to understand and we hope to do away with any grey areas there may have been in previous publications.

In 2017 we will work to the 2015 rule book along with any updates that have been agreed since then. There will be a simplified list below as a reminder to competitors. The rules will take immediate effect unless stated otherwise.

If there is anything that isn't clear then please contact your club or league scrutineers to make sure.



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SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE *(continued)*

Please also remember that no car will be allowed to race without a blue roll cage tag in 2017.

Class 1 Mini

- Contactless ignition systems are allowed, as in 2016 (restricted make and model only).
- Straight through exhaust systems are not permitted.
- Sump guards are now restricted to 3mm steel or 5mm alloy only. Size is the minimum required to protect the engine sump, securely fixed, and not in a way that could strengthen chassis, suspension or engine mountings.
- Special attention should be given to seat belt fixing on older cars where corrosion may be evident.

Class 1 Micra and Yaris.

- Standard production coil must be retained.
- Inlet manifold must be complete with standard production water hoses, sensors and connecting electrical wiring. The disconnecting or by-passing of the same is prohibited.
- Bumpers must remain fitted at all times.
- Battery charging system, including alternator must be retained.
- Battery must be of equal or similar size to the original.
- Sump guards are not permitted.
- Diagnostic sockets must be fitted and must work.

Class 2

- After initial discussions regarding exhaust exit position, and the suggestion that exhausts had to exit behind the B pillar, it has been found that this is not practical in some cases. With this in mind the rule will remain unchanged during 2017 with further discussions to take place prior to the Class 2 rule book update.
- Suspension will be restricted for the 2018 season. Again this will be discussed in detail, with permitted specification announced as early as possible.
- Sump guards will be restricted to 3mm steel or 5mm alloy only. Size is the minimum required to protect the engine sump, securely fixed, and not in a way that could strengthen chassis, suspension or engine mountings.
- Cooling radiator will be restricted to equal or similar to standard manufacturer size, oversized radiators will be classed as ballast.



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SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE *(continued)*

- There have been some important changes made to valve seats, this rule was introduced for 2016, however we are aware that some cars may still be using illegal cylinder heads.
 - The following is taken from the April 2016 scrutineers meeting minutes. These rules apply to all the standard restricted classes. Class 1, Class 2 and Junior Specials.
 - **Valve Seats:** The rule books permit the use of a 3 angle valve seat. If a particular vehicle already has this then that's it, it is not permitted to change this.
 - General rules, page 4 rule 2, only listed modifications are permitted, a part cannot be altered in any way whatsoever. There is no rule listed other than permitting a 3 angle valve seat, so nothing else is permitted and therefore making anything other than 3 angles is non-compliant.
 - **Valve:** Page 17, rule 1.3, standard replacement components only must be used. On a standard valve the seat is in a set location. If the re-cut valve seat is in a different location to the standard valve, it is also non-compliant.
 - All cylinder head, valve, valve seat modifications can only be carried out in accordance with the manufacturers standard reconditioning procedures.
 - This is not a new rule, only a clarification of the rules we already have and will be implemented with immediate effect. The clarification given previously said that from 2017 the valve seat insert had to have enough untouched material to allow measuring in the throat, see below, this still applies. Note - this will not be taken into consideration as being one of the 3 angles.
 - **Valve Seat Inserts:** Concerns regarding modification to insert that may result in part of port being machined either deliberately or inadvertently when carrying out 3 angle cut. i.e. the 3rd angle cut below valve seat cut being a very shallow angle that extends the whole remaining depth of the insert and possibly due to cutter used beyond end of insert into the head port throat.
 - This practise, if discovered upon checking a head, will result in thorough examination and taking of measurements to check for compliance.



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SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE (*continued*)

- It is recommended that at least 1mm of last part of insert length remains untouched. i.e. 3rd angle shallow cut to end 1mm from base of insert.
- Competitors on notice that as of January 2017 if 1mm un-machined part is not found then the head concerned will be deemed as non-compliant.
- If there is any doubt on the above rules please contact a NASA scrutineer.

Class 3

There have been various scrutineering updates for class 3 during 2015 and 2016, these updates have been well publicised and understood, as a reminder here they are again.

- Front of the chassis, engine cradle - All chassis or engine cradle construction should remain behind the front face of the front wheels / tyres, at all levels. Different sized wheels should be taken into consideration when manufacturing.
- Presently the rule book states that, at a height lower than 349 mm, this framework can protrude to within 20mm of the front panel of the vehicle, this is unsatisfactory and the rule will be amended as above.
- All framework forward of the front face of the front wheels / tyres, should be restricted to 2 x 20mm tube / box braces supporting 1x 25mm tube / box cross bar supporting the front panel / bumper, as described in the current rule book.
- Front wing supports and bonnet slam panel support bar, may be constructed from 20mm tube or box, connected to the panels described above only.
- Rear of the chassis, boot floor etc - to simplify the present rules, all main framework should remain in front of the rear face of the rear wheels, from that point rearwards will be restricted to a maximum of 2 x 32mm support bars, supporting 1 x 32mm bar inside the original rear panel of the vehicle, maximum width will be the centre line of the rear wheels, this should be constructed within 50 mm higher or lower than the original vehicle boot floor position, **in addition to this 2 straight / triangulation support bars, 32mm will be allowed, if used they must end 100mm forward of the 25mm bumper bar, this may help protect components housed in this area,** this is a maximum requirement, smaller sized material may be used, excess framework will be seen as ballast, which is prohibited.



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SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE (*continued*)

- Where batteries, oil or fuel tanks are fitted in the rear of the vehicle, safety should be the first consideration, especially in the event of impact, local protection for specific components will be allowed, for example, an oil tank may have 1 bar over any fittings or the top, but only local to that item, maximum 25mm box or tube, excess material will be seen as ballast and is prohibited.
- The material described above, forward of the front face of the front wheels / tyres and rear of the rear face of the wheels / tyres should be of a maximum wall thickness of 3.5mm.
- Having discussed it, and now looked at it in some detail, there will be further discussion in relation to battery and battery box sizes, with a view to reducing sizes for the 2018 season, it seems when the rules were made, little thought was given to this.
- Finally the positioning of radiators in what would be the rear window area of the vehicle will be deemed as, not within the rules for class 3, the infilling of rear or rear side window apertures is prohibited and radiators must be panelled / shielded from the driver.

Other rules to affect Class 3 which are common to other classes are as below.

- **Exhaust exit point:** After initial discussions regarding exhaust exit position, and the suggestion that exhausts had to exit behind the B pillar, it has been found that this is not practical in some cases. With this in mind the rule will remain unchanged during 2017 with further discussions to take place prior to the new rule books.
- **Bodyshell mounting:** All cars that have a removable bodyshell must have 4 mounting points, preferably 2 front and 2 rear, minimum 8mm size, above the bottom of the original window line. The object of this is to secure the upper part of the bodyshell in the event of an accident/roll over.
- **Wheel arches:** Wheel arch minimum requirements have changed. For 2017 the wheel arch must be no more than 20mm from the outside edge of the tyre; previous measurement was 50mm. This 20mm requirement must be for a measurement equal to a minimum of 25% of the tyre's circumference.
- Wheel arches that are broken during racing must be repaired before racing again.
- Sump guards are restricted to 3mm steel or 5mm aluminium.



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SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE (*continued*)

Class 4/5/6/7

For 2017 the following already mentioned rules will apply:

- **Exhaust exit point:** After initial discussions regarding exhaust exit position, and the suggestion that exhausts had to exit behind the B pillar, it has been found that this is not practical in some cases. With this in mind the rule will remain unchanged during 2017 with further discussions to take place prior to the new rule books.
- **Bodyshell mounting:** All cars that have a removable bodyshell must have 4 mounting points, preferably 2 front and 2 rear, minimum 8mm size, above the bottom of the original window line. The object of this is to secure the upper part of the bodyshell in the event of an accident/roll over.
- **Wheel arches:** Wheel arch minimum requirements have changed. For 2017 the wheel arch must be no more than 20mm from the outside edge of the tyre; previous measurement was 50mm. This 20mm requirement must be for a measurement equal to a minimum of 25% of the tyre's circumference.
- Wheel arches that are broken during racing must be repaired before racing again.
- **Bodyshell:** Some taller, more modern body shells will be allowed to have the minimum sill height reduced. This will be on special agreement with NASA with minimum interior heights and other requirements, further updates with new rule book.
- All bodyshell types will be subject to original measurement checks, changing length, height or width of a vehicle is prohibited.
- Sump guards are restricted to 3mm steel or 5mm aluminium.

Class 8/9/10

- **Engine positioning:** in recent years engines have become more exposed. For 2017 all new cars built will have the engine/ gearbox situated within the chassis structure, as originally intended, the new rule books will have more details.

Junior Special

- Upper and lower rear suspension mounting points should be fixed in one place to the chassis. The ability to adjust this fixing point, up, down, in or out is not permitted.
- Sump guards are restricted to 3mm steel or 5mm aluminium.



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SCRUTINEERING AND RULE CHANGE UPDATE *(continued)*

Other important information

- Seats should be fitted safely and securely to the seat manufacturer's fitting recommendations.
- Seat belts should be fitted independently to the seat fixing bolts.