

Summary of cars and drivers that are scheduled to appear in the Live Arena at the Autosport Show, January 2008:

The world of Autograss - the NASA Single Seaters

All categories of NASA single seater are represented here at the NEC this weekend. There are three senior classes:- 8, 9 and 10 and the "Junior Specials" which are listed separately.

In simple terms the Class 8 cars are up to 1350cc, single engined cars and the class is dominated by motor cycle engined examples. Competitive cars weigh in the order of 400kg and have power outputs in the region of 200bhp.

The Class 9 cars are of 2 litre capacity but are specifically powered by traditional type car engines. Turbos are not permitted but otherwise tuning is unlimited. These cars are typically 500kg and power outputs will vary between 200 and 300bhp.

Class 10 is effectively the unlimited class of single seater. There are a large proportion of twin engined cars in use today but there remains a strong following of V8 Chevys, etc The physically smaller bike engines are the most popular and used in pairs, and are preferred small in the interests of keeping mass down and as such tonight's selection of cars are using ZX9Rs, R1s, GSXR1000s and are typical of the current breed. Tuning is unlimited and can include turbos and superchargers if 800bhp per tonne is not enough for you!

In terms of nimbleness and power/weight ratios these Class 8, 9 and 10s' are the most spectacular machines you will see performing in the Arena this weekend. As they are not racing in a contact formulae, unlike say the F1 Stock Cars, it means the cars can ultra lightweight and designed for sheer speed and handling agility. Competitive second-hand cars can be purchased for around £5000. A 2008, latest evo machine from one of our constructors, complete with the latest in engine and management technology can easily set you back £30,000. This is serious motorsport and you will be impressed!

All NASA cars will be seen to be carrying a letter prefix to their race numbers. These letters indicate particular membership of one the 50+ affiliated clubs spread throughout the UK and Eire that make up the National Autograss Sport Association. ST = Sturton (Lincs), Y = York, SC = Scunthorpe, R = Radford (Worcs), ARC = Abram (Lancs), SR = Shropshire & Telford, BC = Border Counties (Welsh Borders), LM = Leewood (Lancs), NS = North Shropshire, etc

Senior NASA Arena cars:

ST44 Dan Mackenzie. (Nasa Class 8) 1350cc Suzuki Hyabusa powered single seater. Chassis is a 2007 spec, ARD special. The engine is a Powertec tuned unit developing something around 200bhp. Dan, 18 years old but already with 6 years autograss race experience benefits from the fact that he is employed as an engineer by Powertec! A third generation racer, he lives at home in March, Cambs.

Y34 Mark Grice. (Nasa Class 8) Also racing a 2007 spec ARD chassis. The 1350 Hyabusa has been tuned by Paul Exon, better known for his NHPRA, Pick Up and Autograss Vauxhalls, this car is as fast as anything you'll see! 200hp is the norm for this 1300cc class. Mark is a big lad in a lightweight Class but is fearless as a racer as we will see in the arena. Now 21 years old but with 7 years racing experience he is also a third generation member of a well known York racing family. Mark works as an engineering fitter.

R1 Lee Waldron. (Nasa Class 8) One of the first Powertec customers from the world of Autograss, Lee's 1350 Hyabusa will be as quick as anything you'll see in the arena. Unlike many of the other competitors here, Lee with the help of father Paul, trading as P&L motorsport build their own chassis' and very effective they are. Lee is 27 years old and like all the younger competitors here started autograss racing as soon as he was old enough. He has raced in saloon classes also but has been with this class for the last 3 years. Lee is a cryogenic engineer and lives in Worcester.

SC1 Antony Ross. (Nasa Class 8) 34 years old and spectating since he was old enough to peer over the sides of his pram and racing for 20 years Ant is known everywhere in the world of autograss. Not only a highly successful racer, he is also the proprietor of one of the sports best known race car building companies – ARD. He will be racing the new 2008 ARD machine in the Arena, that being the revised (anti – wheelie) chassis designed by himself which also features a number of safety improvements - yet comes in at sub 380kg! Powered by the 2008, 1340 Hyabusa from Powertec, horsepower will not be an issue.

ARC5 Phil Cooper. (Nasa Class 9) A high profile member of the sport, Phil has been a regular competitor here at the NEC which was also the venue at which he took the world indoor land speed record from Toyota F1 in this very car! Another ARD chassis, this one which competes in the two litre car engine category, is powered by a B&J tuned Lexus Touring Car engine - developing nearly 300bhp. Fours years as a Junior racer followed by a year in Class 8 and 10 he has been loyal to Class 9 since. Phil, 22 years old, is from Warrington where he works as an engineer employed by Unilever.

SR5 Paul Owen. (Nasa Class 9) Paul is one of the more experienced racers representing NASA this weekend. He races in the two litre single seater category with his Jamie Dodd (DRD) built car. The engine is the popular 2.0XE Vauxhall prepared by himself to something around 230bhp. At 48, Paul has been racing continuously within the sport for 30 years. What's more he's done 23 years in this same class and truly deserves his appearance here at the NEC. Paul's from Shrewsbury where he works as a diesel fitter/engineer.

Y88 Neil Rawlinson. (Nasa Class 10). Larger than life character Neil has just completed another successful racing season in his twin engine, 370bhp Class 10. An established chassis builder within the sport and as someone who owns his own fabrication company, he builds his own cars in their entirety. This one uses the latest spec Yamaha R1 motors coupled together kicking out that 370bhp at 14,200 revs/min – and don't forget, only 2 litre! Neil is 46 years old and has 20 years racing experience and has raced in all of autograss' high output classes but the fearless man from Middlesbrough has probably just had his most successful season to date.

BC22 Lance Bowen. (Nasa Class 10) Racing a P&C built machine the car utilises two “piggy back” mounted Kawasaki ZX9R motors, tuned by Mike Lynham. At 24 Lance is probably the youngest club chairman in the sport, what’s more he’s now in his fourth year in the job with Border Counties! In his 10 year racing career, starting as a junior, he has raced in Class 1 and 2 but has been in the sport’s biggest class for the last three years although he still enjoys an odd outing in Class 2. Lance works as an HGV Fitter and lives in Hereford.

LM170 Vinny Gibbons. (Nasa Class 10) For over 30 years one of the sports showmen. Vinny has raced the big brutes of class 10 for 25 years and has entertained countless thousands in doing so. On the downside Vinny has spent many a night in “casualty” and has more screws pins and plates in his body than most here this week irrespective of their discipline. A loyal fan of the car engine (and by definition a man with a serious dislike of bike engines!), Vinny’s 400hp small block Chevy is a beautiful piece of kit and he won’t disappoint when let loose. The 50 year old teenager from Heywood, Lancs. is a garage proprietor.

R7 Paul Fackrell. (Nasa Class 10) Same age as Vinny, Paul left behind the V8’s a few years back on the basis of “can’t beat them, join them” so switched camps and now runs his own chassis with twin GSXR1000 Suzukis. Even in standard trim this is still a 350hp+ missile. Paul started racing 30 years ago but has as much enthusiasm for the sport today as he’s ever had and is not ready to move over yet for the youngsters! A Manufacturing Co. Director, Paul lives in Redditch, Worcs.

The Autograss “Junior Specials”

This category of NASA Racecar has been specifically introduced for junior competitors, boys and girls, between the ages of 12 and 16 years inclusive. Now into its fourth season its popularity is growing quickly across the UK and within Eire.

Designed to the same exacting safety standards as the regular Nasa single seaters these cars are all equipped with the Vauxhall Corsa C12NZ engine/gearbox combination. Modifications are not permitted and the class is closely scrutinised. Output is approx 55bhp but cars run up to 60mph on the ¼ mile oval in very close, competitive but safe races. There is a minimum weight limit for the car of 450kg.

These are proper race cars that can be prepared at home, are safe, have good resale value and offer a real alternative to other formulae trying to attract youngsters into motorsport.

This is the first appearance of NASA Junior Specials in the Arena.

Arena Competitors:-

Y292 Katie Lockwood. Chassis by ARD, Katie is 15, has two years racing experience and lives near Brigg in Lincs. Both parents are very experienced racers and Katie will have spent most weekends of her life at an Autograss event somewhere in the UK!

Y888 Jack Rawlinson. Jack is the son of Neil the Class 10 racer also featuring in the arena this weekend. Racing a car built by his father, Jack has fortunately yet to show that wild man style of driving usually displayed by his dad! Thirteen year old Jack from Middlesborough has just completed his first season as a competitor but of course has also lived with the sport all his life.

R252 Michael Bluck. Michael has just taken delivery of a new Berrisford chassis and is racing the brand new 2008 spec car here in the arena for the first time! At 14 years old he has just completed his second season in Junior Specials having started in Autograss racing with a Class 1 mini. Maybe one to watch, Michael lives in Grafton Flyford, Worcestershire.

R72 Joe Kacarevic. Young Joe has just completed his first season as a single seater driver but has had the benefit of two years Class 1 mini saloon experience before that. This is a new car ready for the 2008 season and comes from the highly respected GB Engineering concern. 15 year old Tom is from Inkberrow, Worcs.

R6 Tom Taylor. Tom, 12 years old has only been racing a few months but is making good progress in the P&C chassied machine and already starting to collect trophies. Son of Ady Taylor, well known Radford racer and scrutineer Tom has also been raised on the autograss field! The car was ready well before Tom's 12th birthday in July and actually featured on the NASA static display at the 2007 Autosport Show. Tom is from Strensham, Worcs.

NS14 Rhys Williams. Another young man with a lifetime's experience of the sport, Rhys is 15 years old and comes from the wilds of North Wales! He now has 3 years competition experience in these cars and is a regular front runner. His father John is a long established constructor and was responsible for the car in its entirety which featured a new chassis for 2007. Rhys' brother Lyndon also races in the class and father John has raced his own single seaters for more years than he wants to reveal!

NS344 Sam Gould. Now completed 2 years as a Junior Special racer, 14 year old Sam is now consistently getting into the results. Racing a John Williams chassis car, the youngster from Shebdon in Staffs is a third generation racer and the son of Class 3 star Martin Gould.

SC36 Jack Clayton. 15 year old Jack is one of the most experienced JS racers here this weekend. Having completed 3 seasons in the class, Jack races what is the original prototype Junior Special built by Z-Cars as a demonstrator for NASA. Son of Neil and Ro Clayton, themselves regular single seater racers, Jack from Pontefract, Yorks shares his time between autograss and county level rugby.

The NASA static display of Race Cars

NASA is featuring six cars from differing classes in the exhibition hall as part of their static display. There are eleven classes to choose from as a competitor, including the Junior Specials which will be showing in the Live Arena. Those eleven formulae are made up of four single seater classes and seven saloons. There is therefore plenty to choose from to

suit all budgets, levels of technical competence and options for families to choose from where a car can be shared. A competitive autograss car can be purchased second-hand from as little as £500, maybe even less but can cost in excess of £30,000 and many do. Remember there are approximately 5,000 active members of NASA, spread throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern and Southern Ireland. There's somewhere local to race every weekend of the season. There's no pre-entry requirements, race day entry fees are typically £5 to enter the meeting as a spectator and maybe another £3 to £5 to race for the day – yes, you read that correctly!

Display Cars:

CA295 - Class 1 Mini – Carl Whitfield

Carl is the sport's reigning Class 1 National Champion, winning the title at the Nationals in August 2007. The car that won the title had been built – both shell and engine - entirely by Carl himself. A particularly interesting fact and one that should give encouragement to others is that Carl won the title with an investment in the car of only £350! However Carl has a wealth of experience and technical knowledge gained by 17 years continuous competition in the class. Having said that, and encouraged by his recent competition success he has commissioned Stuart Hayman's "Coast to Coast" motorsport concern to carry out the initial build on the car seen here at the show. The car has been finished by Carl himself and is powered by one of his own engine units. Carl is 31 years old, lives in Shrewsbury and works as a "Diesel Specialist".

SP70 – Class 4 Mini – Tom Godfrey

This is another new car making its public debut here at the NEC. A brand new 1100cc, modified mini, this uses a shell wholly prepared by Owens Fabrication – Endaf is an established autograss fabricator but becoming increasingly known for his tremendous successes in both preparing and racing Mini Miglias. Anyway this seriously lightened mini is powered by a variant of the 1071 Cooper S engine taken out to class maximum capacity at 1140cc. All engine work is by Sam Griffiths of DNG a name synonymous with winning mini engines for many years. Tom is only 18 but having started with our Juniors already has 5 years racing experience. He works for the Spalding based family motor business as a mechanic.

TA22 – Class 7 Nissan Micra – Dylan Hughes

Class 7 is the super saloon category of autograss car and always a crowd favourite. These tremendously powerful, yet lightweight machines pack a tremendous punch as anyone who has witnessed them in the Live Arena the last few years will testify! Dylan's car is new and typical of the class. He has built the car himself, with a little help at the engine installation stage coming from Endaf Owens, but otherwise his own work. Powered by the "old faithful" of Class 7, a pair of carb model Honda Blackbird engines; they are piggyback mounted in the rear with the motive power being harnessed by a "John Gay Drive Box". Dylan, like Carl is also 31 and been racing since he was 14 and watching the sport his entire life. He is employed in a sales capacity at a local motor factors in Aberystwyth.

SS8 – Class 8 single seater – Keith Mathews

A new chassis from his near neighbours down in Somerset, Extreme Race Cars (Russ Shepherd and John Gay) this 2008 spec machine features Extremes distinctive reverse mounted engine installation, in this case a 1300 Suzuki Hyabusa and new design features to prevent the front lifting under power – something no longer permitted for safety reasons under the 2008 Nasa rules. Keith is probably best known as a former Class 10 racer but more so today as the Chairman of NASA. The boss is a 49 year old company director, lives in Martock, Somerset but will shortly be re-locating to Blairgowrie, Scotland.

T5 – Class 8 single seater – Stuart Whitehouse

This is a reworked 2007 ARD chassis, having generally been brought up to 2008 spec, in particular also featuring design changes to prevent front lifting under acceleration like Keith's above. This car is also powered by the universally popular 1350 Hyabusa, this one from Powertec. Stuart, 27 and son of popular Class 10 racer, John Whitehouse had his best season in 2006 when he won the Class 8 British Championship. 27 years old, 27 years a spectator and 13 as a racer Stuart lives near Pontefract, Yorks where he runs his own business - the successful motorsport graphics company, "Star Signs".

ST131 – Class 9 single seater – David West

This is a fine example of a budget NASA single seater. Racing in the 2 litre car engine category the Class Nines can be expensive but Dave shows here how to produce a nice car at a reasonable price. The car is built around a Readspeak chassis but all the build work, panelling and assembly were done by Dave and his wife Claire, often helped by Matt Needham. The car is powered by the popular Vauxhall 2.0XE engine, in standard form, just fitted with bike carbs and mated to a std F20 gearbox. Dave is 26, raced since he was old enough and comes from Scunthorpe. He works there for the Seat main dealer as their After Sales Manager.

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