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NEWSLETTER No. 58

Introduction

Once again it's time for the twice yearly newsletter to bring you the results of the summer championship and other news about what's going on in the club. I'd like to welcome those of you that have recently joined us and hope you have enjoyed racing with us during the summer. I hope you will be staying with us as we move indoors to our new winter venue.

Spring Meeting 2005

We were fortunate that a fine day marked our very last race for the foreseeable future at Hugh Christie after many years. By way of a thank you the club bought a bouquet of flowers for Jenny Rutherford who has been an enormous help to us since we first started using the facilities there.

As usual we had a mixture of regular and novelty races with the return of a rally sprint where two drivers at a time race head-to-head. The thirty eight drivers who took part in the event each did a handicapped, timed run with the slowest six dropping out to give us the correct number of 32 to allow the reduction by half each round until just two were left in the final. It was a good event but it took a long time! It is a fact that the success of the day was due entirely to the input of the members who assisted us again in a variety of ways. I'd like to offer our collective thanks to Jim Litchfield, Colin Sexton and Sue Fuller for the excellent bar-b-q that they arranged for us. As before Steve Andrews had collected the burgers and sausages and Jim had brought the rolls and provided the gas bar-b-q. We stuck with the idea of charging non drivers for the bar-b-q and drink (£1.50) which I don't think is at all unreasonable. Drivers had the cost of food included in their race fee of £6 for the day.

Grant designed both the track and the rally sprint circuit, Steve Hamblin was in charge of transmitters and transponders and Ian was "Race Director". Kris Healey organised the team event again but used the "names out of a hat" method of picking the teams for a change. Once more Baz Healey begged and borrowed some excellent prizes for the raffle which raised an excellent £100 exactly. There were some generous donations from EM Models, R/C Car World and Model World (amongst others) which made that figure possible. Also Gary Wise kindly collected the trophies from the engravers that we presented on the day and our guest judge for the Concours was Dave Burton. To all these people can I say "thank you" for your help in the preparation and also on the day to make it the success it was, and of course to everyone who turned up either as racers or spectators.

The results are as follows:-

Concours

1 st Mike Spurway	2 nd Jason Gidley	3 rd Andrew Cartwright
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Saloons

'A' 1 st Dave Mills	2 nd Grant Riddall	3 rd Gary Wise
'B' 1 st Kris Healey	2 nd Kevin Denman	3 rd Jason Gidley
'C' 1 st Joe Denman	2 nd Barry Healey	3 rd Dave Sexton
'D' 1 st Clive Bonner	2 nd Brian Fuller	3 rd Andrew Cartwright

E' 1st Ian Bonner

2nd Kevin Squires

3rd Kelly Walker

Team Event

1st Steve Andrews, James Parascandolo, Tim Fry, James Brooker, Martin Hoare

2nd Phil Gidley, Barry Healey, Gary Wise, Andrew Pilcher, Ian Bonner

3rd Grant Riddall, Mike Spurway, Dave Sexton, Danny Litchfield, Andy Frederick

Sprint Event

1st Andrew Pilcher

2nd Ross Hardy

3rd Dave Mills

Summer Championship

We had some good racing on a much better surface than we have been used to for a couple of years, although it's a shame there are less drivers than last season. It's good to see the various battles going on irrespective of which formula you're in or whereabouts in the results you are. The points are very tight! Perhaps not everyone can win the championship but at least the friendly rivalries give racing a bit of an edge! It was a shame that we had to miss the July 10th meeting and replace it with an extra one at the end with just a week's gap. This was because the playground and sports hall had both been booked for that day prior to us arriving on the scene. The facilities at Hayesbrook are excellent and we settled in without any hassle at all thanks to Tony (the Bursar) and Louis (the caretaker) who have both eased our transition. The shed is ideally situated for racing outdoors but it will need a bit of effort by the drivers when we start using the sports hall in the winter. In fact we did use the hall for two meetings when the weather was bad and found the grip to be better than expected. At the last meeting Grant and I were undecided about the weather. First we started to set up in the hall, then we changed our minds and moved outside. We had only been there five minutes and the black clouds rolled in so we went back indoors again before drivers started arriving. Poor Nick Riddall moved some of that track three times; fortunately Steve Collins helped him with the last move. I know going indoors during summer isn't popular with everyone but I'm afraid we have to make a decision and once we're set up we have to stick with it. My thanks to Steve Andrews, Grant and Ian for removing the old shed from Hugh Christie and disposing of it. Also thanks to Steve Hamblin for donating a tent to use for race control after the old one practically fell apart.

Results

Formula 1

1 st and Club Champion	Dave Mills	670 points
2 nd	Grant Riddall	656 "
3 rd	Kris Healey	627 "
4 th	Dan Hamblin	626 "
5 th	Andy Frederick	603 "
6 th	Phil Gidley	591 "
7 th	James Brooker	585 "
8 th	Tim Fry	578 "
9 th	Shawn Herrington	575 "
=10 th	Gary Wise	544 "
=10 th	Claire Piper	544 "

Formula 2

1 st	Steve Collins	609 points
2 nd	Barry Healey	577 "
3 rd	Richard Hathaway	563 "
4 th	Dave Edwards	562 "
5 th	Nick Riddall	533 "

6 th	Danny Litchfield	510 points
7 th	Mike Hoare	436 “

Formula 3

1 st	Joe Hartfield	552 points
2 nd	David Thomas	531 “
3 rd	Martin Hoare	510 “
4 th	Steve Griffen	488 “
5 th	Ross Edwards	481 “

Formula Tamiya

1 st	Kris Healey	670 points
2 nd	James Brooker	659 “
3 rd	Dave Edwards	641 “
4 th	Steve Griffen	613 “
5 th	Ross Edwards	608 “

Trophies

I hope that the trophies and Club Champion shield will be ready for the first (practice) meeting on October 30th. As well as championship trophies we also present two others at this time of year. Firstly, the “Chris Janes Trophy” is given to the driver that we think is the most improved. Secondly, the “Clubman Trophy” is given to the person we think has given excellent service to the club. This has nothing at all to do with driving ability. Both of the above recipients also get a small version of the shield to keep for good.

New software

One of the biggest changes, apart from moving venue, was the change in race software that we use to run the meetings. As long ago as last year we had a vote on whether we should adopt the “staggered start” system for heats instead of the grid (all go at once) start that we were using at the time which caused a lot of first corner pile ups. Almost everyone was in favour of staggered starts but it took some time for us to be able to implement them. The problem was that both Ian and I had to be confident (and competent) using the program before it could go live. This meant setting up the whole system that we use on race days at home and getting to grips with how it worked. I did try one program but found it difficult to use and so because of this and a shortage of spare time the project got shelved. When we did eventually look at the problem again we tried some different software (bbkRC ECO) which seemed much more user friendly. Fortunately Kris Healey spent considerable time getting to know the program and one night Kris, Barry and I spent the whole evening tinkering with it and running a meeting until I felt confident enough to try it out. I am very grateful to both of them for their help. When we used it at a meeting for the first time we did try to use the old board and race cards as well but this only added to the confusion, so they were soon discarded for good. Another change that was forced on us, by the new software, was the renaming of the top formula from TQ to F1. The new program puts you into heats depending on your ability and also sorts out the finals for us so that life is a little less fraught in race control than previously. The print outs arrive without us asking for them so they are often on the board before the next heat is ready to go. The only down side is the synthesised American voice!

I would just say that changes like this take time to implement and (some) drivers need to bear this in mind as they would be the first to complain if we rushed in new software before we were fully ready and things went wrong. Ian and I (and others) have to commit our own time to make things like this happen so please be patient. As the saying goes – don’t be part of the problem, be part of the solution.

Fund raising and finance

During the summer the "Track Builder Treasure Hunt" has continued with Jim Litchfield still providing what we like to call extortion with a smile. Sadly with the drop in numbers fewer tickets have been sold. Its big advantage is that **you** have a chance of winning something in return for your pound. The other thing that raised money during the summer was the monster truck raffle that Claire organised. She donated a truck from her shop (R/C Car World) initially for the Enduro and sold 100 tickets for £5 each. Third prize of a DVD player was won by Mike Spurway. Second prize of a hauler bag was won by Barry Healey, and the truck itself was won by Mr Roger Wilkins from East Grinstead who was photographed collecting his prize outside the shop. Thanks for your donation Claire. The Enduro as a whole made £1279.23 before expenses.

One concern that we had on the subject of finance is that we may have run out of time in which to use the lottery grant and have to return it. The twelve months allowed would have expired during February 2006. Barry has contacted "Awards for All", and they have agreed a three month extension. I deal with the track situation elsewhere in this newsletter.

At the moment our deposit account stands at just over £20,000 including the grant. There is also the generous offer of an interest free loan of £5,000 from one of our members.

If you have an idea for fund raising Barry Healey is the club's Funding Co-ordinator and can be contacted on 01634 246007.

Web site

I'm glad to see that we have a forum up and running again. It serves a useful purpose in passing information to members and also allows them to discuss any topics they choose – not necessarily all of them radio control orientated. There is a section on the forum that allows you to see the agendas and minutes of committee meetings. I know that all committee members have internet access and can read these on line, but I'm aware that this may not apply to everyone else. If you don't have internet access and want to see agendas or minutes please let me know and I will get you a printed copy. The minutes of the previous meeting are signed at the following one to confirm that they are an accurate record of what took place.

Thanks to Dave and Claire for maintaining the site. The number of hits is over 34,000.

Track update

Sadly not much has happened on the track front. I was tempted to "cut and paste" what I wrote under this heading in the last newsletter. I speak to both Planning and Leisure Services at TMBC who are responsible for the cycle route, which as you know by now is the thorn in our side. The cycle track is now open but is not yet fully "off road". Once it is the cyclists will no longer need to use Lower Haysden Lane and our application can go ahead. Any important developments will appear on the forum or be sent to members who have given me a valid e-mail address.

I have looked at a possible alternative on land that belongs to one of our members and Richard Hathaway is contacting schools to see if any of them have vacant land we could use. Fund raising and the search for alternative sites must be our top priorities.

Winter Championship

Our winter season begins on October 30th in the sports hall at Hayesbrook School, Brook Street, Tonbridge. A full program listing is at the end of this newsletter. Don't forget that this is the weekend that BST ends! Please also remember that the school gates are due to open at 7.45am and shut at 9.00am so you need to make sure you arrive between those times. You can drive right down to the hall for unloading and loading but we can't unfortunately use the playground for parking so you will need to move your car back up to the other side of the barrier. **Trainers are the only shoes you can wear in the hall** - this is a school rule. When we used the hall at the last summer meeting there were all sorts of footwear in there, some of it totally unsuitable. We don't want to reach the stage of having to check everyone's shoes as

they come in, so please either wear trainers or leave outdoor shoes in the entrance hall. Also I have been asked to remind everyone of two other points. Firstly, that food and drink are not allowed to be consumed in the hall itself although it is OK in the entrance halls at either end. This is one reason for Claire and Dave stopping the tuck shop. Secondly, that **the entire school is non smoking**. Having been invited to view the video from school cameras it's obvious that at least two of our members have ignored this. If you need to smoke then I'm afraid you need to do it off the school site – the driveway and car parks are non smoking areas.

The first meeting is a practice to allow you to try out the new surface and tweak setups and tyres etc. The morning is structured in exactly the same way as an ordinary race day (3 heats and finals) but no points are gained at the end of racing. Your committee had thought about changing the way we organise the formulas by using motor classes instead. In the end we decided to stick with the original format that we have used before, so that F3 will use 27 turn stock and F1 and F2 will be allowed to run whatever motor they want. There will also be two Tamiya formulas. The 'A' formula will be for any Tamiya chassis (except the TRF series) and can run up to 27 turn. The 'B' formula will be for beginners or those still fairly new to racing who will be more comfortable with a slower motor. They must race a car that came **with a body shell and a silver can motor** which is the only type of motor they can use. Complete newcomers to racing must race for one season in this formula before they can progress. Depending on numbers we may need to run both Tamiya formulas in one heat. The uncertainty about changes to the formulas mentioned above means that I haven't had time to work out the promotions/demotions yet (as I thought there wouldn't be any!).

The committee have decided that if you want to, you can run in two formulas, meaning Tamiya and one other although they have also said that you will have to pay for each class (see below). The only difficulty may be with marshalling if you end up racing in two consecutive heats, and also repairing and battery charging for two cars.

On the subject of marshalling, please come straight out to marshal when your race is over and put on the yellow tabards so we can easily tell if all the points are filled. We will have a scrutineers table for you to put your car on so we can check that it's race legal. I'm afraid that will mean **all** cars need to be left on the table after they have raced. They can be collected after you have marshalled. This should also remove the need to go back to the pits.

It seems that Hugh Christie was charging well below the market rate for their sports hall because when we moved to Hayesbrook we immediately saw our expenses double. Because of this the committee have agreed that the cost of racing indoors will rise by £1 for everybody. This means juniors will pay £3, seniors £4 and visitors £6 per meeting. However we have agreed that if you run in two classes then the second one will be half price. I don't think this is unreasonable when you consider the quality of the facilities and also that we have had no rise in prices since 2001 when membership charges were first introduced. I hope that the prices will go back down when we return outdoors although other things like the track situation may influence that decision. Also to encourage new drivers to Tamiya 'B' their first meeting will be free.

Carpet

One of the things that were suggested for winter was that we ought to buy carpet for the sports hall. It was felt by the committee that we ought to keep the money we have to fund the outdoor track rather than spend some of it on carpet. That doesn't mean of course that we can't buy it at a later date. The committee has agreed to discuss it again at the next meeting. My thanks to Keith Wale who gave me all the information about suppliers and costs.

Transponders

The AMB20 transponders are now four and a half years old and like Ian are beginning to show their age. Before long we may have to consider replacing them with personal transponders. (Ian

however may last a little longer). These are effectively small versions of what we currently use but they are permanently fitted to your car and powered from the receiver. We can buy them in bulk, thirty at a time but they still cost £53 each. It is possible to buy some to use as “handouts” for those that don’t have their own fitted.

Enduro 2006?

The committee have opted to have another Enduro some time early next year, probably towards the end of the winter season as they felt it was good to race with other local clubs. The feeling is that West Kent ought to field it’s own ‘A’ team this time.

Club Phone

One of the suggestions made at a recent committee meeting was that the club should have a mobile phone of its own. That would allow you to check if racing was on if there were doubts about the weather without ringing anyone’s home number. Also you could ring it if you couldn’t get through the gates. Mike Spurway has very kindly donated a phone and Dave Mills donated a sim card. It will be carried by someone in race control but will only be switched on for race days. The number is 07870 163792.

Club Information

For the last four years I have produced a small booklet to give to new or prospective members that gives a brief history of the club and explains how things are run on race days. I have just updated it and intend to give all current members a copy as I found out recently that one of our committee members wasn’t aware of its existence.

Mike Spurway has kindly designed some posters advertising the club which will be displayed by local model shops. He is also making some in business card size with just contact details on.

Club car

Something I have been looking into is the possibility of the club having a car of it’s own that we can make available to a visitor to try out. A fairly robust Tamiya, possibly at TT01, that won’t break at the first contact with the barrier seems an ideal choice. Dave Edwards and James Brooker have both kindly offered some batteries and Dave has offered to keep the car in working order for us.

Good news

Yes, there is some. Two weddings, although I don’t recall any invitations arriving at race control! First there is Katie Roberts and Danny Mattess who got hitched (to each other) and Steve Griffen who also recently tied the knot. Congratulations to all of them and to Mark Parascandolo for his recently gained degree.

Fame beckons

The club was recently asked by a local TV company to put forward the name of a driver who could take part in a program which is to include an item on r/c car racing. Obviously I thought I would be the natural choice, given the dog’s breakfast I made of the last TV interview I did! Sadly though, it had to be a competent driver under the age of 16. That lets Ian out as well then. Joe Hartfield has agreed to me putting his name forward for possible stardom.

Committee

So far we have had three committee meetings, all of which have been well attended. Mike Spurway has been co-opted in his role as PR man. Richard Hathaway has kindly agreed to become membership secretary to lighten the load on me, so he will be the person to send you BRCA renewals to in December and your club memberships to in April.

I hope that the formation of the committee has been seen by the members as being a positive thing. It allows us to meet in a smaller group for longer and discuss things in more depth than was possible when we got drivers together for a few minutes before racing began. We can (as has happened) still be debating gone midnight particularly when views are strongly polarised. Its members are the representatives that you elected to represent you and your point of view. At the end of the Winter Championship the committee elections will be held again, so perhaps **you** ought to think about whether **you** want to be part of the democratic process and put yourself forward.

BRCA

Can I just remind you that it is a requirement of racing at WKRCC (and part of the Constitution) that you are also a member of the sports governing body the BRCA, because of the insurance cover that their membership gives you. The BRCA allows you to race at three club meetings before you have to join their organisation (currently £10 per year). Visitors are always welcome to race at our club but are limited again to three meetings before they have to join. I propose that this year we will collect BRCA membership forms and payments only up until 11th December and then send them off in bulk. After that date individual members will have to send their own, as last year they arrived in ones and twos for months after!

Thanks

As always I offer my thanks to those people whose continued support has kept the club going during the last season. Steve Hamblin has again been our transmitter and transponder man. Some of you will know that his son Dan has just started his last year at University, so we may not see so much of him for a while but Steve has said he will be down for alternate meetings to continue in his official role. I'm sure we all wish Dan the best of luck with his finals. Thanks to Ian as race director, to Grant for track design, to Big Jim Litchfield for taking round the Treasure Hunt board and Nick Riddall the official shed packer. Lastly thanks to all those of you who in some way have supported the club despite the long wait for a track of our own.

Please remember this is meant to be fun so do**enjoy your racing.**

Brian - October 2005

From the Funding Co-ordinator

Hi All

Many thanks everyone for their financial support over the past year, whether you have purchased Track Builder squares, Raffle Tickets or donated prizes your support is greatly appreciated. We are so close to having our finances in place for the new track; I can almost taste the Tarmac. (Not that I like eating Tarmac)

Earlier this year we were lucky enough to get £5000 from the National Lottery (Awards for All) however one of the conditions that this money was given to us, was that we spent it within 12 months. Due to the council not making a decision with regards to the planning permission, our twelve months are coming round very quickly and we are frantically running out of time. The money must be spent by February or we have to hand it back to Awards for All, ***obviously this would be a total tragedy.***

We are also in a catch twenty two situation with regards to the location of the track. If we consider building a track at another location we would almost certainly have to hand the money back to Awards for All. This is due to the fact that our initial application for the money was strengthened because we were going to build the track on council land, with the obvious securities that would bring.

Hopefully the council will make a positive decision in the next few weeks and allow us to start spending the money. If we can't spend the money, Jacqueline my wife has offered to spend it at Bluewater, she told me that she needs some new dresses, handbags and high heel shoes. However, I don't think Awards for All will WEAR that. I have even heard Brian say (tongue in cheek) that he could also spend the money if the club couldn't. I just hope he doesn't spend it on the same things as my wife!!! (See below)*

Back to the serious stuff, within the last year we have had many prizes donated to us by various Companies and individuals. Some of these prizes have a considerable value and I felt that their value was too great simply to put them in a raffle. On average most raffles make the club about £100 and I just felt we could get a better return, if we tried to sell the items to Club Members or even tried selling them on e-bay.

Claire has agreed to put the items on e-bay and deal with all transactions, so if you would like to make a bid on something either bid yourself on e-bay, if you have an account, or tell Claire your maximum bid so she can take it into account when selling the items.

A date has not been agreed when the items will go up for sale, however all Club members will be notified of the date, probably by email.

The list of items that we are selling is as follows:-

1. BMW V12IMR R.C Car (Carbon fibre Tamiya chassis, Complete with Transmitter, charger and Battery pack).
2. BMI Mercedes CLK Vodaphone R.C. Car (1:10 scale, Complete with Transmitter.
3. M-Troniks Cirrus speed controller (Waterproof).
4. LRP Fusion modified motor (12 Double).
5. Protoform Body shell (190mm Vauxhall Vectra)
6. Ingersoll DVD player (DVD / CD / JPEG).
7. B.A.R. F1 Pit shirt 2004 (donated by B.A.R. F1)

I think that it is only fair that we publicise to club members how much we sell each item for, so on completion of the auction we will email a list of each items final selling price.

And finally... just a thought to leave you on.

If you're having a bad day at racing and need to have a smile put back on your face.

*Just think what the Race Control officials might start to look like if we don't spend the £5000 on a new track!!

Start praying that we get the Planning Permission!!!!!!

Baz

Chairman's Chatter

I think you will all agree it has been a very interesting summer season – with lots of changes. How do you like the new race software? How do you like the new venue? I think the venue is ideal. The school is extremely clean and tidy and Louis the caretaker is really easy to get on with and he has been most cooperative in helping the club – his dog is great fun too and will run after a ball for as long as you care to throw it for her. A bit of a problem with the shed however, it has proved to be a bit on the tight side when packing everything in. It really could have been a bit larger. If you are involved with packing away the track and other bits into the shed they must go in as neatly as possible otherwise we just cannot get the door shut – it really is that tight. Whilst on the track it would be most helpful if some drivers would go and fetch the forms from the hall without Grant having to ask you to. There are still some members who do very little to

help and we seem to see the same faces all the time helping out. So if you are one of those who don't help then maybe it is about time you did. Grant is quite happy to be left to lay out the track provided all the bits are there.

I am starting to get the measure of the new software. I must admit I was a bit sceptical to start with but as I get more familiar with it I now see it is the only way to go – sixty other clubs in the UK use it so it must be OK. At the meeting before last, locating the loop just after the start saved a lot of time, as before cars were completing almost a lap before they had started their five minutes. Remember, your five minute time starts when your car passes under the loop and not from your actual start position. The only downside of the new software is that the heats are not quite so much of a “race” as they used to be. With the old software although each driver was still competing against the clock to achieve their best time because you all started at the same time it did make it quite a race and winning a heat irrespective of whether it was a quick time or not, it was a good feeling to be called out as the winner. Also as everybody started at the same time you had more idea where you were in the heat. With the new software you just go as quick as you can and if you catch up with all the cars that went in front of you then hopefully you'll be up for a good time. Another feature I like is that I can scan through the individual lap times throughout the race and the quickest time for each driver is highlighted. If there is anything you are not quite sure about please do not be afraid to ask either Brian or myself.

The last point I want to mention is what has happened to the numbers racing? We seem to have dropped from around fifty down to around thirty. It seems that with all hobbies the majority of people will only stay with a hobby for so long and then either pack in altogether or maybe go off and do something else. Hence we always need new members to replace those moving on – so try and get your friends interested.

Anyway that's all for now folks as Brian will complain that I'm using up too much paper – and he never “waffles on”!

Ian - October 2005

Winter (Indoor) Championship 2005/2006

30th October	Practice Meeting.....(Don't forget clocks go back one hour!)		
13 th November	Round 1**	5 th February 2006	Round 6
27 th November	Round 2	19 th February 2006	Round 7
11 th December	Round 3	5 th March 2006	Round 8
25th December	No Meeting	19 th March 2006	Round 9
8 th January 2006	Round 4	2 nd April 2006	Round 10 and AGM
22 nd January 2006	Round 5	16th April 2006	Spring Meeting

Please note that dates may change at the end of the winter season to allow for an ENDURO or similar event.

The AGM will take place immediately before racing starts.

** 13th November 2005 is Remembrance Sunday. In common with other sporting fixtures taking place on that day the club will observe the two minutes silence at 11.00am.