



# **NASA MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER**

## **Issue 10 – April 2018**

***We'd intended to head this newsletter up as "start of season 2018" but we've never known a year like it! The start of the Autograss season has never been wiped out to this extent since the "Foot and Mouth" year of 2001 – it's frightening to realise that none of our current junior members were even thought of at that time!***

***According to our fixture list we're now seven weeks into the official season, and we've had 29 scheduled race days, including reserve dates and rearranged dates. Of those just one has managed to run (not quite to its finish but some problems are unavoidable). So well done to Nottingham club and to the large number of members who made it to their opening meeting. We'll now have to hope that there's enough of a change in the weather to allow everyone to catch up with the backlog of track and venue preparation.***

***We're looking forward to the mid-April weekend when National qualifying should be getting properly under way, with thirteen clubs or leagues scheduling meetings. We're already aware of a couple of these being cancelled so best of luck to all the others. In many cases it won't be the work of a moment to get a meeting on after the ravages of the winter, so we hope that all our members understand just how much their clubs will be depending on their support when track work parties are needed.***

***With a severe lack of racing action so far it's been relatively quiet behind the scenes as well, so it's a shorter newsletter this time!***

***But we're sure things are about to get very busy very quickly, so if you have any questions or suggestions relating to the forthcoming season, please check in with your club and league representatives who'll be attending the NASA meetings at Walsall on Saturday 14 April. We'll remind you that visitors are welcome at these meetings, so if you want to come and support your representatives and get more of an insight into the work of NASA, please do!***

### **NATIONALS 2019 CONFIRMED**

We can now make the official announcement that the 2019 Men's National Championships will be hosted by Evesham Autograss Club at one of the most iconic venues in Autograss, the John Wilkin Raceway (Dodwell Raceway) at Stratford-upon-Avon. The dates for your diaries are 3/4 August 2019. This will be the first Nationals held at Dodwell since the Ladies' and Juniors' in 1998, although the venue will be very familiar to most of you from all the Open meetings and championship rounds that have been held there. To avoid any confusion, the hosts will be Evesham club rather than MAP League.



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We've already confirmed that the 2019 Ladies' and Juniors' Nationals will be hosted by the Southern League, at Bearley Raceway in Somerset, on 31 August/1 September 2019, so we're confident that we'll have excellent venues and strong and experienced organising teams for both of NASA's flagship events in 2019.

Looking further forward, we're now looking for proposals for the Nationals in 2020 and subsequent years. As we've already hinted, we'd like to avoid if possible the approach taken in the past where we'd receive (hopefully!) several applications of which one would be accepted and others turned down. In future, if multiple clubs and leagues are interested in hosting the Nationals, we'd be looking to work with all of them to build a multi-year plan to take the events forward. Of course, this will only happen once your clubs and leagues let us know they're interested – whether they want to be considered for 2020 or to plan further into the future.

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### **THE AUTOGRASS CALENDAR**

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Over the last couple of years we've had to work with what we consider to be a compromised annual calendar, largely arising from the experimental move of the Ladies' and Juniors' Nationals to a mid-August date, which stood in the way of an evenly spaced schedule for the BAS and UKAC championships and consequently put pressure on available dates for clubs' other special meetings.

We'd often considered the possibility of NASA imposing an outline calendar for the main series dates, giving everyone else a better chance to plan and establish their own events. We weren't willing to do this without consulting with the series themselves so, taking advantage of the Ladies' and Juniors' returning to its traditional date from 2019 onwards, we held a meeting with representatives of the BAS and UKAC and league chairmen's committee.

The outcome of this is that we've agreed an outline plan for the next three seasons, which we'll then update on a rolling basis. For the main series, the advantage is that they'll have fixed dates to offer to prospective host clubs and leagues, and they'll get as near as possible to the ideal of having five evenly spaced rounds through the season.

For other event organisers, there's the possibility of re-establishing consistent dates for some of the events that have "floated", or fallen by the wayside altogether, when responding to other dates moving. We haven't shown any dates other than Nationals and BAS/UKAC on our calendar, but we did consider and respect the established dates for other events we're aware of. We also hope that we'll be helping those members who need to arrange events such as weddings during the racing season, where advance planning has sometimes backfired in the past!

The most contentious part of our plan will be the timing of the first BAS/UKAC round, which we've now set as the week before the Spring Bank Holiday. That was always going to be a compromise, but we've opted to "sacrifice" one out of around eight weekends for National qualifying in order to keep both the May Bank Holidays free for clubs' own events. We realise this will suit some, but not others, but we had an eye on the 2018 May Day fixtures where



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several clubs have jumped on the date freed up by the BAS/UKAC and scheduled their own special events.

Rolling the agreed dates forward over three years has produced the expected anomalies – for example the August Bank Holiday will effectively jump forward a week in 2019, affecting all the available late summer dates. But we think we've produced a framework that everyone should be able to work with to achieve a more balanced season.

So, attached to this newsletter you'll find calendars for 2019, 2020 and 2021 that we very much hope that, unless any exceptional problems with venue availability etc crop up, we'll be able to stick to!

### **CLASS PLANNING**

Following questions raised at the last NASA scrutineers' committee meeting, we're looking for members' input on the future of our class structure, with particular focus on Class 4.

Now we have bear in mind, when we publicly raise subjects like this, that we have to be careful not to cause alarm and despondency among members who've invested in a class that seems to be threatened. We know that, when planning any significant changes within the sport, it's much easier to lose current members than it is to attract new ones!

Class 4 has been thrown into focus because entries have dropped off significantly in the class at BAS/UKAC level. Even last year's Nationals was short on numbers in the class, although maybe that was due to arithmetical issues – because of the way the numbers fell, it wasn't possible to have a long reserve list and, because the strength of the class is at club level in some areas, there was a higher than normal number of qualifiers who failed to make it.

We do keep an eye on the bigger picture and although Class 4 has undeniably waned in popularity at the "top" level, there's at least one area (Southern Ireland) where it's the fastest growing class with many "budget" cars under construction as members see it as a logical progression from Class 1, 2 or Hot Rod racing.

So we'd be grateful for any ideas or input you may have as to the future of the class. A few suggestions have already come through, as you can read if you look up the scrutineers' minutes on the NASA website. One rather more radical suggestion that came our way was to mirror the Class 6/7 split in Class 4/5, with Class 4 up to 1420cc FWD and Class 5 1420cc RWD – would this give us a stronger entry level modified class, accommodating the types of car that are popular in other forms of oval racing?

Just to give you a few discussion points when talking at your club and league meetings, here are the estimated number of competitors, class by class, in 2017 (including Men's Ladies and Juniors, based on licences issued as actual car numbers are more difficult to keep track of)

<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Class 6</b>	<b>Class 7</b>	<b>Class 8</b>	<b>Class 9</b>	<b>Class 10</b>	<b>Stock Hatch</b>	<b>F600</b>	<b>Junior Special</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>424</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>2137</b>



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### **CANCELLATIONS**

We have to hope that the worst is now over, but we must appeal to any club or league that cancels a meeting to advise us as quickly as possible. We need two notifications; the first is to Margaret Allen so that she can keep the insurance records up to date, and arrange for premiums to be carried over to any re-arranged meetings or reserve dates that come into play this year.

Secondly, please send an email to [fixtures@national-autograss.co.uk](mailto:fixtures@national-autograss.co.uk), which will enable Jason to keep the online fixture list, and especially the highlighted fixtures for the current week on the front page of the website, updated. To be fair, in these last few exceptional weeks we've been monitoring fixtures closely enough to pick up many of the changes before we've received official notification, but as the season picks up and meetings become more numerous, and cancellations fewer, we'll be relying on clubs to tell us what's going on.

### **ONCE YOU GET RACING .....**

We'll make no apology for returning to a theme we've mentioned several times before – car appearance, and the link between this and driving standards. The marshalling and scrutineering teams are singing from the same hymn sheet on this one. To put it bluntly, if the scrutineers see a car presented in such a state that they think the driver isn't going to care about acquiring a few more dents, they'll do the marshals a favour and stop that car racing until some effort's been made to tidy it up.

We hope that the same thinking will filter through to all drivers – that when heading into a corner you'll think of all the extra work you're going to cause yourself unless you give that other car a bit of room!

### **READING MATTER**

For those who need them, we've been working during the "extended" closed season on a few of NASA's documents that aren't included in the main rule books.

The "Nationals File", the supplementary regulations that apply to the two National Championship meetings, has been updated to the 2018 edition. Minor updates were made following a meeting with South Wales League, the host of both this year's events. To an extent this document's always a work-in-progress as new issues come to light, and we'll be expecting both next year's National hosts to have their input before it's updated again for 2019.

Our track construction regulations were removed this year from the Members' Handbook as we didn't think it was necessary for every driver to carry these rules around in their licence. Obviously club officials and those doing track inspections still need access to these rules so we've re-issued them in a more easily updated A4 format.



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Both these documents are available in PDF form by email, on request to the NASA Secretary, and it's likely that we'll in future make them available to download on a dedicated officials' page on the NASA website.

One more publication that's in progress is the Marshals' Handbook and we'd like to thank Paddy Bubb for his offer of assistance in putting this together. All marshalling members will have the opportunity to have input into this during the next few Walsall meetings for the marshals' and safety officers' committee.

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### **SERIES LIAISON**

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Having recently reviewed and approved the permit applications for all the NASA approved series (British Autograss Series, UK Autograss Championship, All Ireland Autograss Series, British F600 Championship and Stock Hatch Tour Series) we've appointed this years NASA liaison directors for the main series. These are the directors who'll be on hand to help the series' own committees with any problems that crop up during the season, and they'll also be the first point of contact for members who want to raise issues with any of the series.

The director working with the BAS will be Phil Rogers, for the UKAC it will be Barbara Harper and for the All-Ireland Series it will be Jeffrey Parish. The Stock Hatch Series will be overseen by Jason Baker. No specific director's been appointed to work with F600 at this stage due to the major part of the series being absorbed into the BAS.

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### **TYRE TALKS**

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One of the main talking points heading into the season (in common, we must say, with many other forms of motor sport that we keep in touch with) has been tyres – most specifically tyre costs.

The NASA Directors are, as you'd expect, in constant dialogue with the major tyre manufacturers and distributors supplying our sport, and recently we've been having extensive talks regarding future developments, with NASA's main agenda being the need to keep costs for our members under a reasonable degree of control.

We obviously can't go into any details here as a lot of the information that's been discussed is commercially sensitive, but we can say that recent meetings have given us an improved understanding of the issues facing our tyre suppliers, and we think we can say that the tyre people now have a better idea of what NASA, on behalf of our members, want to get out of any future tyre supply agreements.



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### **NIGE THOMPSON**

In our first few newsletters we made a point of recognising members of our sport who had passed away. Regretfully we had to decide to discontinue this, mainly because of the difficulty of keeping up with our vast past membership and the danger of missing anybody out who really deserved our recognition – as all our members, and past members, do, whatever their part in the sport.

However, we have to make an exception as, on the day that our last newsletter was published, we received the terrible shock of the passing of Nige Thompson, the long serving chairman of the Scunthorpe and District club, although some of us had known Nige even longer, going back to his pre-Autograss Banger racing days at Ashbyville stadium. As a club chairman, Nige's influence and achievements were exceptional, guiding the Scunny club as it grew into one of the biggest and most go-ahead in the country with a venue that is unrecognisable from the club's early years at Blyton. Nige's missions were to make Autograss safer and more professionally run, but also more fun, so he wasn't one to let conventions stand in his way when pursuing ideas like the Rallycross and Speedway meetings, the pre-season test day, floodlit Autograss, and many others. And as well as a supreme organiser and motivator of his members, we knew Nige as a dedicated family man and the genial host of his unique travelling Autograss pub! Our condolences to the family and all Nige's friends, but his influence and spirit will live on in Autograss.

### **A CLOSING THOUGHT**

Some of you, with no NASA race meetings to attend, may have been following other forms of motor sport, such as the British Touring Car Championship, which this year has three former Autograss racers on the grid. We were delighted to see the success of Senna Proctor (former Scarborough Junior racer) in the first round of the series with strong performances from ex-Junior National Champion Tom Boardman and former Down Autograss Junior Colin Turkington. Congratulations also to all the other Autograss graduates who've been performing well in all levels of Racing, Rallying, Rallycross, Production Car Trials and Drifting, to name just a few disciplines. Just help us by continually reminding everyone where all these talented motorsport competitors learned their skills!

### **OUR NEWSLETTERS ...**

*Any comments on this newsletter, or information or issues you'd like covered in our next issue, please get in touch – email [jeffrey.parish@national-autograss.co.uk](mailto:jeffrey.parish@national-autograss.co.uk)*

# NATIONAL AUTOGRASS OUTLINE CALENDAR 2019

March	Saturday	02/03/2019	
	Sunday	03/03/2019	
	Saturday	09/03/2019	
	Sunday	10/03/2019	
	Saturday	16/03/2019	
	Sunday	17/03/2019	
	Saturday	23/03/2019	
	Sunday	24/03/2019	
April	Saturday	30/03/2019	
	Sunday	31/03/2019	
	Saturday	06/04/2019	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	07/04/2019	
	Saturday	13/04/2019	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	14/04/2019	
	Friday	19/04/2019	
	Saturday	20/04/2019	EASTER
	Sunday	21/04/2019	
	Monday	22/04/2019	
May	Saturday	27/04/2019	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	28/04/2019	
	Saturday	04/05/2019	EARLY MAY BANK HOLIDAY
	Sunday	05/05/2019	
	Monday	06/05/2019	
	Saturday	11/05/2019	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	12/05/2019	
	Saturday	18/05/2019	BAS / UKAC 1
	Sunday	19/05/2019	
	Saturday	25/05/2019	SPRING BANK HOLIDAY
June	Sunday	26/05/2019	
	Monday	27/05/2018	
	Saturday	01/06/2019	
	Sunday	02/06/2019	
	Saturday	08/06/2019	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	09/06/2019	
	Saturday	15/06/2019	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	16/06/2019	
	Saturday	22/06/2019	BAS/UKAC 2
	Sunday	23/06/2019	
July	Saturday	29/06/2019	
	Sunday	30/06/2019	
	Saturday	06/07/2019	
	Sunday	07/07/2019	
	Saturday	13/07/2019	BAS/UKAC 3
	Sunday	14/07/2019	
	Saturday	20/07/2019	
	Sunday	21/07/2019	
August	Saturday	27/07/2019	
	Sunday	28/07/2019	
	Saturday	03/08/2019	NATIONALS
	Sunday	04/08/2019	
	Saturday	10/08/2019	
	Sunday	11/08/2019	
	Saturday	17/08/2019	BAS/UKAC 4
	Sunday	18/08/2019	
September	Saturday	24/08/2019	AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY
	Sunday	25/08/2019	
	Monday	26/08/2019	
	Saturday	31/08/2019	LADIES & JUNIORS
	Sunday	01/09/2019	
	Saturday	07/09/2019	
	Sunday	08/09/2019	
	Saturday	14/09/2019	BAS/UKAC 5
	Sunday	15/09/2019	
	Saturday	21/09/2019	
October	Sunday	22/09/2019	
	Saturday	28/09/2019	BAS/UKAC RESERVE
	Sunday	29/09/2019	
	Saturday	29/09/2019	
	Sunday	05/10/2019	
	Saturday	06/10/2019	
	Sunday	12/10/2019	
	Saturday	13/10/2019	
Sunday	19/10/2019		
Saturday	20/10/2019		
Sunday	26/10/2019		

# NATIONAL AUTOGRASS OUTLINE CALENDAR 2020

March	Saturday	07/03/2020	
	Sunday	08/03/2020	
	Saturday	14/03/2020	
	Sunday	15/03/2020	
	Saturday	21/03/2020	
	Sunday	22/03/2020	
April	Saturday	28/03/2020	
	Sunday	29/03/2020	
	Saturday	04/04/2020	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	05/04/2020	
	Friday	10/04/2020	
	Saturday	11/04/2020	EASTER
	Sunday	12/04/2020	
	Monday	13/04/2020	
	Saturday	18/04/2020	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	19/04/2020	
May	Saturday	25/04/2020	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	26/04/2020	
	Saturday	02/05/2020	
	Sunday	03/05/2020	EARLY MAY BANK HOLIDAY
	Monday	05/04/2020	
	Saturday	09/05/2020	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	10/05/2020	
	Saturday	16/05/2020	BAS / UKAC 1
	Sunday	17/05/2020	
	Saturday	23/05/2020	
	Sunday	24/05/2020	SPRING BANK HOLIDAY
	Monday	25/05/2020	
June	Saturday	30/05/2020	
	Sunday	31/05/2020	
	Saturday	06/06/2020	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	07/06/2020	
	Saturday	13/06/2020	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	14/06/2020	
	Saturday	20/06/2020	BAS/UKAC 2
	Sunday	21/06/2020	
July	Saturday	27/06/2020	
	Sunday	28/06/2020	
	Saturday	04/07/2020	
	Sunday	05/07/2020	
	Saturday	11/07/2020	BAS/UKAC 3
	Sunday	12/07/2020	
August	Saturday	18/07/2020	
	Sunday	19/07/2020	
	Saturday	25/07/2020	
	Sunday	26/07/2020	
	Saturday	01/08/2020	NATIONALS
	Sunday	02/08/2020	
	Saturday	08/08/2020	
	Sunday	09/08/2020	
	Saturday	15/08/2020	BAS/UKAC 4
	Sunday	16/08/2020	
September	Saturday	22/08/2020	
	Sunday	23/08/2020	
	Saturday	29/08/2020	
	Sunday	30/08/2020	AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY
	Monday	31/08/2020	
	Saturday	05/09/2020	LADIES & JUNIORS
	Sunday	06/09/2020	
	Saturday	12/09/2020	
	Sunday	13/09/2020	
	Saturday	19/09/2020	BAS/UKAC 5
Sunday	20/09/2020		
October	Saturday	26/09/2020	
	Sunday	27/09/2020	
	Saturday	03/10/2020	BAS/UKAC RESERVE
	Sunday	04/10/2020	
	Saturday	10/10/2020	
	Sunday	11/10/2020	
	Saturday	17/10/2020	
	Sunday	18/10/2020	
	Saturday	24/10/2020	
	Sunday	25/10/2020	

# NATIONAL AUTOGRASS OUTLINE CALENDAR 2021

March	Saturday	06/03/2021	
	Sunday	07/03/2021	
	Saturday	13/03/2021	
	Sunday	14/03/2021	
	Saturday	20/03/2021	
	Sunday	21/03/2021	
April	Saturday	27/03/2021	
	Sunday	28/03/2021	
	Friday	02/04/2021	EASTER
	Saturday	03/04/2021	
	Sunday	04/04/2021	
	Monday	05/04/2021	
	Saturday	10/04/2021	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	11/04/2021	
	Saturday	17/04/2021	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	18/04/2021	
Saturday	24/04/2021	NATIONAL QUALIFYING	
Sunday	25/04/2021		
May	Saturday	01/05/2021	EARLY MAY BANK HOLIDAY
	Sunday	02/05/2021	
	Monday	03/05/2021	
	Saturday	08/05/2021	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	09/05/2021	
	Saturday	15/05/2021	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	16/05/2021	
	Saturday	22/05/2021	BAS / UKAC 1
	Sunday	23/05/2021	
	Saturday	29/05/2021	SPRING BANK HOLIDAY
	Sunday	30/05/2021	
	Monday	31/05/2021	
June	Saturday	05/06/2021	
	Sunday	06/06/2021	
	Saturday	12/06/2021	NATIONAL QUALIFYING
	Sunday	13/06/2021	
	Saturday	19/06/2021	
	Sunday	20/06/2021	
	Saturday	26/06/2021	BAS/UKAC 2
	Sunday	27/06/2021	
	Saturday	03/07/2021	
	Sunday	04/07/2021	
July	Saturday	10/07/2021	
	Sunday	11/07/2021	
	Saturday	17/07/2021	BAS/UKAC 3
	Sunday	18/07/2021	
	Saturday	24/07/2021	
	Sunday	25/07/2021	
Saturday	31/07/2021		
Sunday	01/08/2021		
August	Saturday	07/08/2021	NATIONALS
	Sunday	08/08/2021	
	Saturday	14/08/2021	
	Sunday	15/08/2021	
	Saturday	21/08/2021	BAS/UKAC 4
	Sunday	22/08/2021	
	Saturday	28/08/2021	AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY
	Sunday	29/08/2021	
Monday	30/08/2021		
September	Saturday	04/09/2021	LADIES & JUNIORS
	Sunday	05/09/2021	
	Saturday	11/09/2021	
	Sunday	12/09/2021	
	Saturday	18/09/2021	BAS/UKAC 5
	Sunday	19/09/2021	
Saturday	25/09/2021		
Sunday	26/09/2021		
October	Saturday	02/10/2021	BAS/UKAC RESERVE
	Sunday	03/10/2021	
	Saturday	09/10/2021	
	Sunday	10/10/2021	
	Saturday	16/10/2021	
	Sunday	17/10/2021	
	Saturday	23/10/2021	
	Sunday	24/10/2021	
	Saturday	30/10/2021	
	Sunday	31/10/2021	