

A GUIDE TO RACING

Drivers can join the club via the link on our website, membership provides a discount for entry and practice fees. If not a member, guests – who must be a member of another ABkC club – can still enter, but of course they will not get championship points, which are automatically awarded to members from the date of joining. Members can also choose a regular competition number. If the driver has passed his ARKS Novice Driver Test a day or so earlier, they can usually race on the Sunday but we ask them to put in a provisional entry beforehand. (If logging into the online entry system before a licence number is issued, use your email instead.) Before taking the test, they need to purchase the Start Karting pack from www.motorsportuk.org although we sometimes have them in stock.

So weeks before the actual event, the drivers will have sent their entry to the club's competition secretary, most will do this online through the link on our website. On average, we receive 150 plus entries per meeting over eleven different classes. A lot of behind-the-scenes hard work occurs before the actual day of the race from arranging the Motorsport UK permit (which covers the insurance), through to sending confirmation of entries, compiling and printing the programme and booking officials.

Drivers usually arrive very early on race or practice day and in some cases, the night before if they have a long way to travel. The first action is signing-on. Every driver must produce his/her competition licence issued by the sport's governing body Motorsport UK. If the driver is under 18 years of age, then his or her parent or guardian needs to have a PG Entrants licence as well. Various forms are completed and entry fees paid. Next, the equipment has to be checked by officially appointed Scrutineers. A 'Scrutineering Card' is given to the driver when they sign on and has to be completed before scrutineering. Every bit of the kit has to conform to the rules and regulations laid down and published online at www.motorsportuk.org. This ensures that the kart and driver meet the strict requirements of his/her chosen class and everything passes the stringent safety checks. But it is a check for safety, not necessarily eligibility which may be checked more thoroughly at the end of a race.

At around 9am (check the programme for times) the drivers attend a briefing by the Clerk of the Course. He informs them of any information pertinent to the day's events and of any special regulations relating to the day or to Shenington circuit. Novices and anyone new to the circuit will receive a special extra briefing. After that, practice begins. This is in race order by class or kart and lasts for 3 laps each. The driver's mechanic is given a wristband to be worn on the dummy grid. Note children are not allowed on the dummy grid except when waiting for their race.

Once the practice is complete we start racing properly. For normal club meetings, every driver completes two or three heats and a final. In the heats, grid positions are allocated to give every driver an equal chance of success. Thus a driver who is on pole for the first heat can expect to be on the last grid place for heat two or three. The only exception is for that of the novice driver, who hasn't yet achieved their full competition licence and will start at the back. They will have black number plates with white numbers to show they are a novice. The points scored by the drivers in the heats determined his/her grid position for the final. Alternatively there might be a timed practice/qualifying session to set the grids for the heats.

Finals are run after a lunch break (if there is time) and are always very competitive events, the heats having sorted the fastest to the front etc. Finals have more laps than heats. Trophies are awarded to the first three or four finishers in every class, depending on the number entered for the class. Except for special meetings, Shenington Kart Club gives out the trophies 30 minutes or so after the end of the final, so that families and teams can get on the road home more quickly. The points scored by the drivers during the meeting (provided they start the Final and are Club Members) count towards the annual Club Championship. At the end of the year we add up the best scores for every club driver to determine the Club Championship by class (If the driver does all the possible rounds, they can drop out their two worst scores). This is a very coveted award and represents a lot of hard work by the team concerned and one driver is chosen as our 'Driver of the Year'.

Remember also the squad of officials and marshals that volunteer to come along and make the meeting a success. If you are interested in helping, please contact the Chief Marshal Jordan Montgomery on 07816 229655.

If you are interested in starting racing please contact the Secretary Graham Smith on 01926 812177 who will be pleased to post a 'Start Karting' brochure (or you can pick them up at our counter). We also run taster sessions for ages 6 up to about 14 (dependent on height), at our 'Lets Go Karting' scheme. See website for dates.