

The committee has been brain storming to try and think of ways to offer alternative events for the membership.

Following a discussion in committee and subsequent investigations, it is apparent that in order for members of the Isle of Wight Car Club (IOWCC) to become involved in other forms of motorsport, that differ to what we are currently able to provide on the island, a trip to the mainland is required.

'Sprints' seem to be a form of motorsport which provide a happy medium in terms of paperwork for competitors, car preparation and overall costs.

Sprint regulations are such that the onus is on the safety requirements in respect of the venue as opposed to competitors and their cars.

I will expand.

For a venue to be eligible for a sprint event, the venue must pass the criteria that the MSA require in deference to their safety regulations. I have spoken at length to Barry Guess who is the vice-chairman of Sutton and Cheam Motor Club and also the chairman of the Association of Central and Southern Motor Clubs (ACSMC), of which there are currently 84 members clubs, the IOWCC being one. He is a very experienced organizer of all forms of motorsport from autotests to stage rallies. He has been kind enough to lend his support and impart some much needed knowledge to us.

From what he tells me the MSA are very reluctant to grant any venue eligibility, for speed events that do not have at least ten metres of uninterrupted run off area and an extremely good quality sealed surface made from either tarmac or concrete. Potholes and the like are unacceptable. There are no suitable areas on the Island that spring to mind.

The only way of doing a sprint type event that can be run on almost any surface and with tree-lined roads etc, is to run a 'Rally sprint'. This re-focuses the onus on the cars and drivers. To that end all competitors must be licensed and their cars must be log-booked and specially prepared for stage rallying. Furthermore the license that is required involves a test. The level to which the cars must be prepared turns a day to day car into a competition vehicle primarily. This is unacceptable to many people and also can be an expensive business

The only types of events that are eligible for the clubman at grassroots level and viable for us as club to put on, some of which we actively pursue are autotests, autosolo and production car trials (PCT).

If members of the car club are interested in sprinting their cars at venues in the south, we would be able to arrange to do this through Barry and SCMC.

As such here are the main criteria for sprinting a production car:

Vehicle requirements for unmodified production class:

I want to clarify briefly that this class is for standard cars, the like of which most of you bring to compete in at the autotest events we currently hold.

- Must have yellow tape wrapped around positive battery cable to identify it accordingly (simple)
- Must be fitted with a timing strut on the front of the car in accordance with blue book (very easy). Minimum vertical height of 254mm, the bottom of which shall not be less than 180mm and no more than 200mm from the ground. The strut must be matt black on both sides, over its total area which shall not be less than 254mm x 51mm. No other, or forward part of the car may interrupt these dimensions or actuate the timing.
- Must have a sticker denoting where the ignition is switched on and off (again dead easy)
- Must run on section 1(a) of the permitted tyres section as stated in the blue book
- Must be equipped with manufacturer's 3 point safety belts as a minimum.

Additionally, there are certain things that you *may* do if you wish but are not requirements and/or won't move you into the modified classes.

These include:

- Fitting of an MSA approved roll cage in accordance with blue book regulations
- Fitting of either 4 or 6 point harnesses
- You may run different suspension (Koni, Bilstein, Spax) provided that the suspension pick up points and operation are not altered.
- You may use any type or brake pad material
- You may NOT run larger, non standard brake calipers or discs
- In the blue book, wheels, exhausts and induction are free. * Note that SCMCS Supplementary Regulations (SR's) state that you may run 1" wider wheels, but the diameter must be the same as the factory standard size for that model – remember to check all SR's thoroughly! Also remember, that although exhausts are free you should ensure that they comply with MOT standards ie "*must not appear louder than the standard OEM exhaust*". Remember to check the SR's as at certain venues there may be noise issues and therefore the scrutineers could be hot on noise! There is often a good element of discretion applied to this rule, but 'drain pipe' excessively loud exhaust systems are bound to receive a luke warm response from scrutineers, given that rally cars are limited to 100db. If a noise limit is imposed in the SR's or indeed a note about standard exhausts being required on the standard classes, make sure you comply.
- Interiors must be retained and all window mechanisms must be present and work. This extends to heaters, sunroofs, door handles etc. You may remove floor carpets however.
- The silhouette of the car must remain unaltered, although bonnet louvres, aerodynamic devices (spoilers) etc are permitted

- Bonnet and boot covers may be replaced with alternative materials – ie from steel to fiberglass, alloy, carbon-fibre etc.
- Engines cylinder heads and blocks must remain of the same type and material and retain the original position.
- Gear box and differential casing type and material must remain original and the position must also remain the same. (suggests that straight cut gears are allowed)

Competitor's requirements:

- Must have a non-race national B speed license (this is something you merely apply for and purchase through the MSA, there is no test required)
- An MSA approved crash helmet, details of which are found in the blue book (they will apply a sticker to your helmet in scrutineering at the event provided your helmet complies and charge a nominal £2 normally)
- You must wear approved fire proof overalls that are in date and comply with the requirements of the blue book (Barry suggested that overalls can be shared between runs to get people started and keep the expense down – I have two sets, Steve Wells one set and there will be others I can beg borrow and steal I am sure)

Vehicle requirements for modified class:

The regulations change somewhat when you move into the modified classes and differ to that of the above. The cars in this class are required to be prepared to a broadly similar specification as a stage rally car,

My advice to people without a specialist vehicle is to save yourselves the bother and run in the 'Road Going Series Production Car' which covers most cars, or in the 'Road Going Specialist Production Car' classes, the latter covers the kit cars and Lotus Elise type of vehicle.

For further information in specific reference to SCMC events, see here the regulations for one such sprint event that is forthcoming. You will find that if you study the regulations within the link, that your car is likely to be very easy to prepare to the correct specification and cheaply too!

http://www.abingdoncarnival.com/2009_AMC_Sprint_Regs_Web.pdf

Sprint Format

The events themselves generally cost just over £100 to enter. For this you get around 2 miles in the form of a sprint course. For example at Longcross which is a venue that SCMC use, the course is 2.25 miles approx of tarmac roads.

This consists of 2 untimed practice runs at the beginning of the day, usually in the morning and then 3 timed, competitive runs in the afternoon.

You can share a car with another competitor, rather like some do now at autotests

In the case of the events that are held at Longcross, which is conveniently situated at the top of the M3 motorway, the events are easily do-able in 1 day. The events do not start until 10am, so this facilitates a one day trip further.

As you may know, Steve Wells is able to get extremely good motorsport rates on Red Funnel sailings between East Cowes to Southampton, so this type of motorsport appears to represent an accessible and affordable step up for many club members.

We are very keen to get a show of hands from those who are keen to actively pursue it.

Please reply to me and forward all your technical queries to me at richard@weaverbros.co.uk

Or on the telephone, 077 34 55 69 51

Richard