

# MOTORCYCLING AUSTRALIA

## REPORT OF DIRT TRACK FORUM

Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Mercure Centro Port Macquarie

103 Williams Street, Port Macquarie

### ITEM 1 INTRODUCTION

Forum opened at 9.00am

D. White welcomed members and provided an overview of the structure of the forum.

#### Present:

Kevin McDonald	MA Commissioner
Steven Guest	MV Dirt Track
Pete Hern	Victorian Dirt Track Management
Garry Thomas	MNSW
Robert Kirkness	
Laure Askew	Macleay DMCC
Lee-Ann Fiten	MQ – North Brisbane JMCC
Belinda Weismantel	QLD Dirt Track Sub Committee
Mark Maybury	
Graeme Boyd	Graeme Boyd Promotions
Dean McNamara	
Keith Davies	Hunter MCC
Tony Hatton	
Phil Tomlin	PTRP Racing
Paul Caslick	Dirt Track Committee MNSW
Wayne Gardner	
David Scott	CCJMCC
Trevor Burns	Macleay DMCC
Alan Myer	Taree Motorcycle Club
Deanne Myer	Taree Motorcycle Club
Daniel Gatt	MNSW
Christine Tickner	Nepean Motorcycle Club
Ron Kivovitch	Motorcycling Australia

#### In Attendance:

David White Chief Executive Officer - Motorcycling Australia

### ITEM 2 GROUND RULES

David White provided an overview of the following ground rules:

1. We are here to focus on Dirt Track Racing. We do not want to personalise issues. Focus on the issue not the person.
2. Everybody will have the opportunity to be heard on any of the issues.
3. One person talking at a time.
4. We acknowledge that there are differences of opinion. Whilst we may not agree, we respect the views of others. We welcome the diversity of opinion.
5. Focus on what we have in common.
6. At this meeting we are all equals.
7. Progression not Perfection.

8. We make decisions on consensus not by vote. You may not totally agree with a particular point of view but make your decision/stance on the premise “Whilst I may not completely agree, can I live with the decision?”
9. We will be honest and frank so we say what we mean and we ask if we are unsure.
10. Focus on the future, let’s not dwell on the past.
11. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

### **ITEM 3 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The following purpose statement was drafted:

*“To find a way and means of Developing Dirt Track Racing in Australia”.*

### **ITEM 4 WHAT IS GOOD ABOUT DIRT TRACK RACING?**

Members optimistically expressed the positive attributes of Dirt Track Racing:

- Talent
- Junior Talent & Numbers
- High Level Competition
- Family Orientated
- Exciting
- Entry Level
- Competitive
- Proven Breeding Ground
- Good Skill Development
- Spectator friendly
- Difficulties can be overcome

### **ITEM 5 WHAT IS NOT GOOD ABOUT DIRT TRACK RACING?**

In a group discussion, attendees voiced the following items as negatives to Dirt Track Racing:

- Safety
- Cost
- Officialdom/Volunteers
- Cheats
- Efficiency
- No manufacturer involvement
- Under regulated
- No marketing/promotion
- No direction/focus
- Track Standards/venue layout
- Prizemoney
- Decline in competitor numbers
  - Abolishing grading (seniors)
  - No “ride up” (seniors)
- Lack of information/pathway
  - Coaching/Classes/Promotion/Detail
- Cost of medical
- Environmental Issues
- Economy
- Calendar
- Race Duration
- Age Groupings – Juniors
- Classes/Machines

## **ITEM 6 WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE IT?**

In a group discussion, attendees voiced the following items as possible improvements to assist Dirt Track Racing in Australia:

- Communication and Actions
- Lowering of Costs
- MA/Calendar (State & National)
- Promotion/Advertising/Entertainment
- Website
- Technical Rules/Classes
- Development Nationally (14 NSW) (5 QLD) (3 VIC)
- National Series (Entertainment)
- Trade involvement
- Official Training/Marshalling
- Code of conduct
- Policing of technical rules
  - Coaching/Classes/Promotion/Detail

## **ITEM 7 WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVING IMPROVEMENT?**

The notes collated regarding obstacles to achieving the our desired outcome are as follows:

- Funding/Costs
- Unwillingness to change
- Venues (new/existing)
  - Costs to improve, change, create
  - Land
  - Environment
  - Lack of support from MA & SCBs
- Competition to our Sport
  - Other Sports
  - Electronic Games
  - Hobbies
- Equipment modification costs
- Volunteers
- Lack of understanding on Lion System Workers.

## **ITEM 8 DISCUSS ITEMS 5,6 & 7 FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ADMINISTRATORS, PROMOTERS & PARTICIPANTS**

It was stated that this item was not necessary given the in depth discussion of item 4-6.

## **ITEM 9 HAVE WE CONSIDERED ALL ELEMENTS RAISED IN CORRESPONDENCE FROM WAYNE GARDNER & TONY HATTON**

*Attachment: Proposal by Wayne Gardner and Tony Hatton*

Wayne Gardner provided an overview of the issues raised in the proposal. It was stressed that this paper is Wayne Gardner's view of the sport and has been presented for discussion. There several proposed changes highlighted in this document. It was stated that personal opinions of the ideas presented should be put aside, and energy should be redirected to what is in the best interests of the sport.

Arising from the overview of the proposal, there were several items of contention and it was noted that these items were not going to be resolved in this session.

It was stated that if the recommended changes in the proposal were made they would need to be reviewed on a regular basis.

David White stated that if other members of the motorcycle community in all disciplines of the sport adopt a similar attitude to Wayne Gardner, the sport will make leaps and bounds.

David White recommended that a questionnaire be drafted based on the ideas presented by Wayne Gardner and this be distributed to the clubs. It was noted that the original proposal is to be distributed with the questionnaire.

#### **ITEM 10 TAKING INTO ACCOUNT 1-7 WHAT ARE THE KEY POINTS (THE THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE)**

In a group discussion the key points collected from the meeting are as follows:

- Re-invigorated Commission
- Increase the competitor base and improve situation for existing competitors
- Marketing and Promotions
- Venue Changes
- Technical rules for bikes
- Lowering costs
  - value for money
- Class & Capacity changes
  - sliders
- Review of Safety
- Official Training
- Industry involvement/investment
- Making riding more accessible
- Making a level playing field
  - engine/noise/fuel testing

#### **ITEM 11 WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

After group discussion the following was decided as a method of proceeding forward:

- All members of the Dirt Track community need to be involved in brainstorming ideas on how the sport can move forward.
- The notifications of a proposal to limit the modifications to the 80cc 4 stroke class will be in the 2009 Manual of Motorcycle Sport to come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010.
- Rule changes as outlined in Wayne Gardener's proposal will go into print for the 2009 MoMs but will be noted as coming into effect 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010.
- The only exception to the above, are the following recommendations which will come into effect in the 2009 MoMs:

##### **Junior Classes:**

##### **80cc – 4 Stroke Modified**

1. Clearly indicating class up for modifying.
2. No restriction on tyre bike types.

##### **Junior Championship**

Maximum number of laps for the Australian Championship is to be removed.

Although the proposals put forward by Wayne Gardner were generally accepted by those in attendance there was not unanimous agreement to all of his proposals. There were issues highlighted in making decisions on all the recommendations put forward. It was noted by MA representatives that procedures in terms of rules need to be followed and as such for some rules which require feedback, approving those items now would not be in accordance with MA processes and procedures. However, all proposals will be widely circulated for feedback.

**ITEM 12 IS THE PURPOSE STATEMENT STILL RELEVANT AFTER OUR DISCUSSION**

Due to time constraints this item was not readdressed.

**ITEM 13 CONCLUSION**

D. White stated that notes from today's forum would be distributed and a list of items which have been approved and circulated within this document.

Forum was adjourned at 4.00pm.

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