



## to the editor

Karting Magazine does not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed in these letters. The names and addresses of the writer must be given even if this information is not to be published.

### COPY OF LETTER SENT TO THE RAC KART COMMITTEE

Dear Sir,  
Having been a kart racing participant for the last 10 years, initially as a 100 National driver and this year as a Cadet dad, I have watched over the years other people get frustrated with the rules dictated by the RAC. Until this weekend I have never felt that upset about anything to put pen to paper myself, but now I really feel that you have gone completely over the top.

I refer of course to the news that the Tillett racing seat (and any other seat for that matter) has been banned from the Cadet class unless it was fitted to the kart at homologation. A look at any cadet grid this season would have shown around 50% of the karts fitted with this seat due simply to the fact that the majority of the standard seats fitted are simply inadequate to protect our young offspring from quite severe bruising. At homologation neither the RAC or the manufacturers appear to have considered the health and safety of our children in this area adequately, since with the wide variation in bottom size and body length of our children in many cases there can be 2 or 3 inches of sideways movement in the seat and the backs of the seat can ride up uncomfortably under their armpits. The Tillett seat is the only seat that most of us have found that is well designed and copes with that bruising. It is also a good deal more comfortable and as you all must know a comfortable driver is a safer driver in more control of his kart.

The farce of the new rules, as I understand them, is that it is still permissible for the original seat to be recovered by Mr Tillett, so an expensive bespoke padding operation is eligible while a cheaper mass produced solution is ruled out. So much for keeping costs down!

I do wonder whether in a few years time if any of our children do suffer spinal damage (and do not forget they have a lot less flesh to protect them than us adults and are probably more susceptible to damage in their earlier years) whether they will have a chance of taking action against the RAC for contributory negligence in banning a safer alternative, freely available to all competitors.

A final thought on seats. How do I know which seat was homologated with my chassis, is there a CIK registration number etched on it or any other distinctive marking? To date I have seen countless variations of seat on my own chassis.

Please RAC let us have some common sense. If Zip can homologate new nerf bars on safety grounds then the standard Tillett seat could also be included as an approved safety option to all chassis.

This seat affair seems to indicate clearly that the RAC has not yet addressed adequately the key question in the Cadet class and that is engine and related costs.

Imagine the average new entrant to kart racing (the fellow we all want to encourage into the sport for good) who spends what is effectively £1000 on his child's equipment (no small sum even nowadays) and on going to his first meeting discovers he is attempting to compete with others with anything from 6 to 20 engines. Not only is the best one for that day being selected but we all hear stories (and see enough evidence) to show that

the engines are being taken apart and the best components matched. In my book this is blueprinting and while allowed by the regulations is certainly not within the spirit of the regulations. There is also no doubt that this is considerably more expensive in time and resources than straight forward tuning that the rule rightly forbids. In addition some children are obviously being sponsored by manufacturers (and this is no reflection on them since it bears out their proven abilities) and this also was one concept that was intended to be no part of the Cadet scene when introduced (from memory this was the reason for banning sidepods another safety measure gone!).

The only sensible solution to this (and I cannot see a foolproof way of completely stopping blueprinting) is I believe to restrict by registration the number of engines a driver can use at any one time and during a season. I would suggest that no driver be allowed more than 3 engines registered in his name at any one time with the RAC and say 6 in season. Most drivers manage well within this but I can hear the howls of pain from some quarters already! Either crankcase numbers could be used but perhaps a better solution would be strictly controlled numbering facilities where crankcases and barrels could be uniquely numbered. This would, I believe, restrict blueprinting and also encourage good maintenance rather than high-tech engine building. Further the numbering could be done at a single source for all new motors while a catch-up operation could be achieved for all those existing units.

That brings me onto chassis. This is the one area where some development is required especially given the quite extreme variations in performance that have been apparent between different manufacturers. The obvious restrictions on magnesium parts, ventilated discs, hydraulic brakes, standard tyres and basic chassis configuration are all easily checked at scrutineering by external inspection. There are a lot of extras though where experimentation should be encouraged, mono wheels may be one, extra bracing on a chassis as long as it is say detachable and not a permanent welded-on addition to the basic frame, I hate to mention it again but seats and maybe even pedal and petrol tank layouts. The big thing about chassis development is that it is clearly visible to be copied by other competitors, you do not need high-tech engineering facilities to do it and it is usually very cheap especially compared to the engine problems outlined above.

Lastly, parents. All the cheating that happened this year is down to the dads not the kids! At Kimbolton this weekend we had the ugly spectacle of one dad taking a swing at another dad. Frankly it's a sickening example to set to our kids.

This weekend leaves me so fed up at what I saw as a superb opportunity at establishing the ideal beginners class in karting being lost in a cesspit of frustration and aggravation. I have an alternative to go Junior Britain next year and I am not sure that I should not take it.

Yours faithfully, Graham J. Goss  
Hardingstone, Northampton.

## LATEST CIK TKM KART

The mark III. This is the first four rail design from TKM. It uses 30mm tubing and has a 3-bearing rear axle. Stub axles have gone from 15 to 17mm and the new layout provides more leg room within the 104cm wheelbase. A large fuel tank and Nassau panel are standard equipment. Price is £630 fully assembled but less tyres. VAT extra.

