

KARTING ROUND-UP

"Callum is talented and a naturally quick racer"
Joyner heralds team-mate, below



Photos: kartpix.net



Litchfield will tackle PFi round

Litchfield will have one final Euro outing

Veteran racer Mark Litchfield will compete in international competition for the last time later this season at the final round of the European KF Championship at PF International.

The 31-year-old, who has raced for PFi owner Paul Fletcher, decided to end his continental career at the conclusion of last season. He said he had become disillusioned with the state of the sport overseas. He also wanted to spend more time at home with family. The Nottingham-based driver will link up with his international replacement, Oliver Hodgson, who he will also race alongside to defend his Super One KGP title this season.

"The opportunity is too good to turn down," Litchfield said. "PFi is just on my doorstep, and alongside Oliver, I'm going to give international racing one last shot and fly the flag for PFi."

Litchfield, who has raced since he was eight years old, said his resolve to continue racing is due to a fear of not competing.

"I've always done it and won't know what to do if it isn't there," he said. "It's a habit. Paul [Fletcher] has me out each week and we bounce ideas off each other. I threw the Kartmasters GP win away at the death last year so I'm determined to get that back and defend my KGP crown."

Joyner lauds new Chiesa partnership

The speed and consistency of the all-British line-up at Chiesa Corse will help it to challenge for all major international honours this season, according to World KF champion Tom Joyner.

The 21-year-old will team up with fellow Brit Callum Ilott at the Italian squad after former team-mate Lance Stroll graduated to single-seater racing (*MN*, Jan 8). The Essex-based driver thinks the duo will be an ideal pairing to take on the European and World Championship crowns.

"It will be good for me to have a talented team-mate in Callum," Joyner said. "He's naturally quick. I'm more consistent but he's so quick over a single lap which is needed in qualifying. We have a bit of everything. Callum will also be able to learn from my experience."

Joyner believes the team will be at the top of the timesheets early on in the season due to its switch of engines this season. "The change from TM to IAME is already going to boost us," he added. "The tyres have changed, which is a big factor, but we now have the ability to challenge on almost every level this year."

SCHOOLS SERIES OWNER PREDICTS ENTRY BOOST

British Automobile Racing Club's bosses say interest will grow in category



School series attracts big grids to the sport

By Russell Hayes

Bosses of the British Automobile Racing Club say becoming the operator of the British Schools Karting Championship will enable it to attract a larger number of children into motorsport.

The arrive-and-drive, team-based formula is for students aged between 13 and 18 years old. Each entry is made up of three drivers from the same

school, academy or college, led by either a teacher or parent as team captain. The knockout-style contest progresses from practice and familiarisation sessions beginning in March, through to local and regional finals, and then the national final in July at Whilton Mill.

The BARC has supported the championship for the past three years, providing financial help with series heads unable to stem increasing losses. Over the past winter, founder Will

Tew has handed over the reins to the BARC, which plans to link up with the Motor Sports Association to provide schoolchildren with a genuine path up the motorsport ladder.

"This is a long-term project to help increase awareness of the sport to schoolchildren," said BARC business development manager Ian Watson. "The aim is to then see them move up into higher karting championships and eventually into junior car racing. We understand the

expense of motorsport and this is also a good activity for the schools."

With the conclusion of the deal extending until the end of December, registrations only opened at the start of this month, with 260 entries already received as *MN* went to press. Last year a total of 540 entries took part.

"It's a stunning figure considering we're only three weeks in," Watson said. "This year due to the legal process

concluding late, 2014 is a stop-gap in the short-term with only a brief time before entries close on February 21.

"We have already taken on a PR firm and will try to do something subtly different in 2015 and look to work with the Motor Sports Association.

"Its Go Motorsport campaign sends regional representatives into schools and we would like to look at linking the championship with that to spread the message."



KGP world champion Game says competition will be fraught

Game ready for a tough battle in Super One

World KGP champion Bobby Game reckons the fight for this year's Super One national title will be the toughest he will have faced for years.

The 41-year-old Team O'Neill racer, who already holds three British titles, comfortably clinched his first international crown in Italy last season. After competing in national and international Formula A championships in the 1990s, Game took a ten-year break from the sport but returned in 2009 in the KF1 class. He switched to KGP two years later. He missed

out on last year's Super One title, finishing runner-up to Mark Litchfield.

"I went into the final round at Shenington last season with a slight lead," Game said, "but a clash in the first final ruled me out of the title. I'm determined to take the crown but each year KGP gets more competitive. This year, the frontrunners from last year's Junior TKM will be there as well as [Rotax world champion] Oliver Hodgson, so there's more uncertainty. It means I'll need to do a lot more pre-season testing if possible."

Cadet competition aids Easykart grid

Organisers of the Easykart championship say its popular Cadet competition has boosted grid numbers for this season's series.

Launched at the start of last year, a mix of six indoor and outdoor venues around the UK will be asked to put forward three drivers each to the assessment day at Whilton Mill in August. After driving during the day, the entrants, all between eight and ten years old, will then be interviewed by series bosses before a winner is selected.

The victor will be awarded a new 60cc Easykart Cadet machine along with a full season's racing in the class.

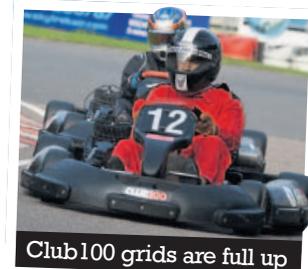
"Last year's competition proved very popular and was a resounding success," Easykart's John Vigor said. "All the drivers are put forward as being the most improved from each venue. Last year the competition generated sales for Easykart which will boost this year's grids and that will provide better racing."

Arrive-and-drive series celebrates full entry

The popular arrive-and-drive karting championship Club100 has full grids for its first round at Buckmore Park in Kent next month.

The series, which celebrates its 21st year this season, has marked the occasion by rolling out a new fleet of karts, along with a switch of tyres from Bridgestone to Vega rubber. Over 150 drivers have signed up to the Sprint category on February 22/23, with the Premier Endurance class featuring a maximum 35 teams.

"For this concept of non-MSA racing to have been running for 21 years shows just how much drivers want to race without have to spend huge sums of



Club100 grids are full up

money," said Club100 boss John Vigor. "We tested the Vega rubber last season. It had more grip and was quicker than the Bridgestone. With national championship grids struggling, I'm sure we're the best arrive-and-drive series in the UK. Racers are responding to that."

Upgrades to lure CIK back to PF International

Trent Valley Kart Club head Nigel Edwards says improvements to PF International show its hunger to regain a round of the world championships next season.

Venue owner Paul Fletcher has given the green light for perimeter barriers along the full length of the back straight, replacing the last of the old-style tyre barriers from the complex.

At the end of the circuit's back straight, a graduated run off area will be built.

"It was disappointing to lose the world championship this year," Edwards said. "We understood that there was a lot of competition to host the single-round event."

"This work will hopefully convince CIK heads that they shouldn't look anywhere else."