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## **IKC Presidents Report 2009**

From the outset it has been a tough year for IKC, upon assuming the role of President 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008 receiving no transitional period and no communications from the exiting committee. The track was torn up and the contract with Boral was signed and almost all the clubs funds were paid in advance to Boral. The kerbing already booked in was not as the members agreed, so this was changed. With little funds in the account (approx 60k) we applied for the additional 50K loan available through AKAQ and in January 2009 this was approved and put to good use. My immediate and total focus was on getting the track operational again, a lot of members were not renewing their membership and going to other clubs with operational tracks which only added to the financial burden for the club. I delegated the office area and associated running of the club to the then secretary of IKC. The directive to the Management was to “save money” as we may need every cent. The treasurer was instructed to get the December BAS done as soon as possible.

I found very little support from members to get the preliminary works done. Our first call for a working bee resulted in myself in attendance with a number of vehicles driving in, parking for a while and then leaving. Slowly the number of members grew to around 8 at the January working bee. On the 12<sup>th</sup> January Boral was engaged to do the “patches” or voids between where the track is and the newly laid kerbs. One of the trucks had fallen through the track on the 90metre straight behind RV engines corner and 70metres had to be excavated before they could return. On 22<sup>nd</sup> January Boral came back to start the resurfacing, they arrived at 7:00am laid 1/3 of the track and left at 1:00pm they advised they had bigger jobs to do and would be back in February. I found Boral aggressive and misleading to deal with, constantly breaking promises and delaying the track resurfacing despite my pleas to finish the works.

Finally at the end of March they returned and finished the job. At that time they requested payment for an addition 16+k for GST on the job, after lengthy discussions with boral our honorary solicitor and then treasurer the 16+k was paid and boral were to come back to complete compensational works for damages to the kerbs. The then treasurer announced that he was standing down stating the club was near insolvency neglecting that the club was owed more than 38k in GST from the ATO for the December and March due BAS periods. At this stage we were left with 14k in the bank. Once news of the track being reopened spread, the memberships began to grow and we got over 60 members to a working bee weekend. With the track now operational in April 2009 my focus moved to the running of the business and implementation of working strategies within the office procedures. This new focus saw shortcomings and met resistance with the then secretary of IKC.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of May race meet was not without complications, the starters button was destroyed and the timing system crashed, Graham used his laptop for timing and we used the flags for starts. Overall the Meeting ran extremely well.

We upgraded the system in the tower for timing and I focused on getting the canteen sorted. A new cash register was purchased to give accurate takings and a Canteen operator was engaged to advise stock levels and ordering of stock and paying personnel. A minimum of 4 people are required to run the canteen at any stage. Two major supplier accounts were set up Bidvest and Campbell's for ordering and bread is delivered fresh from the bakers am before the meets, although we were trying to avoid the receipts from Woolworth's we found it necessary to purchase the fresh fruit and vegetables i.e. tomatoes from there.

The next event was the super cheap series which for the better part ran flawlessly in the eyes of the competitors, issues with getting people to fill positions for the meeting as well as smart card related problems or bugs made the entry and office staff work a lot harder than they should and created more stress on our new race secretary. With my full focus now on the running of the office and race day friction between the Secretary, Race Secretary, Licensing Officer and myself began and ultimately finished at the General meeting in May 09 with the Treasurers (march), Secretary and Race Secretary (may) resignations.

The May general meeting resulted in a new Treasurer Richard Losper and Secretary Kelly Johnson being appointed and after consulting the Race Secretary she agreed to take on the Race Secretary role with out title for the next meeting in August.

2<sup>nd</sup> August race meet was a disaster and a huge wake up for IKC and the AKA, A bug in the new smart card system lost 90+ entries the night before entries took way to long with a slow laptop and the membership officer refused to release the other laptop stating she had licenses to do. The Chief steward refused to allow the lights to be switched on to complete the event stating it was a day meet. We since found out the permit is for 12:01am to 11:59pm but ultimately the decision rests with the Chief steward on the day to allow.

Since that event new equipment was purchased to streamline the entries we have also learn't who to choose for officials and the AKA are now in full support of the club.

The following General meeting resulted in the appointment of Andrea McKay as Race Secretary and what a fantastic job she does.

September saw another working bee in preperation for the upcoming events starting at 7:00am. The majority of the track had to be backfilled with dirt where the karts have been falling off the track. Without this done, the AKA will not approve a race meeting to commence. John Lane was to arrive around 8:30am with a Bobcat to help spread the dirt. I arrived at 6:30am and started loading the dirt and shoveling off the back of the Ute. At 8:45am John Lane arrived by 10:30am members were arriving to practice preferring to sit and wait on the grid suited up with helmet on than help. At 11:20am three members out of the 70 or so there finally came out to look and I handed them a broom and shovel thanking them for stepping up. I left disappointed and angry that people just expect someone else to work for their benefit and have the ordacity to act as if we are inconveniencing them.

After the September Meeting which ran flawlessly at every level the stewards reported cracks appearing in the track and I arranged with Boral for crack filler to come out and I repaired the small cracks.

October saw the first of the major meets and the start of our busiest month of racing. After the Gold Coast Meet the cracks got a lot bigger and Boral was called out to look over the issue they were quick to blame water under the track over the phone but upon inspection admitted the binder had not held up. They organized to fill the cracks with bitumen to get us through the upcoming meets and booked in for November 10 to profile the corners out and relay. Again they were back after the 17<sup>th</sup> October meeting to patch up and on the 25<sup>th</sup> October for the Rotax Pro Tour the track tore up and ultimately closed the event at IKC, luckily our strengthened bond with the AKA saw the event moved to Toowoomba on very short notice.

We now stand very much where we started, Boral have admitted product fault but we are relying on them to correct the track. We have the full backing of the AKA and are strengthening our legal case against them if need be although we are hoping that will not be needed. Work has commenced with core samples and marking Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November with the profiling due to commence on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Moving forward in 2010**

The focus from here is to get the track operational as fast as possible with a fail proof mix of bitumen. I am committed to seeing the works through and making sure IKC is a viable and profitable club for the future.

We have to generate more help from members of the club after all it is a club!

To do this we need to implement a bonus point system in the championship and possibly a cost i.e. \$80 if you do a club duty you receive a credit of \$80 on your membership fee for the following year or receive the \$80 back and 25 points towards your championship. You can also nominate a partner or family member to do the duty on your behalf. A roster will need to be set up and the Race secretary and licensing officer would need to work closely together to make this work.

For the most part IKC is a business and needs to be run as such we have two entry points being AKAQ Delegate to liaise with AKA and Practice collection for members at both of these points we currently have two aggressive personalities, this needs to change

in order to move forward and create a friendlier environment, a more profitable club and gain the full benefit of AKA assistance.

### **IKC Lease**

Ipswich City Council have signed the IKC lease and it is now in the hands of solicitors. We are now in a position for the first time in five years to receive grants for government to improve the facilities and better the appeal of IKC.

### **Summation**

In Closing IKC has experienced the worst year possible, despite the hardships and spending over \$400,000 of capital, we are capable of running a more profitable and a more accountable club than before, while still offering more value for money than its nearest competitors by way of more laps On race days. All the profits earned have been put back into the club by purchasing vital equipment and improvements. We have experienced changes in personnel but sometimes on the way forward you have to move a few stones. The people you see now are dedicated and motivated to advance the club and work tirelessly without pay to achieve their goals, I could not recommend a better team.

This year has seen the dawning of a new era in Karting with the new Smart Card System this new technology makes life easier for the people behind the scenes, improves the speed of entries and ultimately the race day. Once fully implemented will make memberships and licenses as easy as a click of a mouse. We were unlucky to get caught with glitches as this new technology evolves.

The failure of the track surface was a combination of boral under estimating the loads that karts generate on the surface (despite being told) and a product fault within the mix. This will be repaired at no cost to the club and will be ready for the first race meeting of the 2010 season.

Members need to be more involved in the club rather than making assumptions and casting stones. To put things in prospective here is my example over the last year:

- I have spent over 6000 hours on the phone.
- 4500 hours on the computer.

- On average every 2<sup>nd</sup> day through out the year I have attended the track.
- \$30,000 of lost income from my business not including fuel or wear and tear on my vehicle.
- I have only raced 7 out of the 20 events planned for the year

Now is the time to be supportive of your club, with the track closed there is no income. The bills still come in and have to be paid, so with your help we will retain your membership and be able to pay the bills, I'll be able to get the track open again a lot quicker with your help rather than doing it all myself.

It's your club, it's your choice.

John McSpedden  
IKC President