

# Lotus Cars Cycle Race League Norfolk Cycle Racing Norfolk Cycle Race Judging 2016 Report

**This report will form the basis of the AGM Agenda  
The meeting will also be used to discuss how we can further the sport in future years.**

**30<sup>th</sup> Nov. at 7-30 pm. Feathers PH, 13 Town Green, Wymondham, NR18 0PN**

**Function Room Upstairs**

## **Lotus League**

I think Lotus League this year was one of the best, it certainly seemed the easiest to run. We had plenty of volunteers, quick accurate results from the MyLaps system and most important of all a large number of riders, averaging over 100 riders each evening.

As the organiser it was virtually hassle free and the transponder system made 'doing' the results a pleasure. For the 1<sup>st</sup> time every rider was placed every time and a full league table published from it. About 60% of the field each week had purchased their own transponder which made life easier for those signing on as well. It is assumed that those who have already purchased will be eager to renew when their year is up to take advantage of the 28.5% reduction in the cost of buying new.

The entry system worked extremely well, it made the MyLaps judging possible but saved the riders losing their entry fee if they could not make it for any reason.

The one 'downer' was the number of crashes after several years of only having the odd one or two. The worst crash was caused by a blowout just before the line. We are not sure why they happen, inexperience is always with us but with such a wide, smooth, flat and technically non challenging circuit the only thing that breaks the field up is a cross wind which we did not seem to have this year.

I don't think we could squeeze in any more in the time we have each night either, perhaps we do too much and maybe we should think about reducing what we do each evening.

From being 'skint' at the start we have sufficient funds to pay for 2017 upfront and pay out circa £2500 in prize money. Prize values will be subject to change and is dependent on upfront costs for what we decide to do next year. I budget on 80 senior riders per evening as bad weather can reduce numbers drastically.

I'm sure every rider would wish to thank all the volunteers and I hope everyone enjoyed the league.

## **Norfolk Cycle Race Judging**

This is what I called the MyLaps Transponder System to keep the accounts distinct from Lotus League. In all some £13000 was spent on the system, of that Suffolk Cycle Race Series contributed £2640 for 100 transponders. Hire charges has brought in sufficient funds to only reactivate circa 150 transponders for next year @ 25 Euros each, (currently £22.25) instead of 35 Euros for new. The system of charging £5 + £20 deposit on transponders resulted in the loss of just one with another ripped off in a crash that could not be found.

In all 22 race days and 81 individual races were covered. MyLaps worked perfectly every time and the comparatively few hiccups we had is down to us humans bucking the system methodology that has to be followed to the letter. I think we have now sussed the system sufficiently to avoid most of these pitfalls next year. No problems were encountered when used for road races with normal traffic, even track laying vehicles passed over with no problem. As an organiser I appreciated the instant results and how much time and hassle it saved for every event. I believe the riders appreciated getting a placing each time even if it was not the one they wanted. In all some 90 transponders were sold on by myself and many others purchased direct.

## **Norfolk Cycle Racing**

We renamed the website to this to encompass the sport more fully and to attract more hits on cycling in the area. An improvement over previous years I believe.

## **Thinking of 2017**

### **Lotus League**

Being behind Lotus League for 11 years has restricted when I take a holiday so next year before I get too old I am going to go somewhere where I have always wanted to go in May! That means we need a new race organiser and someone to operate the MyLaps system after a bit of training. I won't be missing for all of them however. I already

have dates reserved with Group Lotus and will be willing to set up the League with Lotus, arrange 1<sup>st</sup> aid, portaloos and chuck wagon cover plus remain as treasurer.

If the organising task could be split with the organiser just keeping an overall eye on what is going on every evening I believe the MyLaps operator could do virtually all the 'paperwork', it is at most 4 hours work per week (+ time at Lotus) to set up the system and publish results. If we could get to the position where every rider has their own transponder more time could be saved setting up the races and make signing on quicker.

If we could have broadly the same team as last year it would be great. Many hands make light work I think is the moto! Contact myself if you are interested or want more info. For the AGM I will publish a list of tasks that we need to cover each evening.

I believe this year's entry system should be continued but make the closing date firm. I relaxed this a bit this year but it took longer to add a few more names than setting up the races on Mylaps in the 1<sup>st</sup> place. I also think giving priority to those who have purchased a transponder would be a good way of encouraging ownership and reducing the workload for each evening.

The way to reduce crashes is to add more features to line out the field. Just one or other of the small circuits would do this but on the large circuit, which I know riders prefer, the only option is to add another chicane where the north and south circuits meet. This would not involve barriers or cones as these can cause problems as well. I think this would be worth a try. This will be discussed at the AGM and this is something you the riders can influence.

The BC Risk Assessor is due to visit Lotus on 25<sup>th</sup> Nov so by the AGM on the 30<sup>th</sup> we should know if they will insist on any changes to what we have been doing in the past.

All helpers will be reimbursed for travel at 30p per mile.

The Pedal Park at Coltishall has been refused planning permission by Norfolk County Council but there is still a very remote chance of it via intervention of the Sports Council.

Now the sport in Norfolk is back to having to find closed circuits wherever it can we cannot afford to lose Lotus so I hope someone steps forward for both organiser and a MyLaps operator.

### **What else is happening in 2017?**

On the face of it with the Pedal Park being refused planning permission the future of the sport on closed circuits in the Norfolk area would not appear very bright. However I believe that this is not so, there are some great opportunities out there for the sport just waiting for us to find and grasp. Indeed three are already confirmed, another three almost a certainty and several more in the pipeline. By the AGM more will be clear and no doubt Derek Lusher will be able to give you an update.

What is certain is that organising is much easier on a dedicated cycling facility and requires fewer volunteers but if we could find a way round the general lack of volunteers and encourage riders to support such events more we would be in the same position as those within easy reach of the London Velopark & Hog Hill in a very short time. As an example one village WANTS a crit on their roads (they would like a full blown cycling festival!) and in another town a crit could be on the cards but both are unlikely to happen without backing from clubs and individuals. Likewise events are likely to be lost in future if the riders do not support them.

Some of the problem seems to be that most seem to accept cycling in the area as it is. Historically the accepted norm has always been for a club to promote just one road race and one time trial per year to keep the sport ticking over. Some do more, some less but the demand is out there for more events but at the same time club members seem less willing to take a day off riding their bike to help. Change that mind-set and the sport will surge forward.

We know that this is possible as LCCRL kicked off Gas Hill Gasp as a 4 up concept using volunteers. The same happened with the highly popular racing on the Elveden Estate in 2013 and one or two other events over the years. A suggestion is that a Norfolk Cycle Racing body is set up and run in a similar way to say the Eastern Road Race League or the Eastern Counties Cycling Association whereby members and clubs have to promote or help at events to enable their members to compete. Another possibility is to set up an organising group of circa 20 people who want to see the sport progress and are willing to give their time to see it progress. Yet another possibility is that riders will have to supply a helper on occasions or they will have to do a duty instead of racing. Please give this some extra thought, discuss within your club and bring your views to the AGM. Together we can make the sport in this area just like Yorkshire!!

### **Norfolk Cycle Race Judging**

2016 was a bit of an experiment and the aim was to get it used as often as possible. There is no doubt that electronic timing/judging is the way forward, it raises the organisation standard, makes judging virtually stress free and getting out results so easy but it is at a cost. The aim is to get it used at every event possible, we know riders like it, know organisers who have used it appreciate it. A motion put forward to BC Eastern AGM 'that BC actively encourage the use of electronic timing/judging' passed and will be raised at National Council

Hire charges for next year will be slightly different to ensure that we have sufficient funds available in future years to replace and/or add equipment as and when necessary.

Hiring clubs will be charged £1 per rider (50p Youth) which the club can bake into the entry fee. If the club is willing to train and use that operator the charge will drop by 30%. For using a non-club operator 30p per mile travel expenses will be expected.

Every transponder hired for a race will be charged out at £5 which it is suggested the club charges the rider. This will encourage riders to purchase their own.

I will be willing to cover about 20 events next year but if we could get say 5 or 6 more operators we could really expand its use. Ideally once we have sufficient funds (circa £5000) another unit can be purchased so that more than 1 event per day could be covered.

I intend to hold a training day, probably at the West Suffolk Club Room in Bury St Edmunds early next year. All Eastern Region Race Organisers will be contacted shortly and a diary generated from the replies. I already have some confirmed bookings + whatever we do at Lotus.

See you at the AGM

Cheers

Ken