

## Student Report

The past year has been a very busy one for a lot of the student motorsport clubs across Scotland. It has seen the clubs and their members take part in a variety of different motorsports across the length and breadth of Britain.

Since the start of the academic year, Strathclyde have tried to bring their members to Autotest events to try and diversify the club's activities. Due to availability and transport issues, the club has only been to one event and it was at Ardeer. The club attended a SSCC event and they were very accommodating which led to a great event for all involved. Work is being done on improving the attendance at SSCC events in the following year.

A lot of clubs have been running events exclusively for their members also. Social events are an essential part of running a student club and many clubs use arrive-and-drive karting as their central social activity. It is an easy event to organise and allows a variety of skill levels to participate on the same track, leading to some interesting moments at times I admit.

Strathclyde have put on some more unusual events this year in order to test the waters for what direction the club can take in the years to come. One of these events was a trip to Hypertrax in East Kilbride. Hypertrax is an indoor Dirt-Bike Arena which uses electric bikes and is open to ages 5+. As most of the club had never ridden a bike before, it was an extremely interesting event! Most of the riders struggled to stay on the bike initially but thanks to the support and guidance of the staff, everyone was able to get some serious speed on the track...some even getting air over the jumps! While it was completely different for the club, everyone agreed the trip was a success so further events are being planned presently.



A number of student clubs have also been embracing Sim Racing in order to attract new members. Sim Racing gives anyone the chance to experience the feel of driving a race car without the risk of sitting in one! It has become more widespread thanks to a huge jump in the available technology. Some businesses are taking advantage of this and are opening centres where groups of up to 30 can go along and race on the same server while enjoying a party-like atmosphere. Virtual Reality is also being utilised to enhance the experience, bringing the racers even closer to the action. While there is nothing like the thrill of a race day, the events are really fun and provide another option for the clubs to maintain variety in their activities.

Another thing clubs have done this year is promote marshalling to their members! Strathclyde sent a group of 5 to marshal at the recent Knockhill Stages 2018 event on 25<sup>th</sup> February. Everyone enjoyed the day and for some it was the first they'd seen Knockhill in the sun!

In order to provide progression for their members; a number of clubs have participated in competitive events on a variety of levels. Strathclyde have introduced an inter-club championship for the 2017/18 academic year with four rounds being held across the session at various Arrive-and-Drive venues, including PFI Karting in Grantham, Lincolnshire where the club are running a joint event with Leeds University Motorsport.

Also, both Edinburgh and Strathclyde have entered the British Universities Karting Championship (BUKC) this year. The BUKC is a huge step-up for most students as the racing involves using 2-stroke, direct drive karts which are capable of speeds of up to 60mph. Combine this with the increased track difficulty (rounds are held at Buckmore Park and Whilton Mill Kart Circuits) and it leads to a really interesting series. Teams are comprised of four racers who each get a 20minute qualifying session and a 25minute race each in every round.

Both universities have been strong contenders in the opening two rounds. Strathclyde A have won both rounds and currently have a 6-point lead in the championship standings. Edinburgh A have 9<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the opening rounds, giving them 4<sup>th</sup> place overall. Strathclyde B have not been so fortunate. After finishing well in round 1 (10<sup>th</sup> overall), round 2 brought a whole load of bad luck meaning they finished well down the table and now sit 29<sup>th</sup> out of 50 in the table. All the teams are gearing up for Round 3 at the most northern venue. Hooton Park in Liverpool, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March as I write this report (3<sup>rd</sup> March). Pictured below is the podium for Round 2 with Strathclyde on the top step and some of the Edinburgh team on the 3<sup>rd</sup> step, Surrey A sit in P2. This championship is so popular that they have started Live-Streaming the Mains Championship (so no chance to watch the Scottish Contingent unfortunately) and live timing screens are available courtesy of Alpha Timing ([results.alphatiming.co.uk](http://results.alphatiming.co.uk) for anyone interested)



At present, a lot of clubs are almost dormant due to the imminent exam season that begins as soon as Mid-April! Scottish Motorsports have done their bit to relieve the stress with the re-arranged Student Challenge which is to be held at Knockhill on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March after the

event was initially cancelled in November due to heavy snowfall. The event will comprise of Autotesting and Karting and is set to be attended by a large number of clubs from across the country. More will follow in subsequent reports, I'm sure!

Also still to come this year is the British Universities 24hour Karting Event at Teeside Autodrome in June. Both Strathclyde and Edinburgh are set to participate with both eager to overturn past years results where mechanical failures left both teams too far off the lead to challenge, despite impressive pace being shown by both teams. Watch this space!

I accept that this report has been a little lengthy and if you've made it this far I salute you! If you want to know more or if one of the events mentioned is something your club would like to consider, get in touch with me and I'd be happy to pass on any relevant information.

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