

Joint statement on behalf of the BRCA 1/10th Electric track section and Schumacher Racing

Background:

As in previous years the drivers who participate in the previous years National championship series decide on the control tyre package to be used for the coming season via a poll of submissions received by the committee. Potential suppliers are contacted, immediately after the AGM in November, with a view to submitting a bid to provide the control tyre packages, slick and treaded, for the championship. The process requires that the submissions are accompanied by a control sample which is retained as reference in the event of any queries arising plus other assurances with regards to the supply and consistency of the 3 items that make up the control tyre package, namely the tyre, insert and wheel rim. (See the 2010 bid contract document attached to the 2010 vote page on www.centralbooking.org). On closure of the online poll, the supplier of tyre package selected by the drivers is notified on the 20th December, approximately 4 months 25 days before the first round, to allow sufficient time for the supplier to make arrangements for the tyres to be available within the conditions of the submission contract.

The 2010 slick (dry) control tyre package chosen by the drivers was the Sorex 32R supplied by Schumacher Racing Products, package part number: XG32CM -

Package submission: Sorex 32R tyre, C medium insert, RevLite wheel.

The 2010 treaded (wet) tyre was not subject to a vote as there was only one tyre package submitted and becomes the selected package by default – this being the Pit Shimzu D01J, again as prepared and supplied by Schumacher Racing Products.

Both these tyre packages are the **exact** same control tyre packages as selected and used by the drivers in both the 2008 and 2009 championships.

In the lead up to the first round of the nationals, the committee became aware that some drivers were experiencing difficulties over sourcing supplies of the 2010 control tyres from retail outlets. On following this up with Schumacher the committee were informed that due to delays, caused by the Icelandic ash cloud with air traffic movements into the UK, the shipments they were expecting had been delayed. Following this up the committee were assured that the deliveries would arrive before the first round and that all outstanding orders would be filled to retail outlets that were outstanding before the meeting, and that a good supply would also be available at the meeting itself. This did happen as promised.

Issues:

Following the National round at Mendip, it became apparent that some drivers were commenting on the performance of the control tyres being supplied, in particular that they were noticing a variation in the “feel” of the tyres. Following an increase in these comments the committee acquired a number of examples of tyres run by various drivers at that meeting and these were then checked and cut open to compare their construction and specifically the insert, with the bid control samples. It was immediately apparent that while the tyre and wheel rim were the same as the control sample, the inserts from the used examples of the “new” tyres were totally different from that of the sample control tyre submitted.

Specifically, the inserts found in the “new” batch of tyres were different in weight, colour, compound, and dimensions. Due to its larger size, this insert filled the space between the rim and the tyre resulting in a smaller air gap and less tyre movement, resulting in slightly different handling characteristics.

Actions:

Due to the serious nature of comments being made, and some of the implications should they be found to be true, the committee had no alternative but to suspend the results of the first round pending an investigation into this whole issue.

Upon identifying the difference in the inserts an urgent meeting was arranged with Schumacher to discuss the issue and find out what had happened and how we could move forward. A number of representatives of the committee met with representatives of Schumacher, at their factory, on the same day that the drivers examples were received, and confirmed to be different from the control samples.

At this meeting, after presenting our findings, Schumacher agreed that there had been a change to the insert and offered an explanation of how this had come about. They also explained how they went to great lengths to try to ensure that the new inserts being used were as close as possible to the original sample, by weighing every insert before being used, and had in fact rejected approx 50% of the inserts received as being of unsuitable quality. After agreeing that the insert being used was both different and proving unsuitable, Schumacher offered an alternative option to the committee, of a different insert they had recently sourced, and subject to testing and sufficient supply, would like to use going forward for the rest of the championship. At this point the insert discussion closed with Schumacher having to come back to the committee with a guarantee that they could source the new insert, in sufficient quantity for the remainder of the championship. Further discussions were held over the manner in which Schumacher had failed to handle this whole issue in the appropriate manner, and about the scope of the knowledge about the change in inserts prior to the first round.

Findings:

Following our investigations, the committee is satisfied that **no** drivers had any prior knowledge of the change of inserts before the meeting and was therefore able to take advantage of this, despite the allegations, and reported claims. Since no factual evidence to support these claims has been presented to the committee, or found by the committee, there is no further reason for the results of the first round to be considered unsafe and therefore will stand.

The committee would stress that there is no problem with the tyre or the wheel rim and never has been. The only issue is with the change of insert and the insert itself.

Note: the use of the phrase "package" applies only to the individual, pre-mounted and glued, tyre, insert and wheel assembly and not 4 tyres sealed in retail packaging.

Whilst Schumacher have not been found to have done anything with intent to defraud, they have accepted that they have grossly mishandled this issue and have unreservedly apologised to the committee, and will do to the drivers, for the problems that their attempt to internally resolve the difficulty they faced over the inserts has caused.

Whilst the committee acknowledges the difficulty that Schumacher found themselves in, they are disappointed in their failure to inform the committee of the situation as soon as it arose. The committee accepts that Schumacher's actions were of one of trying to correct the problem they faced as quickly as possible and that in no way intended this to affect the outcome or results of the championship. The committee are also pleased that Schumacher have agreed to replace any unused version of the tyres previously purchased for the Nationals with the new version and did this without hesitation. The committee are therefore pleased that the results of their investigation has not identified any further reason for the results of the first round to be declared unsafe.

Conclusions:

Going forwards, it was agreed with the committee and Schumacher, that subject to testing results, the committee had no alternative but to accept the change in the insert to the specification of the control tyre package. It was also stipulated that in return, conditions would be applied to this 3rd "gen" tyre package.

To ensure fair play and maintain the level playing field for all drivers and teams:

- The new tyre package going forward for the Nationals would be identified with a new part number – to be known as the XG32RY.
- The XG32RY control tyre package was **not** to be made available to any persons or drivers in advance of the next meeting. There are to be no exceptions to this what so ever.
- The new XG32RY tyre package will be available track-side from the Saturday morning onwards, in sufficient quantities for all drivers requirements, at the next round at Cotswold.
- The new tyre package will only be available at the official BRCA scrutineering area, and handed out by a representative of the BRCA **and** a Schumacher and/or the track-side retailer representative, where they would be immediately opened and marked against the drivers name for racing on that weekend. Payments will be made to the retailer or Schumacher and not the BRCA.
- That any driver entered who presents **unused** versions of the XG32CM tyre would qualify to have these swapped by Schumacher for the new XG32RY version. Priority will go to the tyres required for use at this meeting in the first instance.
- After this meeting the new tyre package would then be distributed for normal availability through the normal Schumacher retail channels.

Going forwards:

The committee have worked very hard to raise the profile of the Nationals, and in particular the support and enthusiasm for the 2010 Nationals, which has made it the most successful one for many years with most rounds being either already fully booked in advance or close to it.

The committee feels that, having investigated the whole issue, this result is the best one possible for the drivers and the championship within the time constraints involved and are pleased with the co-operation, support and assurances they have received from Schumacher in resolving this situation.

To ensure this remains the case the committee will be applying additional controls to ensure that drivers, and the championship, are not faced with such a situation again in the future.

The committee is dismayed at the content and nature of claims, and of accusations made in public places by some people, rather than waiting for the outcome of the committee's investigation and resolution. Equally some of the claims, now proven to be unfounded, that have done nothing more than to inflame an already difficult situation for everyone affected. It is also dismayed that some people are so quick to make these sorts of allegations that tarnish the reputations of respected members of the sport without any factual evidence.

We trust that in future all drivers will direct their concerns immediately to a representative of the committee so that they have the opportunity to investigate any potential problems in an objective and factual manner.

1st June 2010
BRCA 1/10th Electric Track Committee
Schumacher Racing Products