



Motor Racing returns to Bishopscourt Racing Circuit

Car racing is set to return to the Bishopscourt Circuit in Northern Ireland for the first time in 44 years.

Leinster Motor Club ("LMC") will run a meeting for Irish classes there on May 12/13.

It is the first time since the 1968 Leinster Trophy meeting that the former World War Two airfield at Downpatrick in County Down, about 23 miles south of Belfast, has been used for car racing although the venue is used regularly for club motorcycle races. It is also a popular site for single venue rallying and last year, after a raft of upgrades, was approved for Motor Sports Association sanctioned kart meetings.

Leinster Motor Club member, Garry Manning, a former Motorsport Ireland Karting Committee chairman, approached the circuit manager Wilson McKibben last July with a view to the club running a meeting there. This led to MSA technical director John Symes examining the track and last week he gave the green light for the project subject to certain work, especially on the circuit's kerbing, being undertaken.

It is understood that because the circuit is in Northern Ireland, and therefore under MSA rules, the LMC will have to appoint a British motor racing club to run the meeting. While details of the organising club won't be made public for another three weeks the situation is not unusual because the Dublin-based club already run meetings at Anglesey Circuit in North Wales under the direction of the BRSCC.

Manning, who coordinated the negotiations between LMC, The Association of Northern Ireland Car Clubs, Motorsport Ireland and the MSA, says it is a positive move for Irish motor racing.

He said: "If you include the long and the short versions of Mondello Park and Kirkistown we now have four permanent tracks in the country. I facilitated the deal purely for the good of Irish racing. It also allows for Sunday racing which is unusual in Northern Ireland."

The circuit is limited to just 16 days of motorsport activity because of local planning permission regulations but the LMC has already been granted its mid-May date by circuit bosses. A full announcement will be made by LMC and the British organising club by the end of January or early February when details of exactly what classes

and championships will use the new venue will be made public. Other classes, like those traditionally run at nearby Kirkistown are likely to be added to the bill.

The race meeting is scheduled to take place on **Saturday and Sunday May 12/13, 2012**. The race meeting will feature all the main classes currently racing in Ireland and will be promoted by Leinster Motor Club, who incidentally organised the last car racing event held at the track in 1968.

In 1992 the circuit was bought and made into a permanent motorsports Facility and in 2001 the present owner took over the site and made massive improvements to the layout and safety of the Circuit. In 2011 the complete resurfacing of the track was finished, giving 3 alternative layouts ranging from 1.5 miles to 2.1 miles per lap.

The race meeting in May will be on the National track measuring 1.85 miles.

Further information will be available in the near future on the following web sites.

www.leinstermotorclub.ie and www.bishopscourt.org

BISHOPSCOURT RACING CIRCUIT

TOTAL LENGTH OF CIRCUIT 1.83 MILES
 CIRCUIT WIDTH : MINIMUM 12 METRES
 MAXIMUM 16 METRES
 CIRCUIT : APPROXIMATE AREA 160 ACRES

KEY

- GREEN - EARTH BANKS
 - - TYRE WALLS
 - YELLOW ▲ - FLAG POST
 - BLUE - CAR PARKING
 - RED - GRAVEL TRAPS
 - ORANGE - PIT LANES
 - - RACE CONTROL
- P/A Between Tyre Walls & Track

