



MOTORSPORT SOUTH AFRICA NPC

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REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR THE MSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON 03 NOVEMBER 2020

When MSA and its members came together for last year's AGM, none of us could have foreseen what a year 2020 would turn out to be. Had we known then what we know now, I am sure we would all have had far more appreciation for the good things that happened in 2019, the last 'normal' year we are likely to see for some time.

The 2019 racing season ended on a high note with the FIA World Rallycross Championship (WRX) again finishing its season in Cape Town, and the iconic 9-Hour endurance race being revived at Kyalami. The WRX event was a championship-deciding cliffhanger and credit must go to Worldsport South Africa, who took over as the local promoter of the event with very little time to put everything together and did an admirable job in the circumstances. The 9-Hour was also a great success (despite the efforts of the Highveld weather) and the team responsible for putting the event together can feel justifiably proud of what they achieved.

On 01 November 2019, MSA welcomed on board a new Sporting Services Manager, Vic Maharaj. Although Vic joined the company with a wealth of experience in various aspects of motorsport, his first year with the company has proven to be a baptism of fire in every possible way. His calm nature has definitely helped him to cope! It has been a pleasure to have Vic as part of the MSA team and I look forward to working with him into the future.

The 2020 racing season had barely got underway when Covid-19 struck with a vengeance, and the accompanying national lockdown meant a cessation of motorsport events for nearly 5 months. A great deal of work went on behind the scenes to obtain approval from government for motorsport to resume and this came in mid-July, with local motorsport events re-starting in August, under strict health protocols. Although the safety of the motorsport community is obviously of paramount importance, compliance with the protocols aimed at mitigating the spread of the virus is extremely onerous for all involved, particularly event organisers. MSA therefore thanks them sincerely for their assistance and cooperation to date.

MOTORSPORT SOUTH AFRICA IS THE ONLY RECOGNISED MOTORSPORT FEDERATION IN SOUTH AFRICA



Directors: A. Roux (Chairman), A. Scholtz (Chief Executive Officer), A. Taylor (Financial), F. Alibhai, R. Beekun, FC. Kraamwinkel, G. Hall, A. Harri, Dr G. Mills, M. Rowe, R. Schilling, Ms M. Spurr, S. Themba, S. Van der Merwe

Despite the obvious safety concerns and financial challenges, when the sport was finally able to resume following the hard lockdown, it quickly became clear that the enthusiasm for the sport remains undimmed. This has been really good to see and I commend the efforts of all those who are getting on with the job of continuing to make events happen in extremely trying times.

On a less positive note, it is clear that '*Covid fatigue*' has become a major factor amongst people in general, not just in South Africa but around the world. This is unfortunately leading people to be less likely to adhere to the basic health protocols of mask-wearing, social distancing and hand cleansing. This is bad news both from a health and safety point of view, but also for society at large if the lockdown regulations are again to be tightened in response. MSA therefore urges the local motorsport community to lead by example and to continue practising the basic health protocols that will hopefully ensure our sport, as well as our daily lives, does not suffer any further devastating disruptions.

The lockdown has had, as with so many other businesses, a major impact on MSA's finances and the company will, despite the implementation of various cost-cutting measures, show a significant financial loss in 2020. Fortunately, MSA's healthy financial position pre-Covid means that the company is not in any short-term danger and therefore able to play its part in helping the sport to get back on its feet in 2021. As part of this process, it is MSA's intention to discount 2021 licence prices for those competitors who took out annual competition licences prior to 01 April 2020 and therefore lost out on the use of their licences during the lockdown. To assist its members, MSA is also intending to discount their affiliation fees in 2021.

Amid all the negative aspects of the hard lockdown, there were fortunately a few positives as well. MSA took the opportunity to move all of its officials training programmes online. This involved the creation of content to be used as the basis for a series of webinar training sessions, which have proved to be very popular. There is no question that online training is a more accessible option for current and prospective race officials than attendance at physical seminars and it is therefore hoped that this initiative will help to provide much-needed growth in the community of race officials. For the members' interest, the various online seminars have been attended as follows at the time of writing this report:

- Technical Consultant/Scrutineer – 186 individuals
- Event Secretary – 59 individuals
- General Competition Rules – 108 individuals
- Resumption of Motorsport (Covid compliance) - 133 individuals

Another positive to come out of the lockdown was the massive boost given to online racing. I already mentioned in my report for last year's AGM that online racing would become more and more prominent going forward but nobody could have foreseen how quickly this would happen. Online racing will be a key focus area for MSA in 2021 and beyond, with the intention being to both embrace the mass market via easily-accessible online racing platforms, as well as create formal championships for the more serious online racers. It is also hoped that new competitors in the traditional forms of motorsport will emerge from online racing going forward.

Over a period of time, the MSA board started to become increasingly concerned about various aspects of South African karting. These aspects ranged from diminishing accessibility due to factors such as the cost of equipment and a high level of technical complexity associated with the sport, to the propensity of some karting parents to force MSA to needlessly incur unnecessary legal expenses in defending High Court review applications when the parents concerned refused to accept the rulings handed down by MSA appeal courts. This state of affairs led the MSA board to appoint a Karting Working Group (KWG), under the chairmanship of MSA board member Richard Schilling, at the end of 2019 to investigate various aspects of local karting, particularly at a national championship level. The KWG held numerous meetings, both in person and online during the lockdown, including with the two series promoters, and ultimately presented a final strategy document, which was approved by the MSA board during October. The KWG document will now be presented to karting stakeholders in an online webinar format, and MSA is both confident and determined that local karting will see the benefits in 2021 and beyond.

Although Covid-19 has played havoc with motorsport all over the world in 2020, South Africans racing overseas have still managed to achieve some stunning results that have done the country proud. Performances worthy of special mention here include Toyota Gazoo Racing South Africa again showing well at the 2020 Dakar with two finishers in the top five in the overall standings, Brad Binder winning a race in his rookie year in the premier MotoGP category, Darryn Binder winning a Moto3 world championship race, Sheldon van der Linde winning a DTM race, Jordan Pepper winning the Bathurst 12 Hour endurance race and Cameron Petersen winning the MotoAmerica Stock 1000 Motorcycle Championship.

In closing, I would like to, once again, thank all of those involved in the administration, promotion and organisation of local motorsport for their efforts in keeping the sport moving forward in what are extremely tough times for the country and the world. Thank you also to the MSA staff for their hard work and support and to the MSA board members, both current and retiring, for their contribution to the company. There is no doubt that 2021 is going to be a difficult year on all fronts and MSA stands prepared to do whatever it can to assist the sport to weather the storm.

Thank you one and all and stay safe.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Scholtz', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

ADRIAN SCHOLTZ
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER