

## Minutes of The First European Hill-climb Meeting

Place: City Hotel Portus, Tallinn, Estonia

Date: 27.11.2010

Chair of the Meeting: Patrick Innocenti

Participants at the meeting:

Chair of the meeting: Patrick Innocenti (FRA), Promotor of Hill-climb, UEM

Vanessa Lapeyre (FRA)

Ivar Gynnild (NOR) Chairman, Norwegian Hill-climb Commission

Erland Matthis (SWE) MC Hydet

Erkki Salak (EST) Chairman, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

Urmas Põldma (EST) Hill-climber, Member, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

Riho Kollist (EST) Hill-climber, Member, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

Billy Toomla (EST) Hill-climber, Member, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

Alar Johanson (EST) Hill-climber, Member, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

Ants Juhanson (EST) Chief, Estonian Hill-climb Judicial Panel

Katrin Kivi (EST) Secretary General, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

Helen Urbanik (EST) Minutes-taker

Invited to the meeting but absent:

Giuseppe Zollis (SUI) Organizer, Obersaxen Hill-climb competition

Steffan Schmucki (SUI) Obersaxen Hill-climb

Vallo Põder (EST) Hill-climber, Member, Estonian Hill-climb Commission

### Agenda

14.00-16.00 - Strategic development of hill-climb

1. Establishment of hill-climb commission under UEM

2. European Hill-climb Championship (European Hill-climb Cup)

3. Specific problems, proposals and rules

16.00-17.00 – break

17.00 – 19.00

4. Communication, Marketing, Media, Public Relations

1. Establishment of hill-climb commission under UEM

Patrick Innocenti explained that in many countries and in UEM, the discipline of hillclimb is under the motocross commission. People who make educated decisions about motocross are not experts in hillclimb. We will

make a proposition to UEM to establish a special, separate commission for hillclimb. But we need to find people who will represent hillclimbers in this commission and are ready to work there.

Ivar Gynnild commented that in some countries you have to be a member in the national federation in order to become a representative in the UEM. Also you get (financial) support from your federation to participate in the UEM work.

Unanimously it was decided to make a proposition to UEM to establish a hillclimb commission under UEM and to include members from France, Norway and Europe in that commission first. It was decided that Mr Innocenti would be considered as the chair of the commission because in order for sports to be taken more seriously, the commission has to accept the promoter of the sports - and what better way to do that than accepting him as leader of the commission. To be part of the official sport the decision was made that in the beginning it is most important to start, the commission can be small, but it is necessary to get the proposal out to UEM and to have the commission working as soon as is possible.

Ivar Gynnild proposed that Mr Innocenti has to notify UEM that they send out information to all members federations that hillclimb commission is being created and proposals for membership are awaited from all countries.

## 2. European Hill-climb Championship (European Hill-climb Cup)

Mr Innocenti gave an overview of the past season: 2010 the European Championship was planned for the first time. There were supposed to be 3 competitions, 2 in France and one in Spain. Unfortunately the Spanish event was cancelled because of organizational problems. In the end it was necessary to hold all 3 events in France to save the situation.

For the future there are two different routes to choose - either to hold a European Championship series in different countries, have many events during the season. Or to have only one big European Cup event like the Motocross of Nations. The key point is that either way the event(s) should be well organized to be recognized as official, attract serious riders with serious bikes - this would make it easier to attract the media and the sponsors.

Mr Gynnild has a slightly different idea: to hold one big European event, maybe for two days, with lots of classes - to attract more and more (new) riders. The idea is to give an opportunity to take part with your motocross bike in the standard class and give you an incentive to build a special class bike the next time. Still, since there are no rules present yet for this myriad of classes, on the European Cup level there can be accepted only one, the

Open, Prototype class. Also, the spectators come to see the special bikes - they have to be present at the big competitions.

Right now Mr Innocenti has three requests from organizers to hold a European event in 2011: Spain, Obersaxen in Switzerland, and in France. Because the time is so short before the beginning of the next season it was decided to hold only one good event - a European Cup, in 2011, and in the meantime find organizers who are able to accept the hillclimb commission rules for the 2012 year. It was discussed that an official email from the Scandinavian hillclimb commissions should be sent to the Arette organizer asking him to consider organizing the European Cup in 2011.

Unanimously it was decided that only organizers who are ready go by the rules that the hillclimb commission sets and don't make restrictions to these rules are allowed to organize events in the European Championship. Mr Gynnild added that the commission should set requirements for an event that belongs to the European Championship series (track requirements, hotel available for riders, food available for riders, internet connection, etc). Everybody who meets all these requirements can apply for a European level event. If there is a problem with environmentalists in some country, they have to solve it themselves. Maybe they can get special permission for one European Cup competition.

### 3. Specific hillclimb rules

Mr Innocenti introduced a new timing system for hillclimb competitions with "timetraps". Receiver gates or systems would be set in four or five points along the track and in the finish. Bikes would be fitted with transponders and if they do not reach the finish they would get the result (a timed result not a result in meters) from the farthest point they reached. The results would be decided according to the best time in the farthest point on the track. It was agreed that the system is good and brings the sport forward, makes it faster.

It was decided that enquiries will be made about the availability and cost of renting such system for the organizers. Also the technical requirements have to be made very clear for the organizers: what they need to build, where and how it has to work.

Mr Gynnild suggested that the requirements of the tracks should also be described in the rules. For example that there should be a fast part, a technical part, a wall in the end, a length of around 150 m would be perfect. The hillclimb commission can look at different hills who are applying for events. Still for the sake of developing the sport, they must accept as different tracks as possible - short, long, fast, etc.

If you are going to run a race under UEM rules you cannot have the national differences in rules on that competition.

For example, nitro is not allowed in Sweden. Only environment-friendly, lead-free fuel. In Obersaxen the situation is the same; also bolts are not allowed, or paddles of iron, on the tire. If you want to organize a European level event, these restrictions cannot be applied.

It was also decided that the UEM hillclimb rules will have to be rewritten according to the suggestions of the majority of the European hillclimbers. The rules as they are now were copied from French hillclimb rules because these were the only official championship rules in Europe.

Mr Erlend Matthis suggested that the newly appointed hillclimb commission for UEM will work on new rules and the structure of the rules, puts the proposals forward and distributes them to the countries' commissions, at the same time also receiving proposals from the countries' commissions. The commission starts work right away. The effort is to have the rules in place before January 2011. The aim is to make the rules more specific and precise to avoid the possibility of many interpretations.

Mr Gynnild stated that he will start making an English version of the rules in a week, send it out to everyone. A very tight deadline was proposed for answering and making further suggestions - maximum of two weeks.

In order to get the correct definitions for parts of motorcycles in the rules it was decided to put up a video of a hillclimb bike on the net and find a native English speaker and a native French speaker who are at home in the field of bikes and let them comment on the video and come up with correct definitions in the two languages.

#### 4. Communication, Marketing, Media, Public Relations

Mr Innocenti said that it is hard to get exposure for hillclimb in Europe, it is considered a marginal (underground) sport. This results in hardly any sponsors. It was agreed that the better the regulations, the better the events are organized, the more serious the sport is, the easier it will become to sell.

Mr Gynnild suggested that the promotor's job is to guide the sport into becoming more spectacular, ask from TV-producers what they want. What is hillclimb missing to make it more appealing for the media? Mr Innocenti as the promotor should not be dealing with small things like tents or posters but concentrate on the top and development, finding big sponsors.

Ms Katrin Kivi suggested that smaller and less expensive steps than buying TV-time on Eurosport could be taken by hillclimbers like exchanging videos, posting them on Youtube. Creating a website for hillclimb in Europe, where

information is current and fresh, and that has an active operator. The newly appointed hillclimb commission has to find out the procedure for getting the official hillclimb information (rules, calendar, etc) up on the UEM website once UEM has approved the commission.

It was also discussed how to improve the communication among hillclimbers: getting the important information to the people concerning. Also it was stated that at hillclimb events, especially the French ones, there has to be at least one person who speaks decent English, to be able to communicate with non-French speaking participants. At other places, there has to be someone who speaks French to communicate with the French riders. This requirement has to be stated in the official hillclimb rules.

Minutes submitted by Helen Urbanik