



From the National Court

**MOTOR SPORTS COUNCIL NATIONAL COURT
SITTING TUESDAY 1 OCTOBER 2019**

**John Felix
Mike Garton
Guy Spollon (Chairman)**

J2019/24 – Sam Baker

This matter came before the National Court on 1st October 2019 by way of a disciplinary hearing.

Although notified and aware of the hearing, Sam Baker failed to attend before the Court. The Court has, however, received various witness statements from Mr Baker himself, Dan Straw, David Griffith, Team Principal, and Anthony Baker, Sam's father.

The essential facts are as follows:

1. On 17th and 18th August 2019 Rounds 9 and 10 of the Rotax British Kart Championships were staged at the Clay Pidgeon Kart Club Circuit. Sam Baker was a competitor in the Senior Max races. On 18th August, Sam Baker was convicted in his absence by the Stewards of the Meeting of conduct contrary to General Regulations C.1.1.9 and was disqualified from the meeting and his competition licence was suspended for 30 days with 6 points endorsed on his competition licence. The issue for the Court is whether any further or additional penalties should be imposed pursuant to General Regulation C2.6.2.
2. There is a most unfortunate background to this matter which involves:
 - (i) Bad feelings over non-payment for work done and a subsequent track collision at an earlier meeting with a fellow competitor.
 - (ii) Frustration and disappointment in the way the above track collision was handled by the event organisers.
3. Sam Baker was accompanied by his long-standing girlfriend, Alanta, to the kart meeting on 18th August 2019. During the day a young woman, Paige Holden, approached Sam Baker's girlfriend and led her to believe that Sam Baker was cheating on her. Alanta was distraught and confronted Sam Baker, telling him their relationship was at an end.
4. Sam Baker denied the allegation of cheating and believed Paige Holden to be making mischief. He grabbed her and shouted at her, demanding that she should speak to his girlfriend to sort out matters. Paige Holden's friend, Ella Burgess, saw what was happening and joined her friend, Paige.
5. Paige Holden's mobile phone apparently did display a Snapchat account with the name 'Sam Baker', but Paige Holden claimed it was not the Sam Baker who is the subject of these proceedings. There is a suggestion that Sam Baker pushed Ella Burgess against a nearby lorry and threw Paige Holden's mobile phone at a wall, against which it smashed. There is also evidence to indicate that Sam Baker threatened to set 'gypsies' on Paige Holden and her friends who would inflict serious injury on them.

There is no doubt that Sam Baker was very upset during his incident and felt that he was the victim of a plan to destroy his relationship with his long-standing girlfriend.

6. Finally, Sam Baker drove off, but not before swerving at the group, including Paige Holden and Ella Burgess, as he left.

The court concludes that:

1. This was a disgraceful incident and that the Stewards were correct to impose the punishment that they did on the information available to them at the time.
2. Having had the benefit, however, of the detailed statements of Sam Baker and his witnesses, there is an explanation for his behaviour.
3. In all the circumstances and recognising Sam Baker's own championship had been ruined by this incident, there will be no additional penalty save for a contribution of £400 towards the costs of this hearing.
4. Karting is a sport where competitors and public alike attend for entertainment and pleasure. Personal disputes and acrimony have no place at the racetrack.

For the avoidance of doubt the contribution of £400 towards the costs of this hearing should be paid within 7 days and Sam Baker's licence will not be restored until the costs are paid in full.

Guy Spollon
Chairman
1st October 2019