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STATEMENT: EASTERN CREEK INTERNATIONAL KARTING CIRCUIT

To improve the Eastern Creek International Karting Raceway facility, track management enlisted the services of company to resurface the 1024-metre circuit in June. At which time, management were informed that the resurfacing would take a maximum of two weeks followed by another two weeks to allow the surface to 'cure' before racing could recommence at the venue.

Prior to the commencement of the work, the contracted company conducted a roll test, which means they drove around the circuit to ensure the base was solid enough to begin work.

This roll test didn't highlight any issues, and the contractor commenced the resurfacing procedure.

Staff at the contracted company completed a resurface of the first half of the track, it was then at this stage that Eastern Creek Karts Managing Director Garry Holt and North Shore Kart Club (NSKC) President Peter Galvin inspected the already completed work. It was the opinion of both Holt and Galvin that the finish of the circuit wasn't up to standard.

Holt and Galvin met with the company's management to request an answer as to why the track didn't appear to be as they would have expected.

Further meetings were then held to discuss the already laid section of the track.

Following independent opinions from industry experts, it was established that the repairs were not completed to an acceptable standard.

Eastern Creek Karts Management and the NSKC then spent the next several weeks trying to come to a resolution with the contracted company to correct what work had already been done and what was required to complete the remaining work.

Further meetings with company management were held, to which at that point negotiations broke down. This led Eastern Creek Karts and the NSKC losing faith in the contracted company's ability to complete the required work to a suitable standard – not to mention further significant delays.

Since this time, Eastern Creek Karts has contracted independent expert engineers to supply information on how best to repair the subgrade of the second section of the track.

In repairing this subgrade, the work of the previous contractor had to be redone – further extending the delays.

This has since led to a completely rebuilt subgrade. The costs to date for the project are somewhere in the vicinity of \$500,000.

The reason why this has blown out to such a cost is due to the wet weather in the Sydney region and because Eastern Creek Karts and the NSKC felt that it was imperative that the works being completed needed to be of the highest possible standards.

“It is imperative that everyone understands the importance of the subgrade being to a satisfactory level so as to prolong the longevity of the track for many years to come. In carrying out these works, no stone has been left unturned in ensuring that the subgrade and the work being done currently is of the upmost professional level,” said Galvin.

Throughout this entire process Holt and Galvin have been working closely with Ivan Mihaljevic who has been an integral part of the resurfacing for the Gold Coast, Townsville and Sydney street circuits along with various airports around the world.

After viewing the subgrade earlier this week, Mihaljevic and the new contractors (including a new asphalt laying company and sealer/binder company) have now classed the subgrade on section two of the track to be a ‘virgin subgrade’ meaning that the racing circuit is to be treated as if it was a brand new circuit, rather a resurface as originally planned.

Because there has been such extensive works to the subgrade of the second section of the circuit, which were only finalised earlier this week, a normal road sealer/binder can’t be used on top of it. A sealer/binder with more additives in it is required. This is because unless this process is completed properly there is no guarantee that the racing surface will bind with the subgrade surface.

The required sealer/binder has a curing time on its own, the racing surface can not be laid until a minimum of 14 days from the time sealer/binder has been laid.

Using this sealer/binder it means that unless the surface, in particular the tar itself, has a curing time of more than 60 days an unacceptable unraveling of the surface could occur. This would mean that random stones could be plucked out from the racing surface by the high level of grip that kart racing produces. ([Click here](#) to view a memo from Ivan Mihaljevic). This would be an unsatisfactory outcome for all parties involved.

Unfortunately, it is considering all of the above that the Committee of the North Shore Kart Club advise that the upcoming New South Wales State Championships will now be held at the Newcastle Kart Racing track. There will also be a State Championship Shakedown on September 17/18 at the venue. The North Shore Kart Club, in conjunction with the Newcastle Kart Racing Club, will run both events.

Decisions on the remaining race meetings have not been made at this point in time and once they are made these decisions will be advised at the earliest convenience. The International Karting Committee is currently evaluating the options for the final round of the CIK Stars of Karting Series with a high priority of importance.

“Firstly, I would like to personally thank Tony D’Annibale and the Newcastle Kart Racing Club for the continued assistance throughout all of the issues we have had with our resurfacing,” said Galvin.

“I would like all of the karting fraternity to know the amount of pressure, anxiety and stress that not only I have felt over this whole saga but also Garry Holt has had to deal with.

“I would ask at this time for members of the karting fraternity to take step back before thrusting their opinions forward on the current situation.

“As President of the North Shore Kart Club, I have spent weeks working with the Management of Eastern Creek Karts, the contractors involved while putting this matter in front of my own work and personal life on many occasions.

“At the end of the day, North Shore Kart Club and Eastern Creek Karts, is simply trying to provide a premier venue for kart racing in the Sydney metropolitan area – something that is vital to the continued success of our sport.”

Eastern Creek Karts and the North Shore Kart Club look forward to providing karters with an upgraded facility that everyone can be proud of as soon as possible.