

BUCKMINSTER TETHERED CAR TRACK UPDATE JUNE 2020.

Progress on the tethered car track project has been most encouraging even during the current and ongoing pandemic restrictions, so this is to provide an up to date status for all interested parties.

Now that socially distanced access is available to season ticket holders at the Buckminster site, the necessary track apron concrete remedial works were carried out last month and the honour of the first, conservative speed



test run on the track fell to Oliver Monk on Friday 29th May, seen here launching his car being “horsed” by a helper at the centre pylon which Olly has made and donated to the project (photo by Manny Williamson). You can see the sparse grass trying to grow on the track inner – after a Winter and Spring of virtually non-stop rain, May has been parched and the ground desperately needs some significant rain but it’s looking slightly better now in mid-June.

The test run revealed a problem with the tether cable length, which was made by Olly to the FEMA regulations which turn out to be incorrect, and some 6

inches too long. Fortunately this still kept the car inside the outer edge and able to run very well on the great track concrete surface. New cables have been made to the correct length to run in the centre of the track, and some more very successful test runs have been made with a number of different cars.

On the subject of tether cables, the table here shows the speed classes now defined for this track, with maximum car weights, speed limits and cable diameters. Cables will be provided by the organisers for official, booked events. Individual

Cable sizes For Buckminster							
Class	Weight (1)		Speed (2)		Cable mm	Colour code	Maximum Speed
	lbs	Kgs	Mph	Kph			Mph
1.5cc	2	1	80	129	0.5	White	115
2.5cc	3	1.4	100	161	0.8	Green	144
5cc	4.5	2	120	193	1	Red	148
10cc	6.5	3	140	225	1.2	Black	143

Weight (1) These are the weights for each class based on the late 1950s classes. Kgs have been rounded.

Speed (2) These are the speeds achieved in the late 1950s some have been but rounded up a little.

Maximum speed is what the cable is capable of with a safety factor of 2, ie twice as strong as it needs to be.

track users at other times will need their own cables and connectors, just as you would need your own control lines and handle for flying a c/l model. These cables will require to be made to an approved specification with a specific, high quality of piano wire and connector materials, and will be subject to periodic inspection and testing for safety considerations. The approved specification, which is a simplified version of the FEMA tether cable spec, will be published shortly, but we are working on having a supplier for these cables at hopefully reasonable cost, and will advise details as soon as we can test and finalise this supply. It is likely that mates will want to share cables, as it takes two to tango to operate a tethered car, and small groups are to be encouraged to make outings more sociable.

Manny Williamson took a couple of short video snatches of the first runs, so if you would like to see these please contact me at stevebetney@aol.com and I will send them to you.

So, our track has been christened, and just awaits the next stage completion of safety fencing to the spectator and pits area to be ready for our general use.

The current financial status of the project is that expenses so far have amounted to £8798.28, and total donations stand at £8860.05 (around £2000 having been raised since the last February appeal, including a further £500 donation from SAM 35 funds, plus the centre pylon made and donated by Olly), so hearty thanks to those who have been able to help, particularly those who have contributed more than once, but as you can see, we are only just out of the red and in much need of further construction funds.

Now for some background, reminders and other news:

The BMFA’s charge for using the track will be £8 per person per day, the same charge as for model flyers using the site, whether in an official event or for individual use, but there will be no charge for spectators or family members, or for those holding Buckminster season tickets (get one, support this great facility, and use it often!).

Track users who have current BMFA membership with flying insurance will be covered to use the track, as this is included in the standard policy.

If you are not a full BMFA member with insurance, there is a low cost option available to obtain the required insurance cover, which covers only model car and boat operation, and not flying models. This is only available by telephone contact to BMFA head office on 0116 2440028, and explaining the cover you require, which costs £18 per year. Payment must be made by cheque only by mail and by no other means such as credit card or bank transfer. This just gets you acceptable insurance to use the track, and no BMFA membership or receipt of the BMFA News magazine, and you should bring your proof of insurance card with you when you visit to run.

Alex Phinn's Redfin rolling tethered car chassis availability has been set back by the total lockdown in the Ukraine, so watch this space for when things start to free up. I finished my Ferrari Tipo 500 model built on one of the 4 prototype chassis sets back in March, and you can see what an attractive subject this is from my favourite F1 racing era from this image. I have perhaps added too many details/bells and whistles which might be prone to damage in use on the track, but it will definitely be used in anger when I can get to Buckminster to give it a run.



Alex should have at least a few of the 2.5cc Redfin twinshaft engines (with green anodised cylinder jackets) and some of the Oliver style fuel cut-outs available, so contact him at alex@redfinengines.com if you want either of these desirable items.

Well, we now have a very usable track, albeit with sparse grass cover at the moment, and all that we need to start operations in earnest once the pandemic restrictions ease sufficiently is the erection of the safety fence. It will probably come as no surprise to you that we have to make a further appeal here for us to complete this work. A number of us on the distribution list have made more than one donation to the construction fund already, so can I please ask that we spread the load a little and winkle out some new donations from others, now that we are so very close to finishing the major works.? The stalwart Buckminster volunteers led by Manny Williamson and Richard Phillips will be undertaking the significant task of erecting the fence, which will be wire mesh fencing with steel poles set in deep concrete post holes spaced 3 metres apart, covering about 60% of the track perimeter to protect the spectator and pit areas, and there will also be a low brick safety wall to the track entry from the pits area to the car launch point.

Donations as usual can be made by cheque payable to the BMFA and with "Buckminster Tethered Car Track Fund" written in the back and sent to Sian Sargeant at BMFA Chacksfield House, 31 St Andrews Road, Leicester LE2 8RE, or to me at 20 Fairfax Road, London NW6 4HA for me to send on if you prefer. For bank transfer payment details, please contact Sian at sian@bmfa.org. If you want to donate by Paypal, the BMFA does not have an account but you can send funds to me at stevebetney@aol.com by Friends and Family and I will send my cheque for the amount received to the BMFA, who will acknowledge receipt to you to keep me honest.

John Goodall has kindly donated another one of his beautifully hand beaten Oliver "Busy" car bodies as shown here to be sold with proceeds to go to the track fund (Hugh Blowers snaffled up the first one, see his write up on this at www.onthewire.co.uk). These are works of art and very few have been made, and this one can be yours for the usual commercial price of £250 for the set of pan base and body top parts, plus postage. Contact John at john@johngoodall.me.co.uk very quickly if you want this, I'm sure that there will be good interest. I'd buy it myself, but I actually got one a while ago and it is in my project pile in need of just a small amount of work to get it finished and ready to run (like perhaps about another dozen or so cars....). Exciting times folks, just keep dodging the Covid 19 bugs and get your cars all ready to run for when restrictions lift.

