



# Getting Started hillclimbing at Wiscombe Park



**Got a car? - Interested? - Like what you see?  
Want to have a go?**

**An introduction to preparing yourself and your car for Wiscombe Park Hillclimb and other speed events**



If you fancy some motorsport and want to start on a small budget, (can be done for under £1,000 including the car) then hill climbing or sprinting are great options. If you are not already a spectator, do come along and get a feel for the sport - access to the paddock is included in the admission price and the drivers are very happy to chat.



[www.reis.co.uk](http://www.reis.co.uk)



**'Speed Event'** is the general term given to the motorsport of speed hillclimbing and sprinting. Hillclimbing is the sport of racing a car from a standing start along a ribbon of tarmac to a finish point which is higher than the start - hence 'hill climb'. This is a time trial and you run one at a time. The speed event season runs from April through to the end of October.

If you are not ready to compete, there will always be a very warm welcome for you to join the enthusiastic band of marshals or the working parties who do so much behind the scenes to maintain the hill and prepare it for each event.

## **BASICS YOU NEED TO KNOW**

These are covered in more detail below:

- Licences and Club membership
- Types of car and mandatory modifications
- Driver preparation and safety - helmet and overalls etc.
- Entering an event
- What to do on the day
- Useful contacts and links

## **LICENCES AND CLUB MEMBERSHIP**

You will need a Motorsports Licence issued by Motorsport UK. The entry level licence currently costs £69 and is known as a 'RS Interclub' licence - this will allow you to compete in club events in road going cars. Apply online for your licence at Motorsport UK.

As a beginner with no competition experience and an RS Interclub licence you will be able to drive all types of production and kit cars but will be limited to 1,100 cc engine capacity (or 785cc forced induction) in single seater cars, other than pre 1994 Formula Ford 1600.

The following link gives you online access to the "bible" of all UK motorsport - which is known as the "Blue Book", available on-line in separate section's at [www.motorsportuk.org/resource-centre/yearbook/](http://www.motorsportuk.org/resource-centre/yearbook/)

The relevant sections, updated every year, are:

H: Licences J: Cars general K: Safety L: Tyres S: Sprint & hillclimb specific  
also see extracts at the end of this guide.

## **CLUB MEMBERSHIP**

To take part in an event you must also be a member of an 'invited club'. Club membership also opens up a whole range of advice and support as you prepare for your first event. The clubs include Burnham-on-Sea, MG Car Club, Plymouth, Taunton, Torbay and Woolbridge, who are all members of the Association of South West Motor Clubs (ASWMC). If you visit the ASWMC web site you will find links to all the clubs in the region [www.aswmc.org.uk/member-clubs](http://www.aswmc.org.uk/member-clubs) as well as a calendar of all events in the region.

**If you have any queries, please contact the club's or let us / them know that you are coming to an event and we will arrange for someone to chat to you.**

## **TYPES OF CAR AND MANDATORY MODIFICATIONS**

### **THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CATEGORY AND CLASSES**

You need to understand what 'class' your car will run in, and what modifications are and are not allowed in that class.

The golden rule when thinking about modifications is that **if the Blue Book doesn't say you CAN do it, then you CAN'T.**

Motorsports UK divide all types of cars into what they call categories. The 4 most relevant categories for novices are -

- Road Going Series Production (over 1,000 made per year – e.g. Audi TT, MX5, Renault Clio) – they must have a current MOT, be taxed (unless exempt) and insured.
- Road Going Specialist Production (over 30 but less than 1000 made per year – e.g. Caterham 7) – again require current MOT, tax and insurance.
- Modified Series Production (over 1000 made per year but highly modified – e.g. highly tuned Renault Clio) – not necessarily road legal.
- Modified Specialist Production (over 30 but less than 1000 p.a, e.g. highly modified Caterham 7

Not all cars in a category have the same performance - so to create a level playing field for competitors in different cars, each category is sub divided into Classes determined by engine capacity - note there is an equivalence factor of 1.4 for turbo-charged cars (i.e 1.000cc turbo is treated as 1,400cc etc). If you have any concerns about which class your car would run in, please contact your local motor club who can help you navigate the rules.

#### **MANDATORY MODIFICATIONS TO A ROAD GOING CAR ARE:**

- A sticker on the ignition switch to indicate how to switch the engine off if you have an emergency;
- Some yellow tape around the negative / earth cable on the battery (so the marshals know which cable to cut in case of a very serious accident or fire risk);
- Attach towing point eyes both front and rear (in case you break down) - these must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour;
- Two throttle return springs (most modern throttle body systems do have a second spring as standard - but check if you have an old car)
- Attach a timing strut / beam breaker to the front (details in the Blue Book in S.10.9 - sold on eBay)
- A set of Race Numbers to stick on your car - these will vary for each event (many people use magnetic backgrounds - Demon Tweaks and other race suppliers are the simplest source) - please note these should not be on the car when you rejoin the public highway, or at least crossed out. Size is 9" per Blue Book J.4.

Other modifications are at your discretion and vary from category to category. The "Blue Book" defines them; for instance in a Road Going Production car it is possible to change springs and dampers, remap the engine, carry out a wide range of modifications providing the original block and head are retained, fit alternative wheels and a different driver's seat. There is a choice of tyres, yet again defined in the "Blue Book" (section L - for Road Going as set out in lists 1.A and 1.B - these latter are road legal track tyres)

**Beware of noise checks - the limit for most events is 105db. In road going classes, the Cat if originally fitted, must be retained., so as to meet MOT requirements.**

## **HELMET, OVERALLS AND SAFETY BELTS ETC**

- Race Suit - must have "FIA 8856-2000 Approved" label (Section K 9.1.2)
- Crash helmet (full face for a Caterham 7 type open vehicle without a windscreen) - must be to an approved standard as defined in the Blue Book - motor cycle helmets, however fancy will not do! We recommend you go for one of the latest standards such as FIA 8859-2015 or Snell SA 2015. We also suggest you buy a helmet suitable for Hans / FHR posts. (Section K 10.3.1)
- Safety belt requirements vary for different categories (section K.2). The minimum requirement is for Road Going cars, which is a belt with three secure anchorage points - this also applies to the requirements for the MOT.
- If you enter an event in the Modified Production category then you will need a Hans / FHR device. FHR stands for Frontal Head Restraint and they are designed to protect the neck in the event of an accident by reducing the speed and the distance that it is thrown forward by the impact.
- Gloves - fire retardant gloves are not required for road going classes but are required for other classes (Section K 14.3 e)

**Driver equipment is expensive – make sure you double check it is suitable for hillclimbing and seek advice to make sure your purchase is to the latest standards and future proof (Blue Book section K).**

## **YOU ARE NOW READY FOR YOUR FIRST EVENT**

### **ENTERING AN EVENT**

Since Covid 19 entries have tended to be on line. You will need to monitor the organising club's website to see when entries open as sometimes they can fill up very quickly.

**You will need to know your MSUK licence number and club membership number and also have electronic copies of both to attach to the entry.**

### **WHAT TO DO ON THE DAY.**

Before each event you will be sent joining instructions from the organising club. These will tell you things such as:

- Where the event is and how to get there
- What time the circuit / paddock are open, important if you are arriving the evening before the event.

- What time signing-on and scrutineering (of the car and driver safety equipment) starts - much of this was carried out remotely in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19, so please check the instructions very carefully.
- When you can walk the course (essential for your first visit to any hill)
- Instructions about when engines may be started - in some cases not before 8am so as to respect local residents
- When practice starts
- Whether there will be a pre-start drivers' briefing
- Lunch tends to be a movable feast - but is generally between the 2nd and 3rd runs. If you are using the excellent catering facilities at Wiscombe then please buy your lunch early as during the actual lunch break catering priority will be given to the marshals
- Who you will be competing against in your class
- A diagram of the paddock layout

**Note there are usually a minimum of four runs, all timed - usually two for practice and two counting to the results**



## Useful extracts from MSUK Yearbook – the Blue Book for 2022

### Section J. 4.1 P. 147

Numbers background, 48 cm x 33 cm. Numbers' minimum height 23cm (width 3.8 cm)-5cm surround

### Section K P. 178 onwards

9.1.2 Overalls; FIA 8856-2000 or FIA 8856 - 2018

FIA 1986 Standard

### 10.3.1 Helmets;

FIA 8860-2010

FIA 8859-2015

FIA 8860-2018

FIA 8860-2018-ABP

SNELL SA 2010 until 31.12.23

SNELL SA 2015 until 31.12.26

SNELL SAH 2010 until 31.12.23

SNELL SA 2020

2020

**Note; all need an MSA approval sticker**

Helmets with HANS option for posts are recommended

### 14.3.e Gloves

Materials test to ISO 6940. 8856-2000 are also approved

**For standard and road going not mandatory, only recommended**

### Section L P. 210

This is for the road going classes -Tyres -1A & 1B

Must comply with EEEC30/EE108E and if produced after 1.11.2014 comply with UNECE Regulation 117 which means they must carry S, W or R markings

### Section S P.354

9.2.5 Numbers –clearly visible on contrasting background –size not specified, but see J 4.1 above

### Section S P. 355

10.2.15 Towing point(s) of adequate strength and size are mandatory. They must be clearly identified and suitably marked in a contrasting colour and be accessible to the front and rear of the vehicle.

10.4.2 Turbo equivalence 1.4, except for standard road cars as defined in 11, where it is 1.7

10.7.1.5.1 For Race or Sports Libre cars over 1,100 cc (or the turbo charged equivalent) a minimum of an RS National Licence is required (old Nat A).

10.10 Timing strut, matt black – at least 25.4 x 5.1 cm-height off ground for top; 45.4cm



Wiscombe House

START

WIS CORNER

WIS STRAIGHT

BUNNY'S LEAP

THE GATE

ESSES ONE

ESSES TWO

CASTLE STRAIGHT

MARTINI HAIRPIN

FINISH

Collecting  
Paddock &  
Competitor's  
Camping

SAWBENCH HAIRPIN



# Wiscombe Park

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