

Josh joins as Monarchs complete their squad

✘ Josh Pickering will make his British speedway debut when he joins Edinburgh Monarchs for the 2017 season.

The signing completes the team and the 20-year-old from Heddon Greta, New South Wales, comes well recommended.

Firmer Monarchs racer Max Fricke told Edinburgh's president Alex Harkess that Pickering is "a 100% trier".

And the newcomer said: "I started racing dirt bikes around 2004 and raced them for maybe 8 years. Then I moved over to road racing in 2012. I did that for a year and a half, riding for Honda Australia in the Asian Dream Cup, but after I lost my ride I ended up buying a speedway bike. I bought two bikes from Adam Shields, I wanted to make a career out of some type of motorcycle racing and it didn't really worry me which one.

"I just enjoy riding bikes I guess, so I have ridden speedway from 2013 and haven't looked back. Last year I had a few dramas with illness and didn't spend as much time on a bike as I wanted to, but this year I've been racing here there and everywhere, trying to do as many laps on the bike as I can. It's starting to pay off for me so I'm happy with that, and I believe with Edinburgh I can get to the next level. It should be a good move for me."

Josh is racing in the upcoming Australian Championship series and hopes to show up well against a field including Sam Masters, Justin Sedgmen and Fricke all chasing the crown won by Brady Kurtz last season.

The newcomer joins Ricky Wells, Erik Riss, Mark Riss, Sam Masters, Max Clegg and Mitchell Davey in the squad which will compete in 2017 in the new SGB Championship.