

Speedway – Cook celebrates after three near misses



At last, Craig Cook is British Champion.

Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

Craig Cook claimed the British Championship after three near misses and the former Edinburgh Monarchs captain immediately praised the team behind him.

The Belle Vue and Workington star blasted underneath Aces' team-mate Steve Worrall, another former Monarchs rider, to hit the front in a tense Grand Final and climb to the top of the rostrum.

After three successive second place finishes in the showpiece event, Cook finally overcame the final hurdle in dramatic circumstances.

Few could have any complaints with the 30-year-old's victory as he dropped just one point from his six rides.

Cook said: "I'm over the moon. I got an unbelievable reaction from the crowd, and I can't thank everyone who has supported me enough.

"My family, friends, sponsors, engine tuners – I really have a great amount of people behind me who helped me get here.

"It means an awful lot to be stood here holding this trophy, it's something I've been working hard to achieve for a long time and I'm just pleased to finally get there."

Supporters were treated to some scintillating action in Manchester, with ex-Glasgow and Berwick racer Ben Barker a star performer before narrowly missing out on the rostrum.

The late call-up blasted brilliantly around Richie Worrall in Heat 19 to secure his semi-final spot before just missing out to former Edinburgh rider Rory Schlein for third spot in the final.

Defending Champion Danny King bounced back from a tough start to reach the semi-finals where his night came to a conclusion, whilst seven-time winner Scott Nicholls bowed out at the same stage.

Chris Harris, Richie Worrall and Richard Lawson (Glasgow Tigers) – who was involved in the race of the night alongside Cook in heat six – all fell agonisingly short of the semi-final on nine points.

QUALIFYING SCORERS: Craig Cook 14, Steve Worrall 11, Ben Barker 11, Rory Schlein 10, Danny King 10, Scott Nicholls 10, Richie Worrall 9, Chris Harris 9, Richard Lawson 9, Paul Starke 6, Lewis Kerr 5, Lewis Rose 5, Kyle Howarth 4, Stuart Robson 4, Jason Garrity 3, Carl Wilkinson 0, Jack Smith (res) 0, Andy Mellish (res) 0.

SEMI-FINAL: Barker, Schlein, Nicholls, King.

GRAND FINAL: Cook, S.Worrall, Schlein, Barker.