

Speedway – Monarchs say sorry to fans after Friday



Armadale when racing is under way. Sadly, rain postponed Friday's clash with Ipswich. Picture Nigel Duncan Media

Edinburgh Monarchs bosses have apologised following the late postponement of Friday's home clash with Championship-chasing Ipswich Witches.

A club spokesman said: "Throughout Friday morning and early afternoon Armadale experienced significant rainfall.

"However, with the rain stopping and the forecast improving there was great belief that the match could go ahead as planned.

"Initial work began in earnest to return the track to its usual good condition, however these efforts were hindered by unforecast late afternoon rainfall.

"Nonetheless, the track team were on course to having the track ready to race.

"Further unexpected rain fell around 6:30pm as the admission gates were due to open. With this rain stopping by 6:40pm the meeting referee consulted with the riders of both teams and the decision was taken to proceed with this the gates were opened.

"An area of the track around the starting gate was highlighted for attention and with work promptly completed in this area all seemed ready to go.

"During the time of this work, the riders raised new concerns about another area of the track around the first bend.

“Further work was carried out in an attempt to alleviate these concerns however the condition of the track could not be rectified to the level of expectation of the riders within a reasonable timescale.

“Following further discussions between the meeting referee, team captains and team managers the decision was taken to postpone the meeting with the safety of the riders paramount.

“The club would once again like to apologise for these events, particularly the delay before the disappointing postponement, and hope for better weather in the coming weeks.”

Dates for rescheduling the match are currently being discussed as Edinburgh bid to halt Sheffield Tigers’ SGB Championship bid when the Armadale combine visit Yorkshire on Sunday (tapes-up 3pm).

Monarchs are in fourth place in the ten-strong table with 54 points from 26 league fixtures.

Sheffield lead the chase with 64 points from 26 outings with Ipswich Witches second on 59 points from 28 matches.

Glasgow are third with 56 points from 24 fixtures and victory for Monarchs at Sheffield would also boost their play-off ambitions.

Meanwhile, Glasgow boss Stewart Dickson admitted he has had a talk-in with his riders ahead of their key road trip to Newcastle Diamonds on Sunday (tapes-up 6.30pm).

Dickson guided Tigers to a valuable win on Tyneside earlier this term and he wants to see them bounce back after their 47-42 defeat at Redcar Bears on Thursday.

Tigers only earned one point and team manager Dickson has demanded that they improve their team riding.

The team manager said: “We’re not looking for our partners

coming off the second turn.

"I've spoken to the riders about that because it's costing us some points.

"We've been in cruise control and thrown away two matches now."

Dickson insists his side will keep on fighting to catch Sheffield but that opportunities to pick up big points on the road are diminishing.

He added: "We're making things really difficult for ourselves.

"Redcar is another away match gone which we could and should have won.

"We had a tremendous opportunity because Redcar were under-strength.

"We're all down, but we're all in it together and we need to sort it out.

"We're going to have to stick in and start helping each other on the road."

He added: "We are running out of away matches to be where we want to be which is at the summit of the league at the end of the season."