

Boxing – McGregor punches message home

Lee McGregor only dipped his toe in the water in his first professional fight.

It lasted 2min 53sec but it was enough to convince the ambitious Scot that this is where he belongs.

The 20-year-old former amateur star just loves the hoopla associated with the paid ranks.

Yes, he's tasted the higher echelons of the amateurs and has reigned as British champion.

But this is a different league. The dry ice, spotlights and a walk to the ring down a gangway watched every step of the way by thousands of fight fans and followed by cameras for a live national TV audience.



In the days before his fight against Bulgarian Stefan Sashov, Lee took part in two press conferences, one to announce he was turning pro with Cyclone Promotions, and another on the eve of his debut fight.

Then there was a public weigh-in before a packed audience at Prestonpans Community Centre.

Lee, however, knows he has a lot to learn and he'll cram in more expert knowledge before fight No 2 set for Leicester next month.

McGregor is, in fact, back in London at the McGuigan gym in Wandsworth working on his technique.

He wants to stay busy and focused. He also wants to learn from his trainer Shane McGuigan, son of boxing Hall of Famer, Barry McGuigan, who heads his management team.

Barry believes in his new man. Lee believes in former world

champion Barry and Shane so this would appear a perfect marriage.

McGuigan senior loves the way the Scot approaches his work. The 3,000-plus crowd saw a glimpse – only a glimpse and if you blinked you could have missed it – on Saturday.

Indeed, the pre-fight ballyhoo was longer than the fight but McGregor showed he was fast, skillful, had quick hands, can dig to head and body and is not backward in coming forward.

He reminded me of the old McGuigan and Barry admitted that this was part of the attraction in signing the Edinburgh youngster who is tall for his weight, another major attribute. The stoppage was a blessing for the Bulgarian. He had come a long way for a doing.

Sashov trooped off into the darkness and emerged later as a face in the crowd watching the rest of the action but McGregor can expect more big fight nights in the spotlight. And any rival bantam watching Channel 5 on Saturday now knows that as new star is born.