

Speedway – set race days agreed



Ricky Wells, one of Edinburgh's stars last season. Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

British speedway's top two leagues have agreed set race days in a bid to cut out fixture clashes and allow greater rider availability.

It means for the first time ever the Premiership will only run on Monday and Wednesday, but there is also consideration for Swindon for a number of protected Thursdays due to stadium commitments.

The Championship will stage meetings on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

It is a move which has been discussed over many weeks but was finally approved at the British Speedway Promoters' Association AGM.

Promoters have also listened to fans' feedback and have scrapped the tactical ride for double points.

They have rolled back the years by bringing back the traditional tactical substitute when a team is six points or more behind. This applies between Heats 5 to 14, excluding Heat 8.

The Management Committee will now include Stewart Dickson of Glasgow Tigers.

And the Premiership and Championship leagues team points average has been increased to 42.5 with the Premiership permitted one rider of an average of 8.00 or more. Championship has no restrictions.

Lakeside will be joining the championship with all other teams remaining in their current leagues.

The championship season starts with three League Cup sections: 1, Lakeside, Peterborough, Ipswich; 2, Scunthorpe, Sheffield, Redcar, Newcastle; 3, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Berwick, Workington.

The Knockout Cup, first-round draws for both leagues, are on a regionalised basis.

They are: first round: Leicester v King's Lynn, Somerset v Poole, Belle Vue v Wolverhampton, Swindon v Rye House.

Second round: Scunthorpe v Sheffield or Redcar, Ipswich v Lakeside or Peterborough, Berwick v Edinburgh or Glasgow, Newcastle v Workington.

Black and White double points have been replaced with tactical substitution permitted in heats 5 to 14 (excluding Heats 8) when a team is six points or more behind. For clarity there are NO double points.

There will be no promotion or relegation between the two leagues but the top four from each league will compete in their own league play-offs.

And a number of working groups have been established from within the association to further develop speedway for the medium and long-term.

Finally, Alun Rossiter and Neil Vatcher have been appointed Team GB Manager and Team GB U21 manager respectively for the next 12 months.