

Speedway – Monarchs misfire at Berwick



Ricky Wells, under-the-weather but still top scorer for Monarchs at Berwick.

The Staggs Bar Monarchs put up their worst performance of the season so far going down 53-37 against Berwick in the Championship Shield on Saturday night, writes Mike Hunter

The majority of the visitors did not have an answer to a solid home outfit with only Ricky Wells and Erik Riss coming out of the meeting with any credit.

Six heat wins and 11 last places tells the story of the match and Monarchs will need to improve massively when they head back to Shielfield in a fortnight in the cup.

It has to be said that it was remarkable the match was on at all as heavy rain fell all around the stadium, but a massive well done must go to the Bandits team of volunteers who were at the stadium as early as 7am to lay track covers.

The down side to the covers being down was that this led to slick and dusty conditions with gating at an absolute premium.

Monarchs did make a reasonable start and were only two points down after five races and, with Ricky Wells and Erik Riss both unbeaten to this point, there was hope that a challenge could be mounted.

Wells and Riss were both excellent value, particularly an under-the-weather Wells who was lightning from the gate all night romping to 14 points. The American was backed by the younger Riss brother with paid 13.

Unfortunately, time and again in the heats that neither of the Monarchs top two appeared, a Bandits heat advantage was the outcome, particularly in the middle spell of the match where the Borders men padded their lead to 12.

A last throw of the dice tactical move was nullified in heat 11 when Erik Riss was disqualified for bringing down home man Nikolaj Busk Jakobsen meaning no advantage could be gained.

Further maximum heat advantages in heats 12 and 14 for the home men boosted the score even further with only a last heat 5-1 of the Monarchs own adding any respectability to the score.

This was a night where several of the Monarchs team will need to look hard at their performances and know that better is required in the cup match to come.

Berwick KLS Bandits: Aaron Summers 3, Kevin Doolan 10+1, Jye Etheridge 7+1, David Howe 6+2, Nikolaj Busk Jakobsen 8+1, Matthew Wethers 7+2, Dany Gappmaier 12+1

Edinburgh Staggs Bar Monarchs: Ricky Wells 14, Joel Andersson 1, Josh Pickering 2, Mark Riss 5+1, Erik Riss 11+2, Coty Garcia 3, Max Ruml 1