

# **Speedway – Pickering boost for silverware-chasing Monarchs**

**The Staggs Bar Monarchs welcome back Josh Pickering for their double-header with Newcastle Diamonds.**

A place in the SGB Championship Knockout Cup Final awaits the winner and Monarchs will be at full-strength for the first time in recent weeks.

Newcastle strengthened their team by introducing experienced Ulrich Ostergaard for his much less experienced fellow Dane Jacob Bukhave but they have suffered the loss of both Lasse Bjerre (seven day illness break) and Thomas Jorgensen (injury).

However, former Monarchs' title winners Steve Worrall, Matthew Wethers and Max Clegg are in their line-up and Diamonds represent a major hurdle.

Experts predict an extremely close contest and an effect of the introduction of Ostergaard is to push Clegg down to Reserve and he could be highly-effective in that role given his excellent form this season.

The winners of the two-leg tie will race either Eastbourne or Redcar in the final.

Alex Harkess, Monarchs' team manager, said: "We beat them on aggregate in the Shield matches but that doesn't mean a lot as teams have changed since then, and we've not been doing terribly well ourselves.

“It would be a great boost for us in a difficult season to find ourselves in a cup final.”

STAGGS BAR MONARCHS: Ricky Wells (capt.), Victor Palovaara, Josh Pickering, Joel Andersson, Cameron Heeps, William Lawson, Connor Coles.

NEWCASTLE BTS DIAMONDS: Steve Worrall (capt.), rider replacement for Thomas Jorgensen, Coty Garcia (guest), Matthew Wethers, Ulrich Ostergaard, Max Clegg, Danny Phillips.