

Speedway – Bewley claims British under-21 title at Berwick

Dan Bewley won the British under-21 Final in the closed-doors meeting at Berwick, the former Edinburgh Monarchs and Glasgow Tigers racer edging Berwick Bandits racer Leon Flint and third-placed Anders Rowe, writes Lawrence Heppell.

Berwick had Kyle Bickley and Leon Flint in the line-up which also included pre-meeting favourite, Dan Bewley of the Belle Vue Aces who has gained great experience this year racing in the Polish PGE Ekstraliga for Sparta Wrocław alongside the best in the world.

Following a delayed start due to an electric failure at the stadium, Heat One went to the tapes at 7.45pm and following the opening round of races, the four heat winners were Flint, Drew Kemp, Bewley and Anders Rowe as the riders got used to the new wider Berwick track, as both Kemp and Bewley excelled in their second races to take two massive wins in Heats Five and Six.

Flint made a stunning gate to lead and win Heat Seven ahead of Joe Lawlor as Tom Spencer fell on bend one, remounted, but retired from the heat as Jamie Halder took third, but Heat Eight came to a halt on the first bend when Rowe and Dan Gilkes collided with Gilkes hitting the dirt.

Thankfully, only winded, he got to his feet and joined the all-four re-run, in which Gilkes made the best gate chased well by Rowe who blasted up alongside the leader, passing well on bend three to take a lead and keep his unbeaten record on six points alongside Kemp, Bewley and Flint.

Gilkes hit the first bend again in Heat Nine, hitting his

right knee and missed the re-run, with reserve Harry McGurk taking his place. Bewley took a huge win in the re-run to move onto nine out of nine while McGurk flew round to take a second place on the third bend.

Flint came out in the 10th and, like Bewley, he too was chasing nine points and pulled round wide on bend one to round Dan Thompson to take up the lead followed home by Dan Thompson with his Twin Joe Thompson in third.

It was Kemp's turn to grab his ninth point in Heat 11, and followed suit with another fine win ahead of Tom Brennan, and come the 12th it was Rowe's turn to also take his tally to nine, but he didn't make the best gate as Lawlor roared away to lead, however Rowe powered up and put on a superb chase, zipping round the outside of Lawlor on the third bend of the last lap to take his vital third win.

Going into the fourth sector of qualification races, all eyes were on Heat 16 when the four top men, Bewley, Flint, Kemp and Rowe, all on nine points were all set to meet, wheel to wheel in a mammoth clash.

Before the 16th, news came through that Gilkes (with concussion) and Bickley (a recurring arm injury) withdrew from the meeting, leaving the way for the reserves to get more rides, and then into Heat 16 with the four unbeaten riders pulling up to the tapes, but the race was stopped on bend three when, after Flint had roared round Kemp to lead, Kemp flew back under Flint going into bend three, but Kemp lost control at high speed, and was flung at speed into the polyfoam fence. He did get to his feet and hobbled back to the pits, unfortunately excluded for the stoppage.

The remaining three unbeaten riders returned to the tapes with Flint desperate to make a great start again, but Bewley hit the front first only for Flint to fly high and wide round the Belle Vue man to lead for a lap and a half until Bewley did

likewise to Flint on the first bend of lap four to open up a huge lead and win leaving Bewley leading the way on 12, Flint on 11 and Rowe on 10 one more qualification ride each before the semis.

Also, in with a semi chance were Kemp on nine, Brennan on eight while Dan Thompson, Lawlor, Thomas on six and Jordan Palin on five.

Flint led the way with ease in Heat 17 to move on to 14 points while Thomas took second to likely make his semi-final place. Kemp made Heat 18 despite his heavy fall in Heat, but Joe Thompson made the lead, soon overhauled by Lawlor as a weakened Kemp took second for the chase and took Lawlor off bend four of the third lap to take the three points over Lawlor and Joe Thompson.

However, with the delays, the stadium curfew came into play and the semis were cancelled, the result going on race points with the new British Under-21 Championship going to Dan Bewley, second to Leon Flint and third to Anders Rowe.

Individual Riders' Score Chart (Programme order)

Alex Spooner R,1,0,0,0 = 1
Joe Thompson 2,1,1,R,1
Tom Spencer 1,R,0,1,1 = 3
Anders Rowe 3,3,3,1,3 = 13 3rd
Jason Edwards 0,2,0,3,1 = 6
Dan Bewley 3,3,3,3,3 = 15 1st
Joe Lawlor 1,2,2,1,2 = 8
Jack Thomas 2,0,1,3,2 = 8
Drew Kemp 3,3,3,Fx,3 = 12
Jordan Palin 2,0,1,2,1 = 6
Jamie Halder 0,1,1,2,0 = 4
Dan Thompson 1,1,2,2,2 = 8
Kyle Bickley R,R,0,N,N = 0
Tom Brennan 1,2,2,3,2 = 10

Leon Flint 3,3,3,2,3 = 14 2nd

Dan Gilkes 2,2,Fn,N,N = 4

Reserve: Harry McGurk 2,1,0 = 3

Reserve: Mason Watson 0,0 = 0

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