

Speedway – Bandits mugged by stunning Brummies comeback

Birmingham Brummies produced a stunning comeback to earn maximum league points from their season opener at Berwick.

The Midlands outfit won 51-39 to earn their first professional level away success since September 2013, despite going 2-10 down in the first two races.

Both sides used tactical substitutes in a see-saw encounter in which Berwick were six points up at the halfway stage only for the visitors to respond with three successive 5-1s.

New Brummies skipper Chris Harris led the way with 14 points and two bonus from six rides but the home side were hampered by the loss of Jye Etheridge in a first-ride crash. Aaron Summers top-scored with 10 points and a bonus.

Birmingham boss Laurence Rogers said: "That was just what the doctor ordered. It's a dream way to start off the season and what a fabulous performance it was from the boys.

"Yes ok, Berwick were unlucky to have Jye Etheridge withdrawn following his opening ride when already using rider replacement, but take nothing away from our lads.

"There were some really great performances out there and even with the two boys missing tonight, it's a really encouraging start to the year in more ways than one."

Berwick manager Gary Flint said: "Well done to Birmingham, they rode well and took a deserved victory, but Jye's crash in Heat 3 undoubtedly reduced our scoring power."

Meanwhile, Leon Flint (pictured) and Kyle Bickley both scored maximums as Berwick defeated Belle Vue 52-38 in the National Development League.

Bullets duo were unbeaten against their former club with Flint scoring 15 – completing a meeting in which he took 12 rides in total – whilst Bickley collected 11 points and a bonus, a total matched by Greg Blair.

Colts were limited to three race winners, including 15-year-old Sam McGurk in Heat 8, whilst Benji Compton top-scored on 8+1.

Berwick boss Gary Flint said: “This is a good solid side we have in the NDL this year and they dominated Belle Vue tonight.

“I also want to thank everyone who worked so hard to get tonight’s first crowd double-header run with such efficiency from the riders, all club managements, track staff and the referee.

“For us to get 30 heats run, with falls and stoppages, to end right on our 9.30pm curfew was an immense effort.”

Colts co-boss Graham Goodwin said: “Having your first meeting away from home is always tough. It would have been nice to have had the home meeting on Friday, but we’re not in control of the weather.

“The result doesn’t reflect the amount of effort these guys were putting in. They really started to pick up in the later heats, but we just ran out of races to make a recovery.”

Former Edinburgh Monarchs racer Dan Bewley is through to the Speedway Euro Championship main series after finishing runner-up in Saturday’s SEC Challenge.

The in-form Belle Vue man finished joint top of the standings on 12 points in Pardubice before missing out to former World No.2 Patryk Dudek in a run-off for meeting victory.

Bewley had earlier overtaken Dudek for one of three winning rides on the day, and now joins reigning champion Robert

Lambert as a full-time member of the 2021 series.

The SEC Finals get underway at Bydgoszcz on June 12 with subsequent rounds at Gustrow, Gdansk and Rybnik.

Edinburgh's scheduled SGB Chamionship clash at Leicester Lions was rained off.