

Speedway – Gladiators put Monarchs to the sword

What the Fork Monarchs started well before fading and the Armadale side left Plymouth's Coliseum empty handed as the hosts ran out 50-40 victors.

Conditions changed throughout the night and the home men adjusted better and Alfie Bowtell produced a Man of the Match performance from Reserve.

The Armadale squad head for Poole on Wednesday and must put this behind them but one Monarch who did well on the night was Kye Thomson.

He finished with seven points coming after a first race fall but Monarchs got off to a dream start with Sam Masters and William Lawson roaring from the tapes for a maximum.

Nathan Greaves won Heat 2 at the third attempt and after a 15 minute delay for track work.

Heat three saw Josh Pickering pass Zane Keleher for the lead, Keleher trying to pin Pickering down on the first bend almost causing both to come off and unsettling Thomson who came down in third.

Heat wins for Sam Masters (pictured) and Richie Worrall in two of the next three races maintained the visitors lead at four going into Heat 7, but this is where the home men started to turn the screw.

Key to this was Bowtell as he held Pickering off for third in Heat 7 for a home 4-2 then winning Heat 8 as a reserve switch, with teammate Jason Edwards joining him at the front the Gladiators had their first lead.

Monarchs drew level in Heat 12 with Thomson taking a good win,

Nathan Greaves riding well to keep Ben Cook at the back.

Any hopes this would lead to a big finish for the Armadale men were short-lived as Bjarne Pedersen, who was impressive throughout, roared to a Heat 13 win and, with returning Jason Crump in third position, the home men had the lead again.

Heat 14 looked like a chance for Monarchs as they exited the second bend in front. Greaves was perhaps slightly guilty of staying mid-track on bends three and four, but this is to take nothing away from Keleher who swept past the field with an outrageous inside swoop. Teammate Bowtell must have taken note as he repeated the trick a lap later for a home 5-1.

This meant the best the Monarchs could hope for was a consolation point with a last heat share of the spoils required.

Again, it was the Gladiators who shot from the tapes. Masters and Richie Worrall tried to overthrow Keleher but failed. Masters' bike then gave up the ghost on the third lap to seal Monarchs fate.

Plymouth 50: Crump 6, Ruml 2+1, Cook 4+2, Keleher 10+2, Pedersen 13+1, Bowtell 11+2, Edwards 4+1

Edinburgh 40: Masters 9, Lawson 3+1, Thomson 7, Pickering 5+1, Worrall 10+1, Crang 0, Greaves 6