

Speedway – Harkess happy with Redcar win

What the Fork Monarchs started their SGB Championship quarter-final 12 points ahead, and they eventually won 57-33 on the night and 108-72 on aggregate.

Alex Harkess, team manager, said: "I was a little bit nervous at the start expecting Redcar to come back at us, especially when Sam Masters came off in the first race.

"But the team just got on with it and everyone was in very good form. In the end there was nothing to worry about. Congratulations especially to Drew Kemp on his paid maximum."

There was an unexpected start to the meeting when Sam Masters spun off on the opening bend. Partner Anders Rowe led Charles Wright down the straight but Masters could not clear the track in time, giving Wright a second chance which he took.

The home reserves were in sparkling form though, and took a comfortable 5-1 in Heat 2 which calmed the nerves. From that point on regular heat advantages flowed and it was soon obvious that there was no way back for the Bears.

Again they were unfortunate with the Michael Palm Toft situation. The plucky Dane has been trying to ride with broken fingers, sustained at Wolverhampton, and has had some success, but he clearly found it tricky to cope with the tight turns and a surface which had taken quite a bit of rain in recent days.

He battled through three rides but, overall, it was left to heat leaders Lewis Kerr, Jake Allen and Wright to put up such resistance as there was.

Allen suffered a curious exclusion in Heat 7 when it seemed

that Richie Worrall had brought him down by cutting across him coming off the inside of the second bend. However it was Allen who was ruled out.

Everyone on the home side scored at least six, and Drew Kemp scored paid 12 from his four rides and took the scalp of Charles Wright who had been unbeaten going into Heat 11 when they met.

For Anders Rowe (pictured) it was a big improvement on recent performances with six points, more than doubling his tally since joining the team and looking determined.

Jason Edwards has been a revelation and his paid nine score was entirely deserved. He got a Heat 15 ride when a twitchy Richie Worrall touched the tapes and was well on the pace battling with Allen for third. Worrall had dropped just a single point up to then.

There were a few interesting battles, not least Josh Pickering's first ride when he lost control twice on the same patch on the pits bend, but roared back both times to finish behind his partner. Lewis Kerr never gave up and his reward was to win both heats 13 and 15.

Thoughts now turn to Friday's second-leg of the Knockout Cup semi-final at Armadale in which Monarchs face a hefty 16 point deficit against Glasgow Tigers (tapes-up 7.30pm).