

Comeback man Fredriksen Man of the Match as Edinburgh Monarchs sting Scunthorpe Scorpions

What the Fork Monarchs celebrated having their full septet back on track with an excellent showing against Scunthorpe Scorpions, recording their highest league win of the season, 56-34.

Skipper Sam Masters led the way again with a full maximum, but all of the team contributed and team manager, Alex Harkess, praised Lasse Fredriksen who was making his comeback from injury.

Fredriksen claimed three paid wins after having five weeks on the sidelines and Harkess said: "I was happy we didn't have a last heat decider to face for a change. We've got some important matches coming up, so it was an encouraging night."

Scunthorpe had injury problems but contributed to a decent evening's entertainment and Ryan Douglas proved to be one of the best visiting riders seen at Armadale this season.

The evening started with the all-too-familiar scene of a rain shower falling around start time, but fortunately it passed quickly and didn't return.

The track looked a bit slippery for Heat 1, won easily by Sam Masters, but all eyes were on Fredriksen (pictured by **Nigel Duncan** in the pits at Armadale). He could have been excused for taking this cautiously, but he rode brilliantly to come inside both Douglas and Simon Lambert for a paid win and a 5-1 start.

The 25-year-old Norwegian only missed out in Heat 8 when he failed to catch Lambert and Zaine Kennedy. His score of seven points, paid ten, was quite an achievement in the circumstances. He was voted Monarch of the Match and his parent were in the crowd.

The other Monarch returning from injury, James Sarjeant, took longer to get going and had early bike problems, but he finished with a flying win. Indeed, there were no weak links in the line-up.

Kye Thomson was excellent in dropping only one point, Paco Castagna had two race wins and Jacob Hook, whilst not getting a huge score, rode solidly and is improving.

Josh Pickering had some red-blooded encounters with his excellent fellow Aussie Ryan Douglas and it was the visitor who came out on top 3-1 in their encounters.

Pickering produced another of the night's highlights when he flew past guest Theo Pijper in Heat 4, making his usual good use of the outside line which, up to that point, riders had been wary of using after the rain.

Rob Godfrey apologised for his team's performance. In addition to Douglas, Lambert was always in the thick of things and Kennedy was a competitive reserve.

Pijper's score didn't reflect his performance. It's always tough at No 5 and new signing James Wright, whilst a little disappointing, came good in the end. It certainly wasn't a bad meeting.

Scunthorpe will expect to turn the tables when the teams meet in the return on Sunday but Monarchs will have been encouraged by their display and will look for at least a point on their travels.

Edinburgh Monarchs (56): Sam Masters 15+0, Lasse Fredriksen

7+3, Kye Thomson 9+2, Paco Castagna 7+0, Josh Pickering 10+0,
Jacob Hook 4+1, James Sarjeant 4+0

Scunthorpe Scorpions (34): Ryan Douglas 12+0, Simon Lambert
6+1, Jordan Palin 0+0, James Wright 5+0, Theo Pijper 5+0,
Connor Coles 1+0, Zaine Kennedy 5+1