

Riss back for Ipswich, Blair skips Bullets

Former Edinburgh Monarchs captain Eric Riss is heading back to Ipswich next year after an injury-disrupted first season with the Witches. The German racer was in good form before crashing in Poland, causing him to miss the Witches' Premiership run-in and their eventual play-off exit to Belle Vue.

Riss said: "It was a pretty easy decision, I enjoyed riding for Ipswich this year. I had my injury and was out for a bit which was a shame, but I got two more meetings in before the end of the season with Ipswich which was nice.

"When the season was finished, there was instantly a desire to be back and I wasn't quite satisfied with how I went last year. I enjoy the track at Ipswich but know I can do better, so I am not finished and can do a lot more. I definitely wanted to be back, it wasn't a hard decision, it was my first choice to be back at Ipswich."

King's Lynn will feature former world No 2 Krzysztof Kasprzak and the side will also feature Danish racer Michael Palm Toft after two years with rivals Peterborough.

It is skippered by Monarchs new No 1 Josh Pickering (pictured). Nicolai Klindt, Thomas Jorgensen, Frederik Jakobsen and rising star Jason Edwards are all retained from the team which completed this year's campaign.

Manager Alex Brady said: "If you look at all of our riders, they're all on starting averages lower than what they actually achieved last season or the last time they were here in England.

"That's the thinking behind the seven we've gone with, and we're looking forward to the challenge of 2023 and seeing what

we can do. We work together as a group, and by maintaining that continuity with five of the same seven from last season, I think that will stand us in good stead along with the two characters that we've added. The team we have for next season gives us the opportunity to go forward."

Elsewhere, Greg Blair has been named as the new captain of Berwick Bullets in the National Development League (NDL) and the 31-year-old from Jedburgh ended a ten-year retirement in 2021 to join Bullets for their inaugural season.

He said: "I'm beyond thrilled to return for a third season and being asked to be captain of my home club and one which my family has such strong historical links is a massive honour."

His great-grandparents, Danny and Elizabeth Taylor brought speedway to the north Northumberland town in 1968.

Meanwhile, Plymouth youngster Ben Trigger admits it's a dream come true having been called up to the senior Gladiators team after the 16-year-old spent his second season in the National Development League racing for the Centurions at the Coliseum. He has now been handed a reserve berth in the Championship for 2023.

He said: "I have grown up watching speedway, Dad (Lee) was involved and I'd go and watch meetings with Dad and when he was team manager. I always wanted to do it one day. Now I am actually getting the chance to do it and I'll be living the dream.

"My fantasy has become a reality. I didn't expect it to come so early, but now I have been given the chance, I intend to take it with both hands to do the best I can, improve and do as much as I can to help the team perform and try and win some silverware."