

Clegg stars but Monarchs edged by Lion Cubs

The Stellar Monarchs Academy lost for the second time this season on the Armadale track, going down 47-43 to Leicester Lion Cubs in the National Development League despite of an impressive return to action by Max Clegg.

He was outstanding for the home side with 15 points but other riders also showed real talent on the night, Max James, Ashton Boughen Dan and Joe Thompson.

Clegg admitted: "I surprised myself a little by doing so well, especially as it is four weeks I think since I had last ridden. I felt a bit rusty in my first ride but settled down after that.

"Leicester have a really good team so I think we did well to run them so close. I am looking forward to the return match next week when I feel we can give them a hard match."

Clegg capped his performance by recording the fastest National Development League time of the season at 57.9sec in heat 1 and he was involved in probably the best race of the day in heat 6, his second ride, when he had to work hard to overcome a determined Joe Thompson.

Thereafter, he cruised to victory in three further heats and never looked like being beaten.

Adam Roynon (pictured) provided Clegg with the best back-up with 11 from his five rides and Academy manager Scott Wilson operated what was effectively a three-reserve line-up permitted by this year's rules for No 8 riders and switched the trio (Wood, Lyden and Simpson) effectively, but it wasn't enough to counter the Cubs' attack.

James and Boughen are still only 15 and they are supremely talented prospects. James didn't win heat 2, that went to faster gating Dayle Wood, but his win over Roynon in his next ride was a real eye-opener.

He reeled off further wins or paid wins in heats 4, 7 and 8 to put the Lion Cubs in command. A last bend fall in his final ride put a slight damper on things, but he has real talent.

The 15-year-old rising star is Boughen who recorded a point in his first two heats (falling in heat 5) but he found the winning groove to head his opponents in heats 8, 11 and 14.

By heat 11 Leicester were ten points ahead but the Monarchs Academy kept fighting, taking a heat 11 5-1 (Roynon and Simpson) and later an advantage in heat 15. It cut the gap to four points by the end.

Edinburgh Monarchs Academy (43): Max Clegg 15+0, Mark Parker 1+1, Adam Roynon 11+0, Alex Spooner 0+0, Danny Phillips 1+0, Dayle Wood 7+1, Karan Lyden 2+0, Mickie Simpson 6+2

Leicester Lion Cubs (47): Dan Thompson 12+0, Ashton Boughen 9+2, Max Perry 4+2, Tom Spencer 0+0, Joe Thompson 7+2, Owen Booth 0+0, Max James 15+1