

Trigger in for injury-hit Bullets

Teenager Ben Trigger guests as Berwick Bullets race their penultimate fixture in an injury-ruined National Development League season at high-flying Oxford on Wednesday.

Connor Coles and Greg Blair are the latest added to a list which began in the first heat of the campaign when Archie Freeman's career as a Bullet lasted just a couple of laps before he suffered a broken leg.

Fellow winter recruit Josh Embleton also joined him in the season-ending category while Blair has been hampered by fitness problems after a series of heavy falls and Mason Watson has also missed meetings with concussion. Coles broke his collarbone and arm following a Cab Direct Championship crash at the weekend.

Awaiting them is an Oxford side which trails Leicester by just a point following their win at Kent on Sunday. Significantly, the first part of the double header saw Kent Royals surprisingly beat Mildenhall by four points to make the likelihood of the Chargers and Leicester meeting in the top two title-deciding play-off even more likely.

They have only lost twice in their ten outings so far this season, both when talismanic No 1 Jordan Jenkins was missing with concussion.

Along with Ryan Kinsley and Henry Atkins, Jenkins forms a seriously strong three-pronged spearhead which accounted for 33 of their points, Jenkins and Atkins recording a dramatic 5-1 in heat 15 to secure the two-point win at Shielfield in June.

Since then Luke Killeen – who has made two incident-packed guest appearances for the Bandits this season – has recovered from a wrist injury and his return at reserve gave Oxford a huge firepower boost.

Despite some decent Championship scores – and two guest appearances at Shielfield – Oxford decided to drop the Australian-born but British qualified Killeen in favour of wonder-kid Ashton Boughen when the Leicester Cub turned 16 on Monday and became eligible to ride in the second tier.

With Birmingham, Scunthorpe, Poole, and Glasgow all in action the options of guests to replace Coles on his 8.08 average were virtually non-existent so team manager Kevin Little chooses to operate rider-replacement at number one with all the Bullets riders eligible for a ride.

Instead they have brought in Plymouth and Mildenhall teenager Trigger to guest for Blair at number three.

Little said: “It’s another tough ask for the Bullets but some of their best performances this year have come when they have been written off and their backs were against the wall.

“Both Connor and Greg are huge losses, not just for their points but their enthusiasm in the pits but in Ben Trigger we have another in the line of young British talent eager to take every opportunity to get competitive track time.”

Chargers: Jordan Jenkins, Jacob Clouting, Ryan Kinsley, Jody Scott, Henry Atkins, Luke Killeen, Jason Garrod

Bullets: Connor Coles r/r, Jamie Halder, Ben Trigger, Danny

Phillips, Steve Boxall, Kieran Douglas, Mason Watson