

Wilson: 'I'm proud of the lads'

An undermanned Stellar Monarchs Academy battled well but eventually fell to a season closing 55-35 defeat at Oxford in the National Development League.

Already operating rider replacement for Alex Spooner, the key man in the team was due to be Mickie Simpson but his night would only last one race ending any chance the visitors had of taking anything against a strong home side.

Scott Wilson (pictured right), the Academy team manager, said: "I'm proud of the lads. To be without Alex and Dayle, then lose Mickie after a promising first ride, and still score 35 points against a top side deserves credit.

'Mark and Kai took on extra rides to help the team and the top three all did their job with race wins and plenty of points.

'We dug in and battled on all night despite the tough circumstances and I couldn't have asked for any more than that.'

Wilson was well-served by his top three with Max Clegg, Jacob Hook and guest Nathan Ablitt all taking the checkered flag at least once on their way to 30 between them.

The absence of Spooner and Simpson meant 12 rides required between the inexperienced duo of Kai Ward and Mark Parker and that was always going to be a battle.

So, the curtain has now fallen on the debut season for the Academy, a campaign that has been blighted by injuries.

Oxford 55: Bowtell 11, Scott 4+2, Kinsley 7+1, Killeen 9+1, Atkins 12, Clouting 12+1, Garrad 0

Stellar Monarchs Academy 35: Clegg 11+1, Hook 12, Ward 1, Ablitt 7, Parker 2+1, Simpson 2