

Pickering: 'I want to progress as a rider'

Stellar Monarchs fans should know more about plans for next season after a board meeting this week but they are still getting over news that their captain and star rider, Josh Pickering, is leaving after seven years.

The popular Aussie told fans: "This club means everything to me, they gave me my opportunity to come here. It upsets me to say this, but I do want to continue to try and progress as a rider and I'm going to have to drop this league next year.

"I need to try to pick up something a bit more abroad. There are riders I've grown up with and I see they are doing big things out there. I definitely rate myself as one of these riders."

He showed his ambition by jumping in his van immediately after Monarchs' last home match of the season in the Cab Direct Championship to drive to London to catch a 6am flight to Poland.

Pickering (pictured in the pits at Armadale) said: "It's not an easy task and I can't be doing that every week and expect to do big things out there. I really do appreciate everyone that's stuck by me for the last seven years.

"John (Campbell), Alex (Harkess), Mike (Hunter), Ronnie (Anderson), every person that's involved in this club, it's the best club in the world, I'm not embarrassed to be in tears because it is how I feel."

Pickering look back on Monarchs' injury-hit and disappointing season and said: "(We) just keep showing up. Keep trying. It's never easy this sport. I felt the seven we started with at the start of the season were pretty good if we all could have got

dialled in.

“Edinburgh’s goal always is to build a team to make the play-offs, but making the play-offs isn’t enough for me. I’ve always wanted to win some silverware for this great club.

“Unfortunately, it hasn’t happened for us so far, with everything that happens, riders getting injured, covering r/r, guests here and there, everything just kept knocking us down and we still made the play-offs and did something that other clubs didn’t achieve.

“It’s something we can hold our heads high for, but it’s nowhere near enough for me. It’s a shame and I’m disappointed we didn’t get to win the last few matches for the people that show up every single week, supporting us. It doesn’t go unnoticed and it’s much appreciated.”