

Campbell stresses that points cut was a 'necessity'

Edinburgh Monarchs' co-promoter John Campbell said the lowering of the points limit for clubs to 38 was done out of necessity rather than for any potential financial benefit.

He said: "I read all the time about how ridiculous it is that we have reduced the points limit to 38 and that we have reduced the standard of the league once again.

"I am not going to deny that is the case, but what I will say is those that think that is a cost cutting exercise and we are just looking to save money year on year are incorrect.

"If we did not have that kind of limit there would be teams that would not have been able to put a competitive team together. There are simply not enough riders about these days to have a higher average limit.

"There are still teams at this moment that are struggling to put a team together and there, quite frankly, is no one out there."

He added: "The points limit has been set to give every team a chance of putting a team together. The stampede of Europeans wanting to ride in the UK has dried up.

"Even for those that do, visa costs and living/travel costs to get them here are absolutely enormous so that is no longer an

avenue and the knock-on effect is without a 38-point limit there are teams that would not have been able to put together a team.”

Another change agreed at the recent annual meeting is to allow guests to be used for all of the one to five rather than just the top three and Campbell (pictured left) said: “It is very, very seldom that when you are using rider replacement you feel that you match up points wise to what your missing man would have got.

“There will be instances, particularly for us being a Friday night track, where there won’t be anyone available. It is a help but we will wait and see if it is the great new thing that will help everybody.”

There are, said Campbell, some big positives from the meeting and he emphasised that everyone is on board and trying to make sure the stars of the future have a platform.

He said: “On the youth development point, I would say that this was a meeting I didn’t actually attend but Alex (Harkess) read out a statement on the youth development behalf.

“Basically, it said if we let the National League fall and did not do anything else then it would be a short space of time before there was no new British speedway riders and that is adding to the fact at the moment there are not a lot of new British speedway riders anyway.

“Many of the better National League riders last year will be in the Championship next year but, in the short term, after that where are the next lot of riders coming through.

“My fear was if we let that happen then British speedway would die as there would be no new riders and we cannot let that happen.”

Campbell said: “Each club will run at least a national league

team, a junior second-half or what we have also developed is this individual series where many tracks will do a one-off junior meeting having never contemplated doing that ever before.

“The full structure of that is yet to be completely finalised and we want to keep away from calling it a GP like series as that would make it seem like each meeting will have all of the same riders but what we want is a pool of 20 or 30 that these meetings will be made up of.”

The co-promoter said that it is too early to commit 100 per cent to Monarchs Academy but he stressed that it is the club’s intention to run in the National Development League again and also that the Northern Junior League will continue.

He added: “Positive discussions have taken place between the five northern clubs and we all have agreed we want it to continue again. What guise is yet to be confirmed.

“Overall, the biggest positive out of the AGM for me was this realisation that more needs to be done by all. In the past, you could almost see some clubs lose interest when these kinds of things were spoken about but that is not the case anymore.”

Campbell is pleased that Workington are back in the second tier of the sport and the boss assured fans that the club are working hard to finalise the team for next season. He promised “some exciting announcements” both on and off the track.