

Campbell: we want fans to be 'excited' by racing at Armadale

Stellar Monarchs open their season with a home clash against arch rivals Glasgow Tigers on Friday, April 5 (7.30) with the return in the BSN Series on Friday, April 12 (7.30pm).

Berwick Bandits host Monarchs on Saturday, April 13 (7pm) also in the BSN Series and Monarchs Academy open their season in the National Development League at Armadale on Friday, April 19 (7.30pm) against unknown opposition.

Monarchs then head for Poole Pirates on Wednesday, April 24 (7.30pm) in the Knockout Cup and the Cab Direct Championship opens for Monarchs with a home clash against Plymouth Gladiators on Friday, May 17 (7.30pm).

Monarchs co-promoter John Campbell said: "It is fantastic to have the fixture list available for supporters to start making their plans for 2024.

"It is a feature of modern speedway, both here and internationally, that the sport is moving towards a model where you can roughly expect to race once per week either at home or away.

"This has increasingly been the case for a number of seasons now and is something often seen in other sports such as

football and rugby, where these fixtures can take place on any day at any time rather than only Saturday at 3pm as was traditional.

“Fixtures are discussed in depth across the league at British Speedway Promoters meetings and we aim to do what’s best for our supporters. With nine teams in the league we need to work towards a solution that suits everyone.

“The only time in recent history where the league moved to each team racing each other twice at home and twice away was 2017. In this season our attendances were around 20 per cent lower for a team’s second visit on every occasion, sometimes substantially lower again for any of the potentially less attractive fixtures.

“The sport has learnt from this and we aim to produce an attractive fixture list where our supporters can engage with the team’s fixtures both home and away throughout the season.”

Campbell said: “The days of weekly home league fixtures are behind us for now and we embrace the current position. Our duty and focus is to make our current fixture list as attractive as possible to supporters.

“With the 2024 fixture list we hope that Monarchs fans will be able to attend all of the team’s home fixtures whereas in the past they may have had to miss some due to other commitments.

“For those that wish for a more regular fix of racing we will continue in the National Development League with the Stellar Monarchs Academy offering five further fixtures at Armadale Stadium. The racing at this level can be great and it is exciting to watch young riders develop.”

Campbell concluded: “I believe we have an attractive season ahead of us. Some have suggested there is a concern that speedway needs to be a habit every week to get people out of the house but I don’t believe this to be the case. I can’t

think of any other sport where this happens with a home match on the same night every single week of the season.

“We don’t wish for people to attend Armadale Stadium simply because it is a habit. We want to give people an occasion to look forward to, we want people to be excited to attend every time the Monarchs are in action. This is our aim and this is our challenge.”

PICTURE: John Campbell (left) with Scott Wilson, Stellar Monarchs Academy manager last season