

# Hodder signs for ambitious Bandits

Teenager Freddy Hodder has been unveiled as Berwick Bandits' No 7 for the 2024 Cab Direct Championship season.

The 17-year-old from Rugby has made rapid progress in Belle Vue Colts colours since swapping moto-cross for the British Youth Championships in 2021.

Belle Vue snapped him up and Hodder (picture courtesy of *Ian Charles*) made his debut for their Colts team, who ride in the National Development League (NDL), and enjoyed an impressive debut season, averaging just over 4.5 points included paid eight on his first appearance at Shielfield Park and 11 points plus three bonus points on his first sight of Mildenhall.

Colts re-signed him last season and the last action of the year at Berwick's Shielfield Park circuit saw Freddy and Colts team-mate James Pearson combine for a heat 15 victory which stole victory from the Berwick Bullets in their final third-tier meeting.

Hodder's 15 points plus one bonus is a career-high and he will be back in the NDL with Belle Vue in addition to slotting into the No 7 role with Bandits.

Berwick team manager Stewart Dickson said: "As auditions go, Freddy's match-winning performance against the Bullets was pretty spectacular although, to be fair, he was already on the radar of the management here and we were keen to get his signature on a contract.

“Compared to many that he will be racing against in 2024, Freddy is relatively inexperienced on a speedway bike, but he is an excellent all-round motorcycle racer, and slots seamlessly into the Berwick side.

“He will be learn from some of the best in Rory Schlein and Lewi Kerr while Drew Kemp and Danyon Hume have first-hand knowledge of what it takes to establish yourself as a young rider.”

Dickson said he had one rider left to announce but added: “Berwick fans can see that we have built a side which blends experience with huge potential and a team which will race and battle for every point.

“With the festive period behind us the countdown really begins to that opening night challenge against Workington on 30 March.”