

Schlein and Borke deny Gladiators

Cab Direct Championship: Berwick Jewson Bandits 47, Plymouth Gladiators 42

An injury setback for Berwick Jewson Bandits' No 1 Lewis Kerr took the gloss off the Borders side's 47-42 victory over a dogged Plymouth Gladiators outfit.

Kerr, who returned on Friday after five weeks on the sidelines with a fractured ankle, fell in the Heat One rerun after clashing with Connor Mountain.

The damage will be discovered by scans early this week, but his meeting was over and Berwick operated injury rider replacement.

It was a decision contested by Plymouth who felt that he had aggravated a previous injury and they plan to ask the Speedway Control Bureau to investigate.

As it happens Schlein's heat one victory was the only points the facility yielded – Jye Etheridge falling, Drew Kemp suffering engine problems and Danyon Hume finishing last in the other IRR rides.

Bastian Borke – cheered on by his parents and a contingent of relatives and Danish friends – put down an early marker with a tapes to flag victory in the second heat.

Kemp came out on top after trading places with Kyle Newman to follow Etheridge home in three and the home side opened up an eight point lead as Schlein headed Ben Barker home, Borke's

third place pushing the home side further ahead.

Mountain rode a brave back straight to beat the fast-starting Etheridge before Plymouth pulled themselves right back into contention in bizarre heat six.

At the first time of asking Etheridge fell battling with Barker on the second bend and, to his annoyance, was excluded. Hume then broke the tapes as did his replacement Borke in the second restart leaving Mountain and Barker to race unopposed to a 5-0 which cut the gap to three points.

Extensive track grading following rider complaints interrupted the flow of a meeting also dogged by starting gate problems.

All the niggles and complaining seemed to play into the hands of the visitors and Alfie Bowtell produced a tapes to flag victory in eight and first Hume and then Borke had to find a way around Joe Thompson to prevent Plymouth from taking the lead on the night.

It was the first of four shared heats as Plymouth doggedly stuck to their task, Hume and Schlein both having to ride the boards to force their way to the front.

Borke's new-found gating prowess was to the fore again in 12 and with Etheridge finally getting the better of Dan Thompson after the pair traded places, the Bandits had some breathing space.

A 4-2 for Barker and Mountain as Schlein dropped his first point of the night in 13 – heat six apart their only other heat advantage to this point – whittled away the lead, but Borke was electric from the gate again in 14 and with Kemp following his team-mate home the destination the match was settled.

Indeed there was enough breathing space for Barker and Mountain's last heat maximum over Schlein to be no more than a

slight blip.

Bandits: Lewis Kerr 0, Danyon Hume 6, Jye Etheridge 7+3, Drew Kemp 8+2, Rory Schlein 15, Freddy Hodder 0, Bastian Borke 11+1

Gladiators: Connor Mountain 13+1, Alfie Bowtell 5, Dan Thompson 5, Kyle Newman 4+2, Ben Barker 12+2, Joe Thompson 2, Jacob Hook 1+1

PICTURE: Rory Schlein