

Sedgmen back in the saddle for fired-up Monarchs

Stellar Monarchs have confirmed that Justin Sedgmen will return for their biggest match of the season so far at Armadale on Friday when Scunthorpe Scorpions visit in the BSN Series semi-final, first-leg (tapes-up 7.30pm).

Sedgmen (pictured in the pits at Armadale by *Nigel Duncan*), is the club's No 5 rider, and has been sidelined with a knee injury. Club officials say that the popular Aussie from Mildura, Victoria, is feeling more comfortable every day.

The 32-year-old is desperate to play a part after being on the sidelines for some weeks after a crash in Heat Four of the club's 55-53 victory over Workington Comets at the West Lothian stadium in the Cab Direct Championship on July 19.

And Sedgmen confirmed his fitness after a mid-week try-out so the Armadale club will be at full strength as they bid to stay on track for silverware.

Earlier this season, Monarchs eased their way through the Scottish section of the BSN Series group stages to set up this intriguing semi-final against a side sitting in third position in the nine-strong league.

Monarchs, who prop up the rest, have already put the Scorpions to the sword at Armadale, winning 56-43 in mid-June with

Sedgmen top scoring on 14 and Josh Pickering one point behind.

A battling display at Scunthorpe's Eddie Wright Raceway saw the aggregate point secured in a 50-39 defeat. Pickering scored 15 from six races and Sedgmen eight from five.

A repeat of these performances would secure a slot in the final and Pickering, the club's in-form, No 1 racer, who this week confirmed he would be riding for Polish combine, Unia Leszno next season, will be a key man.

Scorpions, however, are set to be at full-strength and they are on good form and the return is at Scunthorpe on September 6. Alex Harkess, Monarchs' team manager, said: "They are coming to us first and we need to open a big lead.

"We know it is difficult at their place, although we did very well down there (earlier this season) after a bad start."



TALK IN: Josh Pickering consults his pit crew at Armadale. Picture by **Nigel Duncan**



FAN-TASTIC: A young fan is cheered when one of his favourites signs his plaster cast. Picture **Nigel Duncan**



LOW DOWN: Paco Castagna checks the track at Armadale ahead of a match. Picture **Nigel Duncan**



SMILES BETTER: Max James in the pits at Armadale. Picture *Nigel Duncan*



Alex Harkess in the pit area at Armadale. Picture Nigel Duncan



Monarchs on track for a win. Picture Nigel Duncan