

Ex-Monarch Cook now a Bandit

Craig Cook joins Berwick Bandits after recovering from a shoulder injury which prematurely ended his 2024 speedway campaign for Workington and Leicester.

The 37-year-old Cumbrian has scored over 4,700 points in the second tier since making his debut with the Comets in 2009 and a further 2,000 in the top flight, predominantly with Belle Vue.

He has regularly been a thorn in the Bandits' side around their Shielfield Park home. In fact, Cook's previous dozen league and cup visits seeing him average over 12 points a meeting, including three full maximum scores.

He holds the record for the fastest four laps at the pacy circuit and the time of 62.8sec was set in 2015 and is a tenth of a second faster than current Grand Prix star, and fellow Cumbrian, Dan Bewley's official track record, set in 2020 following work to widen and shorten the raceway.

Cook joins another former Edinburgh racer, Rory Schlein, Drew Kemp and Danyon Hume as confirmed starters for the 2025 campaign and Berwick have silverware ambitions. Last season the Borders outfit propped up the rest in the Cab Direct Championship following an injury-ravaged campaign.

Cook had been expected to return to Workinton but Berwick's team manager, Stewart Dickson, explained that he moved quickly after learning of the rider's availability.

He said: "It was a no-brainer really. "When riders of Craig's calibre become available you don't have to think too hard about what he offers to any team.

"I worked with him at Leicester in the Premiership in both 2023 and 2024 so I know what he brings to the table first-hand."

PICTURE: Craig Cook by ***Keith Hamblin***