

## **ABERNETHY, Bruce Mackenzie**

**Born:** May 14, 1928, Wellington, New Zealand.

**Died:** May, 1999.

One of the most colourful and entertaining riders the sport has ever seen, Bruce was a Kiwi who spent four seasons with the Wembley 'Lions', having being recommended to the club by the former New Zealand international Wally Kilmister after some impressive showings on the Taita track in his home town of Wellington.

He spent the majority of the 1948 season on loan at non-league Rayleigh and showed impressive form as the 'Rockets' took on a series of Third Division sides in challenge matches. These performances earned him a call up to the 'Lions' side in 1949 and, despite being a second string rider in the main, his extravagant personality made him one of the most popular riders of his time.

He was to play an important role in the 'Lions' three consecutive championship winning sides of 1949, 1950 and 1951 and his last season in Britain proved to be his best. He was paid for double figures on eleven occasions during the league and cup campaign and looked certain to reach the World Final until blowing his chance in his last qualifying round at Harringay when he suffered three falls.



Despite not returning to Wembley after the 1951 season 'Abner' rode intermittently in New Zealand for many years and resisted numerous approaches to return - including a bid by West Ham as late as 1964. Twice the New Zealand Champion, Bruce died in May 1999.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Club</b>	<b>Division</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>BP</b>	<b>TP</b>	<b>CMA</b>	<b>FM</b>	<b>PM</b>
1948	Wembley	NL1	1	2	2	0	2	4.00	-	-
1949	Wembley	NL1	35	100	99	25	124	4.96	-	-
1950	Wembley	NL1	31	86	99	25	124	5.77	-	-
1951	Wembley	NL1	31	124	202	31	233	7.52	-	3

**Individual Honours:** New Zealand Champion 1950, 1951.

**Team Honours:** National League Division One Championship winner 1949, 1950, 1951.