

BASTABLE, Henry (Harry)

Born: August 30, 1928, Birmingham, West Midlands, England.*

A legendary figure in Midlands speedway, particularly during his two spells with Cradley Heath, Harry was a product of the Alan Hunt Winter Training School in 1949-50. His showings were so impressive that he was handed a role in the starting line-up for the Dudley Wood side for the 1950 season, although he spent most of the year with sister track Tamworth in Division Three where he averaged over five points per match. Returning full time to the 'Heathens' in 1951, Harry filled the shoes of his former tutor who had embarked on a career in the top flight and became a crowd favourite with the Cradley Heath fans. He topped the club's averages in 1952 with an excellent figure of 8.68 and was a transfer target of Division One giants Wembley at the peak of his form.



The club were forced to close at the end of the season and combined with arch rivals Wolverhampton for 1953, with Harry spending less than six months at Monmore Green before moving up into Division One with Birmingham in August. Despite the occasional high score, Harry never really made the grade in the First Division and was unable to lift himself out of a second string berth in his spell with the 'Brummies' and scored in a similar vein at Leicester after moving to Blackbird Road on Birmingham's closure during 1957. Harry spent the whole of the 1959 season riding for the 'Hunters' reserve side and, when he was unable to secure a regular place in the side the following season, he jumped at the chance of returning to Cradley Heath who had reopened in the newly formed Provincial League. To say that Harry had a new lease of life in 1960 would be a massive understatement as he recorded an average of 10.43 points per match, putting his wealth of experience to good use and ending the year in third place in the league averages behind the equally experienced Trevor Redmond and Reg Reeves. Harry led the side to the Provincial League Knock-Out Cup crown in 1961 and 1963 but, as the younger riders in the league became more accomplished and Harry's age ticked along into his mid-30s, his average fell year on year until 1964 when double figure scores became the exception rather than the rule. After the combination of the leagues in 1965 to form a single tier British League, it was clear that Harry's best days were behind him and he hung up his leathers during the month of June.

Year	Club	Division	M	R	P	BP	TP	CMA	FM	PM
1950	Cradley Heath	NL2	8	22	21	9	30	5.45	-	-
1950	Tamworth	NL3	19	66	83	6	89	5.39	-	-
1951	Cradley Heath	NL2	35	129	179	20	199	6.17	-	-
1952	Cradley Heath	NL2	46	187	378	28	406	8.68	4	3
1953	Wolverhampton	NL2	28	118	208	27	235	7.97	-	1
1953	Birmingham	NL1	10	30	32	6	38	5.07	-	-
1954	Birmingham	NL1	30	96	62	13	75	3.13	-	-
1955	Birmingham	NL1	28	126	142	21	163	5.17	-	-
1956	Birmingham	NL1	28	102	98	19	117	4.59	-	2
1957	Birmingham	NL	9	33	28	6	34	4.12	-	-
1957	Leicester	NL	8	39	48	13	61	6.26	-	-
1958	Leicester	NL	20	80	62	17	79	3.95	-	-
1960	Leicester	NL	3	9	4	3	7	3.11	-	-
1960	Cradley Heath	PL	13	61	155	4	159	10.43	3	1
1961	Cradley Heath	PL	24	106	228	13	241	9.09	1	2
1962	Cradley Heath	PL	22	85	155	10	165	7.76	1	-
1963	Cradley Heath	PL	28	114	162	24	186	6.53	1	1
1964	Cradley Heath	PL	20	83	101	14	115	5.54	-	-
1965	Cradley Heath	BL	16	61	59	14	73	4.79	-	-

Team Honours: Provincial League Knock-Out Cup winner 1961, 1963.