

BRAITHWAITE, Derek

Born: c. 1932, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England.

Derek was a teenage second half rider at his home town track, Stoke, in the early 1950s and made his debut for the 'Potters' at the Sun Street track against Motherwell in July 1951 - deputising for the absent Johnny Fitzpatrick. When his more experienced team mate returned to the side for the following match Derek was again relegated to junior events until a second chance at the end of the season saw him show all his promise with an unbeaten two rides at reserve against Liverpool. He was included in the Stoke side for the start of the 1952 season and got the fans talking with a ten point display in a Midland Riders Championship Qualifying Round at Cradley Heath, marking him down as one to watch for the future.

After some hit and miss performances for the 'Potters' Derek moved to the scene of his earlier success, signing for the 'Heathens' at the end of August. Derek's best performances came with Wolverhampton in 1953, averaging over six and a half points per match and scoring maximums against Scottish visitors Edinburgh and Motherwell. When Wolverhampton closed in early 1954 Derek linked up with Leicester but suffered torn knee ligaments in a second half race in his debut meeting at Blackbird Road and disappeared from the scene for several years. He was tempted back to Wolverhampton in the Provincial League in 1961 and showed occasional glimpses of his undoubted talent, but was unable to hold a team place. Derek later emigrated to Canada.

Year	Club	Division	M	R	P	BP	TP	CMA	FM	PM
1951	Stoke	NL2	2	6	6	1	7	4.67	-	-
1952	Stoke	NL2	20	63	59	13	72	4.57	-	-
1952	Cradley Heath	NL2	12	26	27	6	33	5.08	-	-
1953	Wolverhampton	NL2	26	93	139	14	153	6.58	1	1
1961	Wolverhampton	PL	3	11	11	2	13	4.73	-	-