

## **BLIGHT, Ernest Westlake (Ernie Brecknell)**

**Born:** June 30, 1920, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia.

**Died:** March 13, 1976

Ernie's career began in Australia in 1945 and he was considered good enough for a place in the Australian test team for the series against England in 1947-48. His showings in the series were impressive, scoring 21 points in three matches, although his spectacular and fearless brand of riding caused some comment amongst the unsuspecting touring team. Originally poised to join New Cross in 1947, Ernie did not come to England until the following year when he signed for West Ham, but his British career got off to a terrible start as he broke his leg in a second half race at Custom House in April. The accident occurred before he was able to make his 'Hammers' debut and he was never to ride in an official fixture for the London club.



His belated British League debut came when he signed for Newcastle in Division Two in 1949, initially on loan, but he was unable to reproduce his Australian form at Brough Park and was plagued by injury, suffering another broken leg at Glasgow in May 1951. The injury looked to threaten his career at one stage but he returned to the saddle and reserved his best performances in Britain for his spell with Southampton in the mid-1950s, finding he was more suited to Southern League speedway at Bannister Court. He had unsuccessful spells with both Weymouth and Poole in 1955 before returning home to Adelaide.

<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>
1949	Newcastle	NL2	46	146	150	32	182	4.99	-	-
1950	Newcastle	NL2	25	78	87	17	104	5.33	-	1
1951	Newcastle	NL2	2	9	16	2	18	8.00	-	-
1952	Southampton	SL	21	60	95	6	101	6.73	1	-
1953	Southampton	SL	29	119	210	16	226	7.60	2	-
1954	Southampton	NL2	20	73	85	15	100	5.48	-	-
1955	<i>Weymouth</i>	<i>NL2</i>	9	46	67	8	75	6.52	-	-
1955	Poole	NL2	13	38	34	7	41	4.32	-	-

**International Honours:** Australian international – 3 caps, 21 points.