

Pictures:
EDDIE GARVEY



Young Australian Nick Morris has enjoyed an astounding amount of success since he appeared on the UK scene three years ago. Since 2010 he has helped rake in not one, but at least three pieces of league-racing silverware at National, Premier and Elite League levels! His taste for a trophy or two first began back home in Australia.

It's no wonder clubs across Britain are tripping over each other to sign him every year... success seems to follow him wherever he goes!

By Hayley Bromley

Young Morris always has had a taste for motorcycles. Having acquired his first speedway bike courtesy of his father at the tender age of 10, it wasn't long before he was learning how to master the art of sliding it sideways as a junior rider.

"I always wanted to ride motorbikes when I was little. My dad was a massive speedway fan in his younger days...he still is to be honest. He was the one who really got me into the sport, he bought me my first bike and I started racing junior speedway not long after that.

"To be honest though, I hadn't really given much thought as to where I was going with speedway as a career; at the time I was just there to ride and have fun. I always thought I'd like to be a professional rider some day, but I didn't

know if or how it would happen."

But puzzling over a future career in speedway didn't appear to distract him in the slightest during his maiden year of individual title pursuits.

In 2009, the highly-rated 15-year-old Morris batted off some stiff competition to lift the coveted title of Queensland Under-16 Champion. It was no fluke that the young Aussie walked away with the spoils that day, for the same year saw him claim runners-up spot in the Australian Under-16 Championship.

Quite a feat... beginner's luck some might say. But one year later not only did Morris successfully defend his Queensland title, he expanded his trophy cabinet to include the New South Wales Under-16 Championship as well.

"It was awesome winning those titles. Really, I didn't think anyone was even watching the senior meetings but it was a brilliant feeling all the same.

"It was around that time that there was a lot of talk about me coming to England actually,

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GOLDEN BOY

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and things kind of went from there." Sure enough, the young Aussie's exploits hadn't gone unnoticed, and in 2010 he was awarded his UK debut by National League side Buxton in the high peaks.

Leaving home for the first time can be a daunting prospect for anyone, but flying halfway around the world to pursue your dream? Morris took it all in his stride!

"I never really found a problem when I first came over. I made sure during my first year that I was living with Josh Grajczonek so that was good, he taught me everything I needed to know about life over here; plus it's always good to be living with a friend, it made things a lot easier."

Buxton really does get down to the grass roots of speedway in our country, quite literally.

The tiny little track in the beautiful Derbyshire countryside seems to have a habit of attracting some of the most promising new talent through its gates, taking them in as raw, unpolished rookies before finally unleashing them as some of the most honed and exceptionally gifted riders in the country.

Hi-Edge was the first racing circuit young Morris was able to call home. Arriving from the land down under with fellow Aussie boy Robert Branford, the pair formed a devastating partnership at reserve for the Hitmen that year.

"Honestly, I wouldn't be here right now if Buxton hadn't given me that chance all those years ago. Riding there taught me everything I needed to know about English tracks, and even more it helped me learn how to ride my 500 properly because I hadn't really had that much practice on one up until that point."

Even if there was a slight twitch of nerves from the young Australian it's unlikely his rivals even saw it, and it wasn't long before he'd mastered not only his motorcycle but the tricky little track along with it.

"It's a pretty tight track, and it can be quite bumpy as well. I knew a lot of other riders never really liked it, which made my life a bit easier because it meant potentially there

were easy points up for grabs."

Sadly though for the Hitmen, 2010 was to be Morris's first and last season in their colours.

The young Aussie's blistering form during the course of the year, and his outstanding contribution in every meeting he raced, helped fend off some extremely fierce competition to enable Buxton to claim, for the first time in their 16-year history, the Knockout Cup, the National Trophy and the National League silverware.

Such an achievement in his first year on the British scene was astounding, but to win the league for a second time the following year, this time aiding Premier League Glasgow to their first piece of silverware in 17 years, was incredible.

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Sweet as you like, and 2012 just kept on dishing out dollops of glory.

After a brief spell of doubling-up with parent club Coventry the previous year, Morris appeared on the scene at Swindon in what proved to be a pivotal year in their history.

It truly was the battle of the century which concluded a mixed season for young Nick, with as many lows as there were highs. But even so, the talented teenager once again cast his spell over his home side's fortunes, and reigning Elite League champions Poole simply had no answer to it.

For the first time in 40 years, Swindon were crowned Elite League champions 2012 in an emotional trophy presentation at Wimborne Road. It would seem like too much of a happy coincidence to imagine that such feats of good fortune, after years of wooden spoons, could befall each of Morris' clubs by chance the

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same year he happens to join them.

"I don't know! I don't know what's going on there. I think I'm just lucky, but I don't want to jinx it so we won't talk about that too much!

"Hopefully we [Swindon] can do something like that again this year. Winning the Elite League with them

last year was just brilliant. This year we've got a really good team; on paper it looks just as good as the one last year if not better. We're throwing away a few silly points at the moment though, I don't know why, but it's still early doors yet so hopefully we can get past this."

As of 2013, in addition to his Elite League commitments, Morris is well

settled at his new Premier League haunt at Somerset's Oak Tree Arena.

But comfortable though he is, his aspirations recently have started to run much higher than restricting himself to riding exclusively in the UK.

"I was looking at doing a bit of riding in Poland for this year, but it never really worked out. Hopefully

it'll be something I'm looking to do next year, I definitely want to get in there but I need to see what my options are first though.

"I take each day as it comes but at the end of the day I'm here to race for my dream and my dream is to be in the World Championship; maybe even win the World Championship!

"What's going to happen between

now and then? Who knows, but hopefully it will happen for me one day."

For those who dare to dream, every new horizon hides a brand new opportunity. Whether in Poland, Denmark, Great Britain and beyond, the competition for such opportunities is fierce in speedway, and if you don't keep your head it

can be like stepping into the hornet's nest.

Youngsters like Nick have the world at their feet. With a focused mind and a maturity that belies his years, he's prepared to take his chances, and risk a little sting on the world stage, if it means taking one step closer to achieving his dreams. As they always say: no pain, no gain!