

## Wright on track for anniversary re-union

Friday, 26 February 2010

JAMES Wright, who made himself a big favourite during his time as a Workington Comets rider, is coming back to Derwent Park.

The Stockport-based Elite League star is the second rider announced by the Comets for their special 40th anniversary meeting on March 27th.

After starting with the Buxton Hitmen it was Workington who launched his career in the Premier League and he climaxed his career at Derwent Park by winning the Premier League Riders Championship.

Comets team manager Ian Thomas, the man who first signed Wright for the Comets, said: "I'm delighted that James is coming back to ride in this very special meeting. He was always going to be a very good rider and it was good to see him progressing at Workington and proving such an exciting rider for the Comets.

"He doubled-up for me when I was at Belle Vue and after a spell with Swindon is now back at the Aces and a popular member of their team."

Wright became renowned for his sweeping last bend passes at Derwent Park and was one of the most popular riders for Workington since the sport re-launched in 1999.

He joins another Derwent Park hero in Kauko Nieminen for the anniversary meeting to mark the original launch of speedway at Derwent Park in 1970.

As well as old favourites back on track, the Comets will be welcoming some familiar faces among special guests who have been invited to attend and watch the action again at Derwent Park.

The latest former riders who have accepted invitations are Taffy Owen, Terry Kelly and Shaun Tacey.

Owen and Kelly, from the Manchester area, were riders in the 1970's while Tacey is a little bit more recent, although he has also finished competing in the sport. He's making the long trek from King's Lynn for the occasion.

Taffy has been back at Derwent Park a few years ago, and now 73, is an occasional visitor to Belle Vue.

Anglesey-born Owen originally made his name with Belle Vue Colts operating from Rochdale, leading them to two successive Second Division titles before joining the Comets.

He was transferred to Workington at his own request following what was said to have been a disagreement with the Rochdale management. He later saw service with Sheffield Tigers before eventually retiring from the sport in 1977 when he ran a speedway shares shop in Manchester for many years.

One of the great characters of the sport &ndash; and there were many in that era &ndash; Taffy was one of the Comets legends from the early days.

Owen, Kelly and Tacey join Geoff Penniket and Ken Vale, along with the Collins family &ndash; Neil, Les and Aidan &ndash; who have been confirmed as special guests on March 27.

Thomas said: &ldquo;Tony Jackson has been compiling the guest list and I think he&rsquo;s had a lot of fun speaking to the old riders again after a number of years. The guest list is growing all the time and I&rsquo;m sure it&rsquo;s going to be a night to remember for all those who have an affection for Workington Comets.&rdquo;