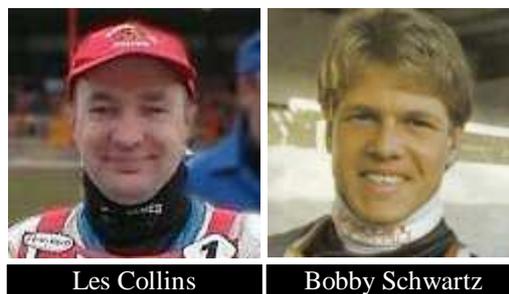


Dream Team : Gregor Pattinson

I used to watch to the Leicester Lions at Blackbird Road every other Tuesday between 1978 and 1983. From the photos I can see how decrepit it was at the end. However, to my pre-teen eyes it was a Mecca. I was always fascinated by the huge tote board they had for the dog racing in the middle of the first bend. I could never understand what it meant and why they didn't have a proper board like they did at Brandon. It didn't matter though, it was at Blackbird Road so it was cool and much bigger than the one at Brandon anyway.

I remember Martin Rogers as an odd little man, who always gave you his autograph, I remember his wife was always very friendly. Even after she'd suffered some appalling verbal abuse at the hands of Ian Clark, she told us, 'he was effing and b-ing all over the place and he won't be welcome back here now, I can tell you', she still had time to pat us on the head and let us walk round the pits for a bit before the riders came out.

The proudest moment of my primary school life was when my dad and his mates Dick and Dave sponsored Colin Cook (what a fence hugging genius of a speedway rider!) and they got their pictures in the match programme. It was made better by the fact we spotted him when we were coming out of the 1981 World Final and he was wearing a belt with his name on it! Ironically, I ended up playing football for my college on the playing fields on the estate they built on Blackbird Road and I used to catch the bus on Stadium Rise.



John Titman

Stylish and steady. The first rider I saw beat Ole Olsen. I didn't think it was possible before that! Great hair as well.

Colin Cook

Pure action. What a man, what a beard, what a belt!

Les Collins

Great riding style; bum back, head down, feet up. A nice guy as well. The fact he always put in a duff race even when he was on fire cost him a deserved world title.

Neil Collins

More great hair, looked like something out of the Jimi Hendrix Experience but he went like the clappers. Probably the most stylish of all the Collins brothers, even if he wasn't the most successful.

Bobby Schwartz

Boogaloo bought us cokes all night once in the bar at Brandon. He kept doing that 'What's that?' point at your chest/flick you on the nose thing and I fell for it every time. Not a bad rider either.

Ted Howgego

He used to have purple leathers, was a bit over weight and a bit slow, so me and my brother used to call him Wibble Purple. As in the Leicestershire street classic of the late 1970s, 'You're slower than Wibble Purple you are, fatty maloist'.

Steve Gresham

Because my day slagged him off for coming out for practice starts while the national anthem was on. After the meeting while we were on our obligatory autograph hunt, he got his bike stuck getting it into his Citroen estate and my dad helped him and then said he was really nice guy! He was as well, he gave us a hat each!

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