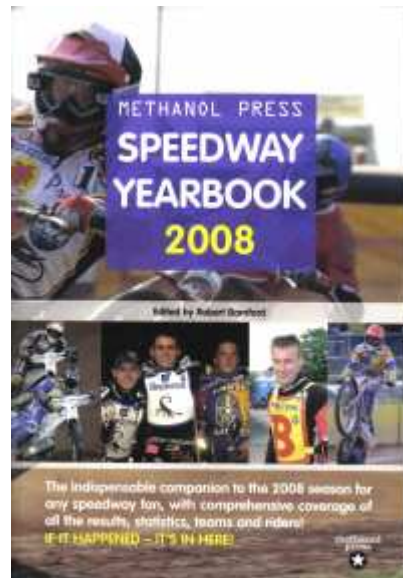


Book Review: 2008 Speedway Yearbook

The Methanol Press Speedway Yearbook 2008

By Robert Bamford

£14.99, in softback



The publisher may have changed but Robert Bamford's yearbook remains an essential purchase. The strap-line on the cover states "If it happened - it's in here" and that's a fair assessment of this comprehensive reference book.

Within the 274 pages you'll find the results and scorers for every meeting staged in Britain last year, club by club averages and details of the sundry other competitions that make up the season - pairs, riders' championships and fours are all present and correct.

There's also a lengthy introduction that covers the season enjoyed by each British club. This was penned by Chris Seaward and tells the story behind the statistics that make up the majority of the book. It may have been better to include these season summaries as part of the club-by-club sections, rather than as such a lengthy piece of prose at the start of the book, but that probably comes down to personal preference.

The Grand Prix and World Cup are covered in detail towards the back of the book - again with commentary from Chris Seaward to put the facts and figures into context.

Unlike the Peter Oakes' yearbooks of the seventies and eighties, this publication doesn't cover the speedway scene in other countries. It's most definitely focussed on the UK, so if you want to know who won the Polish League then you'll have to look elsewhere.

The photographic content of the book is also different from previous editions, it no longer includes a team picture of each club. Instead there's a mix of individual rider shots and team photographs. This gives the book layout a less regimented layout than

in previous years though there is considerable white space on several pages that could have been better utilised.

The move from Tempus Publishing to Methanol Press has resulted in several other changes. The book is now taller and thinner than previous editions, as a result it's not going to align perfectly with the others on your bookshelf. The predominantly white cover of the Tempus books has been replaced by a dark blue styling this time around. The changes continue inside the book, most notably with the better quality paper used in this edition. Presentation within the book is also improved - a cleaner and sharper look being introduced.

The final pages of the book are taken up with a rider guide that lists the birth details, club history and honours of every rider in British Speedway. Ideal reference information even if it's not something that you'll necessarily read from A to Z.

All in all, this is exactly what you'd expect from a yearbook. There's more to read than in previous editions, every conceivable fact and figure is listed and nothing obvious has been omitted. In true yearbook tradition: this is a book you'll buy, flick through and then put on the bookshelf until such times as you need to consult it.

The Methanol Press Speedway Yearbook 2008 is available from www.methanolpress.com for £14.99 (plus p&p)

or

Send a £17.99 cheque to cover P&P made payable to: "J Scott" to

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