



# THE GREAT WEIGHT DEBATE

# EYE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

    | SPECIAL FEATURE

## JAMES BLACK LOOKS INTO THE RECENT ONLINE DEBATE BETWEEN RIDERS OVER THE POTENTIAL OF ADDING WEIGHT TO SPEEDWAY BIKES TO COMPENSATE FOR THE RIDERS OVERALL WEIGHT AND IF IT WORKS

Despite the fact there has been no speedway action to speak of, that hasn't been to say there hasn't been plenty of debate going on over social media.

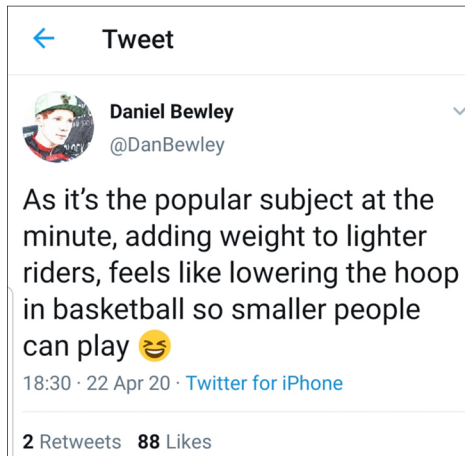
Scott Nicholls caused a bit of a stir when he put forth his opinions on the topic of levelling out the playing field as it were, by adding additional weight to speedway bikes in order to ensure man and machine weigh the same heading to the tapes, thus putting it purely down to rider ability when the race gets underway.

Now this isn't a particularly new debate, it has generally always been the case that the lighter riders will generate more speed than their heavier counterparts, who in turn find themselves, perhaps better equipped to handle the deep and heavy conditions that present themselves on occasion.

While Nicholls did confess that there would be no easy solution to this conundrum, insisting adding too much weight to the bike would cause it to become increasingly difficult to handle and that adding weight to the rider would hinder their ability to handle an already volatile machine.

Both of these points are more than valid, and Nicholls also used Dan Bewley as an example, saying that the Belle Vue man is around 15 kilos lighter than him so that adding that additional weight to the bike would compromise his safety, which in an already dangerous sport isn't an option.

Dan Bewley was quick to have his say on the debate, quipping that adding weight to lighter riders is the equivalent to lowering the hoop in basketball for the shorter players! However one reply to that was that guys like Tony Rickardsson, Ivan Mauger and Hans Nielsen all dominated the shale sport without being the smallest riders on the circuit.

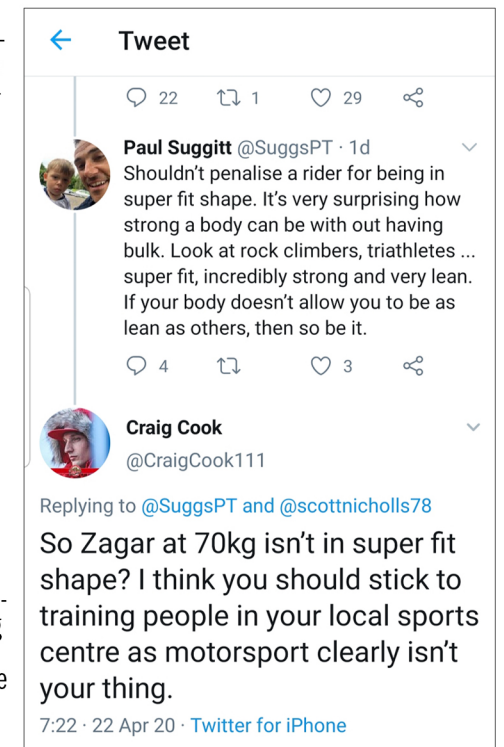


That's not to say that these guys weren't in great physical condition at their peak, but taller riders are always going to be at a disadvantage by virtue of being heavier than their shorter rivals.

Take Matej Zagar for instance, he is one of the tallest riders on the GP circuit and weighs around 70KG, but he is always going to be heavier than the likes of Patryk Dudek and Bartosz Zmarzlik. But all three are incredibly fit athletes who are at the top of their profession.

Personal Trainer Paul Suggit was another who weighed in on the debate, stating that riders shouldn't be penalised for being in ultra-fit shape, which is a valid point, but one that was quickly shot down by Craig Cook, who rightly stated that Matej Zagar was still ultra-fit despite being heavier than many of his colleagues.

Danish star Mikkel Michelsen was another who was quick to weigh in on the debate, insisting that it was ridiculous to suggest adding weight to the bikes, stating he is a taller rider who works hard with his diet etc. to make sure he is in the best physical condition possible when he takes to the track.



In the end Nicholls stated while the debate had been fun, he didn't ever really see additional weight being added to the bikes ever coming to fruition despite not seeing any constructive facts against it.

Whatever your opinion on the subject there is little doubt that Scott Nicholls caused quite the stir and gave lots of people plenty to talk about. In these uncertain times we find ourselves in at the moment, topics like these provide quite a welcome distraction!

But what do you think?

JB

