

One Flew Over the Safety Fence



The number of information and media sources available to speedway fans these days is greater than even before. We have the internet, numerous magazines, many books, regular television coverage and even a weekly BBC radio show. Just last week a new contender emerged on the scene and the good news is that it's completely free. That's especially welcome given the exorbitant cost associated with some of the magazines on the market!

The newcomer is a rather splendid 'podcast', produced for the fans and by the fans. If you're not familiar with the podcasting concept then 'google it' as the descriptions available are bound to be better than the one that follows. It's basically an audio stream that you can listen to on an iPod or on your PC. Similar to a radio show, but you can listen whenever it suits you and you don't have to sit through traffic reports or station jingles.

The man behind the project is Russ Duke, who also takes to the mic as the main presenter of the show. We tracked him down to find out more about the project. We asked him first of all to tell us what inspired the podcast.

"I'm responsible for a few Football podcasts and thought that speedway has an equal amount of contentious issues to debate. I was shocked there was absolutely nothing out there and knew that my fellow presenters Paul and Curt would be good additions as neither pull their punches."

That's certainly the impression you glean from the first show, these guys aren't going to beat around the bush. The lack of any kind of official relationship between them and the sport's authorities makes it possible for them to be more honest than the traditional media could ever be. Russ acknowledges this as one of the strengths of the show.

"I guess it's just the uncensored fans opinion. Just general speedway chatter - the stuff you hear at a meeting, on the forums or that the Sky team are too diplomatic about. It's a bit raw at the moment but once we've done a few I think it will get quite entertaining."

This aim to entertain is also emphasised on the show's website, where they claim their *raison d'être* is to put a smile on Peter Adams' face. Good luck with that one guys!

So what can you expect to hear should you choose to listen in? We asked Russ on your behalf...

"It's a half hour fortnightly speedway show that will go out shortly after each GP. The podcast is mainly concentrating on the GP's and a number of other issues concerning our domestic leagues. I know the GP's are far from the grass roots of the sport but it's hard to discuss the league fixtures as things can change so much over a fortnightly period. To give you an idea of the sort of thing we want to cover, our next show will have a debate about our domestic leagues and riders and why we feel we are falling behind the likes of Poland and Sweden."

The team presently consists of Russ as the anchor, with pals Curt and Paul chipping in with their comments and participating in a speedway trivia quiz to round off the show. The three are clearly good friends and work well together to produce this, surprisingly professional, product. However, Russ is keen to stress that it's not a closed shop and that everyone is welcome to contribute.

"The more interactive the better. I'm trying to get people to email or even give me the opportunity to interview them. If someone has a Skype account I can record an interview quite simply and the more content we get the more diverse the show will become."

If you'd like to get involved with the show then you'll find full details on their website.

The show is officially titled - "One Flew Over the Safety Fence", a reference to an accident (involving a supporter) that the presenters witnessed on a trip to the Czech GP. At present we suspect that it'll become better known as simply "the speedway podcast", hopefully in time other groups will attempt something similar and the name will become its unique identifier.

Finally, the all important question, how can you hear the show? Russ explains:

"At the moment you can listen by subscribing through iTunes or on the site at www.speedwaypodcast.co.uk. I've had a few queries about different formats and I'll try to do whatever I can. At the moment I'm just doing what I know."

If you've got a spare half-hour then why not listen in to the boys? This isn't three daft lads talking nonsense or 'playing at radio', it's an intelligent speedway show that deserves to find a loyal audience. How the show develops from here will probably depend upon the feedback the guys get. If you like it then let them know and listen regularly, if you've got ideas for them to consider or would like to appear on the show then they'd be delighted to hear from you.

You can listen to "One Flew Over the Safety Fence" at www.speedwaypodcast.co.uk

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