



Kurt Wigley at Cadwell Park

Picture: Ian Ward

Stacey on the podium twice in a weekend

STORM STACEY enjoyed another strong weekend, this time at Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire, securing a double podium in the British Motostar championship.

The Staffordshire teenager maintained his second-place in the series after racing to two third-placed finishes over weekend.

Stacey, 14, from Eccleshall, was tussling for a strong grid position during qualifying but being unable to get a clear lap in around the tight and narrow track, the FPW Racing rider had to settle for eighth.

Team boss Adrian Mason said: "Storm battled through the grid with an excellent start and was soon running up front with Jake Archer and Jack Scott during race one.

"Closing the front two down, he had closed the gap to 0.53 seconds by the 10th lap.

"Unfortunately, the race was red-flagged with only two laps to go leaving Storm to take a solid third, setting the fastest lap in the process, which put him in pole position for race two on Sunday."

A second dry race saw Stacey again make a great start and he led into the first corner until three riders in pursuit used his slip stream in the run down to Park Corner, which dropped him back to fourth.

Archer and Durham eventually broke away, but the race was again red-flagged, leaving Stacey to take another third.

Stacey has turned his attention to the British Talent

“ Storm battled through the grid with an excellent start

Cup this weekend, riding on the undercard of the British Moto GP at Silverstone, before returning to British Motostar action September 7-9.

The Wigley twins once again put in two solid performances in the British Supersport class but fell short of the top-10 finishes they are aiming for.

Kurt, 22, from Hednesford, finished the round with a 16th and 15th-placed finish, while brother Matt ended with a pair of 18ths.

Kurt said: "We're trying to find a bit of a balance. We're getting the confidence back but at the same time we're not where we want to be in the races."

Brierley Hill-born Michael Rutter missed the National Superstock 1000 round at Cadwell after turning his attention to the Classic TT on the Isle of Man.

The 46-year-old, who has been taking part in practice this week around the same 37.73-mile circuit used for the main TT races, races a Ripley Land Racing Matchless in the Senior Classic TT and Rex Fox Grinta Ducati in the Lightweight Classic TT last Saturday, followed by a Ripley Land Racing Honda in the Junior Classic TT and a Winfield Yamaha in the Superbike Classic TT on Monday.



Richards scores the winner in the 1974 League Cup final: "It wasn't the best goal by any stretch of the imagination, it was a low hard shot from the penalty spot."

Wembley wonder who went down in history

SCORING the winning goal in a cup final at Wembley is the dream of probably every English striker.

Not many can boast that achievement – but that is exactly what Wolves legend John Richards did.

Out of all the 194 goals he scored for Wolves, it's perhaps no surprise that was his favourite.

"It wasn't the best goal by any stretch of the imagination, it was a low hard shot from the penalty spot," said the 67-year-old. "But it was probably the most important goal of my career."

The year was 1974 and Wolves had suffered two semi-final heartbreaks the previous season in the FA Cup and League Cup. Now they had passed that hurdle and made it to League Cup final where they played Manchester City. They were two well-matched First Division teams.

A crowd of 97,886 supporters travelled to Wembley that day setting up a huge stage.

"It was a fantastic occasion," said Richards. "We were a good side with international players. They were exceptional, a great team."

It was Wolves who scored first, through Kenny Hibbitt on the stroke of half-time, before Colin Bell equalised on 59 minutes.

But Richards turned hero when he scored in the final 10 minutes. Wolves had a corner cleared before they picked up possession and a deflected cross found its way to Richards' feet, where he struck the ball first time into the bottom corner.

"For a footballer I always wanted to play and to score at Wembley, so that is quite special," he said. "We had lost two cup semi-finals the previous season and to top it off I scored the winning goal seven minutes from time."

"It is something that doesn't happen to many people. We had players in our team in their 30s and for some of them it was their first and only time they were likely to play at Wembley."

Richards spent 14 years at Wolves,

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where he became their record goalscorer – eventually being surpassed by Steve Bull. He won two League Cups during that time with the other coming in 1980 against Nottingham Forest.

But it was the early 70s that were his most cherished time at the club.

"I was a young lad coming to one of the best teams in England and the world," said Richards. "They still had that reputation from the Billy Wright era from the 50s. Wolves were considered, in the world of football, one of the top clubs."

"It was an honour and privilege to be invited to join them and sign for a season."

Richards became a top-class striker, but his sporting influence when he was younger was rugby, having grown up in 'rugby town' Warrington.

However, he enjoyed playing football and during an amateur match, aged 18, he was picked up by a Wolves' scout.

"It was an unusual set of circumstances how I signed for Wolves," said Richards. "It wasn't the normal route through apprentices and local schools as they did in those days."

"I was nearly 19 and happened to be playing for a Lancashire grammar school boys team. There happened to be a scout from Wolves. He asked if I would like a trial for Wolves and I signed as a professional for one year."

"It was a complete shock to the system. I was planning to go to teachers' training college and then straight away I was training

every day. It was hard work. But back then you are bullet proof when you are 18. If they say run around the hills of Cannock Chase, you do it."

Through hard work, he set himself on the path to footballing glory and forged himself as one Wolves' best ever goalscorers.

He never really scored wonder goals, Richards admitted, but was a 'reactionary' striker in and around the box who had a sharp eye for goal.

His record for a season tally was 36 goals and he still holds Wolves' record for the most FA Cup goals by an individual player with 24.

In the era that Richards played for Wolves, they were a strong force in English football. They made it to the first ever Uefa Cup final, in 1972, which Richards played in as they lost 3-2 to Tottenham Hotspur over two legs.

This was a decade before Wolves slumped to the Fourth Division and found themselves in turmoil.

But now the Old Gold and Black are back playing at the pinnacle of English football and Richards believes they have a bright future.

"I would like to think that this team has got the pedigree and potential to achieve the success that our Wolves team did," said Richards. "The games I saw last year, there was definitely potential and quality in the way that they played. They have got the opportunity to do well now because they have the financial backing."

"I think it is something they haven't had at the level they have got now. If they want to go and buy top Premier League players then the funds are there. In

the last year alone I don't know how many times they made a record signing. You have to buy to be able to do that to compete at that level in the Premier League."

Richards, who also served the club as MD for three years from 1997, is a fan of the current team and believes they have got some quality players, in particular Ruben Neves and Willy Boly. He is also a fan of boss Nuno Espirito Santo.

"Neves looks like a useful player and it will be a good test for him in the Premier League," he said. "Boly last year looked like he was strolling. Everything was that easy for him. He is a big lad anyway, he has got something about him."

"But Wolves have got lots of exciting players and that is why fans talk about them the way they do. Nuno has done a fantastic job and I think they will finish in mid-table comfortably this season. Their style of play is well suited to the Prem."

Football has changed over the decades since Richards' era and he remembers when the tactics were a lot more direct and attacking.

"The style of football is very much different," he said. "It is very much about keeping the ball now where all players are comfortable on the ball, but back then we used to have a forward attacking style. Even the full-back was thinking of going forward. They are both exciting styles of play."

He added: "The best player I played against was George Best. Kenny Dalglish was a tough player. I think Mike Bailey was the best I played alongside."

Football has also changed outside the pitch too. Richards pointed out how players have much more stricter diets now and take cold baths after game to help muscle recovery. And on the playing surfaces: "The Molineux pitch is stunning all year round now. From January onwards only the outskirts of the pitch had grass back then."

Now, 44 years on from that League Cup final, Wolves play Manchester City again today hoping to prove the new generation has the ability to matching the heroes of the 1970s.

