

**Karoly Lechky Interview, published 28.6.1997, Speedway Star, UK.
re. his appearance in the Overseas Final
of the World Championship, Bradford, 22.6.1997**

Few people gave South African Karoly Lechky much chance in the event, and so it turned out. But, despite failing to open his account, Lechky proved anything but a pushover and gave the impression that he could be a useful performer at a reasonable standard of competition. He said afterwards:

“This was my first big meeting and it has been an eye opener for me because of the quality of riders around me. “I came here as the underdog and no one gave me a chance, but I hope that I showed that I can race a speedway bike because that is important to me. “I really had nothing to lose in a meeting like this because no one rated me and no one expected me to qualify, that’s for sure. But for me to race in the same meeting as the riders here has been a big occasion for me and hopefully I can come back again next year and do a bit better.”

Lechky earned the right to represent his country after winning the national championship over two rounds, beating Deon Prinsloo into second place. “It was an honour for me to represent South Africa and I hope that I have not let them down.” He went on: “We are such a small country in terms of international speedway and really have little chance of making much of an impact at this sort of level. “But I was determined to do my very best in our national championship because of the chance to come over to England and ride in this World Championship. Normally, our meetings back home have very little incentive attached to them, so it was important to do well when this opportunity came up.”

Lechky spends most of his time based in Poland where he rides for Division Two side Krosno, generally returning to South Africa between November and February when he competes in about ten meetings in his homeland. “We do not have any sort of league, mainly open meetings. It is good when foreign riders come to South Africa for the winter because then I can judge myself against class riders as well as learn more about machinery and maintenance. “Most of my time is spent in Europe, riding mainly in Poland. Riding speedway means so much to me, but it is difficult for me to get better because of the number of meetings I ride in. “I drove over here from Poland and spent a few days in England, but the weather was not good. Then I must drive back almost straight after the meeting.”

On his Overseas performance, Karl, as he likes to be known, concluded: “It would have been better had I scored two or three points, but the occasion was the most important thing to me. “I don’t think I did too badly and I am satisfied with my riding. All I hope is that I did my country proud and that I can come back again next year. “Bradford is a wonderful stadium and the racing was very good. I liked the track, it is big and fast which is what I am used to - so maybe next time I can do better.”

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Post script, 2013:

Lechky rode in the Overseas Final again in the following year, 1998. Held that year at Poole, UK, - he did lift his score, by just 1 point.

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1997: Karl Lechky rode for Krosno, Polish Div.2.

Karl Lechky rode in the Overseas Final, Bradford UK

1998: Karl Lechky rode in the Overseas Final, Poole UK

1999: Karl Lechky rode for Lendava, in Slovenian Lge.

2002: Alex Lakatos rode in the World Chmpshp Qual.Rd at Lonigo Italy

2003: Warren Meier rode in World Chmpshp Q.R. at Heusden-Zolder, Belgium.