

CYCLING.

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DICK TURPIN'S WEEKLY GOSSIP.

THE recent rainfalls have effected a vast improvement in the condition of the roads in the neighbourhood, but unless we get a much heavier dose than we have yet had, they will ere long again blossom forth in their flinty wickedness. The road through Angmering to Littlehampton is in a better order than either the Brighton or Horsham roads just now.

Last Wednesday the Sussex Centre of the National Cyclists' Union held their quarterly perambulating meeting, Lewes being the venue on this occasion.

Unfortunately, tyre troubles prevented me from reaching the County town, but I gather that the various delegates had a good time, the local Club trotting them round to view the lions of the town and entertaining them to a meat tea at the Elephant and Castle.

The cravings of the inner man having been satisfied, and a further stroll, presumably to aid digestion, having been performed, the agenda was tackled.

This largely consisted of instructing the Centre Councillors how to vote on the various matters coming before them at the forthcoming General Council Meeting of the Union; but as nothing of any special importance is on the tapis I need not go into details here.

Then came the allotment of the Centre Championships, the chief applicants for which were the Eastbourne and Worthing Clubs, both of which had asked for the Five Miles Amateur Championship. Seeing that Eastbourne sends three delegates from one Club alone, and on occasion one or two from other local Clubs, it is not surprising that the ballot gave the race to the "wise men from the East."

Worthing, however, was entrusted with the One Mile Amateur Championship, which is, of course, a more important race—so much so, indeed, that it seems hardly wise to run it on grass when there is a track like Preston Park in the district.

The Club men are naturally very well satisfied, looking at it from their own point of view, as it will be a big draw for one or other of their Race Meetings. It is the racing section who disagree with the action of the Centre, on the ground that the conditions attending the running of such a race on grass must necessarily be somewhat unfair.

The Centre were also requested to permit the West Tarring C.C. to race against the Worthing Club next Wednesday. This was granted, subject to the "Fig Trees" becoming affiliated to the Union.

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Were it not for the N.C.U., it would be more expensive to take a cycle by rail than it now is, and still more concessions have got to be granted by Railway Companies ere the Union will bury the hatchet they have brandished for so many years in this quarter, whilst Union solicitors are continually defending cyclists where the latter are unjustly prosecuted. To the same body we owe much for universal lights after dark in many counties, less scattered hedge-clippings, dangerous sewer gratings, illegible signposts, and other petty annoyances once so common.

I suppose more nasty accidents come about through riding with the chain slack than through any other one thing. A few weeks back A. Chilton was out with some other "fliers," when he slipped his chain and made it a near thing whether he croppered or not. A few days later I espied another chum minus a portion of his nether garments through a spill occasioned by the same thing; and only last Wednesday the veteran Sam Clark flew the Bostel, luckily without an accident, owing to running his chain off. Moral: Keep your chain adjusted.

The Tarring Club have added another attraction to their runs. This is a gramophone, which an industrious member is good enough to carry in a trailer hitched on behind his machine, so there is no lack of harmony when this enterprising Club run out.

The Worthing Excelsior men are made of sterner stuff, and believe in travelling a bit further, and perhaps a bit faster, relying upon finding someone at the other end to supply their music. They were once again in fairly strong force on their Steyning run. Captain Young tells me they have maintained an average attendance of ten during the runs this season so far, which is a distinct improvement on the last few years.

Next Wednesday, of course, the Club will be in force at the Park, to see their Evening Meeting through, and I should like to see the Tarring Club abandon their run to Shoreham in favour of the same project. In any event their Secretary informs me they have a rule to the effect that any member competing in a cycling event is credited with having attended the Club's run for that night, so doubtless many will take advantage and try their speed or skill at the Park.

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