

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.

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CYCLING.

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THE recent spell of fine weather has brought about considerable activity on the part of the speedy roadmen, no less than three Excelsiorites having recently secured the coveted medal. A magnificent performance was done by W. Stephenson, who left the Railway Bridge at half-past six, and rode at an even, steady pace through Horsham and Crawley to Woodhatch, reaching there at 8.27.

Returning to Offington in another two hours, he then set out for Fareham, still going very strong. Six hours after the start he had ridden upwards of a hundred and two miles, and was still fresh.

Stopping at Fareham fifteen minutes for a brief but well-earned meal, he then tackled the journey back to Offington. It is nearly forty miles, and Stephenson was hindered by the wind; but two hours and a half sufficed for the untiring rider.

He then receded off the ride to Southwater and back in another two hours, finishing with a fine burst of speed over the last five miles, and checking at Broadwater at 5.20.

Stephenson thus rode a hundred and seventy-one miles in ten hours and fifty minutes—a ride which qualifies him for the Excelsior Club's gold medal, and proves him to be one of the finest stayers in the Club, or, for that matter, the county.

He has never attempted long distance work on the road before, but he travelled in fine style, and quite surprised "the boys" with his pluck and judgment.

There is little doubt that, with proper

arrangements and good conditions, he would worry the South Roads record of a hundred and ninety-five miles in twelve hours.

T. A. Durant also went for the twelve hours medal, starting at 6.10. Riding a good seventeen miles an hour, he reached Woodhatch at 8.12, and was back at Offington by 10.26.

Still keeping well up to his scheduled time, he rode through Arundel, Chichester, and Gosham, to Fareham, reaching there at 12.50.

After turning for home he had the misfortune to puncture twice in succession, which cost him a delay of twenty-five minutes, and prevented his reaching Offington the second time till 4.10.

He had still two hours in which to ride the bit to Southwater and back, but decided not to risk it, as a puncture might deprive him of any medal whatever.

So he "toured" up to Ashington and back to Broadwater, thereby qualifying for the gold-centre medal, having ridden a hundred and fifty-six miles in eleven hours and twenty-five minutes.

Like Stephenson, Durant covered his first hundred miles well inside the standard he would have to beat for the "century" gold medal.

The other medalist, W. R. Paine, won his honours on the hundred miles ride. Leaving the Railway Bridge at 7.15, he did Horsham inside an hour, and was at Woodhatch by 9.3.

A delay at Crawley on the return did not prevent him from getting back in less than another couple of hours.

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Stopping a minute at Offington, he then made for Westhampnett, having a very bad puncture on the way. After a ten minutes' delay he changed on to a roadster machine and continued, reaching the turning point at 12.5.

Finding he was well inside the standard of six hours and twenty minutes, Bert came along comfortably at sixteen to the hour, and finished at Broadwater six hours and a minute after the start, thus winning a special gold medal for his splendid ride.

On the same day J. Dudley Daymond, of the Anerley B.C., essayed to beat the present record of a hundred and ninety-five miles in twelve hours.

Elaborate arrangements were made for feeding, spare machines, and even opening level-crossing gates; whilst Daymond was followed by a motor-car in which a cyclist was mending the punctured tyres of the spare machines as the car went along.

Unfortunately Daymond, who rode very light tyres, punctured frequently, and had to

continually change mounts; and though when he left Offington Corner the second time he had four hours in which to ride the remaining sixty-two miles, he eventually finished up with a hundred and ninety-two miles only, missing the record by three miles.

Speaking of road rides reminds me that Kemp, of the Littlehampton Club, has just beaten the standard time of three hours for the fifty-mile ride from Littlehampton to Horsham and back.

The brothers Hales have just returned from a week's touring on their tandem round the Reading, Newbury, and Oxford district, after a thoroughly enjoyable time.

Next Wednesday the Five miles Sussex Championship will be run at Preston Park. It will be remembered the race was declared "off" at Eastbourne this year through the time limit being exceeded, and I hope to see "Bert" once again successful, the more especially as he won at Eastbourne after having done the lion's share of the pace-making.

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