

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.
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<p style="text-align: center;">CYCLING.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.</p> <p>WITH the odd few fine days we are now getting, cyclists seem as busy as they have at any time been throughout the season. The roads were quite busy last Sunday.</p> <p>Offen is not to have the Excelsior gold medal for that "century" ride of his which he did in 6 hrs. 17 mins.</p> <p>He admitted at a meeting of the Committee that, during a small portion of the ride, he was paced at his own request by another cyclist. He is allowed to go again if he cares to.</p> <p>In order to obviate any trouble in the future the Committee also requested Stephenson to go over the course again, though no one entertained the faintest shadow of suspicion as to the fairness of his ride.</p> <p>Thorough sportsman that he is, he took the first opportunity of again proving his ability to win the medal, though during his all-day performance he covered a distance equal to the "century" course in less than six hours.</p> <p>Started by W. Duffield at 9.5, Stephenson left the Railway Bridge and set off so fast that he also "left" three of his followers in the first half-dozen miles.</p> <p>Riding grandly, he romped through Horsham and on to Crawley, by which time the last of his shadowers had dropped off. Before this he had struck mud, and the going had become pretty heavy.</p> <p>Woodhatch was reached just after two hours from the start, and the return journey commenced at once.</p> <p>At Horsham he had covered fifty miles in</p>	<p>At Horsham he had covered fifty miles in three hours, just after which he stopped a minute or two to absorb some egg and tea, then rode to Offington within another hour.</p> <p>Here he had thirty-three miles more to ride, with two and three-quarter hours to do it in.</p> <p>Having previously shown his ability to do fast hundreds, he was now content to "tour" down to Westhampnett and back, as he had no object beyond beating the standard 6.50.</p> <p>So he took eleven minutes over the hour to get to the Coach and Horses, where he seated himself comfortably on the stairs, with big drinks and biscuits, and refused to budge till all had disappeared!</p> <p>And he didn't worry himself on the way back either! One cyclist who saw him coming along, with Durant acting as follower, insists that he was having a nap in the saddle!</p> <p>At every bit of a pimple his follower—who says he is now out of training—made Stephenson walk.</p> <p>"Billy" is very popular with the boys, and a crowd were waiting along the road for his return. They brought the information that near Offington Lodge was a policeman with a stop-watch.</p> <p>Durant carefully marshalled them behind the rider, and a tortoise race began at the top of Offington Hill, and was kept up right along the measured quarter to the finishing post.</p> <p>That particular constable—who is a good</p>	<p>That particular constable—who is a good sportsman himself—wondered what was up as a crowd came by him doing a full three miles and a half to the hour, Billy heading the procession of smiling faces!</p> <p>The journey back from Westhampnett occupied an hour and twenty-nine minutes, which can hardly be said to be over the legal limit.</p> <p>Stephenson checked in for the gold medal with six minutes to spare, after a nice comfortable morning out.</p> <p>I am pleased to note that Bert Paine has replied to the complaint, made by some Brighton cyclists, that he ran wide in the Five Miles' Championship, thereby depriving Valler of his chance of winning.</p> <p>Bert rightly asks when Valler or, indeed, any of the other riders ever show their ability to pass him, and attributes their</p> <p>complaints to the "boy partisans of disappointed competitors."</p> <p>It certainly is a significant fact that no one thought it worth while to lodge a formal protest with the officials. Possibly this was because Bert's wheel had left its mark right in the middle of the track—proof positive that there was plenty of room for Valler—whom Bert had paced nearly all the way—to get by if he could.</p> <p>But he lacked the speed, and the supporters of the defeated one grumbled.</p> <p>F. J. Foulger, of Brighton, a one-time speed-merchant, recalls the famous old days—his days, of course—and laments the fact that there is no sport now.</p> <p>So far as Brighton is concerned I think he is right.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">DICK TURPIN.</p>
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¹ Goodness! Another Gazette type-setting error! Is that two so far in 1902?