

THE WHEELING WORLD

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Turpin: 4.10.1905, P2C5

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A Weekly Survey.

DICK TURPIN'S RANDOM RECORDS.

Attempting a Record.

THOUGH many honours have befallen the Excelsior Club, there has ever been one which has been denied the illustrious body. Though it has produced many a good rider, can point to Bert Paine, who won County Championships innumerable, and Sam Clark, who is still the Veteran County Champion, and has put teams in the field which have defeated neighbouring Clubs' teams, yet never has a first-class Excelsiorite broken a road record.

Edgar Henson holds Chichester and Worthing Club records, and Bert Paine holds a Brighton Club record; but I refer, of course, to records open to attack by all comers, and made under the auspices of the recognised Road Records Associations.

Stephenson and Standing, and a large number of Club-mates and friends, hoped last week to remedy the omission, as the pair were making an attack on the twelve hours' tandem record on Southern roads, to beat which they had to ride the long journey of two hundred and two miles.

So towards the end of last week they hid themselves to Riddlesdowne, near Redhill, where speedmen are wont to congregate, and after a night's rest turned out and were started by an official in the nippy air at six o'clock in the morning.

A puncture lost valuable time in the first thirty miles, but a fine speed was maintained on the roads round Crawley, and by dint of hard work the precious minutes were regained.

Later, however, the brake gave a lot of

trouble, and finally it had to be removed altogether when the pair reached Offington Corner, at which place they had dropped about twenty five minutes outside their schedule. A stiff breeze pulled them about on the ride down to Farham, but they were well looked after by Harry Greenfield, who, on his motor bicycle, was a "guardian angel," and got food ready on ahead of them.

Brightening Prospects.

Flint Brothers, of Shoreham, and Worley and friend, from Portsmouth, followed on spare tandems; whilst Edgar Henson and others accompanied them also. But all the helpers in the world would fail to make it easier to ride against a strong wind.

However, after checking at Fareham things brightened up rapidly. The speed on the return journey went up in surprising fashion, and the chance of record looked brighter at almost every mile. Then again more time was lost through lack of food when Offington Corner was reached.

But Stephenson and Standing were not easily daunted, and they kept slogging on their way through Horsham and Crawley, getting back the precious minutes one by one.

But fortune did not smile on their efforts, and at the end of the twelve hours it was found they had ridden a hundred and ninety-seven miles, thus missing honours by the narrow margin of five miles; an extra fifteen minutes sufficed for them to ride this bit, so it is evident they were travelling well at the finish.

The ride is indeed a highly creditable per-

formance, and proves Stephenson and Standing to be a combination of a very speedy nature. Stephenson had, of course, already proved his speed by winning a couple of Excelsior gold medals on the hundred miles course and another for a twelve hours' ride. His pal, Standing, is new to the game, but it is clear we may expect to hear a lot more of him yet. It is not likely the pair will again attempt the record this year, though it is, I think, pretty certain that, with luck and the experience gained in this ride, they would put up new figures.

Sam Clark made fifty, not out, last Saturday. Tremble not, Fry and Abel! Our Veteraan will not wrest from you the laurels of the cricket field. It was fifty miles not out of the saddle, for Sam rode up to the Crystal Palace without a dismount.

By-the-bye, Sam is not intending to do as I feared he might in the event of a team race to London and back between the various Wards of the borough. It will be remembered I was anticipating Tarring would be represented by Sam Clark and Edgar Henson, and their record-breaking friends, Olley and Drake.

The Veteran's Visions.

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But in a prophetic dream Sam saw visions. The men were about to start for their respective positions when a dark, mysterious stranger, enshrouded in a black cloak and wearing a wide-brimmed soft hat low over his eyes, stole into the night. Sam followed—in the dream, of course.

The enshrouded one stealthily went from machine to machine, and Sam, with bated breath, helplessly watched him transfer the food of the Tarring men from one basket to another! Then the race started.

Horror of horrors! Instead of finding Blackberry's Cocoa in his handlebar basket, Sam discovered soda water and prunes, which is the diet Drake used on his Laud's End to London record. Drake had got Olley's mysterious vegetarian mixtures, and Olley had had to smoke Henson's perpetual cigarettes, leaving Edgar to fatten on the famous cocoa with which Sam embrocates his inner man.

All the Terringian Terrors were on the point

of death when Sam woke up, thus saving four valuable lives. But the dream has warned the Veteran.

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ⁱ Farlham? A rare Gazette typo – most likely Fareham