

THE WHEELING WORLD

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A Weekly Survey.

DICK TURPIN'S CYCLING GOSSIP.

In The Early Morn.

RE the uncertain glimmer in the eastern sky had broadened into light the other day a little group of wheelers might have been seen on the Railway Bridge. They were speedmen; and speedmen are accustomed to rising in the "wee sma' hours," breakfasting by lamplight, and setting out on a long ride whilst yet the chanticleer of the morn has scarce cleared his throat with a preliminary "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

The central figure of the little group of speedmen was Mungeam, intent on riding a hundred and seventy miles in twelve hours, and thereby winning an Excelsior Club gold medal.

At 5.25 Captain Duffield said "Go!" He went; Henson following on a spare machine, and a good steady pace took him through Horsham and Crawley to Woodhatch in two hours and five minutes, another similar space of time serving for the journey back, despite a puncture.

At Offington Mungeam's friend, Baggett, followed him as he pedalled westward through Arundel, Chichester, Emsworth, Havant, and Cosham to Farsham, the western end of the course.

At this point Mungeam had ridden one hundred and three miles in six hours and fifty minutes, still going well.

Hastily taking light food, he set about the return journey to Offington, where the score read a hundred and thirty-nine miles in nine hours and a half. Now Mungeam tackled the final stretch, to Southwater near Horsham, and back. This thirty-one miles, in spite of another puncture and a bit of a breeze, was completed in two hours and a quarter, Mungeam finishing his one hundred and seventy miles at Broadwater with fifteen minutes in hand.

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"Jack" is now doubly hall-marked as a long-distance speedman, having won the hundred miles gold medal last year. Bravo! Mungeam.

"Diddler's" Lonesome Journey.

A couple of hours after Mungeam had started on his ride the Club Captain sent off another aspirant for speed honours, Fred Jay, alias "Diddler," to wit. Never having ridden more than forty miles in a day, Jay had selected the hundred miles ride in preference to the longer journey.

And all alone he set off, riding in determined style. The thirty-three miles to Westhampton and back occupied a bare two hours, which was "not bad for a little 'un." His fifth mile provided him with a puncture, so, still alone, he changed the tyre near Horsham and continued the game.

Beyond Crawley he had difficulty in finding the way, but eventually checked at Woodhatch all right; then he made tracks for home, riding the thirty-four miles in two hours and six minutes.

Jay's time for the hundred miles was six hours and forty-three minutes, which qualifies him for the gold-centre medal, and proves him to be as full of pluck as he is of rashness.

Fancy! a hundred miles ride without training, or even a chum to get food ready.

But I fear we all are sometimes rash. I confess I was the other day. I took C. S. Ashford, of the Excelsior Club, to see Bury Hill. He had heard a great deal, but had seen nothing of this one-mile climb which raises the travelling three hundred and fifty feet.

Ashford, of course, must attempt to ride it, he being as rash as the rest of us; and, working manfully, he succeeded in his task. But I was goat enough to follow on! And though I did manage to labour up all right, some distance behind my companion, I got no satisfaction. For it shocked me to think that at my time of life I knew no better.

An Incident at the Crocodile.

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At Offington Corner a day or two ago I saw a painful accident occur in a very simple way, and, though bad, the consequence might easily have been far worse. A couple of local wheelmen came down the Findon-road and turned to their right up the Crocodile, or, as the Ordnance map hath it, Crookhurst Dell.

The second rider, a man of about fifty, not riding fast, ran wide and fouled a triangular piece of grass bank which divides the road.

Pitching heavily over the handlebar, he fell with an awful thud, and was bruised, shaken, and cut about. Examination revealed that his finger was broken, so after being bathed and bandaged by Mr. Jesse Farncombe and other wheelmen, with the assistance of the kind people at Offington Lodge, the poor fellow was driven to the Hospital, still in a somewhat dazed condition.

The two triangular grass banks at Offington Corner have frequently proved a nuisance; I should like to see the smaller one removed and the other reduced in size. Under present-day traffic conditions the space they occupy is too precious.

The sad accident in Brighton-road last Sunday, dealt with elsewhere in the GAZETTE, is one which arouses the deep sympathy of all cyclists.

It again goes to show the need of having one's machine under absolutely perfect control. This and the exercise of reasonable caution at all times should be a habit with all of us; it is a duty we owe to ourselves and to other users of the road. Every day this duty becomes more imperative, and it is one which would avoid practically all the terrible accidents we hear of.

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