

3rd London to Brighton Walk 8th Oct 1921

This race was held on the 8th October, and for the first time in the history of the present series was won by a foreigner, an Italian named Donato Pavesi. Pavesi had come over specially to compete, as he had been doing great things in his native country, where road racing is now all the rage, but his performance at Stamford Bridge in the A.A.A. 7 Miles Championship did not immediately stamp him as a winner. To my mind his arm and shoulder action was too laboured for a jo-mile course, but I was wrong. He kept his form remarkably well, seemingly trained to the minute, and finished an easy winner in 8.37.27 $\frac{2}{5}$, just 27m. 54s. in front of Atkinson.

The time is nothing wonderful, having been beaten on at least seven different occasions since 1906, but Pavesi did all that was asked of him, and had he been pressed, might have knocked off a bit. It was most unfortunate that Ross cracked just by Lowfield Heath—rather a fatal spot for him. I heard it said that he had sprung a muscle in his thigh when winning at Stamford Bridge a week before. Very hard luck, this, for a stern finish between him and the Italian would have been well worth seeing. But if Harold will insist on becoming the 7-mile champion one week and having another shot at Brighton the next, well—records or muscles or something are bound to go. Now for the race itself. Sixty-two lined up, or tried to, just after Big Ben struck 7, and got off in a heavy mist that promised trouble later on. Ross, Pavesi and Atkinson at once forged ahead, with Allen, Miles, Hawker and Parslow in close attendance, but at Streatham Hill Pavesi had established a slight lead, which he steadily increased, though after passing Redhill Ross gained considerably. By this time it was getting very hot, more like June than October, and several of the competitors felt it severely. Actually Pavesi, from the sunny South, grumbled, and expressed a wish that it would rain, and some of the improvised sun hats were a sight. The George at Crawley was, as usual, the chief C.C.S., Ross, Parslow and a good few others retiring at or just before this point. The leader went through in great style in 4.40.12, followed by Allen, Atkinson, and Mann. The latter, making his first attempt, was walking very well just about here, but apparently the heat and the long, trying rise to Handcross was too much for him, for he retired before Bolney. The experience will be valuable to him and I shall expect to see him do something good next year.

At Bolney Pavesi was nearly 23 minutes ahead of Atkinson, the police walker, with Allen and Hubbard following at intervals of about five minutes, and bar accidents it was obvious he would not be caught. As a matter of fact he put on a fine spurt for the last three miles, and finished some two miles ahead of Atkinson, who had a regular dust up with Allen by Preston Park, for second place. Hubbard, who walked a good steady race with considerable judgment, finished fourth in 9.23.28 $\frac{3}{5}$, thus securing the Dithy Cup for the second time in his career, and incidentally annexing the prize for the first unplaced veteran. Hubbard was the second man to win the Dithy, his time in 1907 being 8.51.0. Some walker, my masters, to win as a veteran the trophy he secured 14 years ago when in his early thirties, taking only a little over half an hour longer to do it. Several other members, including Holley and Summerfield, did well for a first attempt. Altogether 35 finished the journey inside 12 hours, and when the various results were worked out it was found that Hawker, second in the Police walk, took the Services prize, F. M. Stone the handicap, and the Belgrave the team race, with 12 points as against the Southgates' 14. The Belgrave are hot stuff in a long distance team race, as witness their record this year.

To the accompaniment of the usual speechifying, the prizes were presented by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. Preston in the Royal York Hotel, our new Brighton quarters, and so ended a memorable race. The Victory Cup has gone to the Riviera for the winter, but she will be back here next year, and we must try to induce her to stay. She is a fickle lady who works her suitors hard, but I fancy we have one or two full-blooded English lads who can woo her back again. The police arrangements at the finish were the best I remember, though Collden and Ashford say—but that's quite another story, and I cannot tell it. Ask Harry. TORVA.

Results:

Times and Positions of S.W.C. Men.

- 4. A. Hubbard 9.23.28 3/5
- 14. F. T. Summerfield 10.4.47 4/5
- 18. H. Holley 10.22.31 2/5
- 21. L. Franklin 10.41.31
- 22. E. Lyons 10.50.47
- 23. R. C. Ashendon 10.51.38 2/5
- 30. H. Sorrell 11.19-37 2/5

Also walked—H. B. Churchill, G. W. Compton, H. W. B. Daffern, F. J. Mann, E. Parslow and E. B. Wright