

13th London to Brighton Walk 7th Sep 1931

STANDARDS MADE TO LOOK CHEAP.

In every respect but the weather the thirteenth annual contest along the famous road for the Victory Cup was the greatest of all the Club's promotions of this nature. Even the weather, wet all the way though it was, did not damp the ardour of the walkers; nor, apparently, did it affect their performances, which were a great advance on anything we have previously seen. True, Green did not break his own wonderful record (8.2.55), but he was less than T, minutes behind it and accomplished a time which beat Ross's old figure by 53 minutes. Then Lloyd-Johnson, walking his first "50," showed us a time that has only been excelled by three men, to wit, Ross, Baker and Green.

It was in the general level of the performances that the race was so surprising. Thirteen men beat 9 hours. Forty-two beat 9.30, which is the present first-class standard. Sixty-one had arrived before the tenth hour was over. Seventy-eight were within the second-class standard time of 10.30. A grand total of 99 accomplished the 52 miles journey within the 12 hours, thereby gaining the certificate which is so proudly cherished by every long-distance walker who has, by arduous training and courageous endeavour, fitted himself to accomplish that task.

To return to the beginning. On the first stroke of seven 117 walkers started, followed by Whitlock (two minutes late), and Laurie (about 15 minutes late), making the total of starters 119 in all—which is the greatest number we have yet had. -For the first few miles nothing of especial note happened, excepting that Green, Ludlow, Johnson, Gum, H. Taylor, Holt, and Heaney all worked up to the head of the fast-moving procession, and heedless of the injunction to avoid "bunching," passed South Croydon together in 1h. 38m. 28s. At Redhill Green, Johnson and Heaney were still together in 3h. 10m., and having dropped Heaney, Green and Johnson passed Crawley together in 4h. 36m 55s., which is 7 minutes, 38 seconds slower than Green's time last year. Up to this point Green had not looked like doing anything exceptional, and had at times even looked a little tired or listless for him; but he roused himself at Crawley and started to force the pace to such a tune that at Hand-cross (34 miles) he was 1.5 minutes ahead of his only real danger, and at Bolney (38 miles) 7.5 minutes ahead. He increased his lead and his pace as he went on, and it next became a question whether he would not, after all, beat his own figure of last year. Although he failed to do this, he failed magnificently, having walked the section from Crawley to Brighton (approximately 22.625 miles) in 3 hours 28 minutes 48 seconds, which is 4 minutes 50 seconds faster than in 1930 when he set up the record for the full journey.

Green is veritably a marvel amongst walkers and even amongst the (greatest of the past there was none greater than he.

THE TEAM RACE.

This was a hard-fought struggle. Thirteen clubs started teams and the leading four—Derby, Birmingham, Belgrave and ourselves—had a battle royal right along the road. Birmingham gave a beautiful display of team-packing and, with their scoring four ultimately counting 7, 8, 9 and 11 in the placings, gaining a handsome victory over our own club by 16 points

OTHER FEATURES.

It is impossible for the writer to say much about the organisation of the race, excepting to thank helpers, as his readers know too well that he is in fact the Race Hon. Sec., but it may be permissible to observe that everything went "according to plan," excepting the weather, and that almost every official faithfully performed the duties allotted to him. The magnificent help given at the Brighton end to the arriving competitors and attendants, is referred to elsewhere, but the efficient and rapid staff-work of the untiring sub-committee who toiled ceaselessly until the stroke of seven p.m., in order to produce full results and completed certificates for all finishers within the exact minute that the last competitor finished, is not known to many, and is most of all appreciated by the Race Hon. Sec. himself.—CLODHOPPER.

THE BRIGHTON FROM A CLUB POINT OF VIEW.

Not for many a long day have we finished two men inside 8.45—yet, in spite of that, we failed to retain the Edward Knott Memorial Shield awarded to the winning team.

Certainly the opposition was very strong—a record team entry and of the highest possible class. Even so, there were many among us who considered our lads "good enough," and so thoughtful a student as the Dithy Cup holder for the past two years gave it as his opinion that "Surrey" could defeat all comers.

It was distinctly unfortunate for us, however, that Freddie Bennett was quite clearly a little "off-colour" before the start, and that Frank Scott should be rather worried over the somewhat serious illness of his mother. (We sincerely hope she is now well on the way to recovery). These facts are not offered in any way as excuses for the team's failure, but it must be remembered that, no matter how carefully a walker has trained, or how good his physical condition on the day, other circumstances play a big part in his ultimate performance.

Just running through the performances of Surrey men Etherington walked with quite unsuspected judgment, keeping his head, and refusing to vary his pace, after an initial burst under the influence of a fellow-countryman. His schedule times and his actual clockings are well worth seeing. In many instances he was "dead on"; his greatest margin, one way or the other, about two minutes. Congratulations to a very worthy Dithy Cup holder.

The writer believes that Hammond himself considered Etherington the most likely man to deprive him of the Dithy, which he had held for two years. The fight "Still Tongue"—as we knew him in Holland—made to retain the trophy, is best illustrated by his time, the fastest he has yet accomplished. Hammond and Etherington were close up to each other for mile after mile. When Etherington finally decided to pass his Cub mate, Hammond made a gallant effort to overhaul him, twice going right, up to him, only to lose ground again. But both finished "full of going."

Smallbone is undoubtedly a discovery. Under Etherington's guidance he had trained splendidly, and his one concern was that he might justify his place in the team. He did so so well as to be our third scoring man. He deserved to beat nine hours; that he will do so many times over this classic course is quite obvious. When Smallbone has modified his style a little, he will punish himself far less, and his fighting qualities will have full play. Scott collected a blister "as big as an egg"—to use his own words—just to add to his troubles. None the less, he smiled his way down the course over which he has only once failed to finish in under 9.30, in some ten or eleven attempts! He came with a finishing burst at Patcham to deprive Levy of fourth place. He didn't want to do it, but his attendant made him! It gave us a point or two.

Levy surprised us all. Always walking well, he really "got down to it" when told, a couple of miles from Crawley, that he was in the team. We always knew he had pluck; his Brighton performance shows that he has real ability for long-distance walking. The conditions were a little too much for him towards the end, otherwise he would undoubtedly have scored for us. Still, encouraged by a very fine performance in beating 9.30, we look to him to improve rapidly.

Freddie Bennett, having discussed the question of "packing" over a Guinness with the writer, said he felt better and would see it through! He was, of course, sadly disappointed, but we know well enough that these things will happen and that Freddie, like many before him, will "come again."

Our other finishers are all deserving of hearty congratulation. Wilmot, Prior, Shipman and Stratta all did very pleasing performances, while Doune "strolled" through without turning a hair—the youngest competitor in the race at that!

Special mention must be made of Coombes and Cousins. The former, doing his first Brighton, only just failed to beat first-class Standard. He seems to have been at pains to keep secret the fact that he intended to enter, knowing that steps would have been taken to dissuade him. When he had actually entered, it seemed a shame not to let him have a walk for his five shillings! At any rate, he appeared none the worse for the experience. That here we have another first-class long-distance walker of the future is beyond all doubt.

As to Cousins—fifty-nine years of age—putting up his best time in his last "Brighton"—for next year the age limit ban will be imposed upon him—well, can you beat it? The fact that he won the Centurion's handicap, held in conjunction with the race, was a fine performance. But his actual scratch time of 10.8.0 is beyond all praise. What a pity he was unable to join up with the Club many years ago, for, as a young man, he used to walk to Brighton for the pure joy of doing it, and "get there" in under nine hours too ! Here's to you, Cousins !

Finally, the Club renews its congratulations already extended to the Birmingham Walking Club. Theirs was a great show, and we can never hope to be beaten by a more sporting body. Their principles are very largely the same as ours, as to them the team event is the thing that really matters. They are very proud of having beaten us, and prowl, also, to share with us the distinction of finishing their "declared" team of eight. Next year they are out to rob us of the Nijmegen Shield. Well, they can try—as we shall try to win back the Edward Knott Shield!

ORGANISATION AT BRIGHTON.

A big debt of gratitude is due from the Club and also from every competitor who reached the finishing post, for the magnificent co-operation of the Brighton Police, the Sussex Walking and Athletic Club, and the other good sportsmen who facilitated the passage of the finishing competitors to the Baths. Although the weather was vile, a special service of private cars was maintained between Aquarium and Baths from 3.0 p.m. until 7.0, and no competitor had to wait a minute for a lift, even at the busiest time. This invaluable service was carried out by Alderman Kingston, J.P., Councillor E. E. Lyons, Messrs. C. J. Siebert, I. R. Peock, W. Travers and W. Pratt, with Mr. Tom Butcher in charge, and our Stroll Hon. Sec. as C. in C. All but Simmonds were mobilised by our member, J. C. Johnson.

On behalf of the attendants we are grateful to the Brighton Conservative Institute, which, by kind permission of the Secretary, Major Neilson, placed itself at the disposal of the Surrey Walking Club and the Fellowship of Brighton Road Walkers for the afternoon and evening. At that place, Mr. Horace Virgo, assisted by another detachment of Sussex W. & A.C. members, worked hard for about six hours on end making wet and weary attendants comfortable.

Never before has the comfort and welfare of competitors and attendants alike received such ample consideration, and it is great to know that the Club has the promise of similar interest and assistance on all future occasions.

This is what "Johnnie" writes :—"My chaps have got it into their heads that it is the (Sussex) Club's annual duty to do everything it can to help the weary walkers and saturated attendants. They want you to feel that we here are greedy for work that doesn't show."

No words of mine can adequately express how cheering such a message is to the RACE HON. SECRETARY.

TIDWORTH PENNING'S CAMP,
TIDWORTH, HANTS.

14/9/31

DEAR RHODES,

Will you please convey to all members of the Surrey Walking Club the great appreciation of all members of the Battalion team for the very warm welcome we were given on Saturday. It has been my good fortune to know your Club for some years, and I am sure that the rest of my team will never forget the spirit of good fellowship which is unique among all who have slogged along the Brighton Road.

I hope that other Services teams will follow our lead and that you will get record entries in the future. Yours very sincerely,

F. C. HORNSBY-SMITH.

It is the first occasion on which a military unit has furnished a team to compete as such

in the "Brighton," and the accomplishment of all finishing is not only creditable to the men themselves, but should certainly act as a spur to other regiments.—ED.

Results:

Position	Initial	Initial	Surname	Club	Hour	Min	Sec
1	T.	W.	Green	Belgrave H.	8	5	43
2	T.		Lloyd-Johnson	Leicester W.C.	8	10	18
3	J.	H.	Ludlow	Derby W.C.	8	24	8
4	D.		Gum	Essex Beagles	8	24	20
5	H.	H.	Whitlock	Metropolitan W.C.	8	34	37
6	H.		Taylor	Derby W.C.	8	35	33
7	H.	L.	Etherington	Surrey W.C.	8	38	43
8	F.	A.	Hammond	Surrey W.C.	8	43	5
9	J.		Medlicott	Birmingham W.C.	8	51	59
10	F.		Smith	Birmingham W.C.	8	52	28
11	R.	A.	Sills	Birmingham W.C.	8	56	57
12	F.	D.	Marson	Yorkshire W.C.	8	58	3
13	G.	E.	Nash	Birmingham W.C.	9	59	17
14	H.		Kirkbright	Yorkshire W.C.	9	0	33
15	R.	C.	Hillier	Belgrave H.	9	1	14
16	C.	T.	Smallbone	Surrey W.C.	9	3	9
17	H.	G.	Bassett	Surrey A.C.	9	6	17
18	E.		Marsh	Yorkshire W.C.	9	7	59
19	A.	V.	Williams	Ashcombe A.C.	9	8	10
20	A.	H.	Field	Belgrave H.	9	10	23
21	W.	H.	Smith	Birmingham W.C.	9	12	45
22	T.	A.	Snell	Surrey A.C.	9	13	46
23	F.	C.	Hornsby-Smilh	2nd Bn. S. Wales Borderers	9	13	51
24	T.	C.	Reynolds	Surrey A.C.	9	15	11
25	C.		Hill	Birmingham W.C.	9	16	32
26	E.	V.	Goff	Ashcombe A.C.	9	16	54
27	A.	W.	Belliss	L.C.C.T.	9	17	11
28	F.	R.	Scott	Surrey W.C.	9	20	34
29	G.		Dodkins	Cambridge H.	9	21	30
30	A.	F.	Stoyell	Surrey A.C.	9	21	44
31	S.		Smith	Birmingham W.C.	9	22	56
32	J.		Dunlop-Levy	Surrey W.C.	9	24	23
33	J.	E.	Ingham	London Vidarians	9	24	33
34	F.	A.	Bennett	Surrey W.C.	9	25	42
35	H.	W.	Shepherd	Polytechnic H.	9	25	59
36	W.	F.	Ashwell	Surrey A.C.	9	26	55
37	C.		Kirkland	Derby W.C.	9	28	4
38	F.	G.	Fullalove	Essex Beagles	9	28	15
39	A.	G.	White	Belgrave H.	9	28	19
40	W.	J.	Harris	L.C.C.T.	9	28	46

41	D.		Eggington	Birmingham W.C.	9	28	58
42	J.	C.	Johnson	Sussex W.C.	9	29	22
43	B.		Bacigalupo	Yorkshire W.C.	9	33	20
44	F.	L.	Young	Derby W.C.	9	36	22
45	A.	D.	McSweeney	Highgate H.	9	37	12
46	T.	A.	Coombes	Surrey W.C.	9	38	38
47	E.	C.	Worth	Sussex W.C.	9	39	10
48	G.	L.	Ore	London Vidarians	9	42	18
49	E.	M.	Shipman	Surrey W.C.	9	43	17
50	J.		Prior	Surrey W.C.	9	43	18
51	E.	H.	Winter	Polytechnic H.	9	44	19
52	A.	E.	Harris	L.C.C.T.	9	46	7
53	P.		Khlopin	Belgrave H.	9	49	41
54	G.	W.	Head	London Vidarians	9	50	55
55	F.		Trusler	Y Div. Met. Police	9	53	14
56	F.		Wilmot	Surrey W.C.	9	53	29
57	C.	W.	Stracey	Metrogas A.S.A.	9	54	0
58	R.		Crook	Ashcombe A.C.	9	54	12
59	T.	E.	Arnold	Birmingham W.C.	9	56	48
60	J.		Allen	Sussex W.C.	9	56	48
61	B.	B.	Wood	Birmingham W.C.	9	57	34
62	J.		Mills	Sussex W.C.	10	3	8
63	C.	H.	Hill	L.C.C.T.	10	2	39
64	A.	T.	Hinton	Birmingham W.C.	10	4	4
64	E.	L.	Hannant	Downham H.	10	4	4
66	A.	E.	Cousins	Surrey W.C.	10	8	1
67	J.	N.	Thomas	Belgrave H.	10	9	2
68	E.	S.	Hills	Dowsham H.	10	1 1	11
69	R.		Burgess	Y Div, Met. Police	10	12	48
70	P.		Langmead	Polytechnic H.	10	13	23
71	G.		Stratta	Surrey W.C.	10	H	13
72	E.	G.	Hitchings	2/Bn. S.Wales Bord.	10	16	33
73	A.		Martin	Belgrave H.	10	17	20
74	G.	H.	Laurie	Belgrave H.	10	17	25
75	T.	W.	Hart-Wilden	Wdfrd. Gn. A.C.	10	20	6
76	F.		Boyer	Essex Beagles	10	21	24
77	C.		Woodward	2/Bn. S.Wales Bord.	10	28	15
78	C.	A.	Wattam	Belgrave H.	10	29	17
79	A.			Ashcombe A.C.	10	33	19
80		J.	Sweeney	Birmingham W.C.	10	34	7
81	S.	J.	Pitt	Surrey A.C.	10	36	22
82	w.	R.	Bruce	2/Bn. S.Wales Bord.	10	36	34
83	G.		Wood	L.C.C.T.	10	38	21
84	G.	C.	Cornish	2/Bn. S. Wales Bord.	10	39	45
85	G.	A.	Harlow	Unattached	10	40	1

86	W.		Griffiths	2/Bn. S.Wales Bord.	10	54	1
87	L.	H.	Wilkins	Surrey A.C.	10	55	26
88	A.	E.	Doune	Surrey W.C.	11	6	42
89	T.	H.	Tugwell	Brighton & Co. H.	11	7	42
90	A.	E.	Aldridge	Birmingham W.C.	11	7	47
91	J	A.	Holland	Essex Beagles	11	13	42
92	F.		Kirkland	Derby W.C.	11	13	42
93	P.		Highgate	Unattached	11	15	33
94	R.		Toon	L.C.C.T.	11	16	1
95	H.		Sorrell	Unattached	11	16	3
96	S.	T.	Ball	Belgrave H.	11	18	6
97	M.	J.	Morgan	Metrogas A.S.A.	11	24	4
98	F.		Driver	Leicester W.C.	11	38	29
99	T.	A.	Drake	Unattached	11	54	40

	Team Position Club	Points
1	Birmingham W.C.	35
2	Surrey W.C.	51
3	Belgrave Harriers	67
4	Yorkshire W.C.	77
5	Derby W.C.	79
6	Surrey A.C.	84
7	Ashcombe A.C.	145
8	Essex Beagles	153.5
9	L.C.C. Tramways	156
10	Sussex W.C.	178
11	2nd Bn. S. Wales Borderers	185