

17th London to Brighton Walk 7th Sep 1935

London to Brighton Walk By H. W. Keen.

The Brighton road, famed in history of the King's highways for its athletic achievements, once again formed the scene of another remarkable performance, on the occasion of the Club's seventeenth annual Victory Cup race of 1935, when H. H. Whitlock, Metropolitan W.C., gained his second success in record time. It was an event that 'had many pleasing features, not only to the average student of road or track walking, but also to those who are either past or present participants of the sport.

In my effort to chronicle its features I must first carry the minds of our readers back to the 1930 race which formed the occasion of T. W. Green's second victory, and his record time of 8h. 2m. 55s. It was in the early stages of that race that the prospect of eight hours; being beaten became foremost in the minds of those who followed the race, and it will be remembered how it terminated amidst wind and rain, that robbed that wonderful walker of the chief object that he set out to accomplish. Both in 1932, when J. H. Ludlow, Derby W.C., put up a further record of 8h. 1m. 6s., and the year following, when Green again won, and his time was but only thirteen seconds slower, that honour was still deferred.

At last it has become an accomplished fact by Whitlock reaching the old finishing point in front of the Brighton Aquarium in 7h. 53m. 5s.; and the new position on 'Brighton front forty-five seconds later, thus beating the previous best by eight minutes.

These wonderful figures now give rise to the question on a subject that prevailing circumstances does not permit a satisfactory answer, viz., What is the present length of the course? For several years continuous alterations have been going on to the road from Bolney to Dale Hill, in such a way that does not permit any new measurements being taken. The present chart shows fifty-two miles, and in several parts a new road has been cut, to take off bends, thus considerably shortening the distance. That is how I view the situation, but I am mystified by the knowledge that early in the year a friend of mine went to the trouble of obtaining a car, fitted with a specially prepared distance register, and their run to Brighton showed fifty-two miles. Not being satisfied, they did a return run, and again it registered the same distance !

My reason in making this statement is because I desire to further outline the full merit of Whitlock's record. Jack Butler's eight hours' record, which he accomplished on the old track at Putney, as far back as 1905, was fifty miles 1,190 yards, yet Whitlock covers over fifty one miles—seven minutes inside that duration; and in conjunction it must be obvious that he also improves on Butler's fifty miles' record of 7h. 52m. 27s.

It has been my pleasure to follow many sporting events on the Brighton road, yet I cannot remember a more suitable day than that which favoured the contestants of this fixture. Throughout the temperature was always favourable, and the walkers had a warm following breeze, and the roads throughout (were the best for many years. With such ideal conditions-, not only Whitlock but several others showed further improvement on their previous best, and, in addition, several newcomers showed promising form on their first attempt. In all, it was a great incentive to the sport, a great improvement on the returns of the 1934 race, that led me to remark at the time, " We have now struck a bad patch and fresh blood is required."

V. W. G. Stone, 'Polytechnic Harriers, the R.W.A. junior champion, who by his success in the Essex long distance championship, led him to make his first attempt on the Brighton road, made the pace for the first nine miles, but by the time Croydon was reached Whitlock had drawn level, and their time of 93m. 15s. compared favourably with Green's. They continued to walk in close company till they reached The Star, Hooley, in 2h. 23m. 47s., which was 26s. slower than Green in 1930, but in making this comparison I do not overlook the fact there are faster times recorded in the early stages of other races, which have no bearing on recent records. From that point Whitlock went ahead, but it was not until he reached Redhill (20.25 miles) in 3h. 1m. 13s., against that of Ross in 1911, viz., 3h. 2m. 10s., that he gave any promise of a new record. Stone came through at 3h. 2m. 35s., with Henderson eleven seconds behind him, and both these times were inside Green's best.

Now, The George, Crawley, is about 700 yards short of 30 miles from Westminster, and

Whitlock reached this point in 4h. 24m. 55 s., but if you examine Butler's 30 miles track record you will find that the figures are 4h. 29m. 52s., which leaves the former almost five minutes to cover the remaining distance, an easy task to a walker then showing 8.5 minute mileage. Green showed 4h. 29m. 17s. in 1930, but Stone reached The George exactly three minutes slower, with Henderson another thirty-five seconds behind him. Handcross Hill provided the test, and previous experience told, for Henderson passed Stone,, and he still held second place at The Red Lion.

This point had been reached by Whitlock in 5h. 6m. 16s., against Green's 5h. 11m. 55s., with a lead of nearly thirteen minutes from Henderson, but by the time they reached Bolney it had been increased to sixteen. Whitlock then showed 5h. 44m. 25s., a six minutes improvement on Green, and that he increased to nearly 7.5 minutes at Albourne Green, which he reached in 6h. 23m. 39s.

It was not till Whitlock had covered forty-four miles that I noticed him ease for the first time, but with the stiff climb of Dale Hill ahead I think he acted wisely. He reached the top of Dale Hill in 6h. 52m. 32s., an advantage of nine minutes over Ludlow's record of 1932. It is interesting to note that Stone was then in second place again, with 7h. 12m. 6s., Henderson 7h. 12m. 31s. and Richardson 7h. 13m. 5s.

Now the closing stage of the race, from Dale Hill to the finish shows an interesting feature. In 1932, Ludlow covered this section of the race in 59m. 40s., and Whitlock at the same finishing point 60m. 33s., but Richardson must have put in a remarkable finish to fill second place, for his time to the new finishing point was 59m. 4s. Still, the record for this section was Green's 57m. 43s. in 1930.

Richardson's success speaks well for the future. He wins the Sussex 37 miles on August Monday, beating Stone and Henderson, then turns his attention to a Brighton race for the first time. He fills second place in 8h. 12m. 9s., a favourable comparison to Whitlock's previous best, when he finished second to Ludlow and recorded 8h. 12m. 20s. Then we have Henderson who improves every time out. Filled seventh place last year when his time was 8h. 49m 57s., and now a good third in 8h. 12m. 23s., whilst Stone with fourth place and 8h. 13m. 34s. has every reason to be satisfied with his first effort. Although Horton went back from second to fifth and Bentley, from third to seventh positions, they, in company with Cashmore, Gum and Abel, all improved on their previous year's times. Horton did have the satisfaction of retaining the Dithy Cup for the fourth successive year, and after a lapse of. four years the Surrey-Walking Club once again secured the team honour and the Knott Shield, a trophy which their rivals, the Belgrave Harriers, have held in the past three races.

That brings my review to a close, but in doing so I beg to tender the best thanks of our distance walkers to the Surrey Walking Club committee for the able manner in which they provide the facilities that enables them to compete in such a sporting fixture.

THE CLUB POINT OF VIEW.

The Club is grateful to Mr. Keen for the interest shown by him in writing the above article, and now a few words about Our Blokes may not be amiss.

Firstly, we heartily congratulate our 'scoring four, viz., Horton, Etherington, Christie-Murray and Smallbone on carrying off the coveted shield, and we trust they will serve us as well in future years.

Secondly, thanks to Stanley Horton for a splendidly walked race, and felicitations on winning, for the fourth successive year, the Dithy Cup. His time of 8.22.4 again shows a further improvement, and is over two minutes better than last year. Although he did not have the satisfaction of finishing better than in fifth position, it must be remembered that those who beat him are all front rank distance walkers, only one of whom, apart from Whitlock, walked last year, viz., Richardson. His struggle with Richardson, by the way, was well worth watching, and, although at one time I thought the " escape me never " look in Stan's eye would result in the defeat of the Woodford Green man, it was the latter's day, and his amazing finish brought him the reward it deserved.

We have to extend congratulations and condolences to Etherington at the same time, congratulations on his fine performance, and condolences on the mishap with a car, but for which he would undoubtedly have been much faster. Still, he achieved his objective

in scoring in the winning team, and that's all that seriously matters. As for Christie-Murray, that amazing young man chopped nearly an hour off his 1934 time, finished third for the Club, and beat first class standard by nearly fifteen minutes! It looks as though Stan Horton will have to fight hard for his Dithy Cup next year not that that would worry Stan!

Our fourth man, Charlie Smallbone, after a fast start, fell away somewhat only to eventually recover and record a sterling performance, beating first-class by four minutes.

Burt, on his first pilgrimage over the Brighton Road, did well enough to encourage 'hopes that a really 'great' Brighton is well within his powers; his time reflects great credit on his pluck and endurance. Scott followed Burt within less than a minute, and showed that his time of 10 hours 6 mins. in 1934 was " all wrong." Jock Galloway, also performing for the first time, walked as if he were taking the measure of the old road for really 'serious business in the future. He walked well within himself all the time and' never really " let out " in his own inimitable style.

Milne and Reynolds made an even closer thing of it than last year, when only 22 seconds separated them. This time they decided to be matey and finished together in a time that showed an improvement of 16 minutes. Jim Lock also bettered his previous time by about the same margin, \ whilst all credit is due to Mephram in finishing at all. He only commenced walk-ing in June of this year, has found little time in which to train, was up until 3 a.m. on the morning of the race, and yet plugged through in a spirit which we all admire.

Lastly, the 1935 " Brighton "" will long be remembered by all those fortunate enough to be on the road.

STREATHAM HILL

H
M
S
1
Stone

43
44
2
Gum

43
55
3
Whitlock

44
20
4
Abel

44
29
5
Henderson

45
15
6
Smallbone

46
18

SWAN & SUGARLOAF

1

Whitlock

1

33

15

2

Stone

1

33

15

3

Gum

1

33

16

4

Henderson

1

33

16

5

Abel

1

33

55

6

Cashmore

1

37

40

STAR, HOOLEY

1

Whitlock

2

23

47

2

Stone

2

23

52

3

Henderson

2

24

0
4
Gum
2
25
25
5
Abel
2
26
25
6
Cashmore
2
28
31

POST OFFICE, REDHILL

1
Whitlock
3
1
13
2
Stone
3
2
35
3
Henderson
3
2
40
4
Abel
3
6
34
5
Gum
3
6
37
6
Cashmore
3
7
25

CHEQUERS, HORLEY

1

Whitlock
3
39
58
2
Stone
3
42
31
3
Henderson
3
43
3
4
Abel
3
47
10
5
Cashmore
3
47
12
6
Gum
3
47
33
GEORGE, CRAWLEY

1
Whitlock
4
24
55
2
Stone
4
33
16
3
Henderson
4
33
51
4
Cashmore
4
36
50
5
Gum
4

37

28

6

Abel

4

38

12

RED LION, HANDCROSS

1

Whitlock

5

6

10

2

Henderson

5

19

3

3

Stone

5

20

56

4

Cashmore

5

21

17

5

Gum

5

23

22

6

Horton

5

24

6

QUEEN'S HEAD, BOLNEY

1

Whitlock

5

44

2

2

Henderson

6

0

7

3
Stone
6
0
41
4
Cashmore
6
1
24
5
Horton
6
4
0
6
Richardson
6
4
0
ALBOURNE

1
Whitlock
6
23
30
2
Henderson
6
42
38
3
Stone
6
42
58
4
Cashmore
6
44
3
5
Richardson
6
44
15
6
Horton
6
46
43
DALE HILL

1
 Whitlock
 6
 52
 32
 2
 Henderson
 7
 12
 6
 3
 Stone
 7
 12
 31
 4
 Cashmore
 7
 13
 5
 5
 Richardson
 7
 15
 18
 6
 Horton
 7
 16
 0

Results:

| Position | Initial | Initial | Surname | Club | Hour | Min | Sec |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | H | H | Whitlock | Met. W.C. | 7 | 53 | 50 |
| 2 | T | W | Richardson | Wdfd. Grn. A.C | 8 | 12 | 9 |
| 3 | J | F | Henderson | Worthing & D. | 8 | 12 | 23 |
| 4 | V | W | Stone | Poly. H. | 8 | 13 | 34 |
| 5 | S | E | Horton | Surrey W.C. | 8 | 22 | 4 |
| 6 | i | H | Cashmore | Leicester W.C. | 8 | 23 | 22 |
| 7 | D | | Gum | Essex Beagles | 8 | 24 | 39 |
| 8 | F | E | Bentley | Belgrave H. | 8 | 28 | 17 |
| 9 | S | F | Abel | Essex Beagles | 8 | 28 | 28 |
| 10 | F | | Rickards | Belgrave H. | 8 | 43 | 32 |
| 11 | H | L | Etherington | Surrey W.C. | 8 | 51 | 25 |
| 12 | R | | Martin | Belgrave H. | 8 | 56 | 8 |
| 13 | M | | Chatfield | Worthing & Dist. H. | 8 | 56 | 58 |
| 14 | D | H | Christie-Murray | S.W.C. | 9 | 0 | 51 |
| 15 | P | W | Collier | Ldn. Vidarians | 9 | 9 | 13 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----------|--------------------|----|----|-----|
| 16 | V | J | Pammenter | Poly. H. | 9 | 10 | 44 |
| 17 | C | T | Smallbone | Surrey W.C. | 9 | 11 | 11 |
| 18 | J | A | Prior | Ldn. Vidarians | 9 | 14 | 55 |
| 19 | E | G | Baines | Highgate H. | 9 | 21 | 45 |
| 20 | A | W | Bellisis | L.T. S. & A. A. | 9 | 23 | 0 |
| 21 | N | L | Burt | Surrey W.C. | 9 | 23 | 39 |
| 22 | W | J | Harris | L.T. S. & A. A. | 9 | 23 | 45 |
| 23 | F | R | Scott | Surrey W.C. | 9 | 24 | 16 |
| 24 | W | C | Merrett | Poly. H. | 9 | 24 | 19 |
| 25 | W | H | Holman | Belgrave H. | 9 | 30 | 8 |
| 26 | G | T | Galloway | Surrey W.C. | 9 | 31 | 49 |
| 27 | W | F | Ashwell | Lon. Vidarians | 9 | 34 | 10 |
| 28 | H | D | Nielsen | Poly. H. | 9 | 35 | 46 |
| 29 | A | D | McSweeney | Highgate H. | 9 | 37 | 9 |
| 30 | J | H | Gibson | Lon. Vidarians | 9 | 37 | 38 |
| 31 | R | H | Milne | Surrey W.C. | 9 | 39 | 39 |
| 32 | T | C | Reynolds | Surrey W.C. | 9 | 39 | 39 |
| 33 | A | B | Griggs | Worthing & Dis. H | 9 | 40 | 18 |
| 34 | G | W | Head | Lon. Vidarians | 9 | 40 | 33 |
| 35 | G | S | Johnson | Leicester W.C. | 9 | 44 | 3 |
| 36 | E | L | Wood | Leicester W.C. | 9 | 46 | 1 8 |
| 37 | R | C | Pantling | Lon. Vidarians | 9 | 47 | 3 |
| 38 | w | P | Everard | Essex Beagles | 9 | 47 | 11 |
| 39 | E | A | Manning | Poly. H. | 9 | 48 | 20 |
| 40 | L | R | Spooner | Belgrave H. | 9 | 48 | 55 |
| 41 | W | A | Howse | Lon. Vid. | 9 | 51 | 34 |
| 42 | A | C | Drew | Lon. Vidairians | 9 | 51 | 34 |
| 43 | J | G | Smith | Metropolitan W.C. | 9 | 51 | 34 |
| 44 | F | T | Yorworth | Belgrave H. | 9 | 53 | 36 |
| 45 | C | A | Wattam | Belgrave H. | 9 | 53 | 56 |
| 46 | J | E | Bennett | Essex Beagles | 9 | 54 | 58 |
| 47 | A | E | Underwood | Metropolitan W.C. | 9 | 58 | 45 |
| 48 | L | L | Hind | Highgate H. | 10 | 0 | 56 |
| 49 | F | A | Parsons | Lon. Vidarians | 10 | 5 | 35 |
| 50 | J | W | Lock | Surrey W.C. | 10 | 5 | 48 |
| 51 | H | W | Stallard | Poly. H. | 10 | 13 | 54 |
| 52 | W | | Pease | Fords Sports Club | 10 | 14 | 36 |
| 53 | W | J | Rycroft | Met. Police | 10 | 16 | 44 |
| 54 | J | | Myers | Lincoln Wellington | 10 | 18 | 30 |
| 55 | L | H | Wilkins | Surrey A.C. | 10 | 19 | 2 |
| 56 | D | | Willis | Belgrave H. | 10 | 22 | 10 |
| 57 | B | C | Angell | L.T.S. & A.A. | 10 | 22 | 40 |
| 58 | S | H | Carter | Metrogas A.S.A. | 10 | 27 | 2 |
| 59 | S | | Jarritt | Worthing & Dis. H. | 10 | 27 | 45 |
| 60 | G | H | Laurie | Belgrave H. | 10 | 34 | 6 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-------------|-------------------|----|----|----|
| 61 | F | | Warren | Highgate H. | 10 | 38 | 43 |
| 62 | F | C | Emerick | Metropolitan W.C. | 10 | 44 | 2 |
| 63 | W | W | Stevens Sen | L.T.S. & A.A. | 10 | 48 | 46 |
| 64 | W | W | Stevens Jun | L.T.S. & A.A. | 10 | 48 | 46 |
| 65 | F | C | Brock | T.T.S. & A.A. | 10 | 58 | 4 |
| 66 | J | H | Bullick | L.T.S. & A.A. | 11 | 0 | 44 |
| 67 | G | W | Mepham | Surrey W.C | 11 | 21 | 54 |
| 68 | J | E | Pocock | Essex Beagles | 11 | 21 | 56 |
| 69 | R | | Toon | L.T.S. & A.A. | 11 | 52 | 35 |

| | Team Position Club | Points |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Surrey W.C. | 43 |
| 2 | Belgrave Harriers | 49 |
| 3 | Polytechnic Harriers | 64 |
| 4 | Essex Beagles | 91 |
| 5 | Worthing and District H. | 92 |
| 6 | London Vidarians | 96 |
| 7 | Metropolitan W.C. | 133 |
| 8 | Highgate Harriers | 136 |
| 8 | L. T. S. & A.A. | 136 |