

29th London to Brighton Walk 11th Sep 1954

The weather for this year's race was certainly cool and there was a fair head-wind. Although we were promised heavy showers by the weather prophets, we were most fortunate in missing it.

From the start, young Thompson, of Metropolitan, took the lead and at one time was 8.5 minutes in front of his nearest rival. In the latter stages of the race he weakened and was overtaken only by one competitor. Thompson walked a truly great race and his turn will come in the very near future to follow in the footsteps of his great Club members, Harold and Rex Whitlock.

Norman Guilmant was the eventual winner of the race. He was always in the first three or four and timed his effort to perfection. Throughout the whole of the race his fine upright style was a treat to watch and, when he did make his effort in the last twelve miles, he put such power into his stride that it would have taken a "Whitlock" to have beaten him.

Vic Stone was third and can be more than satisfied with his performance, considering the distance races he has performed this season—including a shattering effort in the Blackpool/Manchester "100."

Of course, Belgrave won the team race. They have been in great form this season and have won every long distance team event. Their winning team was Guilmant (1st), Hugh McCreechan (4th), George Checkley (7th), and their Captain, Harry Shields (9th), and if any one of the above should have dropped out—including number one—there was George Beecham, competing in his first Brighton, in 11th position. What a team!! The President of the Road Walking Association, A. D. McSweeney, walking in his 7th Brighton, once more took the Harry Preston Cup for the first veteran to finish.

Now, what about our own boys in the race. Back to the Horton family goes the Dithy Cup. Not to Stan—who for the first time for many years missed the race—but to Maurice, back in harness again. His time was not good—in fact, for a Horton, it was "real bad," and he can thank brother Stan for seeing him home over the last five miles, when he was telling everyone how sick he was of the sight of Brighton.

Les Griffiths, second home for the Club, became the first holder of our new trophy, "The Elaine Cup," for the first Club veteran to finish. There is no reason why he should not hold this trophy for many years—except Stan Horton.

Next Club man—none other than Peter "leaning tower" Jobson. Still in his first year of racing, he put up a wonderful performance and became a worthy holder of the "Cousins Bowl." His remarks, when going up Dale Hill, about the Brighton being "chicken feed" will be well remembered next year when he is on his knees in the Brighton and Back. Next came Bob Strowger—or perhaps one should say Percy Wilson and Strowger—for Percy stayed with Bob throughout the race and it was only by encouragement and "perseverance from Percy" that Bob ever saw Brighton front on his feet—and Surrey say "Thank you, Bels.," once again. Such is the spirit of "Walking."

George Baverstock completed his Brighton quite comfortably, and he is a member we would like to see more often at H.Q.

Ron Newton, another newcomer to the Club this season—and an elderly member by present-day standards—started at Westminster and finished on his feet at Brighton. His time does not matter—he has "done the Brighton."

George Thwaites turned out once again. He is one of our most loyal members. He has more travelling to do than any member of the Club—he has to do all his training alone—yet he is almost always on the spot for the long-distance races. He is not a fast man, but how he loves his walking.

We must sympathise with Wilf Cowley. He was walking extremely well until he reached Crawley. At that stage he got some grit in his eye and all efforts failed to remove it. His eye became so painful that it completely upset his walking and he eventually retired. So serious was the eye that his doctor refused to allow him to go to work during the following week.

Now a word about all those who helped to make this race so successful. Len Mathews did all that a President should do, and he can look back upon this Brighton as a fitting climax to a great year of office.

Ernest Neville once again did yeoman service on the road, even though he did have a dead easy time as a judge. Ernest says that next year's B. & B. will be the last event he will help to organise. If he is really serious about this, he has another think coming—can anyone visualise a long-distance walk without Ernest?

Harry and Mrs. Collden were once again in their usual place on the road, doing their usual job of time checking. We also saw Scho. looking fairly fit again. Bill Parslow going over all his favourite haunts again and finishing up with many others at our headquarters at the "Stag and Hounds."

Also on the road were quite a few of our younger members—some of whom not yet eligible to compete in the Brighton—including young Peter Abbott (only 18) saying: "I shall be 21 next year"!!

Also on the road was Bunny Austin with members of his Youth Club who had volunteered to do service as attendants. One young lady member worked so enthusiastically at her job that she collapsed from sheer exhaustion. (We understand that she has fully recovered and is now looking forward to next year's event.)

Behind the scenes another young member, Ian Watson, put in an enormous amount of work organising the programmes and distribution of same. His first effort is most encouraging and he is now preparing for next year.

Of course, those two old reprobates, Harry Fry and Clarrie Lancaster, were up to their old games out in the wilds with their own private refreshment stall—always conveniently situated near a pub, just in case a competitor might require something stronger than their "jollop."

And last, but not least, our Race Hon. Secretary, "Ding Dong." He started work on the Brighton months ago and his organisation of this year's race was as near perfection as anyone could wish.

Results:

Position	Initial	Initial	Surname	Club	Hour	Min	Sec
1	M	N	Guilmant	Belgrave H. "A"	8	20	44
2	D	J	Thompson	Met. W.C	8	23	15
3	V	W	Stone	Poly. H	8	24	59
4	H		McGreechan	Belgrave H. "A"	8	33	25
5	H	D	Neilson	Woodford Grn. A.C.	8	36	35
6	J	O	Culver	Essex Beagles	8	40	33
7	G	S	Checkley	Belgrave H. "A"	8	43	44
8	L	S	Fairman	Polytechnic H	8	44	02
9	H	W	Shields	Belgrave H. "A"	8	47	22
10	J		Ridley	Queen's Park H	8	48	36
11	G	E	Beecham	Belgrave H. "A"	9	00	32
12	R	C	Pantling	London Vidarians	9	02	09
13	T	B	Kent	Woodford Green A.C.	9	02	52
14	H		Johnson	Trowbridge A.C	9	03	10
15	J	F	Holding	Woodford Grn. A.C.	9	04	13
16	J		Hartley	Sheffield United H	9	08	08
17	K		Abolins	Royal Sutton Coldfield	9	09	07
18	M	Y	Horton	Surrey W.C	9	14	11
19	A		Roberts	Highgate H	9	14	13
20	P	A	Price	Polytechnic H	9	14	34
21	A	D	McSweeney	Highgate H	9	17	50
22	R	D	Guilmin	L.T. (C.R.S.) S.A.	9	21	22

23	J		Hayward	Enfield A.C	9	24	53
24	W	P	Everard	Essex Beagles	9	26	08
25	F	G	Rolfe	Belgrave H. "A"	9	26	42
26	R	A	Haynes	St. Albans A.C	9	31	41
27	A		Staines	Leicester W.C	9	34	15
28	J	C	Coomber	Highgate H	9	34	19
29	A	W	Marler	Enfield A.C	9	35	54
30	W	F	Watson	Met. Rly. A.A.	9	36	50
31	H	W	Shephard	Polytechnic H.	9	37	37
32	G	A	White	Essex Beagles	9	43	16
33	G	S	Doubleday	Belgrave H. "A"	9	43	22
34	J		Wilson	Belgrave H. "A"	9	43	36
35	W	T	Morris	Queen's Park H	9	46	53
36	A	E	Joels	Belgrave H. " B "	9	49	47
37	T	W	Lown	Essex Beagles	9	49	55
38	R		Elkins	Brighton A.C	9	51	41
39	S		McSweeney	Highgate H	9	53	12
40	L	H	Griffiths	Surrey W.C	9	53	53
41	G	V	Gittins	Queen's Park H	9	54	03
42	T		Milner	Southend Police A.C.	9	54	08
43	B	J	Rawlings	Leicester W.C	9	56	12
44	R	G	Harrold	Trowbridge A.C.	9	56	53
45	P	A	Jobson	Surrey W.C	9	57	57
46	T		Thomas	Newport H	9	58	41
47	V	M	Dillon	Surrey W.C	9	59	30
48	J	P	Thomas	Enfield A.C	10	01	10
49	F		Kavanagh	Brighton A.C	10	01	14
50	J		Breen	Polytechnic H	10	01	44
51	R	G	Lewery	East Sussex Police	10	01	45
52	W	B	Morgan	Newport H	10	02	09
53	P		Wilson	Belgrave H. "B"	10	02	38
54	R		Strowger	Surrey W.C	10	02	38
55	D	G	Shingles	Southend/Sea A.C.	10	04	08
56	R	G	Dick	Highgate H	10	09	11
57	C	E	Wingate	Brighton A.C	10	10	42
58	J		Wigglesworth	Preston H	10	14	43
59	H	W	Stallard	Dover A.C	10	14	52
60	W	F	Watson	Lozells H	10	15	49
61	J	B	Marriot	Unattached	10	19	05
62	S		Spencer	Belgrave H. "B"	10	20	56
63	L	T	Williams	Birmingham W.C.	10	25	16
64	J		Prior	Cambridge H	10	25	43
65	H		Peel	Lozells H	10	27	06
66	J	H	Jansen	Essex Beagles	10	27	44
67	C		Meanin	Highgate H	10	28	10

68	A	W	King	Enfield A.C	10	30	16
69	C		Hayes	Trowbridge A.C	10	30	57
70	G	H	Baverstock	Surrey W.C	10	34	54
71	C	F	Hewitt	Leicester W.C	10	36	07
72	R	A	Newton	Surrey W.C	10	36	30
73	A	J	Tompkinson	Leicester W.C.	10	41	22
74	G	B	Ramsey	London Vidarians	10	42	44
75	S		Shirley	Polytechnic H	10	44	15
76	B		Butterworth	Lanes W.C	10	46	18
77	G		Thwaites	Surrey W.C	10	47	06
78	G	S	Sharp	London Vidarians	10	55	18
79	G		Smith	Newport H	10	57	02
80	D	W	Ashenden	Polytechnic H.	10	57	51
81	W		Garratt	Surrey A.C	11	00	59
82	J	A	MaGog	Highgate H	11	07	41
83	R	J	Board	Highgate H	11	21	38
84	J		Travell	Queen's Park H	11	27	04
85	J	P	Fleming	Roath Youth	11	42	32

Team	Position	Club	Points
1		Belgrave H	16
2		Polytechnic H	45
3		Essex Beagles	75
4		Highgate H	79
5		Surrey Walking Club	121
6		Enfield A.C	125
7		Queen's Park H	129
8		Leicester W.C	160