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THE TWENTY-FOUR HOUR FELLOWSHIP

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A CHAMPION'S "TWENTY-FOUR"

by "Jock" Wadley

An account of the 1955 National Championship reprinted from the Catford "Gazette" by kind permission of the Editor. We of the Twenty-Four Hour Fellowship are honoured to have as our President Ken Price and here then is the story of the ride that really and truly put him in the national record books.

"You've got a great story to write this time, Jock" was an observation made to me many times from eighteen hours onwards in this year's Catford "24" hour. But most of these friends immediately realised the situation and added "But what are you going to write it for?" - to which I replied, "The Catford Gazette".

Right - we're off to the start! And riding along the main Brighton road en route for the Pease Pottage Lane, many a 24-hour man must have thought "Well, I'm usually in a state at the end of a "24" but I can't be as bad as those walkers!" Those walkers were, of course, on the final stage of the London-Brighton-London event, and it was interesting to see the number of competitors who were being looked after by cycling clubmen.

While the lane looked pretty much the same as it does for any 24-hour, to me the chief difference was the presence of several notable Addiscombers in a peaceful capacity. Christine Watts (whose husband John was riding) exclaimed to the 1951 champion, Gus Andrews, "How on earth you must feel standing there and seeing all those people start." To which Gus replied, "I feel the best I've felt for years!" And, nearby, 1952 champion, Eddie Mundy, was trying to cadge a start card off Stan Newport. I looked in vain for Stan Harvey, the remaining member of the famous Addiscombe trinity; he was helping clubmate John Smith in the Luton "12".

Parked along the lane on the verges were the "headquarters" cars of most of the teams. I tried to make a quick call at them all, but as I expected, with so many friends to bump into, it was as impossible as trying to carry out a systematic tour of the stands at a Cycle Show. I have said that the lane looked pretty much the same as usual - but it sounded very different, for the card was rich with the names of many provincial riders, with the emphasis on the north. Apart from Alan Blackman, whom I had on my own private short list of possible winners, it was fair enough to say that barring accidents the "24" promised to be a battle between the holder of the title, Stuart Thompson, the 1955 winner, Nick Carter, and the distinguished newcomer to 24-hour racing, Ken Price.

In those three camps I found evidence of thorough preparation by the helpers for the welfare of their men. Looking after Stuart Thompson was a well organised squad headed by Dick Masterman, a Rutlander with a 429-mile "24" to his credit and now home on leave from his engineering work in West Africa. The Rutland camp was quietly confident, not only of retaining the title, but of taking the team award too, for Tony Fouldes had done a 445 ride, and "novice" Ron Coukham is an inside evens man at 12 hours.

In the S. Lincs. camp they were kind enough to give me a blue-print (art work by Cliff Bate) of the course, and chief helper, Alan Tyson (back man of the Heald-Tyson record breaking tandem) said, "Come and see old Nick, he's got some bad news for you." The bad news which Nick imparted was that after a whole winter and early racing season on gears, he had gone back on to "fixed" a fortnight before the Catford event. Nick told me this "bad news" with the widest of grins, for on two occasions I have printed that his next "24" was to be on "gears" having had his own personal assurance that this would be so. "But it's no good", said Nick, "I just can't get on with gears; it's fixed for me from now on." I know what will happen now, - Nick will turn up at the North Road "24" of all places, riding ten gears!

I found Ken Price sitting down on the verge waiting his turn with complete calm, not terribly worried about a cold in the head. It was at the Redmon dinner in January that I heard from their Welsh contacts that Price was planning to ride the "24", and there on the roadside before the event started, Ken told me he had not put in any special long distance training for it, but had carried on more or less the same as usual.

Without a "24", Ken was not a seeded man and was number 91 on the card. His time came, and he set off in pursuit of his minute man, Eric Osborne, a man after Ken's own heart, a super-keen clubman who planned to follow up the "24" with a "12" the following week and then to pack up work for three months and tour the continent. Nine minutes after Ken Price had gone it was last man Reg Randall's turn, there on No. 100, as winner of the Catford 24 hours for the past two years. Reg was on his usual 79 fixed, as happy as ever, but in no way dreaming of becoming

24 hour champion. Randall vanished down the lane for a day in the saddle, and organiser Stan Newport began his last and most worrying 24 hour of a trying week. I contributed just one more grey hair to his collection by depositing my bike on his already overcrowded van, while I had the whole of the back of Fred Churchill's "Vanguard" in which to relax, with timekeeper Alan Gordon keeping Fred company in front.

While the field of riders pedalled to and from the Turner's Hill and Handcross sections, we moved off through Cowfold for a late lunch, after which we spent 20 minutes or so in that important cross-roads of the "24" getting the "feel of the race." It was too early (40 miles) to take any important checks, but I spent some time with Bas. Talbot on "his" corner (I've nearly bought this one, he said) cribbing down his entries on the card. We found that Ken Price was already in the lead by a minute from Thompson, who in turn was three minutes faster than J. Yates (University), Cliff Bate (S. Lancs.), Pat Wright (Redmon) and Reg Randall. Now then, you pukka amateur time-keepers with all those posh watches brought home from Swiss holidays, don't you dare criticise those times. Bas. Talbot's are the official ones and his time-piece is bigger and costlier than any of yours - it is Cowfold Church clock! Sitting on a nearby seat was Arthur Dixon, who told me that when the Catford club first had the idea of running a "24" in 1925 and sought the opinions of other South London clubs, Mr. Dixon's club, the Southern Roads, were among those who supported the idea. He rode in it himself seven times between 1927 and 1951, doing 322 the first time and 379 the last.

In previous years when I have been with him, Alan Gordon had first got out his watch in earnest at the Burrell Arms, but this time he repeated last year's successful change over to the Steyning turn where things are much quieter from all points of view. This check at 90½ miles confirmed the Cowfold pre-view as told by the Talbot time-piece: Price was indeed in the lead, and increasing it over Thompson. On my notebook against their names I jotted down "Trying" against Price, and "Thoughtful" by Thompson. And alongside the next two arrivals in time merit were notes of "Looking good" against Blackman and Carter, although why Carter should be looking good I don't know, because hereabouts he started a bout of stomach trouble that was to last for another twenty hours. Also looking good and happy - I've yet to see him anyhow else - was last year's championship runner-up, Arthur Turner, and he grinned out the information here that he had punctured early on. The Rutlanders were "packing" beautifully; Alan found when everybody had gone through that they were already leading the team race by 23 minutes, with North Road second, South Lancs. being "at 26 min." as we say in our mass start reports.

The riders seemed to be up on schedule. I do not necessarily mean their own personal schedules, though in most cases this was true, but that the higher quality of the Championship-cum-Catford field had brought about the estimated time of arrival at any point considerably forward. Thus when we arrived at the traffic lights on the Chichester by-pass (138½ miles) we found Ron Maer of the local club already with the names of Nos. 19 (L. Jenkins), 30 (R. Coukham), 25 (R. Way), 48 (J. Yates) and 34 (R. Mackinlay) entered up on his check card, and Thompson was soon along, too, going well. The fact that he was not looking happy doesn't mean a thing, because Stuart (or "Joe" to the boys) never seems to be enjoying his racing.

Sid Amey came along with the news that on Washington Hill the lead had passed over from Price to Thompson, who had two minutes in hand. But when Ken eventually went down on Mr. Maer's card he was once again at the head of affairs, with one minute to spare. The two of them were way out ahead of the others (Price had been going 6½ hours), with Pat Wright (Redmon) twelve minutes behind Thompson.

Now in any Catford "24" while the riders are down visiting Selsey, West Wittering and other places on the windswept Bill, certain things are certain to happen on the Chichester by-pass. It will, of course, get dark and colder, and most of the riders will want to stop to pick their lamps and night clothing - and there on the by-pass the mobile cloakroom attendants were preparing for their impatient customers and laying the clothing out ready. Fred Churchill will, of course, disappear for 20 minutes or so and come back with great oily packets of fish and chips for time-keepers and checkers; he will then disappear for some hours into Chichester hoshtelrishe (that's what it sounds like when he comes back, anyway). And last, but not least, the outsize figure of Tom Hubbard will loom up from Chichester town to recall that he rode in the first Catford "24" in 1925 and will give his expert opinion on what is likely to happen in today's version. All these things happened on the night of July 2nd, of course, and the most startling outcome was Tom's prediction that the 1955 Catford-cum-championship winner would not do more than 444 miles.

Old Tom's observation is not without its point; the afternoon wind was strongish from the N.W., and to old-timers at least, this didn't seem a record-breaking weekend. Yet while we were waiting, the wind dropped, and a great moon rose.

After the Selsey bits and pieces the field came back, young Jenkins still first on the road and Thompson fifth, MacInlay having dropped back. Gordon's gen. was that Price had gained a further half-minute on Thompson and was there at 160½ miles, about 28½ minutes inside evens. On crossing the traffic lights and turning towards Fareham, Ken stopped to put on a pullover. I asked him how he came to lose that two minutes on Thompson earlier on: "I stopped for a feed," Ken explained from the depths of his half-on pullover. "With this cold in the head I just can't eat when I'm riding".

In much less of a hurry was Jack Spackman who turned on the water of an enormous carbide lamp ready to light up further along the road. At length the Fareham detour was closed and among the first to be sent straight back in Arundel direction was Geoff Guy. With the camp-fires blazing on the by-pass verge, lamps flashing and bidons falling on to the road, we waited for the first of the "from Farehams". Jenkins kept that distinction, but on stopping to fix a rear lamp,

handed over the pathfinding to Coukham, the pair setting off on the long trip east and north with a twenty-minute lead on the road over the next man, Thompson, who - it turned out - had gone back into the lead with a minute in hand over Price. I forgot to check the matter, but possibly Ken had made another stop along that 36 miles leg. (I mean, of course, that Coukham and Jenkins were first on the road of the all-the-way riders, for by now they were well mixed up with the non-Fareham guys). We had to leave Chichester before the arrival of Reg Randall, who, while being at this stage in no way a danger to the Price-Thompson madmen, was coming up nicely behind Coukham, Carter, Yates and Blackman for fourth place - yes, fourth, because Fouldes was now nicely established in third position. We left there with two big laughs. The first was when a sleepy John Morris was dozing in his gear-service van and was roused into action by a loud yell for what he thought to be "Cyclo wanted quick" but which turned out to be a demand for Night Clothes..... and the second was when Churchill was summoned by Gordon to get the car ready as we had to get up to Billingham direction. "I know they're up on schedule this year," Fred muttered. Gordon agreed, and to confirm it produced last year's check sheets. "I don't need to see that," said Fred. "I go by the pub closing times....."

The Codmore Hill detour was a new one to me, although it had been used last year on the way back from Guildford. Roman Gate, therefore, became the night headquarters of our little party, and of many others, too, for when we arrived we found all sorts of faces looming out of the darkness - the night was not as light as we had at first supposed - and amongst those present were Len Samwell, George Yellowlees, Jim Purves of the quickly detachable teeth, and Percy Huggett of the irremovable beard and strange smelling pipe (the offender is, of course, of the Redmon Huggetts). It goes without saying that at almost all the spots I have mentioned and will be mentioning in the future, that Stan Newport and Harry Carrington were there for a time as well, keeping an eye on the marshalling and feeding arrangements. Amid the general conversation a remark "Butler's packed" took us back to the day when the great Stan turned it in thereabouts, but this time the Butler in question was F.W. of the Belle Vue Club. While we were peering up the road for signs of Coukham's lamp, Butler in fact appeared, having retired without doing the Billingham lap.

In previous years the chief timekeeper has followed out the leading riders to get a rough idea of their 12 hour distances, but this time with the Roman Gate check coming at $246\frac{1}{4}$ miles it was not necessary, especially in the case of Thompson, who came through with exactly ten seconds to go. Price, however, was well and truly back in command and with 6 mins. 12 secs. to run probably did nearly 249 at the half-way point. The $16\frac{3}{4}$ miles to and from Codmore Hill must have been hard, and I think if the checks are examined it will show a big drop on "evens" all round; even Thompson (who gained slightly on Price) took something like 56 minutes and others were well outside the hour. But in a "24" beyond generalising it serves no useful purpose to make comparisons over so short a trip, because quite obviously men may have stopped for a feed. But I should imagine that those who missed the Codmore Hill detour were not dismayed at getting sent straight on to Guildford; actually the last man to make the trip before the closing of the detour was my club-mate, Rout, who was putting up a good show despite his half-hour late start. It was now beginning to get light.

After a courtesy call at the Guildford roundabout to check with Charlotteville's George Hunton that all was well with his department, we went back to the Bridge Cafe. Quite apart from the fact that we were ready for a 5 a.m. breakfast it is always good to get into such an establishment during a "24" for all the best and most interesting people get there. I have always regretted that my Catford arrangements have not allowed a visit to Dial Post in the early night, for the place must be packed with news items. But the news that greeted me in the Guildford cafe was not of the best, in fact it was very sad indeed, and yet at the same time it was splendid. It was sad to hear that dear old Arthur Turner of the Warrington R.C. had collided with an inebriated jay-walker somewhere down Arundel way and sustained a badly cut eye. But it was splendid to hear that the first man on the scene was another northerner, Peter Bates, who stopped with Arthur until help arrived to take him to Arundel hospital, and then stayed guarding the two bikes until he, too, could be picked up. Peter, of course, lost so much time that it wasn't worth his while to carry on, and he had been brought back to the Cafe in the South Lancs. van together with his sister. Many southerners will know this young lady and her mother who run the famous cycling hostelry up at Goostrey, the H.Q. of the Cheshire courses.

At the start of the 24 Arthur had told me that as he was entirely without help the S. Lancs. party had offered to look after him like one of their own, and look after him they did, even to the extent of throwing away their chances of a place in the team race. And I was not surprised to hear from Mrs. Muriel Carter (Nick's wife) who helped look after him following the accident, that even with a nasty crack over the eye which necessitated several stitches, Arthur was still laughing!

Replenished we went back to the traffic island waiting for them to come back from Esher and set out for Windsor. Several sleeping figures on the grass had no more protection than their capes, and the feeding station a little way up the road was busy. So was George Hunton who efficiently sat on his little stool checking men from two directions and snatching an occasional munch of sandwich and swig of coffee. I was sorry to find that one of the by-standers was old Bill Brown. "Pedal broke at about 200 miles," he said. "I was going all right too; never mind, I'll have another go next year." (Next year Bill will be 60). With Bill was another Welshman, an Acme boy who told me he had cycled up from Wales in two days with this young Len Jenkins who was doing so well at the head of the field and who works in the famous Nant-garw pit. It was his first 24, but he had twice finished second to Price in S. Wales championship 12's.

HOW THE BATTLE PROGRESSED

Offington at 108.7 miles		Chichester at 160.9 miles		Offington at 214.7 miles		Billinghamurst at 231.8 miles	
Thompson	5h. 4m.	Price	7h. 33m.	Thompson	10h. 19m.	Price	11h. 11m.
Price	at 2 m.	Thompson	at 3 m.	Price	at 1 m.	Thompson	at 5 m.
Blackman	9	Fouldes	19	Coukham	21	Fouldes	27
Fouldes	11	Yates	23	Fouldes	28	Coukham	29
Carter	11	Carter	23	Randall	31	Randall	35
Yates	13	Coukham	23	King	31	King	40
Coukham	13	Blackman	25	Jenkins	33	Yates	43
Wright	16	Randall	26	Yates	33	Jenkins	48
King	16	King	29	Carter	38	Carter	49
Randall	18	Wright	31	Wright	46	Bate	56
Barton	20	Jenkins	33	Blackman	46	Blackman	56
Jenkins	24	Barton	35	Bate	48	Wright	56

Guildford at 280.8 miles		Windsor at 328.5 miles		Enter Circuit at 386.7 miles		Leave Circuit at 455.7 miles	
Price	13h. 40m.	Price	16h. 7m.	Price	19h. 6m.	Price	22h. 51m.
Thompson	at 8 m.	Thompson	at 8 m.	Thompson	at 7 m.	Thompson	at 12m.
Coukham	40	Coukham	49	Coukham	50	Coukham	49
Randall	43	Randall	51	Randall	54	Fouldes	54
Fouldes	46	Fouldes	57	Fouldes	59	Randall	60
Jenkins	53	Jenkins	61	King	77		
King	62	King	70	Jenkins	79		
Yates	70	Yates	90	Wright	90		
Bate	73	Wright	90	Carter	107		
Wright	80	Waddington	99	Mackinlay	113		
Waddington	82	Carter	100	Yates	116		
Mackinlay	86	Mackinlay	102	Avely	116		

Finally, to see where the leaders gained on evens: + is up on evens.....

	<u>Price</u>	<u>Thompson</u>
at 50.7	+ 16	+ 14
at 108.7	+ 20	+ 22
at 160.9	+ 30	+ 27
at 214.7	+ 24	+ 25
at 231.8	+ 24	+ 19
at 280.8	+ 22	+ 14
at 328.5	+ 18	+ 10
at 386.5	+ 14	+ 7
at 455.7	- 4	- 16

Riders over 400 miles:-

		<u>Miles</u>	<u>Yards</u>
1.	K. Price	Cardiff 100 M.R.C.	478 980
2.	S. Thompson	Rutland C.C.	474 215
3.	R. Coukham	Rutland C.C.	462 89
4.	G. Fouldes	Rutland C.C.	460 1679
5.	R.F. Randall	Harlequine C.C.	458 327
6.	S.J. King	Colchester Rovers	452 269
7.	L.R. Jenkins	Acme Whs. (Rhondda)	449 213
8.	F.P. Wright	Redmon C.C.	448 596
9.	P.E. Carter	South Lancs. R.C.	444 968
10.	S. Avely	Tooting B.C.	437 1412
11.	R.J. Way	North Road C.C.	437 1051
12.	R.E. Yates	University C.C.	436 660
13.	R.A. Mackinlay	Addiscombe C.C.	433 1578
14.	R. Waddington	Doncaster Whs.	431 244
15.	W. Marchant	Tooting B.C.	430 1638
16.	R. Rance	Balham R.C.	430 1578
17.	W.E. Thorncroft	Brentwood R.C.	430 850
18.	R.F. Shiret	Redmon C.C.	429 701
19.	G.L. Redman	Oxford City R.C.	428 1638
20.	A.G. Williams	Viking R.C.	424 1675
21.	J.W. Smith	West Kent R.C.	424 1638
22.	I. Eley	Tooting B.C.	424 1638
23.	R. Jessett	Bromley R.C.	422 1206
24.	E. Osborn	Watford R.C.	422 452
25.	P.D. Barton	Castlenau C.C.	421 378
26.	G.W. Siddle	Spartan Whs.	420 302

27.	D.A. Wright	Cambrian Whs.	419	628
28.	C. King	Kentish Whs.	416	97
29.	W.W. Leonard	Fountain C.C.	415	598
30.	P. Pearson	Colchester Rovers	414	1276
31.	J. Beard	Redmon C.C.	412	1171
32.	D.E. Challis	Sorian R.C.	411	1603
33.	G.D. Seward	Middlesex R.C.	411	1236
34.	G. Crouch	Kingston Phoenix R.C.	411	316
35.	J. Lawrence	Bromley R.C.	411	110
36.	D.C. Hall	Rodley Whs.	409	1683
37.	P. Pinkham	Westerley R.C.	409	578
38.	R. Walker	University C.C.	408	758
39.	L. Wilson	Bromley R.C.	404	1098
40.	E. Potter	Doncaster Whs.	401	1551
41.	E.G. Guy	Vegetarian C. & A.C.	400	1428
	Team	1. Rutland C.C.	1397 miles	233 yards.
		2. Tooting B.C.	1291 miles	1133 yards.

100 riders accepted.

96 Started.

62 Finished.

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD

The Twenty-four Hour Fellowship has members scattered all over the Country (and abroad) and although this is a good thing from a membership point of view as the benefits of the Journal are carried a great distance, it means that members do not have much personal contact. Only a small number can attend the Annual Dinner and General Meeting. To bring members together more we have tried some regional get-togethers this year. The intention of these is to bring local members and any out of the district members who can get along in contact with each other. So far these have been highly successful. Including the Annual Dinner we have had three so far.

The Annual Dinner. 9th November, 1963.

This was held at a Chinese Restaurant in Leamington and the attendance was:- Charlie Alexander, Stan Bray, Bert Brown, Mrs. Ivy Brown, John Coulson, Bill Dunk, Bob Dunk, Les Ladbury, Les Lowe, Ken Price, Peter Reeve, Ian Shaw, Ken Smith, Eddie Sumner with guests Mrs. Bray, Doug Osmonde and Mrs. Osmonde.

This was very well organised by Ian Shaw and has set the general pattern for future get-togethers, this being: meet at a suitable inn, move out for a meal and then adjourn to another inn for refreshment and reminiscence. The most illustrious member of the gathering was Ken Price who had cycled a large part of the way from Glasgow in only his second ride of the year.

For me there are two highlights of this 'do'. The enthusiasm of the conversation in the restaurant, so much so that the manager got worried about the noise we were making and was glad to see us go. The ringleaders in this were undoubtedly Ken Price and Ian Shaw. The other is standing outside the Roebuck at Warwick well after closing time with everybody still conversing enthusiastically after an almost continuous four hours of it.

The Cheshire Get-together. 29th February, 1964.

This was held at Chester and the attendance was rather low for two reasons. I was organising it at a distance, from Derby, and couldn't make contact personally with likely members. I think it is essential for somebody local to whip up enthusiasm before the event; once get the members to the 'do' and they can't help but enjoy themselves. The second reason was that illness or other troubles kept three of the original number of eleven away. The attendance was:- Cliff Bate, 'Taff' Brissenden, 'Claud' Farrar, Les Heald, Ken Hughes, Les Lowe, Ray Page and Len Scarratt.

The Mid-Shropshire and Birkenhead contingent met me on time and after waiting for the South Lancs. we decided they must be "D.N.S." and made a start in the Chanticleer Restaurant. When we were well advanced with the meal the others arrived and by missing the wine and soup 'detours' they were soon up with the rest of the field. Adjournment to a local hostelry produced the usual 24 Hour men's reminiscences and this carried on while walking around Chester afterwards, punctuated by excited comments by Taff Brissenden about Swansea's win over Liverpool in the F.A. Cup. Reluctantly, the party broke up at about 11.45 p.m.

The Sheffield Get-together. 7th March, 1964.

This was held at The Royal Oak at Summerley, the hosts being Rutland C.C., the dinner being very well organised by George Steers. The attendance was:- Ossie Bennett, Jock Caldwell, Ron Coukham, Tony Fouldes, Don Frisby, Jim Goodwin, Jim Hall, Colin Keeton, Pat Kenny, Les Lowe, Brian Pilkington, Ken Porter, Ian Shaw, Ken Smith, Jack Spackman, George Steers, Pete Swinden, Joe Thompson, John Withers.

As a change from chop-suey we had home-made meat and potato pie and this went down very well helped by the usual hubbub of conversation. The Birmingham St. Christophers lads were a bit late after fighting against a headwind but the two Kens from Oxford had made good time and hardly mentioned the fact that they had done about 120 miles into a continuous headwind with blizzard conditions part of the way. Well done! Ian Shaw had climbed out of a 104 deg. F. influenza bed and come up by van but although still weak in body he was unaffected in other ways and the Rutland Champions were soon undergoing the 'Shaw Global Inquisition'.

To my mind the climax of the evening was when our former President, Jack Spackman, staggered in after hitch-hiking from Sleaford. After suitable refreshment Jack became his usual lively self proving that the 'Unbeatable Spackman Spirit' is still there. A word about our hosts. The Rutland C.C. is one of the greatest powers ever in 24 hour racing. They have produced three National Champions and five Championship Teams, most of these riders are still riding and in the Fellowship, and although not racing in 24's at the moment they are still helping at several of the 24's every year. We had the honour of meeting eight of them and although some are greater than others I feel it would be unfair to single out any one for special mention. Suffice it to say that the Rutland story is by no means concluded.

This event was held at an inn so that no time was wasted transferring from one building to another but even so the time was much too short. Do 24 Hour men need twenty-four hours for their social events as well?

The main thing about all these get-togethers was that:-

A good time was had BY ALL.

Les Lowe.

BLOOD TEMPERATURE

This journal has had many brilliant articles written for it by experts in their own field of training, nutrition, race management, etc., so by way of a change the writer of this present article admits that he knows practically nothing about his subject.

One of the larger advertisements that we are bombarded with in our workaday world concerns a question: "Are you one degree under?" If, according to the Ad., you are in that state then you are certainly illing up for something and a course of their tablets or whatever it is will be needed to see you well again. All this is based on the premise that "Everybody knows" (i.e. practically nobody knows) that your blood temperature is 98.4 degrees F. In actual fact most people vary between 2 deg. F. of that figure and that, as they say, is where this story really starts.

Professor Kleitman of Chicago University has done much interesting work on the subject of sleep and is reputed to be one of the world's leading authorities on it. He finds that most normal people, working by day and sleeping at night, rise to a daytime peak of 99° F. and fall to 96° or so during deepest sleep around 3 a.m. Mental and physical tests show that around "trough" times of day capabilities are far lower than nearer peaks; obvious enough and it would be of little interest if everyone was the same. But in the same way that there is no average man neither is there an average temperature graph.

In the racing world we have all met those "awful" characters who can leap out of bed at 4 a.m. on a Sunday, all cheerful and alive and turn in a storming 25, although as the day wears on (post-race weariness apart) they are often seen to get more sluggish and will seldom stay out with the boys till closing time. On the other hand there is the type who faces the timekeeper half asleep and often finishes a short-distance time trial fresher than at the start. This type usually takes most of the day to get "wound up" but can often produce flying times in evening events and is usually the King-pin at late night parties.

The above examples illustrate two extremes, the former reaching his 99° F. peak early in the day and the latter finding his several hours later. Between these are many variations and here I can only say that I seem to fit in the double-peak category in that I can 'warm up' fairly quickly and dislike going to bed early but mid-afternoon usually finds me in a drowsy state and when circumstances permit I retire to my bed for about three hours after lunch (all too infrequently I'm afraid!).

As you can see these 'Blood temperature graphs' have quite a bearing on a 24 hour ride where one will run the complete cycle of temperature variations; while some can quickly adapt themselves to change - as some shift-workers find themselves able to do - most find their temperature patterns fairly rigid. With this knowledge in mind a rider can anticipate a bad patch knowing that he can ride through it rather than blame himself for starting too fast or some other misjudgement and "spinning himself in" psychologically.

Finally I would repeat what I mentioned in the opening paragraph. My knowledge is scant and based on self-observation and a little reading. Should any reader be able to contribute something more on this aspect of distance racing both the editor and myself would like to hear from you.

P.J. Crowsley,
Southboro' & Dist. Wheelers.

Reprint No. 1. and Cloth Badge.

Members are reminded that both Reprint No. 1. at 2/6 post free containing a condensation of Journals No. 4 and 5, and an enlargement of the badge (similar to that on the cover of the Journal (mounted on cloth and intended as stickers for windjammers are available from the Editor.

THE NATIONAL 24-HOURS COMPETITION RECORDS

An Historical Review

by T.M. Barlow

Official recognition of unpaced competition records began on January 1st, 1945. Until then, we had to rely on information obtained from the Press and other sources. There was no body to investigate and adjudicate upon claims; there were no timekeeping standards applicable to time trials; and course measurement was not of guaranteed accuracy. On the other hand there is no reason to doubt that in most cases the finishing distances given on result sheets were correct within reasonable limits.

There was no question as to who held the unofficial 24-hours bicycle record at the time the Road Time Trials Council took over. He was Edgar Seeley, who had covered $444\frac{3}{4}$ miles in the Catford "24" of 1935. This was an outstanding ride, and remained unbeaten until three years after the war.

As far as I can discover, the first man to beat 400 miles in competition was Maurice Selbach, then a member of the Unity C.C., and the progression table reads as follows:-

1919	M.G. Selbach	North Road event	405 miles
1925	J.E. Holdsworth	Catford event	$408\frac{1}{2}$ miles
1927	W.A. Ellis	North Road event	$410\frac{1}{2}$ miles
1928	W.A. Ellis	North Road event	$413\frac{1}{2}$ miles
1930	W.A. Low	North Road event	$413\frac{3}{4}$ miles
1930	E.J. Doubleday	Catford event	$416\frac{1}{4}$ miles
1931	J.W. Dougal	Catford event	$430\frac{3}{4}$ miles
1935	E.B. Seeley	Catford event	$444\frac{3}{4}$ miles

The first official record was G.H. Basham's 454.2 in the North Road event of 1948. The following year did not see any improvement on this; but in 1950 Basham's record was beaten three times.

In the Western T.T.A. there was a grim duel between Eddie Mundy of the Addiscombe C.C. and Stan Butler of Norwood Paragon. Mundy finished at 3.59 p.m. at 455.91 miles, and had the satisfaction of holding the record for a few minutes. Then Butler swept past his finishing point with about six minutes still to ride, to set up another record of 458 18. But 1950 was not finished. There was still the North Road event to come; and on August 26/27 R.F. Mynott won his own club's event with a distance finally accepted by the R.T.T.C. at 459.50 miles.

Butler was hoping to regain his record in the 1951 Catford "24", but he ran into trouble and retired after 300 miles. G.A.T. Laws also was unlucky, but in a different way. He beat Mynott's distance by a fraction of a mile; but, unfortunately for him, G. Andrews, Addiscombe C.C. had finished nineteen minutes earlier with 461.31. It should be explained that competition record claims are considered in the order in which the claimants have equalled the current record. It is certainly hard luck when a man is denied recognition because of his position in the starting order, but this has happened on quite a few occasions. There usually follows an argument in favour of allowing two (or more) riders in the same event to receive certificates irrespective of their order of finishing. On the face of it, this seems reasonable; until someone asks the question: "If he ever held the record, how long did he hold it for?" Obviously, there is no answer to this. You can't hold a record for minus five minutes!

George Alfred Thomas Laws sportingly accepted the situation, but decided that next year it would be different. After months of intensive training he rode in the Catford "24" on July 5/6, 1952. He had not much opposition to face - he won by 25 miles - but, with a distance of 463.29 he got his competition record certificate. He did not hold the record for long, however, for only two months later, in the National Championship, Mundy came back with an improvement of over four miles (467.52).

Nineteen fifty-three was a blank year for 24-hour competition records; but the following year Stuart Thompson, Rutland C.C., put a further two miles on the distance, covering 469.66 miles to win the Wessex event and the National Championship in the same ride. He finished nearly twelve miles in front of the runner-up.

History repeated itself in 1955. In the Catford event, again a National Championship, Thompson battled it out through the night with Ken Price, the Cardiff 100 M.R.C. champion, and both beat the record. Thompson finished at 1.10 p.m. at 474.12 miles. Price, who had started 21 minutes behind him, went through his finishing point with 13 minutes to go; and, at 478.55 miles, became the next holder of the record and Winner of the Championship.

And now we come to the two Dennis White records. Riding in the Wessex "24" on July 21/22, 1956, the Swindon Wheeler became the first man to beat evens (unpaced) in a twenty-four. He covered 484.64 miles - a stupendous performance; but he proved that there was nothing freakish about it, for, two years later, he did it again. In the Wessex "24" of 1958 he added a fraction of a mile to his earlier distance, won the National Championship, and got himself another record certificate. In other circumstances this second distance might have started quite an argument. The course for the 1958 event was not quite the same as that used in 1956, and the question of measurement-accuracy could have been quibbled over. After all, the margin was less than 200 yards. But, fortunately, Dennis had only broken his own record, and the technicians were tactfully silent.

White's ride, although officially the current record, is not, in fact, the absolute best. This must be credited to D.J. Keeler, that remarkably versatile vegetarian who began his career as

a champion 25-miler and finished it, prior to going to live in France, as holder of the End - Man of Goats record. Keeler had covered 466 miles in the 1958 Wessex event, but not content with one twenty-four in a season, he put up a performance later, in the North Road "24", which is certainly the best all-day ride up to date. He covered over 490 miles; but, unfortunately, all was not well. Although the promoting club's result sheet credited him with the full distance covered, his claim to competition record was rejected, with great reluctance, by the R.T.T.C. National Committee on the grounds that some seven miles had been ridden away from the official course. There was nothing to be done about it, although Keeler himself had only followed the marshal's directions. The rules are quite clear; and, as others have discovered, there are no hard lines prizes in record-breaking.

Let it be said quite clearly, however, that there is conclusive evidence, in the archives, to prove that Keeler did, in fact, cover 490.31 miles, and until somebody beats this he is undoubtedly the man who has covered more miles in twenty-four hours on a bicycle than anybody else.

The Team Records

When the official tables were opened in 1945, the "men in possession" were the Vegetarian C. & A.C. team, whose aggregate distance of 1254.63 miles was accepted as the best up to that time. It was put up in the Catford "24" of 1937, and stood for ten years; after which the Luton Wheelers team (Goodman, Ellington, and Walker) pushed it up to 1283.5. Two years later the Vegetarians came back, with Purves, Shillibeer and Guy; but they added less than a mile to the Luton distance.

The problem became a question of finding a good third man, and in due course one club, at least, successfully solved it. Trained, organized, and bullied by ex-record-breaker Charlie Davey, they beat record three times in three years. In the Western T.T.A. "24" of 1950 the Addiscombe C.C. added many miles to the aggregate, bringing the record into reality, with E. Mundy, S.E. Harvey and S.E. Armstrong, who, incidentally, were 2nd, 3rd and 4th in the individual finishing list. The next year they were without Mundy, but G. Andrews filled his place with great credit, winning the Catford event easily. Andrews, Harvey and J.F. Watts formed the team. Watts had been 4th man in 1950, but this time displaced Armstrong, who did 428. The Addiscombe even had a fifth man, J.H. Trenowden, who did 427 miles.

With another ten miles added, the record was getting rather tight, but the Addiscombe had not finished with it. For the North Road "24" of 1952 they had Mundy back in their team; and it certainly proved to be his day out. He won the event (and the Championship) with a record individual distance and with Andrews and Harvey, added yet another ten miles to the team record.

The Addiscombe Records

1950		1951		1952	
Mundy	455.91	Andrews	461.31	Mundy	467.34
Harvey	455.73	Harvey	450.09	Andrews	448.50
Armstrong	440.31	Watts	440.52	Harvey	445.90
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	1341.95		1351.92		1361.74

After this we hear but little of the Addiscombe team; but by 1955 the Rutland team had arrived, and with Stuart Thompson, R. Coukham and G.A. Fouldes, the increased the aggregate by over thirty-five miles.

By now the target was at 1397.13 miles; and so it remained until the Wessex "24" three years later. This was the event in which D.H. White beat evens for the first time. Coukham and Thompson were second and third. Steers made up the team and a further five miles went on the record.

The Rutland C.C. Records

1955		1958	
Thompson	474.12	Coukham	477.43
Coukham	462.05	Thompson	469.83
Foulds	460.95	Steers	455.43
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	1397.12		1402.69

The team record, by now, represented an average of 467½ miles per man, and people began to talk about finality. But, as it turned out, there was still room for improvement. This came along in the 62nd North Road "24", held on September 3/4, 1960, in which the Middlesex Road Club took first, second and fifth individual places. F.A. Burrell won with 477.70 miles, from the amazing veteran Arch Harding (454.78). R.W.E. Poole was third man with 454.8. These mileages total 1407.23, and this is the current National Competition Team record to date. Since official records have been kept, eight successive attempts have added 153 miles.

Cycles

The name of George Lawrie appears opposite the best 24-hour tricycle distance ridden in 1945. A member of the Viking Road Club, George covered 387.37 miles in 1939.

S.W. Parker was the first to improve this. He did 391.04 in the Catford "24" on July 1949; and one week later in the Western T.T.A. promotion, his fellow clubman L.C. Holt

added another mile and a half (392.65). Next came C.A. Prior, Ilford Road Club. Riding in the 1949 Catford "24" he became the first tricyclist to cover more than 400 miles, in competition, in the day. He put the record up to 402.11.

By now the Crimes-Arnold era was in its beginning. Albert Crimes was there first, of course. He is a good bit older than John Arnold. Riding in the Mersey Roads Club "24" on July 23/24, 1949, a fortnight after the Catford, Crimes, with 411.79 miles, put more than nine miles on Prior's record. This new "best" survived for two years, by which time Arnold had come along, to add a further seven and a half miles in the 1951 Mersey Roads event.

The record now stood at 419.26, and it was Crimes' turn. He was quite equal to the call, and in 1952 - again on the Cheshire/Shropshire course - he regained the record; this time with 422.40. Incidentally I am reminded that Crimes, although a tricyclist, did not omit any of the controlled detours on this occasion. It had at last been recognised that fast tricycles could be faster than slow bicycles.

The end of the rivalry came in the Championship "24" of 1953, again a Mersey Roads promotion. As far as I know, this is the only "24" in which they competed with one another. The expected close struggle did not materialize. Not because Crimes wasn't good enough; far from it. Albert actually exceeded the record distance by nearly two miles, but John, who overtook him on the road, put up a ride which may stand out as the most remarkable tricycle performance of all time. He went through the event with only one momentary stop, and covered 457.33 miles.

At one time it seemed possible that he might actually win the event, in straight competition with the bicycles; but Peter Carter managed to hang on to a two miles lead to win both the M.R.C. event and the National Championship. John was awarded the second prize by the promoting club, but was not placed in the Championship as this was confined to two-wheeled machines. There was a lot of talk afterwards, of course; and, much later, the stable door was bolted after the horse had gone. In Championship events, wheels are now no longer counted. You can win on a tricycle - if you can beat the bicycle riders. But will anyone else ever be good enough?

The appearance of a tricycle team in a 24-hour finishing list will always be something remarkable; but it does happen, and a competition record is recognised. The current "best" is the Crouch Hill C.C.'s aggregate in the North Road "24" of 1959. On this occasion K. Usher, H. Hutchinson and H.K. James totalled 1216.53 miles.

There are no tandem 24-hour competition records; the simple reason being that there is no competition. The present position is that claims to tandem records will be considered only if the event involved is confined to tandem machines. There is, however, an unofficial tandem bicycle record. In July, 1949, E.G.E. Widdows and J.M.P. Robinson, of the Southern Elite C.C., covered 421 miles 32 yards in the Catford "24", but their claim was rejected on the grounds stated.

"Nothing Ever Happens"

by Jack Duckers.

As I start to write, it is raining hard here in Whitchurch, Salop, and that will be the main topic of conversation in the quiet, narrow, and now gloomily wet, streets of this insignificant country market town of some 7,000 inhabitants where fate, cruel or otherwise, decreed I should first see the light of day in the gracious year of 1910. Not that the fact of that perfectly natural and ordinary occurrence made the year any more gracious than another and I don't delude myself into thinking that the dry, dusty annals of Whitchurch were emblazoned by it. I grew up hearing, daily, the plaint "Nothing ever happens here" and it didn't! I remember playing marbles, climbing trees and running around bowling an iron hoop which I took, for repairs, to a blacksmith whenever it split or was knocked out of truth by violent contact with brick walls or lamp posts. How I fretted, with impatience, should the forge be in use and the smith busy hammering out shoes for a massive farm horse or aristocratic hunter.

A red letter day arrived, however, when Dad came into possession of a second, or was it fifth, hand bike. It had a great frame so high I could barely look over the top tube! Twenty-eight inch wheels, with solid tyres, the monster had, and a huge saddle way above my head. It seemed a good circus trick whenever Dad mounted by the back step on the rear wheel spindle. That feat of gymnastics was beyond me yet, like a duck to water, I was drawn to that stolid machine. In spite of being threatened by dire parental consequences if I so much as touched it, I waited long weeks for the chance to do just that. Opportunity came, eventually, on the day of a chapel outing - a great treat for the elders when they went a distance of four miles by canal barge to a deacon farmer's place for lunch and tea! Now there was only big sister to contend with, and what brother, with the slightest tact (perhaps "cunning" would be the right word), can't handle his sister? Carefully I wheeled the ancient steed on to the road. There was only one way that I could see, to tackle it and that was to thrust one leg through the frame and contort myself to reach up past the top tube to grasp the ends of the cumbersome bars. The next few hours were interspersed by a series of crashes and I lost count of the number of times I finished up either beneath or across the fallen bike. The grim contest continued far into the day until at last, bruised, bleeding and painfully sore, I managed to ride that cantankerous mount the full 600 yard length of the street without further disaster. I could now ride a bike and began to dream of the time when I would have one of my own. Dreams, however, were insufficient, so I scrimped and saved, helping the milkman, every morning, with his early deliveries, running errands for coppers and doing all kinds of distasteful odd jobs until, one blessed day, I emptied the old cocoa tin

for the last time and counted the princely sum of £3-19-6. Out came the accumulation of grubby catalogues and there was my choice - a James Grose model for just £3-19-6.

Meanwhile outside my own little personal world something was happening, yes! even in Whitchurch! The year was 1926 when half a dozen lads, with cycles, got together and founded the North Shropshire Wheelers. I will never know, and always regret, how and why I did not join them right away. Perhaps I was tainted with the local apathy which the pioneers found so hard to break down in their efforts to "sell" real cycling. It took two years to get the necessary ten members in order to affiliate to the C.T.C., yet there the club was, poised on the threshold of much wonderful touring country. Just a few pedal revolutions and in two miles one is over the North Wales border with Llangollen a mere 25 miles away. Cheshire and Staffordshire are equally close and lovely Derbyshire is well within a day's club run as are, of course, the gems of native South Salop.

My baptism into club life was an all-night ride to Meriden and I recall asking the runs captain, at the outset, how far it would be. "About 145 miles" he said, and I, in my innocence, asked if that was one way! By the time we got back home I felt as though it really had been 290!

Through the years, and the good and not so good times, the club has survived. Today the North Shropshire Wheelers' comparatively short history contains many memorable incidents of epic cycle rides, owing to the club's fortunate geographical position right on the line of the Land's End - John o' Groats route and in the centre of the Mersey Roads 24-hour course. It is on the "24" that I now ask you, dear reader, and the editor to bear with me. (Perhaps he will accept some such random notes as these, on End to End and other record rides, for a future Journal issue?) No cyclist, worthy of the name, around here has to query to what you refer when one speaks of the "M.R." for that would be tantamount to asking "Who is Beryl Burton?" Heading an unrivalled organisation are Dave Stapleton, Tom and Peter Barlow. We few clubmen, in Whitchurch, are a very small cog in a well nigh perfect machine which, on one glorious weekend every July, is triggered into motion down a lane beside the A.51, near Tarvin and six miles from Chester. There is a certain atmosphere about the start of a 24 hour road ride the like of which appertains only to this type of event and the M.R. is no exception. The lane is an annual Mecca for club-folk who crowd into it to talk cycling in general and the imminent "24" in particular. The riders, spick and span, at least at the start, in colourful outfits mingle with the throng to finalize personal arrangements with their own independent band of helpers, although so well is each competitor catered for that it is possible for the average rider to go through the M.R. with no assistance outside that provided by the promoters. The last number is called and, a minute later, the lane begins to empty for everyone has the first of many rendezvous to keep somewhere on the course. I usually slip into Tarporley for tea and, before the route was altered a year or two ago, the Bull's Head at Clotton was a genial and refreshing spot to see the riders returning from the Nantwich area and heading for Chester and, subsequently, the N. Wales coast.

Queensferry is my next vantage point in the night. There one can see the small white lights coming from two directions and also rear lights disappearing towards Nant Hall turn at 168 miles, near Prestatyn. I can't stop too long there, however, for soon the "24" begins to move across to Shropshire. Even as I head for home bedroom lights are appearing, in various parts of Whitchurch, as my club fellows arise in the small hours and prepare to receive the first man on the road out of Cheshire. The H.Q. is No. 19 Bath Street, home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Hodgkinson, who at 2-15 A.M. will be busy in a steaming kitchen filling two big thermos urns with tea. A wonderful beverage is tea, surely the cyclists' favourite on long competitive rides and outside the social season! Anyhow practically every M.R. rider accepts it as he enters the first chill hours of dawn - but I am digressing again. Our party divides and one group repairs to the town by-pass with tea and bottles.

Eventually a car arrives with Tom Barlow and Peter. They tell us when we can expect to be busy. Then they sample the tea and Tom relates an indelicate story from his repertory before moving to Hughes Hotel corner (220 miles) to control the detour down to Nantwich (230 miles). Two of our number now leave to marshal the junctions at Dodds Green (234 miles) and the other drinks team then takes up position on the other side of the town to provide for the riders covering the detour. Those "cut off" by Tom are lucky in so far that they get the chance of two drinks in little more than half a mile.

Around 7.0 a.m. the centre of activity shifts to Shawbury and the S.D.F. at Edgebolton (262 and 292 miles). In that area our Mid-Shropshire Wheeler friends, from Shrewsbury, are occupied and if one cares to miss breakfast (and it is well worth doing that!) there is plenty of interest and excitement at Prees Heath, Tern Hill and Battlefield (appropriate name that, when the M.R. is on). Come 10.30 a.m. and it is actions stations again in Whitchurch. There is the Raven Island (335½ miles) to marshal and two time checks at Wem road fork (349 and 391 miles) plus more marshalling on Hughes corner and the North Island on the Chester road. It is afternoon now and 5.0 p.m. the previous day seems a long, long time ago. Although I have tried them both (another tale Mr. Editor?) I can't decide which is the harder - to ride the M.R. or to follow it through as spectator and helper. It is a somewhat impatient wait, with heavy eyes and tired body, to see the last rider through, for now the final battle is being waged on the circuit at Waverton. A car is now essential and we pile into it for the dash to be in at the end. So we witness the sands gradually running out for each travel stained and weary rider; every man-jack a living (or half-living) tribute to the grand sport of cycling.

To finish where we came in - "Nothing ever happens in Whitchurch?" Well only once a year for me, - the M.R. "24".

persuade a third man to enter and so make a team. I am sure this adds interest to the others in the team and could help in piling up the miles.

Thanks also for the copies of the Journal which I have received. I have found them very interesting and full of information.

Thanks again for everything. See you up the road one day.

Yours,

John D. Hughes,

Dulwich Hamlet C.C.

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

Subscriptions.

In spite of the reminder in the last Journal a large number still have not paid up for 1964. Individual reminders have been sent out but these will not be received by any defaulters who have moved. Anyone knowing of such a change of address, please help by contacting me.

Badges

At the last A.G.M. a request was made for a smaller badge suitable for formal occasions such as Club dinners. Enquiries have been made and a quotation obtained for badges $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter (the size of a sixpence). The manufacture of a die is expensive, so before launching into anything, we require to know the demand. Will all members who want these badges please let me know? As our finances are not too healthy at the moment, it is unlikely that we will be able to do anything about these badges before the next A.G.M., and we would also require approval from the A.G.M. or by postal vote.

Publicity

There are still a large number of riders and helpers who may want to join the Fellowship but do not know how to contact us. We are publicising ourselves by advertising but this is expensive and we would be grateful for any help in telling non-members about our activities that you can give us.

L.E.L.

FELLOWSHIP HELPING

The Catford

The Help Organiser (Mrs. Ivy Brown) writes ".....in my position as Help Organiser, I need both riders who might like some personal help and people willing to give such aid to contact me. A scratching post is no good unless someone's back itches. I therefore look forward to a heavy mail on both sides."

The other 24's

The above naturally applies to all four 24's, - just that the Catford is not far off.

The Mersey

At our recent Rutland "do", Ron Coukham and Stuart Thompson told me that they would be over at the Mersey and would I mention to our members that they would be pleased to help a rider. It is not every day one has the chance to have help from two National Champions. Applications to Ivy Brown please.

I.C.S.

STOP PRESS:

More new members.

We welcome to the 24-Hour Fellowship the following:

Jack Duckers	North Shropshire Wheelers
George Ward	North Shropshire Wheelers
Norman Riley	C.T.C.