

No. 188—STANNARD McADAM of Limerick City

THE recent very welcome revival of interest in road racing brings to mind the colourful career of a Limerickman who won universal recognition as King of the Roadmen, and who, but for his untimely death at the early age of thirty, might have set records that would be yet unbeaten.

Stannard McAdam spent the greater portion of his cycling career giving away long handicaps to opponents, but, as he often remarked, the public always looked to the back-markers to justify themselves in the early days of the track meetings, and many a time he rode the heart out of himself to hear their shouts of approval as he made up ground upon his opponents.

FIRST APPEARANCE.

His first appearance, as far as I can discover from thumbing old press reports, was at the old Limerick A.A. and B.C. Sports, held on June 16th, 1886.

The newspaper description of that gathering is worth reproducing:—

"This important annual festival was celebrated in an exceptionally successful manner on last Wednesday, the venue as heretofore being the spacious Markets Field on the outskirts of the city. The energetic promoters eclipsed all their previous exertions in organising the meeting under notice, and William Stokes, Bruce Murray, John McNamara, A. J. Eakins, B. Plumer, W. de Courcey, Charley Gubbins and E. J. Meade, with the popular, call steward and lap keeper, Andrew Murray, were well recompensed for their arduous labours by sports which, in justice, must be described as among the best ever held in any part of this sporting nation.

"The weather, which until recently, has proved so unfavourable to outdoor pastimes, was singularly propitious, and enabled a numerous and brilliant assemblage of the gentler sex to appear on the scene decked out in the faultlessly graceful fashion which is needed to do justice to the surpassing natural endowments for which the fair women of the historic city on the Shannon, enjoy such a world wide fame. The 'noble animal' himself was almost profuse in his patronage, so that in point of attendance there was no need for cavilling.

"The decision of the programme was productive of magnificent contests for which large fields turned out in almost every instance while the intervals only furnished fresh enjoyment in the delightful music discoursed by the band of the Second Leinster Regiment.

THE RESULTS.

100 Yards Steeplechase: J. Coll (70 yards), won by a foot, but

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missed a hurdle and suffered disqualification. One Mile Cycle (novices): T. S. Lowry (scr.), 3m. 49s.; won: M. Trehy (20 yards), second. One Mile Cycle (open): T. S. Lowry (70 yards), 3m. 24s., first; S. McAdam (70 yds.), second; H. McGhie (60 yards), third. Three Mile Cycle (open): T. S. Lowry (210 yards), 9m. 44s., first; S. McAdam (210 yards), second, B. Fielding, third. Two mile Cycle (confined): T. S. Lowry (scr.), 7m. 31 2-5ths s., first; S. McAdam (scr.), second; H. McGhie (scr.), third. Putting 16 lbs. shot, P. Lipsett, Kilfinane, 40 ft. 5 ins., first, James Mitchell Emly, second. 100 Yards Flat—D. Costelloe, Limerick, 10 3-5 s., first; P. J. Corbett, Newmarket-on-Fergus, second; Frank O'Dea, Parteen, third. Long Jump—M. A. Sweeney, Dublin, 23 ft. 6 ins., first; W. Tisdall, Bantry, second. Half Mile Flat—P. Clara, Newmarket, first; Denis O'Neill, Cork, second; H. Croker, third. Two Miles Walk—M. Hickey, Newmarket, first; Patrick Hogan, Limerick, second; Lawrence O'Connor, Waterford, third. High Jump—M. Connery, Kilfinane, 5 ft. 10 ins., first; C. Hickey, Clonmel, second. 300 Yards Flat—M. A. Sweeney, Dublin, first; John Purcell, Dublin, second. One Mile Flat Challenge Cup—James Sheehy (scr.), 5 m. 3-5 s., first; J. F. Barry (70 yds.), second; W. E. Frost (scr.), third. 60 Yards Flat (novices)—J. F. Barry, first; P. J. Corbett, second. Running Hop, Step and Jump—D. Shanahan, 49 ft. 7 ins., first; M. Connery, second. Throwing 16 lbs. Hammer (7 ft. circle)—P. Lipsett, 139 ft. 7 ins., first."

DEBUT IN DISTINGUISHED COMPANY.

McAdam made his debut in distinguished company, but first indication of his real greatness was reserved for the following Wednesday when he competed at the Waterford Bicycle Club Sports and made a clean sweep of the big events there, winning the Four Mile Cycle South of Ireland Championship in 13 m. 30 2-5 s., the One Mile Cycle in 3 m. 4 s. and the Three Mile Cycle in 10 m. 15s.

One of the best races of his career was at the North Tipperary G.A.A. Sports, where in the One Mile Cycle event he had a great tussle with T. S. Lowry, and won a most exciting contest by half a wheel.

At the L.A.A. and B.C. meeting in 1887, he gave first indication of his prowess over the longer distances by winning the Ten

Mile Cycle event. On the same occasion he notched another victory over T. S. Lowry, whom he beat over three miles.

A year later at the same gathering he collected first prizes in the one, two, and three mile cycle races, with Blakeney Gubbins in second place in all three.

He won the half and one mile cycle at the Freemans' Journal Sports at Ballsbridge, Dublin in August, 1888, and two years later figured in the "battle of the machines" at L.A.A. and B.C. Sports, where the Pneumatic and High Cycles were in opposition. On that occasion he took the honours over three and five miles.

FIFTY MILES CHAMPIONSHIP OF IRELAND.

Stannard McAdam popularised road racing in Limerick when he travelled to Dublin on September 12th, 1891, and won the Fifty Mile Cycling Championship of Ireland over the Phoenix Park course, his time of 2 hours, 50 minutes, 8 seconds, being a record for the distance.

Shortly afterwards many such events were held in the Limerick district, particularly over the Rosbrien, Ardnacrusha and Blackwater courses.

On June 8th, 1893, P. J. Kenna won the Twenty Five Mile Championship of the World at Ballsbridge, Dublin, his time being 1 hour 12 minutes 23 two fifths seconds. Twenty competed including Zimmerman (New York), E. O'Callaghan (Cork) and A. Watson (London).

Stannard McAdam won the Ten Miles Championship of Ireland three years in succession at Portadown, held the Twenty and Twenty Five Mile Championships and the record for the former distance for two years. He made a world's record at Waterford on the occasion of the opening of the Goff Track.

ON THE OLD SOLID TYRED BICYCLE.

All his early victories were secured on the old solid tyred bicycle, but on the appearance of the pneumatic tyre he quickly adapted himself to the changed conditions, and won his fifty miles title on the new machine.

In addition to proving a great cyclist he was keenly interested in the administrative side of athletics. Hon. Secretary of the L.A.A. and B.C. for several years, he managed many famous athletic meetings.

Athletics and cycling lost a big figure by the untimely passing of Stannard McAdam, which sad event occurred on March 12th, 1896, to the universal regret of the many friends he had made during his all too short but brilliant cycling career.