

PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY NEWS CHRONICLE

The PARIS-LONDON Anglo-French Road Race  
May 24/25/26

On Whitsaturday, May 24, sixty racing cyclists will set off from Le Bourget airfield, Paris, on a 250 miles (check) journey to London, competing for the honour of winning the first-ever road cycle race linking the two capitals. The event, promoted by the News Chronicle, has attracted wide interest, not only in England and France, but in all European countries where cycling ranks as a number one sport. The field of sixty is composed of crack British riders (selected by the National Cyclists' Union and the Road Time Trials Council) and the cream of French riders (selected by the Federation Francaise de Cyclisme). All are amateurs, and apart from having their incidental expenses met en route, they have to provide their own machines (a good racing bicycle, with multiple change speed gears, costs around £37) and all equipment. A £400 Gold Trophy is the team award for the successful country but the reward for the winner is the comparatively small prize value of £15, the maximum permitted under the N.C.U. rules, but the men are fighting for something greater than that. Both countries have agreed to use the results of the race to determine the riders they will later enter in the world's cycling championships (in August) and, on a long-term basis, the team for the Olympic Games road cycle race of next year.

The type of racing common in France is vastly different from that practiced in England. Abroad, they use the massed start principle, that is, all the riders start in one group, and race together (until split up by the attacks of the leaders) towards the far off finishing line, where the first man over the line is the winner. Here, we use the time trial system, in which the men start off one by one, separated by an interval of one minute. Each rider is individually timed, and the man with the lowest time is the winner.

In order to make the race fair to both teams, the News Chronicle have arranged that the section of the race in France will be run under French rules, while, in England, normal British rules apply.

Each rider will be separately timed over his French stages and again over the English section, and by the addition of the total times, the winner will be determined.

The field starts from Paris on the Saturday, May 24, and races, massed start, to Lens, a mining centre in the north of France, finishing after 115 miles at the local cycling track. After an overnight stop in Lens, the race resumes, still under French conditions from Lens to Calais (63½ miles)., finishing on the main road, in front of the Town Hall.

Owing to the holiday traffic it was not possible to arrange for a cross channel passage from Calais, so the riders are then transported by bus to Boulogne, where the Southern Railway's Autocarrier (specially reserved for the occasion) will be waiting to take them over to Folkestone, which they reach at 6 p.m. (Sunday).

The next morning, after being received by the Mayor of Folkestone on the sea front, the riders set off for the "secret" starting point of the last stage of their journey. For, to avoid congestion on the roads, and to conform with British rules, exact details of start, etc., are restricted to the riders, officials, etc.

From the starting point outside Folkestone, the riders will be despatched one by one, first a British cyclist, then a French, and so on in alternate order, at one minute intervals. Reaching the outskirts of London, the riders cross another "secret" check point, where their racing time is recorded. From then on the race is neutralised, until the riders enter Herne Hill track, Burbage Road, London, S.E. Here another timekeeper picks them up, and records their time for the final leg of the journey one lap (503 yards) of the track.

As each man arrives, all his times over the various sections will have been totalled, so that within a second of his crossing the line which marks the end of Paris-London, his total time for the 235 miles from Paris can be announced.

The first man in may not be the winner.. as each subsequent rider arrives, so the totals will emerge, and the lead change from minute to minute. It may well be that the issue will be left in doubt until the very last man gets in to Herne Hill track, and, in view of the even-ness of the field, it can happen that the time taken over the final 503 yards may make all the difference between a win for England..or for France.

The first man is expected to arrive at Herne Hill tract at 3 p.m. approximately, but, in support of the arrival of the roadmen, a full programme of track events has been arranged, starting at 2 p.m., between track teams representing England and France, together with open events over the usual distances.

In spite of the great number of track meetings arranged for Whitmonday, all over the country, the entry for the News Chronicle's Paris-London track meeting has been so great that preliminary heats for the open events will be necessary, starting at 1 p.m., so that only the finals will be run off during the meeting proper.

The French team will be captained by Henri Sensever, the current amateur sprint champion of that country, and he will be supported, in the sprint events, by Jackie Lanners and Fernand Vidal. They will be opposed by the unbeatable Reg. Harris (British amateur sprint champion), Alan Bannister (both being from Manchester) and the London crack, Lew Pond of the Polytechnic. Each rider will ride in turn against all three of the visitors, making a total of nine "two-up" sprint matches, with points deciding.

The remaining four of the French team will be Francis Brizon, Alain Moineau, Serge Blusson and Georges Jeannot. They will compete in a 4,000 metres team pursuit race, and a 4,000 metres individual pursuit race against a British team.

The N.C.U. have selected as their opponents, Tommy Godwin (Rover), Dave Ricketts (Polytechnic), R.W.Cassey (East Midlands Clarion) and J.L.R.Gates (Maidenhead).

All the foreign visitors, together with the British stars will be competing in other events on the programme, including the final race, a 30 minutes Madison. This is, in effect, a miniature "six days" bicycle race, being run on the same principle, between teams of two riders who relay each other at will, the team covering the greatest number of laps being the winners.

A limited number of reserved seats are available, from The News Chronicle, (Paris-London), Bouverie St., London, E.C.4., price, grandstand, 7/6, sidestands, 4/6, enclosures in front of stands, 4/6, all prices including tax. Meeting starts at 2 p.m. prompt, Monday May 26, with preliminary heats from 1 p.m. onwards.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

In accordance with the rules of the British cycling bodies concerned, it is requested that no publication be made of the exact details of the start and route of the Folkestone to London stage.

+ The Gold Trophy presented by the News Chronicle will be held by the winning team for one year. This trophy will revert to the News Chronicle in the event of the race being discontinued under their sponsorship.

Procedure - Sunday May 25th

The Autocarrier with the British and French teams and accompanying officials, is due to arrive Folkestone Harbour at 6 p.m. (D.B.S.T.) On landing, the two teams will be taken through the Customs as quickly as possible and escorted to the "Auto-Pilot" Garage at the foot of the quay. Here they will park their bicycles for the night.

Maintenance facilities have been laid on, but it is essential that the riders do not start any work at this juncture. From here they will all be escorted to the BRISTOL Hotel, 3, The Leas, approximately three minutes walk from the garage. At the hotel they will be met by hotel escorts and, according to the tickets issued to them on the boat, they will split to put their suitcases in their rooms.

They will eat in two parties: one at 7.15 p.m., second party 7.45 p.m. at the BRISTOL Hotel. From the organisers' point of view it is left to the good sense of the riders to have an early night.

The race officials hotel is the PIER Hotel, near the harbour entrance.

The News Chronicle control is at the QUEENS Hotel in the centre of the town.

Dinner for the officials at the PIER Hotel has been arranged for 8 o'clock.

The Conference of Race Officials is to be held at the QUEENS Hotel between 7 and 8 in a private room booked in the name of the News Chronicle.

Whit Monday, May 26th

First breakfast for riders	7.30 a.m.	BRISTOL Hotel
Second " " "	8.0 a.m.	" "
Maintenance time for riders	8.0 a.m. to 9.45 a.m.	
Call-Over for riders at rendezvous,	BRISTOL Hotel, 3 The Leas, on	
the grass verge on the Front ....	10.0 a.m.	
All officials to meet at this point.		
Riders will load their packed suit-cases into the van		
provided by the News Chronicle at 10.0 a.m.		

At 10.35 a.m. riders will be escorted 500 yards along the Front to the Leas Cliff Hall Open-Air stand. They will park their bicycles in the space provided and will be ready lined up at 10.45 a.m. to be received by the Mayor of Folkestone, Alderman Howard Hughes, J.P.

Procedure: All Race Officials will be presented first and a nominated British official will introduce the British team and a nominated French official will introduce the French team. The Mayor will then wish the riders luck and God speed.

11.10 a.m. - all riders will be ready with their bicycles to move off under police escort, who have closed the roads to the start point, which is the STAR INN, NEWINGTON, just outside the built-up area of Folkestone.

Points on Star Inn: There is a wide drive-in and a large garden. All riders 1 - 20 will wait in the drive-in. Higher numbers may go into the garden until called.

Time of start of race 11.30 a.m. EXACT.

Special points for Race Officials Watches will be synchronised at first rendezvous at 10 a.m. Car allocation will be made on a separate detail to all officials.

IMPORTANT: In order that the start time is rigidly adhered to, it is asked that full co-operation of every one is given to assist in whatever way possible to see that the programme is carried out as stated above.

INFORMATION FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PARIS-LONDON

NOTE: This detail, when finally checked and approved, will be in the hands of all officials concerned with the start, route and finish of the Race.

FOLKESTONE Monday May 26th

PROCEDURE. After the Mayoral Reception, riders and officials will proceed under Police escort to the start point, which is the STAR INN, NEWINGTON. The route, as selected by the Traffic Dept. of the Kent County Police is as follows:-

The race starts on the A20 and leads to NEW INN GREEN, continues along the A 20 to SELLINGE, WILLESBORO and turns right along the B 2164 to SPEAR POINT CORNER. The route then goes to the left along the A 28 to the west side of ASHFORD, joining the A 20 again and continuing through CHAR ING, LENHAM and along the A 20 where a right turn is made to BEARSTED through AYLESFORD, where the level crossing check will be made. From there the route goes to DITTON along the A 20 to WROTHAM HEATH, thence to WROTHAM FARNINGHAM FOOTS CRAY fork. The left fork is taken which takes the riders along the SIDCUP BY-PASS to CRITTALL'S CORNER.

The first set of traffic lights will be met half a mile further on. (NOTE: Police advice is awaited as to the possibilities of finishing at BEAVERS WOOD further up the road where there is a wide grass verge. At some point along this route the exact finish will be defined). Metropolitan Police advice is to finish south of first lights at Perry Street Crossroads. This is being conformed with.

The riders when they have been flagged will be picked up by an escort and ridden to Herne Hill where they will complete one lap, which will be timed.

DETAILS AS TO FINISH. Each rider as he approaches the mile mark from the finish point will be flagged. He will be flagged again at a quarter mile from the finish point, which will indicate his last effort. A chequered flag will be used for the exact finish.

NOTE: Route maps with Marshals' positions will be supplied to all race officials when they are ready. A route map of the London area is being supplied to all escorts and will be in the hands of all officials.

Translations will be done for the French riders which they will receive in their packets at Folkestone, which will give them ample opportunity of studying conditions over night.

A schedule of prizes for the Road Race will be issued as a separate detail together with rules of the race itself.

NEWS CHRONICLE PARIS-LONDON ROAD RACE

Schedule for Officials and Marshalls

Approximate time of first and last man past specified route points.

<u>FOLKESTONE</u>		<u>First Man</u>	<u>Last Man</u>
Star Inn, Newington.	<u>START TIME</u>	<u>11.30</u>	<u>12.29</u>
New Inn Green		11.44	12.34
Sellinge		11.51	12.41
Willesborough		12.02	12.52
Spearpoint Corner		12.08	12.58
Ashford		12.13	1.03
Charing		12.26	1.16
Lenham		12.45	1.35
Aylesford		1.07	1.57
Ditton		1.09	1.59
Wrotham Heath		1.23	2.13
Wrotham		1.28	2.18
Farningham		1.45	2.35
Footscray Fork		1.58	2.48
Crittalls Corner		2.01	2.51