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See Page 114 in this Issue.

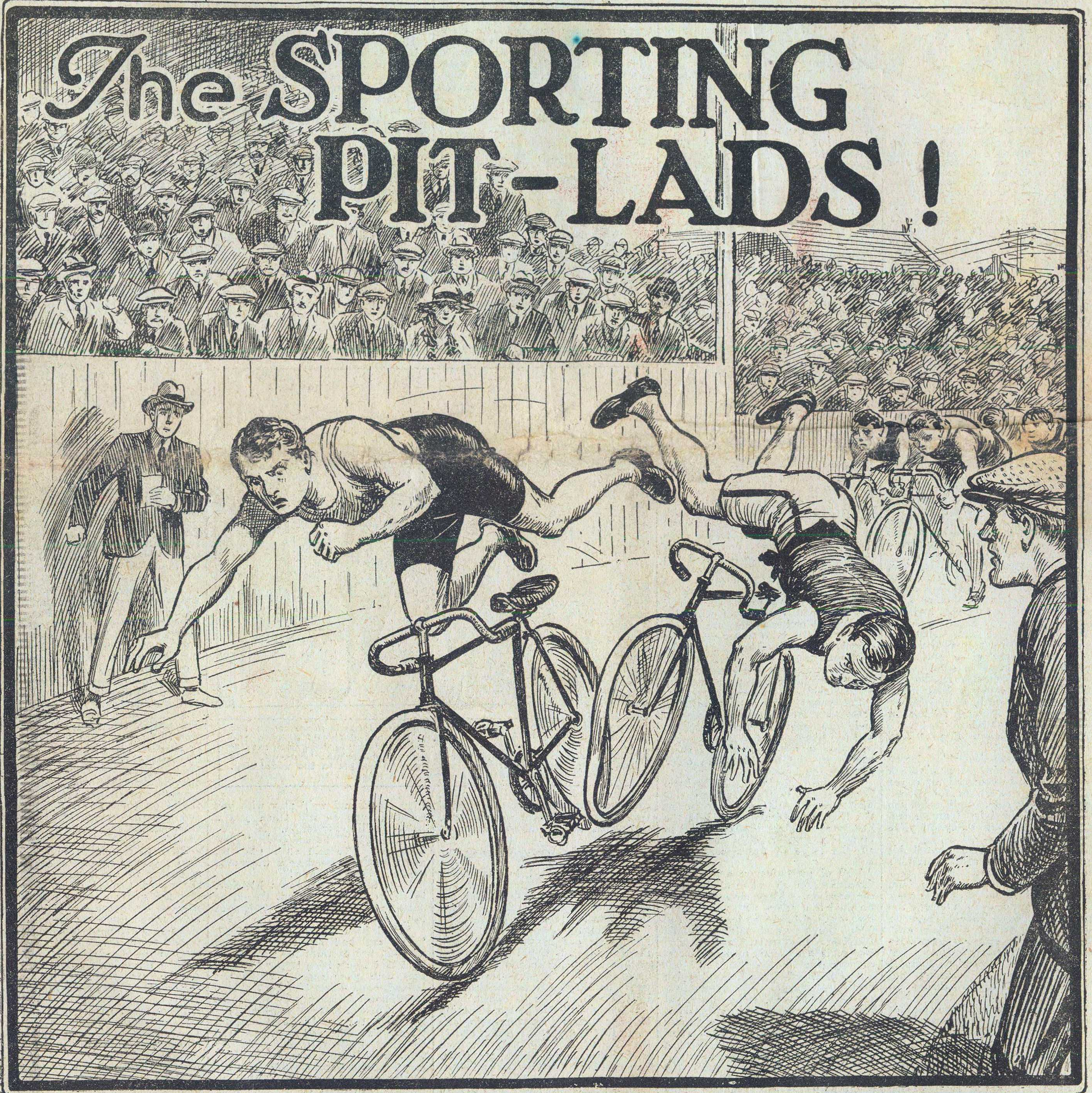
The BOYS' FRIEND ^{1d}/₂

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THE WORLD-FAMOUS BOYS' PAPER!

[Week Ending September 23rd, 1922.]



FOULED ON THE LAST LAP!

The Champion Cyclist of the Sporting Pit-lads is robbed of victory by a pre-arranged "accident."
(A thrilling incident from the magnificent story of the North included in this number.)

JIMMY SILVER & CO. AGAIN MEET GRUNDY OF ST. JIMS!



The Rookwood Recruits!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")

The 1st Chapter.

Only a Misunderstanding!

"After us?" said Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Looks like it!" agreed Jimmy Silver. Jimmy Silver & Co. looked back along the white road with smiling faces.

The Rookwood holiday-tramps were following a lane in Berkshire a few miles from Newbury, when Lovell happened to glance back and spot the pursuer on the path.

A rather hefty-looking youth, with a rugged face that was now crimson with exertion, was pedalling on the track of the Rookwooders, his head bent over the handle-bars of his bicycle.

"It's Grundy!" said Putty Grace.

"That St. Jim's ass!" said Newcome.

"Looking for more trouble!" grinned Raby. "Well, let's stop for him, and give him all the trouble he wants!"

Jimmy Silver nodded assent. "May as well," he agreed. "If Grundy wants to be bumped again, no reason to deny him that pleasure."

Trotsky the pony halted. Jimmy Silver hooked the reins over a wayside stump. Leaving the baggage-cart by the roadside, the five Rookwood juniors gathered in the middle of the lane to wait for Grundy to come up.

They waited for him with grinning faces.

It was only the day before that they had fallen in with George Alfred Grundy of the Shell at St. Jim's—a youth whom they knew slightly, and were not anxious to know better.

Grundy with Wilkins and Gunn of his cycling tour in Berkshire. A tramp had stolen the party's bicycles, and Jimmy Silver & Co. had recaptured them—and Grundy's way of expressing his gratitude for services rendered was so original that the Rookwooders had given him a bumping before they left him.

After that bumping, George Alfred Grundy had been in no state to avenge his outraged dignity, and the Rookwooders had gone on their road, not expecting to see him again.

They had camped for the night a mile from the village of Weededge, and taken the road again in the morning, thinking of anything in the world but Grundy of St. Jim's.

So it was rather a surprise to see the burly St. Jim's fellow scorching on their track in the sunny morning.

But if Grundy wanted more trouble they were prepared to give it to Grundy, and they waited cheerfully for him to come up.

Grundy came along at a great rate, driving hard at the pedals. He slowed down a little as he saw that Jimmy Silver & Co. had halted, but he came up with a terrific rush, and swept past the group in the lane before he could stop. Then he turned his machine to ride back to them.

The lane was not a wide one, and wheeling round on a bicycle was a rather delicate operation. From what they had already seen of George Alfred Grundy and his ways, the Rookwooders expected to see him curl up with his machine and land with a crash. Grundy did not do exactly that; he only ran into the hedge.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Grundy. The machine went over, and the St. Jim's fellow sat in the grass beside the lane and spluttered.

Then Jimmy Silver & Co. "weighed in." They surrounded Grundy, and laid hold of him. So far as they could see, Grundy had come for another bumping, and the bumping was ready. Five pairs of hands were laid on the Shell fellow, and he was swept off the ground.

Bump!

Grundy smote the ground again with a loud concussion, and a louder yell.

"Whooooo!"

"Give him another!" chuckled Lovell.

"Here! Leggo! Wharrer you at? You—"

Bump!

"Oh, my hat! You cheeky rotters! Ow! I—"

Bump!

"Yaroooooh!"

"Perhaps that's enough," said Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "It rests with Grundy! Is that enough, Grundy?"

"Grooooo!"

"If you want any more, say so," said Lovell, with a chortle. "It's on tap, you know!"

"Ooooooooh!"

"Yes or no?" demanded Putty of the Fourth.

Grundy sat and blinked at the Rookwooders. He seemed quite taken by surprise, and he was breathless.

"You—you—you silly chumps!" he gasped.

"Give him another!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leggo!" roared Grundy, as the Rookwood juniors closed round him again.

"Hands off! Wharrer you at? Wharrer you mean? I'll lick you all round—I'll pulverise you—I'll—I'll— Oh—ooop!"

Bump!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell. "That will do! Now let's get going. Grundy won't follow us any farther."

And the Rookwooders, chuckling, left the St. Jim's fellow to his own devices, and returned to the baggage-cart and Trotsky. Grundy spluttered for breath.

"You silly owls!" he hooted.

"Hallo! Do you want some more?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"Wharrer you mean by this?" howled Grundy. "I came after you to speak to you—"

"What?"

"To ask you to play cricket—"

"Eh?"

"And you set on me like this!" roared Grundy. "Wharrer you mean by it?"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Jimmy

"But what did you want with us?" asked Jimmy. "What's the trouble?"

Grundy restrained his wrath with difficulty. Apparently he had followed the Rookwooders with pacific intentions to ask something of them. Whatever it was he wanted, he was not likely to gain his object by starting a frontal attack. Even Grundy realised that, and he calmed down. He dusted his clothes, and picked up his bicycle, grunting. Jimmy Silver & Co. waited politely for him to explain. They were rather curious to know what he wanted; he had mentioned cricket, and if there was any cricket going, Jimmy Silver & Co. were quite ready to bear a hand. They had their cricket outfit in the baggage-cart, but they had not had many opportunities on their tour, so far, for playing the game.

"This dashed thing's twisted," grunted Grundy.

"Do you always dismount like that, Grundy?" inquired Putty Grace innocently.

Grundy stared at him.

"Of course not, you ass! I ran into the hedge." It was one of the great Grundy's gifts that he never could see when his leg was being pulled. "Of all the

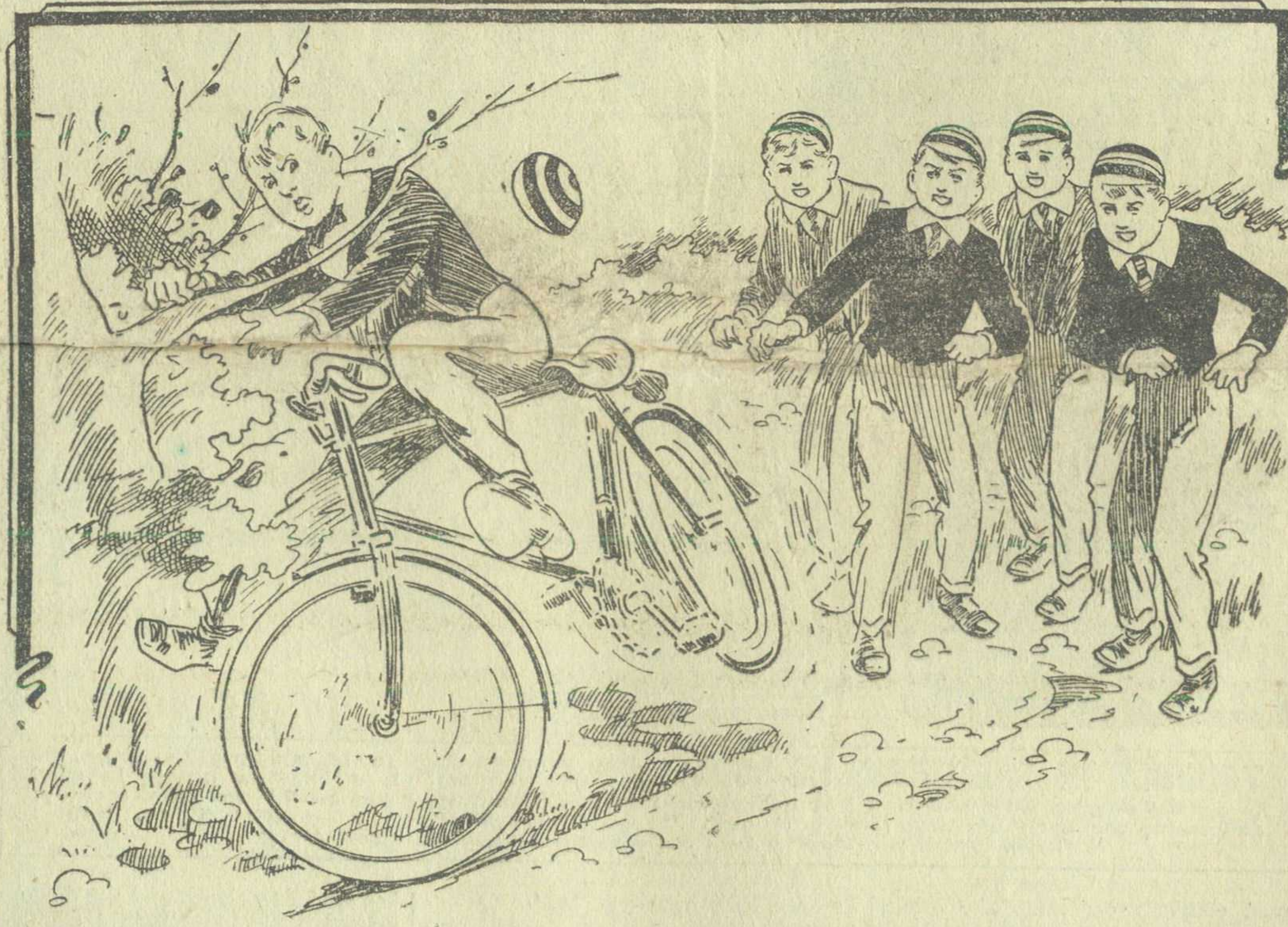
"I don't see where the cackle comes in," he said. "But, to cut it short, I made up my mind to give the chaw-bacons a lesson. With Wilkins and Gunn and me, that's three—counting me as four, that's six. You fellows don't know much about my cricket, of course, but you can take my word for it that in a junior game I should count as four ordinary players."

"Oh, we're to take your word for that!" stammered Jimmy Silver.

"Yes. As a matter of fact, I should be quite prepared to take on the Weed-edge yokels with a team of three, and that really was my idea at first. But Wilkins and Gunn kicked. I punched Gunn's head, and rubbed Wilkins' nose in the grass, but somehow that only made them more obstinate—they simply refused to go in for it."

"You don't say so!" ejaculated Putty.

"I do. Then I thought of you chaps," said Grundy. "Rather lucky we met yesterday. Of course, I know you're only a set of Fourth-Form kids, and probably not much good at cricket. But, with the



GRUNDY COMES A CROPPER! Down the lane came George Alfred Grundy at a terrific rate. He swept past the Rookwooders before he could stop, and then, in trying to turn back, he ran into the hedge. His machine collapsed, and he sat down in the grass beside the lane and spluttered.

Silver. "You—you—you didn't come after us to look for trouble?"

"No, you dummy!"

"You—you weren't on the warpath?" gasped Lovell.

"No, you silly owl!"

The Rookwooders stared at Grundy, and looked at one another. Evidently there had been a misunderstanding. It had been a painful misunderstanding for George Alfred Grundy, but the Rookwooders saw the comic side of it, and they roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The 2nd Chapter.

Recruits Wanted!

George Alfred Grundy staggered to his feet. He was dusty, he was breathless, and he was wrathful. Jimmy Silver & Co. could not help chortling. The misunderstanding had been a natural one, from what they knew of Grundy. But evidently they had been a little hasty. Grundy looked inclined to run amuck among the Rookwooders, hitting out right and left.

"Sorry!" gasped Jimmy Silver at last. "Our mistake! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling ass!"

"Awfully sorry!" chuckled Lovell. "Naturally we thought you were hunting trouble, you know."

"You dummy!"

"Never mind," said Jimmy cheerily. "Keep smiling, Grundy! Mistakes will happen!"

"I've a jolly good mind—"

fathered questions. I think that takes the cake. I shall have to get this machine repaired somewhere. Never mind now; you can stick it on your cart."

"On our cart?" repeated Jimmy Silver.

"Yes; as you're coming back with me."

"Oh, we're coming back with you?" asked Lovell.

"Yes; get a move on!"

The Rookwooders stared at Grundy. He had not stated yet precisely what he wanted, but he was taking it for granted, obviously, that the answer would be in the affirmative. That was Grundy's way. Grundy had a great respect for his own opinion, and a lofty disregard for anybody else's.

The Rookwood juniors watched him, as if fascinated, while he lifted the damaged bike on the baggage-cart.

"Come on!" said Grundy.

"But perhaps we're not coming back!" gasped Jimmy. "Suppose you tell us what's wanted first."

"I'll tell you as we go along."

"You'll tell us before we start, old bean," chuckled Raby. "Otherwise you can lift your damaged goods off our cart and say good-bye."

"Don't be a fool!" said Grundy.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Fool! And don't jaw! I have enough jaw from Wilkins and Gunn. Now get a move on. We're wasting time."

Jimmy Silver smiled.

"We've bumped that chap four times," he said. "Now he wants a fifth! Well, we'll give him what he wants."

"Hold on—I mean keep off!" roared Grundy. "What's this game? I tell you

I want you to come back to Weededge at once. Isn't that enough?"

"Not quite," said Jimmy Silver. "We'll give you just one minute to tell us what you want. Now go ahead."

Grundy snorted.

"I suppose I'd better explain," he said ungraciously. "We're wasting time, but I'll explain. We're making Weededge our headquarters at present, and I've fixed up a cricket match. There's a village team of sorts in Weededge—not bad for a little village team—of course, not my style of cricket."

The Rookwooders smiled. They had heard something of Grundy's style of cricket from Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's.

"Being in the place," continued Grundy, "I took some notice of them—kindness, you know. I offered to captain them in their matches as long as I stayed on, and give them some tips in real cricket. You'd hardly believe that young Wegg, their skipper, refused my offer—actually laughed. I know it sounds rather thick, but he did."

The Rookwooders laughed, too; they could not help it. Grundy glared at them.

"I don't see where the cackle comes in," he said. "But, to cut it short, I made up my mind to give the chaw-bacons a lesson. With Wilkins and Gunn and me, that's three—counting me as four, that's six. You fellows don't know much about my cricket, of course, but you can take my word for it that in a junior game I should count as four ordinary players."

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"You don't say so!" ejaculated Putty.

"I do. Then I thought of you chaps," said Grundy. "Rather lucky we met yesterday. Of course, I know you're only a set of Fourth-Form kids, and probably not much good at cricket. But, with the

that the Rookwooders would come in useful as cricket recruits, and he had set out on his bike to look for them. Fortunately, he had found them. He did not disguise his opinion that probably they wouldn't be much use in the game; but that, as he explained, did not really matter, as he, George Alfred Grundy, was quite capable of playing the Weededge lot on his lonesome own. What he wanted was some players—duds would do—to keep the game alive while he piled up runs, or took wickets, as the case might be. Alone he could have beaten Weededge; but even Grundy, wonderful cricketer as he was, he could not keep up the wicket at both ends at once—neither could he bowl and field and keep wicket single-handed. Recruits were needed, and it was a case, as Grundy said frankly, of "any old thing would do." Jimmy Silver & Co. did not seem flattered at being told that they were the "old things that would do." But that did not matter; it was not Grundy's object to flatter them!

Grundy was still talking when the outfit arrived at the Red Cow in Weededge, where they found Wilkins and Gunn, and lunch. Trotsky and the baggage-cart were put up, and the Rookwooders went into the inn. Wilkins and Gunn eyed them rather curiously.

"You fellows agreed to play for Grundy?" Wilkins asked.

"That's it," said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh dear! Then we're in for it."

"Rotten!" said Gunn.

"Don't you fellows care for cricket?" asked Lovell, in surprise.

"Not Grundy's sort!" answered Wilkins. "You see—"

But George Alfred Grundy came in just then, and Wilkins did not explain further. But he seemed rather depressed at lunch, and Gunn shared his feelings.

The 3rd Chapter.

Grundy's Programme!

Grundy of St. Jim's was in a cheery mood at lunch. He was almost civil to the Rookwooders, and he did not call Wilkins and Gunn duffers and fatheads more than a dozen times. Evidently he was in high good-humour. The lunch was good, and it was ample, and the Rookwooders did it full justice. Whether Grundy could play cricket or not, or talk sense or not, he knew how to stard a lunch, and his hospitality, at least, was unbounced. Soon after lunch was over, a chubby-faced youth came to the Red Cow to see Grundy, and Jimmy Silver & Co. understood that this was Wegg, the skipper of the Weededge local-junior team. Wegg was a rather powerful fellow of about seventeen, with a good-tempered face, and the Rookwooders thought that he found Grundy of the Shell entertaining. Grundy greeted him in a lofty and patronising manner.

"Ready for a whopping?" he asked.

"Quite—if you can give us one!" answered Wegg good-humouredly. "But where's your team? I haven't seen the fellows about."

"Only eight of us," said Grundy. "There would have been only three—"

"Eh?" said Wegg.

"Three! But I've picked up five kids to play. Not much class at cricket; but, of course, miles ahead of your yokels!"

Wegg looked at Grundy rather fixedly. Jimmy Silver was not a thought-reader, but he could see that Wegg was debating in his mind whether to punch Grundy's nose. But Grundy was quite unconscious of having uttered anything calculated to give offence.

"Oh!" said Wegg at last. "I took it for granted, of course, that you had an eleven, as you challenged me to a match!"

Grundy smiled.

"I could play your team entirely off my own bat!" he explained. "The others won't have much to do—hardly anything, in fact. You'll find eight of us quite enough to deal with, I assure you!"

"There's some lads of the village who would play for you," said Wegg. "Better make up a full eleven."

Grundy laughed.

"We don't want any help, thanks!" Wegg looked rather restless.

"I've fixed it up and told the fellows," he said. "Otherwise I wouldn't play the match, I think. It's rather late to scratch now."

"Scratch!" exclaimed Grundy, in astonishment. "What is there to scratch for? I don't follow!"

"Oh, all right!" said Wegg. "Stumps pitched at half-past two. That suit you?"

"Right as rain!"

"Then we'll expect you on the green."

"Right-ho!" said Grundy.

And Wegg walked away, apparently not quite satisfied with the interview. Grundy looked at his followers with a smile.

"I don't suppose it will last a couple of hours," he remarked. "We sha'n't have to bat twice, of course."

"No 'of course' about it!" said Wilkins rather tartly. "I've watched those village kids at play, and they're rather hot stuff in their own way!"

"Hardly my style!" grinned Grundy.

"Oh, no! Not at all your style!" said Wilkins, with a sarcasm that was quite lost on George Alfred Grundy.

"If we bat first," said Grundy thoughtfully, "I'll declare at fifty. They'll never make that in both their innings with me bowling!"

"Are you going to bowl all the time, Grundy?" inquired Putty Grace, with his most innocent look.

"That's impossible!" said Grundy. "The rules wouldn't allow it. You don't seem to know much about cricket! But I shall put in all the bowling the rules of the game allow, and put them out of their misery, you know! You kids had better look out for the catches I shall give you. You really won't be wanted to bat!"

"How's that?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"You see, I shall open the innings with Wilkins, and Gunn will follow Wilkins in—"

"More likely to follow you in!" interjected Wilkins.

"Don't be a silly idiot, Wilkins! Gunn will follow Wilkins in," resumed Grundy, "and by that time I shall have made fifty. Then I shall declare the innings closed, and let the chaw-bacons come in."

"And where do we come in?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Eh? You don't come in at all!"

"Have you brought us here to stand around and watch you bat, then?"

"Yes, it amounts to that!" assented Grundy, with a nod.

"Well, you cheeky idiot—"

"What?" roared Grundy.

"Peace, my infants!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "It's possible—barely possible—that Grundy may lose his wicket."

Lovell burst into a chuckle. According to Grundy's programme, there was little for the Rookwooders to do but to stand about and watch the wonderful exploits of George Alfred Grundy, an occupation to which they had no desire whatever to devote the afternoon. But it was very probable that the game would not work out according to Grundy's masterly programme.

The juniors changed into their flannels, and Grundy led his flock to the village green. Wegg and his merry men were there, knocking a ball about while they waited. Jimmy Silver ran his eye over the Weededge crowd, and his opinion of them was much higher than Grundy's. They looked a good set of cricketers, in their way. Their ages ranged from fourteen to seventeen, and several of them were in their workaday clothes. One or two were schoolboys, the rest in employment of some kind or another in and around the village. They did not have the time, of course, to put in practice that the Rookwood fellows had, and Jimmy had no doubt that with a team of the Rookwood Fourth he would have walked over them easily enough. But with three men short it was a different matter, though Grundy had declared that he was equal to four ordinary players. Jimmy took the liberty of doubting that statement. Indeed, from the way Grundy "gassed," and from certain remarks of Wilkins and Gunn, Jimmy doubted whether Grundy was of much use in the team at all.

Grundy had the satisfaction of winning the toss, and, of course, he decided to bat. He gave his followers a final word before he went to the wicket.

"You're with me, Wilkins," he said. "Gunn next. You Rookwood kids can sort yourselves out how you like to follow Gunn."

"Not to follow you?" murmured Raby. "Eh? I shall be not out at the end of the innings!" explained Grundy. "Now, just listen to me. I want you to keep the innings alive as long as possible while I score. That's the idea. There'll be seven wickets, one after another, and while they're going down I shall be able to knock up at least fifty to declare on. At least, I hope so. I can only tell you to do your best. Now, come on, Wilkins!"

And Grundy marched out to open the innings and take the first over, and the Rookwooders looked at one another.

"Don't miss what's coming along!" said Gunn kindly. "Grundy's got the bowling. He will be out in the first over, and will come and tell us it was an amazing fluke! You see, I know him—I've been there! Watch!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. watched. Weededge were in the field, and Wegg had taken the ball. The ball he sent down to Grundy was a fairly difficult one, though Jimmy Silver would have knocked it away easily enough. Grundy did not knock it away. He made a terrific swipe at it. If that swipe had proved effective, certainly it would have been a boundary hit. Unfortunately, Grundy's bat did not come within a foot of the ball. With the force of his swipe Grundy spun round and nearly fell over. And there was the crash of a falling wicket.

"How's that?" yelled the villagers. And the Red Cow landlord, who was umpire at that end, blinked and grinned, and said:

"Hout!"

The 4th Chapter. A Great Game!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Rookwooders simply roared. It was not polite, but they could not help it. The difference between Grundy's programme and Grundy's achievement struck them irresistibly.

Grundy stared at his wicket. He was out—even Grundy could not doubt that. The balls were off, and the middle stump was down, and Grundy could not stare it back into its place again. He came off with an extraordinary expression on his face.

"Astonishing fluke—what?" said Gunn, with a wink at the Rookwooders. Grundy nodded.

"Simply amazing!" he said. "You'd better get in, Gunn. Knock up some runs if you can. Don't be discouraged. We shall have to bat a second time, but I'll make fifty then."

"Oh, my hat!" said Gunn. And he went to take Grundy's place. Jimmy Silver & Co. regarded Grundy with interest, as they might have regarded some strange animal at the Zoo. How a fellow could play cricket like Grundy, and still fancy himself at the game, was a mystery to them. He reminded them of Gunner of the Fourth at Rookwood; but as Putty remarked, he out-gunned Gunner. The amazing thing was that Grundy's self-satisfaction was not in the least diminished by his defeat. Had it been a single-innings game, he would have given all up for lost. But as there was another innings to come, Grundy had no doubts. There was not going to be a fluke like that in his second

innings—according to Grundy. But the Rookwooders were of opinion that in Grundy's second innings there would be another fluke just like that.

Wilkins and Gunn began to make the runs between them. But the Weededge bowling and fielding were both good, and Gunn's wicket went when the score was at ten. Jimmy Silver took his place. Jimmy was more of a bowler than a batsman, but he was a good, reliable bat, and equal to deal with the villagers. He made runs, and was still making them when Wilkins went out. Arthur Edward Lovell joined Jimmy at the wickets. The Rookwooders were getting some cricket, after all, in spite of Grundy's programme.

The score was at thirty when Grundy strode on the field and talked to the Weededge skipper. His remarks, whatever they were, seemed to surprise Wegg, but he nodded. He called off the field, a proceeding that astonished the two batsmen.

"Hallo, what's this game?" called out Jimmy Silver.

"Am I to bowl?" Jimmy asked. Grundy stared at him.

"You!" he ejaculated. "Hardly." "I'm considered a pretty good bowler at Rookwood," Jimmy explained. Grundy laughed.

"Oh, I dare say you can bowl, in your fag way!" he said. "But I don't want any fag stunts now. I want wickets." And Grundy went on to bowl.

With a field of only seven, including the wicket-keeper, the batsmen had plenty of chances. But they did not need them. Wegg took the first over from Grundy. Grundy's bowling was worth watching. It was not like any bowling Jimmy Silver had seen before, so it had all the charm of novelty. He presented Wegg with three byes to begin with, and the fourth ball Wegg cut away for four. The fifth gave him another four, and the sixth three, bringing him to the batting end again.

"And that's bowling!" said Arthur Edward Lovell.

Grundy gave the ball to Wilkins for

piling up was alarming. Gunn was not much of a bowler, and Grundy was a dud one. Only Wilkins had any effect on the enemy, and he was not by any means above their strength. As a matter of fact, the team of that little Berkshire village was a very good one, and their play was excellent. With Jimmy Silver in command, getting the very best out of the men, the eight might have had a chance against the eleven. With Grundy in command the result was a foregone conclusion from the start.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had plenty of leather-hunting to do; and the Weed-edge score went up by leaps and bounds. Quite a crowd of villagers had gathered on the green to watch the game, and they stared at first, and then they chortled, as they watched the exploits of George Alfred Grundy with the ball. It was clear to Jimmy Silver that the Weededge innings could have gone on practically without limit, and the eight were soon tired of chasing the leather. Fortunately, when Weededge were 100 for four wickets, Wegg declared. It

off the reel. That would make the Weed-edge skipper realise what an ass he had been in declaring too soon.

Greatly to the surprise of the Rookwooders, Grundy stopped the first ball. Then he hit out at the next, which was to be a boundary hit, or at least a three. Amazing to relate, the bat struck the ball, and the leather went on its journey—straight into the open palm of a fieldman. Grundy was running—running hard—puzzled a little by the roar of laughter.

"How's that?" yelled the fieldman. "Out!"

"Eh—why—what—?" gasped Grundy. He had nearly reached the other end, where Wilkins was doubled up with laughter, before he realised that he was caught.

Grundy's face was a study. Having got a duck's egg in each innings, he was the happy possessor of a "pair of spectacles." "Jever see anything like that?" he said, as he came off. "Cricket's a jolly uncertain game, what? First-class bat caught out by a rotten fieldman. Jever see anything like it?"

"I've never seen them playing cricket at Colney Hatch, so naturally I haven't," remarked Jimmy Silver.

"Eh? What? Don't be cheeky!" Gunn had gone in, and the game went on. Grundy of St. Jim's watched the play with a gloomy, thoughtful brow.

"Not much good going on with this!" he remarked, after a time.

"Eh? What's that?" asked Lovell. "You see, the game depended entirely on me," explained Grundy. "Owing to a couple of the most astonishing flukes, I'm out of it. Not much doubt about the result now. Why, they may not have to bat a second time at all."

"We'll make them do that, anyhow," said Jimmy Silver.

"You! That's good! Ha, ha, ha!" "There goes Wilkins!" said Raby.

Jimmy Silver went in. To Grundy's surprise the Rookwooders kept the innings going; he blinked and stared as the number crept up. Jimmy Silver had no hope now of pulling off a victory. Grundy was skipper, and Grundy was going to give himself the bowling if Weededge had to bat a second time. That banished the last hope. Still, it was something to make the villagers bat again, and that Jimmy Silver & Co. did.

"One hundred and eighteen," said Jimmy Silver at the finish. "With thirty in the first innings, that's one hundred and forty-eight. We've got a chance of beating them if Grundy doesn't bowl."

"Don't let him bowl!" said Lovell savagely.

"What's that?" roared Grundy. "Look here, Grundy," said Jimmy Silver seriously. "If we keep them under forty-eight for their second innings, we beat them. I want you to leave the bowling to me and to Wilkins and Putty—see?"

Grundy seemed at a loss. "Give me a chance if you don't play the giddy ox!"

Grundy gasped. "Have a little sense for once, old fellow!" pleaded Gunn.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Grundy. "Why, you—you dummies! You asses! You—you nincompoops! Gimme that ball! Get into the field! Shut up!"

"Look here, Grundy—"

"Shut up!" roared Grundy. And George Alfred gripped the ball—evidently not caring to trust the bowling into less able hands.

Jimmy Silver set his teeth. "Grundy's skipper," he said. "We've got to play up to that. But as soon as we're licked, Grundy is going to feel sorry."

"Hear, hear!" said the Rookwooders, with deep emphasis.

Weededge wanted forty-nine to win. The ineffable Grundy presented them with sixteen in the first over. Wilkins kept the runs down in the next, and then Grundy, blind to the menacing looks, deaf to infuriated expostulations, took the ball again. The batsmen were grinning cheerily. They put the score up to thirty on that over. It rose only to thirty-five on Wilkins' bowling, and then again the great Grundy weighed in. Four and four and four and two. The villagers had tied. Wegg took a single off Grundy's next ball, though he was laughing almost too much to run.

"Well, we might have expected it," said Grundy, as he came off with the field. "After those two unaccountable flukes that put down my wicket, it was all over bar shouting. I did my best with the bowling, but you can't win cricket matches on bowling alone."

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Can't be done!" said Grundy. "And if we had the ghost of a chance, it was spoiled by your rotten fielding, you Rookwood kids!"

"Wha-a-t?" "No end of catches off my bowling," said Grundy. "How many did you take? But I don't blame you—I blame myself for playing a set of silly fags who don't know a catch from a cough-dropper! Here, wharrer you up to? I say—leggo—yaroop—whoop—help!"

It was the limit. The five Rookwooders closed in on George Alfred Grundy, and collared him. They bumped him in the grass, they stuffed his cap down the back of his neck, and they ragged him. Then they left him gasping, and went to the inn for Trotsky and the baggage-cart. As they started with Trotsky, Grundy of the Shell came up to the inn, leaning heavily on the arms of Wilkins and Gunn. He glared at the Rookwooders, but he did not speak. All he could say was "Groogh! Gug-gug-gug!" And they left him saying it.

THE END.
(The Rookwood holiday tramp is near its end, and in next week's grand story, entitled "The Man Who Escaped!" Jimmy Silver & Co. arrive back at the school in great style!)

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"SILHOUETTES"—No. 3.

INSTRUCTIONS.

On the right you will find six silhouettes, each showing a person doing something, and what you have to do is to write in the space under the picture the exact action portrayed. All the actions can be described in one or two words, but not more than two words.

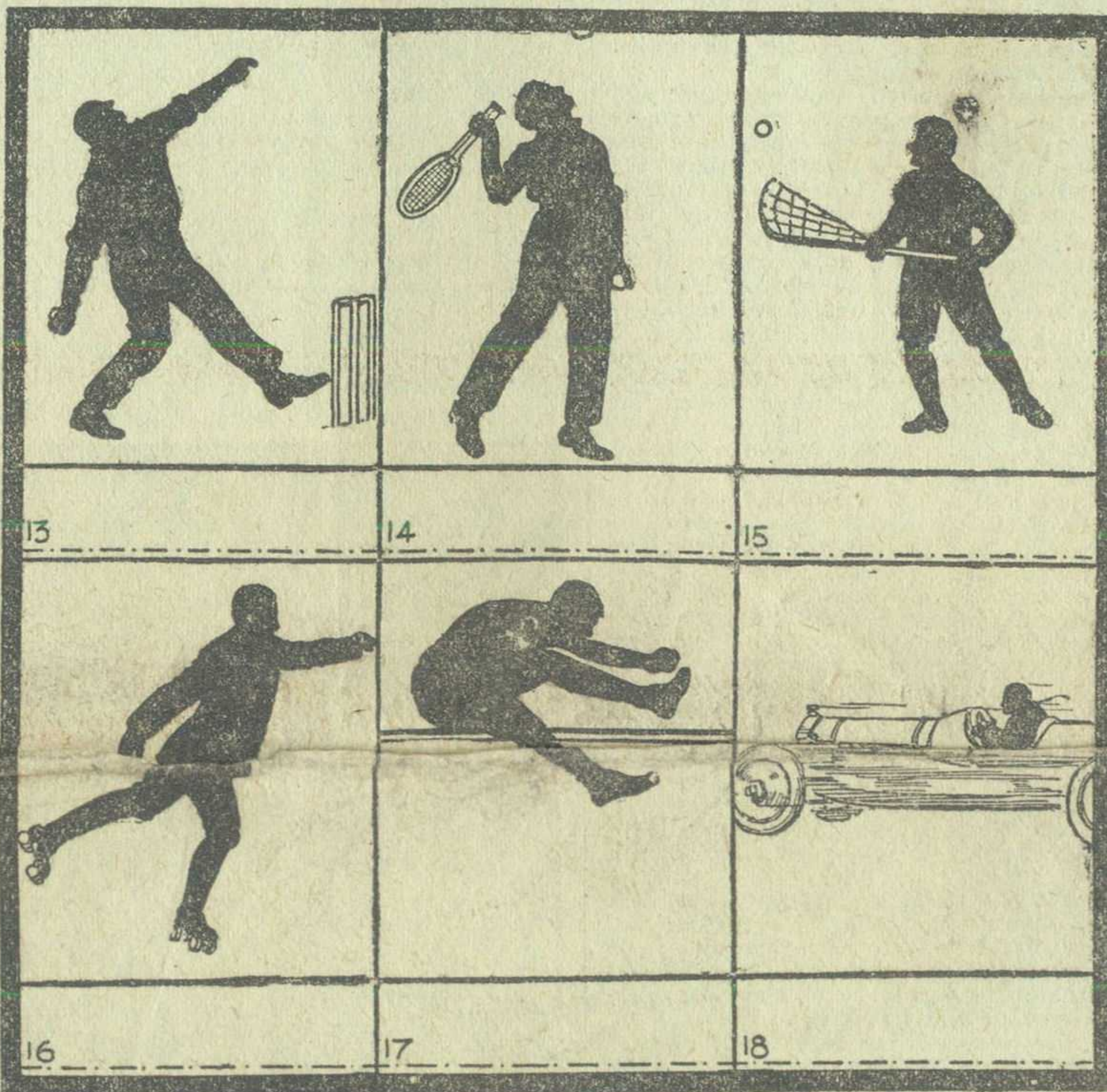
When you have solved this week's picture-puzzles, keep them by you in some safe place. There will be six sets in all, and when the final set appears you will be told where and when to send your efforts. This is the third set in the competition; the two previous sets appeared in the BOYS' FRIEND week ending September 9th and 16th, and can still be obtained from the Back Number Dept., Amalgamated Press, Ltd., 7-9, Pilgrim Street, London, E.C.4.

You may send as many complete sets of efforts as you please.

The First Prize of £25 will be awarded to the reader who succeeds in submitting a set of solutions exactly the same as, or nearest to, the set of solutions in the possession of the Editor. In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. No competitor will be awarded more than one share of the prize.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Gem," the "Magnet," and the "Popular," and readers of those journals are invited to compete. It must be distinctly understood that the decision of the Editor is final and binding.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.



"It's all right—innings over," said Grundy.

"What?" bawled Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Innings declared closed," explained Grundy. "You kids come off."

Jimmy Silver and Arthur Edward Lovell looked at one another along the pitch, with feelings too deep for words. They came off, and met the grinning glances of the other Rookwooders. Wilkins and Gunn gave them sympathetic looks.

"You crass idiot!" said Lovell to Grundy. "What do you mean by declaring at this stage of the game?"

"No need for you kids to bat any longer," explained Grundy. "The runs are not needed; and it's a waste of time. I can't stand about watching your fumbling, you know. I shall make all the runs that are wanted in the next innings."

"You frabjous ass!" roared Lovell.

"Now, then, don't be cheeky!" said Grundy warningly. "Get into the field; the chaw-bacons are going to begin."

Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged glances. They were strongly inclined to walk off the field, and leave Grundy to play out that match on his lonely own. But they decided to go into the field:

the second over. Evidently the Rookwood recruits were not to have a look-in.

Wilkins, however, was fairly good. He played for Tom Merry's eleven at St. Jim's, and his style did not resemble Grundy's. Only a couple of runs were added from Wilkins' bowling.

"Let Gunn have a chance," Wilkins urged his great chief, when the field crossed over.

Grundy shook his head. "After me," he said. "I'm going to use both of you as change bowlers, you know. But I must put in all the bowling I can. You see, what we want are wickets."

Wilkins did not seem able to make any rejoinder to that. He gasped, and said nothing.

So the great Grundy went on to bowl again. There were not so many byes this time. The over added fifteen to the Weededge score.

There was not much chance for Jimmy Silver & Co. In so thin a field the batsmen had plenty of room to drive clear. However, Jimmy succeeded in catching Wegg out at last, and a smart return from Lovell cost Weededge another wicket. But the way the runs were

came as a welcome relief to the unfortunate fieldsmen.

Grundy was surprised. "Fairly chuckled the game into our hands," he told Wilkins and Gunn. "Why, if they'd put on the most they possibly could, they might possibly have had a chance of winning, you know—with their second innings to come. Now they've given it away."

Wilkins snorted. He was getting tired of Grundy.

"They won't want their second innings," he snapped.

"Eh? There's my score in my second innings to come, you know."

"A big round nought!" snapped Wilkins, and he walked away before the astonished Grundy could reply.

The 5th Chapter.

A Surprise for Grundy!

Grundy, of course, opened the second innings. The game, so far, had not had flattering results for Grundy's team, and George Alfred felt that his men required bucking up. He was going to encourage them by some mighty hitting, and he was going to make Wegg look rather green by piling up a hundred runs right

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