

A Grand
Long Complete
Story, dealing
with the
Early Adventures
of
Jimmy Silver & Co.

THE RIVAL ESCORT!

By
Owen
Conquest

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Great Idea.

"WE'RE absolutely done!" said Tommy Dodd mournfully to his chums Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle.

"Absolutely!" groaned Tommy Cook. "What's more, it's too late to do anything now."

A short distance away stood Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Newcome, and Raby, the Fistical Four, arrayed in Norfolk jackets and cycling knickers, buttonholes, clean collars, and, in fact, as spick and span as they had ever been seen before.

They were standing by their bicycles at the gates of Rookwood College, waiting for the Head's pretty daughter, Dolly Chisholm. She had graciously consented to go with them for a spin, and the Modern chums were green with envy.

"I wish I could think of some wheeze to stop their little game," said Tommy Dodd to his chums. "But the worst of it is that we have only just discovered the idea. Why didn't we tumble to it sooner?"

"Can't you think of something?" said Tommy Doyle. "You're the leader of the party!"

Tommy Dodd gave a sudden jump, as a stream of cold water was projected against his trousers. He yelped and swung round angrily. The stream of water came from the nozzle of a hose in the hands of Mack, the school porter.

The Modern chums were standing on a grass plot, and Mack had taken it upon himself to water that particular grass plot at that particular moment. Mack was not on the best of terms with Tommy Dodd & Co., or the Fistical Four, either. The stream sent against Tommy Dodd's legs was probably not an accident.

"What are you up to, you elumy villain?" howled Tommy Dodd.

Mack looked at him.

"Begging your pardon," he said, "I didn't see you in the shade of the helm!"—Mack meant "elm"—"Would you mind steppin' out of the way, young gentlemen?"

"You might have said that before you drenched my trousers, ass!"

"Haccidents will appen."

Tommy Dodd growled and walked off the grass, followed by his chums. The Fistical Four, at the gate, had seen the mishap, and they were grinning. A glimmer came into Tommy Dodd's eyes, and he grasped Tommy Cook's arm so suddenly and so hard that Tommy Cook uttered an exclamation.

"What the dickens—"

"Quiet! I've got an idea!"

Tommy Cook stared at him.

"What do you mean, Doddy?"

"I've got an idea how to do those rotters!" hissed Tommy Dodd. "Mack has just put it into my head!"

"Has he? What the—"

"Get into the house, both of you, and

change as quickly as you can into cycling things, and get my things out ready for me, while I speak to Mack."

"But—"

"No time for talk. I'll explain afterwards."

"Right you are!"

Both Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle knew that they could trust their leader. They hadn't the faintest idea of the plan that was working in Tommy Dodd's active brain, but they were content to follow their chum's lead.

They ran into the house to carry out his instructions, and the chief of the Modern chums walked across the grass towards Mack.

"Get huff the grass!" called out Mack. "You'll get wetted again, Master Dodd. Get huff the grass!"

"I want to speak to you, Mack!"

"Get huff the grass!"

"Is a two-shilling piece any good to you?" asked Tommy Dodd, showing a glimmer of silver between his finger and thumb.

Mack's manner changed at once. A two-shilling piece was a great deal of use to him.

"Wot can I do for you, Master Dodd?" he asked, quite civilly.

"It's ten to three now," said Tommy Dodd, in a low voice. "At a few minutes to the hour I want you to go away, and leave the hose lying here, so that anybody who came along could pick it up and use it."

The porter stared.

"What for, Master Dodd?"

Tommy Dodd gave a slight jerk of the head towards the gate. Mack glanced in that direction, and saw the Fistical Four standing there—and understood. He grinned. He was on the worst of terms with the Fistical Four.

He did not like Tommy Dodd much better, as a matter of fact; but that was no reason why he should not accept the two-shilling piece and allow the Fistical Four to receive a drenching.

"It'll have to be kept dark, sir," he murmured.

"Of course," said Tommy Dodd readily. "You just walk away for a few minutes and leave the hose lying here. It's not your fault if somebody picks it up and plays with it while your back's turned."

"That's so, Master Dodd!"

"I'll drop this two-shilling piece into the grass, and you can pick it up," went on Tommy Dodd. "Is it a go?"

"Yes, sir."

Tommy Dodd let the coin fall and walked away into the school. Mack stooped to move the hosepipe and picked up the florin. Mack was grinning expansively. He had never earned two shillings before in so easy a way.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Change of Escort.

JIMMY SILVER looked at his watch. "Two minutes to three," he remarked.

Lovell, Newcome, and Raby glanced towards the spreading elm-trees that hid the Head's house from sight. Two minutes more, and they would be carrying off the Head's daughter before the envious eyes of all the Fourth Form, and of the Fifth, too.

"Bound to be a little late," murmured Jimmy Silver.

"I expect so," said Raby.

"Oh, I don't know!" said Lovell. "Miss Dolly isn't the kind of girl to be late. I expect we shall see her as the clock strikes."

Raby hastily gave his necktie a jerk, to make sure that it was quite straight; Lovell jerked a little more white cuff into sight, and Newcome flicked a speck of dust from his knickers.

"One minute more— Ow-wow! What the dickens—"

"Oh!"

"Ugh!"

A sudden jet of water played right over the Fistical Four. They whirled round in rage and amazement, and yelled out simultaneously:

"Tommy Dodd! You villain!"

Tommy Dodd & Co. were there. They were clad in their best, and they had wheeled down their bicycles and stood them against a tree near the gate. Then Tommy Dodd had taken up the hose left on the grass by the bribed and corrupted Mack.

Taking care not to get any water over himself or his comrades, Tommy Dodd was playing the hose upon the astonished Fistical Four. The fellows in the quad looked on at first in utter amazement, and then with yells of laughter.

The Fistical Four yelled—but not with laughter. They were far from laughing at that moment. For the first swish of the water drenched them from head to foot, and almost swept them off their feet. It was a powerful stream, with heaps of force behind it, and Tommy Dodd let them have it at full strength.

Alas! for the elegant attire of the four cyclists. In a few seconds, before they fairly knew what was happening, their clothes hung around their limbs in drenched folds, the flowers were swept away from their buttonholes, their caps were off their heads, their hair streaming with water, their shirts and cuffs were limp rags.

Tommy Dodd & Co. chuckled. Tommy Dodd played the hose right merrily. The Fistical Four reeled from the torrent. Then, frantic with rage, they made a desperate rush at the Modern chums.

If they had reached them, the Modern chums would have fared badly—quite as badly as the unhappy Fistical Four had

fares. But they did not reach them—they could not.

Tommy Dodd kept the torrent at full force, first upon one of them and then upon another, and they were fairly knocked flying by the rush of the water.

Lovell went over, and Raby fell across him. Newcome was bowled over on his back. Jimmy Silver rushed on desperately, but the torrent caught him fairly beneath the chin and bowled him over.

There was a shout from Hooker, of the Fourth.

"Look out, you drowned rats! Miss Dolly's coming!"

The Fistical Four staggered to their feet.

A charming girl, with brown hair and blue eyes, was wheeling a bicycle through the elm-trees that surrounded the Head's house.

The chums looked at her—and at themselves. Their condition was deplorable. They looked, as Hooker put it, like drowned rats. They could not face the girl in that state. Well they knew how the bright blue eyes would glimmer with fun. As for going out for the promised ride, it was impossible. They were in no state for that.

As the slim form of Dolly Chisholm appeared through the elms, four juniors broke into a desperate sprint for cover. Four drenched bicycles lay on the ground in a puddle of water. Four flying figures disappeared into the house—Jimmy Silver only stopping a moment to shake his fist at Tommy Dodd.

Tommy Dodd, choking with laughter, shut off the water and threw down this hose. The Modern chums took their bicycles from the tree where they were leaning, and wheeled them forward to meet Miss Dolly near the gate.

The girl glanced at them, and then at the drenched machines on the ground. The laughing faces of all the fellows near seemed to puzzle her. She looked at Tommy Dodd & Co. inquiringly as they raised their caps.

"Will you excuse Silver, Lovell, Newcome, and Raby?" said Tommy Dodd smoothly. "They were waiting here when something went wrong with the garden-hose—"

"That's so."

"They have somehow got drenched; you see the state their machines are in."

"Dear me!" murmured Miss Dolly. "I am so sorry."

"Yes, it is a shame," said Tommy Dodd hypocritically. "They looked such drowned rats that they couldn't face you, and they've left me to make their excuses."

"Exactly," murmured Tommy Doyle. "If you would allow us to ride with you, Miss Dolly, we are quite ready," went on Tommy Dodd eagerly. "They would feel it very much if you were disappointed about the ride, and as we are ever so much better riders than they are—"

The girl laughed—a pleasant, rippling little laugh.

"How did the accident happen?"

"It was quite sudden," said Tommy Dodd. "The hose was turned in their direction, and they were in the way of the water; that's how it came about."

"Was Mack using the hose?"

"No, he had carelessly left it on the grass, and some juniors started playing with it," said Tommy Dodd innocently.

Miss Dolly smiled.

"If you would let us come with you—"

"Well, I must have my ride," said Miss Dolly, "and if my companions are not here, I must be quite free to accept your kind offer. It is very kind and obliging of you, Dodd."

"Not at all," said Tommy Dodd blissfully. "It's a great honour, and we are awfully grateful. We'll take the best care of you, Miss Dolly."

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"I can take care of myself," Miss Dolly remarked.

"Yes, of course," agreed Dodd. "We're not the kind of fellows who think that a girl always needs taking care of; just because she is a girl."

Tommy Dodd would have said anything at that moment, and his chums would have backed him up. Miss Dolly, still smiling, mounted her machine, refusing assistance, and the Modern chums rolled out of the gates of Rookwood one on either side of the fair cyclist, and one riding behind. Four drenched figures stood at a study window, shaking fists after them.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Jimmy Silver Rises to the Occasion.

THE Modern chums and Miss Dolly were watched by Jimmy Silver till they disappeared through the stone gateway. He then turned back from the window of the end study. His usually cool and determined face was very gloomy.

"Did you ever see such a swindle?" he exclaimed.

Lovell shook his head.

"No, Jimmy. We're done!"

"Foiled, diddled, dished, and done!" said Raby. "I'll make cats'-meat of those rotters when I get within hitting distance of them again!"

"They've absolutely done us. And we were going to whisk Miss Dolly off under their noses, too!" groaned Jimmy Silver. "Instead of which, they've whisked her off under ours."

"It couldn't be helped. We couldn't have faced her in this state."

"I believe she must have guessed half of it," said Jimmy Silver. "She'll be laughing at us in her sieve for being done so easily by those Modern rotters."

"You're a regular Job's comforter," said Newcome.

"What's to be done?" grunted Jimmy Silver.

"Better get these wet clothes off, I should say. We shall catch pneumonia if we hang about in them much longer."

"I don't care if I do. I'd catch pneumonia forty times for the sake of getting level with those rotters!"

"It can't be did!"

"Let's get changed, and then think it over," said Raby. "It's no good catching cold."

Jimmy Silver nodded gloomily.

The four chums stripped and rubbed themselves dry, and changed their clothes. They felt better when that was done, but they were still in a state of rage and chagrin that was almost intolerable.

They left the House, meeting with grins and chuckles from every fellow they passed.

Bulkeley, the captain of Rookwood, stared at them as they came into the quad.

"Hallo! Weren't you going out with Miss Dolly?" he asked.

The chums turned red.

"That's so," said Jimmy Silver awkwardly. "But there was an—accident, and Tommy Dodd & Co. have gone instead."

The big Sixth-Former laughed.

He guessed well enough that the "accident" had been some device of the Modern chums, for the rivalry of the two parties in the Fourth was a standing joke among the seniors at Rookwood, and furnished them with much food for merriment.

The Fistical Four walked on.

"Hallo, you merchants!" exclaimed Hooker, meeting the four chums with Towie and Leggett and Lucy and some others of the Fourth Form, in a laughing crowd. "Hallo! I hear you've been taking shower-baths instead of taking Miss Dolly out for a ride!"

"Oh, shut up!"

"It was nice of Dodd & Co. to come to the front as they did, and take your place, wasn't it?" Hooker remarked.

"If you fellows aren't looking for trouble, you'd better shut up," said Jimmy Silver dully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four strode away and passed the gates. They had had enough chipping to last them for the afternoon. Jimmy Silver threw himself down upon a grassy bank.

"Things are getting into a nice state," he grunted. "We shall be chipped to death over this, to say nothing of the crowing we shall have to put up with from Tommy Dodd & Co."

"It's rotten!" said Newcome.

"Can't something be done?" said Lovell desperately. "Can't you think of something, Jimmy? Where's that keen brain you're always talking about? If you've got a brain at all, think of some way of getting level with those rotters."

Jimmy Silver looked very thoughtful.

"Hang it!" said Raby. "If the rotters would only get a few punctures, the ride would be mucked up, and—"

Jimmy Silver started up.

"Punctures!" he yelled. "Ha, ha! I reckon we shall be able to get our own back, after all. It's Raby saying something about punctures that's made me think of a wheeze."

"I'd like to know what you chaps would do without me to think of things for you."

"Oh, cheese it, Raby, and let's hear Jimmy's idea."

"Suppose the cyclists were to get a large, full-grown, first-rate crop of punctures," said Jimmy Silver, grinning.

"What do you think of that?"

"It would muck up the ride, and no mistake—but it can't be worked."

"It can be worked."

"But that would spoil Miss Dolly's ride, as well as those Modern rotters," said Raby thoughtfully. "We can't have anything of that sort, Jimmy."

"Ass! Do you think I'm the kind of chap to give a girl any trouble, or spoil her outing?" said the leader of the Fistical Four indignantly.

"Then what—"

"Miss Dolly's tyres will be punctured along with Dodd & Co's; but suppose four fellows about our size happen to drive by, in a neat little trap—"

"My hat!"

"Just in time to come to the rescue. We give Miss Dolly a lift, of course, and she has a pleasant drive under the chestnut-trees, instead of a ride. She would like it just as much—in fact, after riding so far, she'd like a drive for a change."

"Very likely, but—"

"Tommy Dodd & Co. can wheel their bikes home, and Miss Dolly's, too. There won't be room for them or the maclines in the trap."

"Yes, but—"

"We'll carry off Miss Dolly under their eyes, just as they've done us. But the chap laughs best who laughs last, and we shall laugh last. And those rotters will stop chipping us when they see us drive into Rookwood with Miss Dolly in the trap, and when those Modern rotters come crawling in an hour or two later wheeling their machines."

"Yes, but how—"

"Don't you think it's a ripping wheeze?" demanded Jimmy.

"Absolutely ripping, if it can be worked! But how in the name of all that's impossible are you going to give them a lot of punctures they can't mend?"

Jimmy Silver chuckled.

"That's where the beauty of the idea comes in!"

"Blessed if I can see it!"

"I reckon we can work it easily enough, all the same. There are lots of things

you don't see, my son, till I point them out to you."

"Oh, get on with the jaw, and don't cackle!"

"Very well. You know they are riding back through the chestnut wood, and you know the track through the wood is so narrow that four riders would have to ride very close, if one didn't have to drop behind."

"What about that?"

"Tin-tacks are cheap."

"Tin-tacks!"

"Yes, tin-tacks! What's the matter with buying a dozen packets or so of tin-tacks in Coombe, and distributing them in the road there for a distance of about fifty yards, to make quite sure? The rotters ride over them, and they gather up about a hundred punctures in a couple of seconds—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They'll get their tyres so jammed full of tacks that there won't be any question of mending the punctures. You can't mend fifty punctures by the roadside, and keep a lady waiting for you all the time—especially when there's four nice young fellows ready to take her home in a trap."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"Come on, and let's go down to the village!" said Jimmy Silver. "We've got to buy the tacks and hire the trap. Lucky I'm a good driver! Let's get a move on!"

And the Fistical Four, chucking over the prospect, hurried towards the village.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Disaster.

THREE more absolutely joyous and beaming faces than those of Tommy Dodd & Co. could not have been found that sunny August afternoon throughout the length and breadth of England.

They had beaten the Fistical Four hollow. They had carried off the prize. They were enjoying a pleasant ride with a charming girl. Earth had nothing more to offer.

"It is charming," said Miss Dolly, with a bright smile. "I don't think I have ever enjoyed a ride so much."

"Haven't you, really?" said Tommy Dodd, beaming.

"No, really."

"And the best part lies before us, too," said Tommy Cook. "It's jolly under these shady trees, and you never meet any traffic on this road, either."

Four abreast, riding somewhat close, for the lane was narrow, and the sides of it were rough and rugged, the cyclists spun on under the overhanging chestnuts.

Overhead the branches met and formed a green canopy, through which the sun's rays filtered in subdued shafts of gold. It was the pleasantest ride within a hundred miles of Rockwood, and a favourite of Miss Dolly's.

"Ripping!" said Tommy Dodd, once more.

Tommy Cook was looking worried.

"I—I say, I believe I've got a puncture!" he murmured.

Tommy Dodd glanced at him. Tommy Dodd looked annoyed. It was really very exasperating of Cook to get a puncture just then.

"Don't you think of waiting for me!" said Tommy Cook hastily. "I'll examine the tyre and you keep on. I'll overtake you before you get to Rookwood."

"Oh, no!" said Miss Dolly immediately. "We shall wait for you!"

"I'd rather—"

"Dear me, I think I have a puncture, too!" said Miss Dolly, as she stopped her machine and lightly dismounted. "My front tyre is getting flat."

"Oh, I'll jolly soon mend that for you!" said Tommy Dodd.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Miss Dolly, in astonishment. "My back tyre is going down, too. What can be the matter with it?"

"I've got a puncture in each tyre, too," said Tommy Cook, looking blue. "Both the beastly tyres have gone as flat as pancakes."

"That's curious," said Tommy Dodd. "I never came across such a crop of punctures so suddenly before!"

"Nor I," said Miss Dolly. "But look at your own machine! And Doyle's! Dear me, your tyres are all flat!"

Tommy Dodd stared at the machines in amazement.

Miss Dolly was quite right. Their tyres were going down, and were almost flat. Both tyres on all four machines were flattened out. And the punctures must have been pretty serious ones for the tyres to go down so suddenly.

bent over his tyres, and looked at them closely. There was no doubt about Tommy Cook's statement. It was not an accidental thorn or piece of glass that had done the mischief. The tyres had been punctured by tacks, and there were a dozen of them still sticking in the rubber.

"Tacks!" murmured Tommy Cook dazedly. "Look, they're scattered all over the road. There's as much tacks as dust!"

Tommy Dodd glanced round him. He had not noticed it at first, but it was the case. Tacks were scattered everywhere in the dust of the road. Tacks were sticking all over the tyres on all four bicycles.

No wonder the tyres had suddenly gone flat. As for repairing, that was out of the question. Tommy Dodd & Co. were too careful ever to travel without their



"Look out, you drowned rats, Miss Dolly's coming!" The Fistical Four staggered to their feet. A charming girl, with brown hair and blue eyes, was wheeling a bicycle through the elm-trees that surrounded the Head's house.

"My only hat!" said Tommy Dodd. Miss Dolly was looking puzzled.

"This is very strange!" she remarked. "I have never heard of such a thing before—never!"

"I—I can't understand it!" muttered Tommy Dodd. "I—I'm afraid the ride's rather spoiled, Miss Dolly. Can you see what's wrong with your tyres, kids?"

"Yes!" yelled Tommy Cook, who was bending down by his machine. "My hat, they're stuffed full of tacks!"

"What?"

"Tacks!"

"Tacks?"

"Yes, tin-tacks!"

Tommy Dodd, in utter amazement,

repair outfits, but they could not have mended all those punctures in a whole afternoon. They were looking utterly dismayed and nonplussed.

"It's—it's rotten!" said Tommy Dodd. "Somebody has done this for a joke, I suppose. I wish I had the joker here, by Jove! I'd joke him!"

"We shall have to walk the machines to Rookwood," said Tommy Doyle. "You needn't bother with yours, Miss Dolly; I'll wheel it. And I can manage yours, too, Diddy. You can walk on with Miss Dolly, and we'll follow with the machines."

"Not at all!" said Miss Dolly.

"It's—it's a beastly long walk for you, and uphill half the way," said Tommy Dodd. "I—I wish we could get a vehicle of some sort. But there's nothing near here."

"I can walk it," said Miss Dolly bravely, though, to tell the truth, the prospect was not attractive.

"Hallo! I can hear something on the road!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd eagerly. "It may be something that will give us a lift to the village."

The sound of a horse and wheels could be heard round the corner in a narrow lane that branched off a score of yards away. The juniors and their fair companion looked eagerly towards the turning.

A market-cart going to Coombe would have been a godsend then. But it was not a market-cart that came into view. It was a neat little trap with a boy driving, and three other boys sitting in it. And a gasp broke from Tommy Dodd & Co. simultaneously.

"Jimmy Silver & Co.!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. The Capture.

JIMMY SILVER stopped the trap, threw down the reins, and jumped into the road. He raised his cap to Miss Dolly, and Lovell, Newcome, and Raby were only a moment behind him.

"Fancy meeting you!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Nothing wrong, I hope?"

Miss Dolly gave him a curious look.

"Yes," she said; "the tyres are punctured."

"It's too bad! Nothing serious—eh, Doddy?"

"Yes," grunted Tommy Dodd, "About a dozen punctures in each tyre, on each jigger."

Jimmy Silver whistled.

"That's bad!"

"It will take you a long time to mend them, Doddy," remarked Raby, with a grin.

"We can't mend them!"

"Can't mend punctures!" ejaculated Lovell. "Really, Doddy, old man, you ought to learn to mend punctures with anybody! But it's impossible to mend this lot in less than about a day's hard work."

"Too bad!" said Jimmy Silver again. "How fortunate we came along! We were so sorry to miss you, Miss Dolly. Of course, Tommy Dodd explained?"

The girl smiled.

"Yes. There was an accident with a hose-pipe, I think."

"That is it. A trio of silly young monkeys who ought to have known better, got playing with the garden-hose, and were drenched."

Tommy Dodd & Co. exchanged wrathful glances. It was impossible to pick a row with the Fistical Four before Miss Dolly, but they had never felt so strongly inclined to do so.

It was dawning upon their minds, too, who was responsible for the tin-tacks and the punctures.

"We were simply soaked, Miss Dolly," said Lovell. "We had to change, and Tommy Dodd & Co. were jolly glad to take our places."

"It is very curious," said Dolly, with a serious face, but a glimmer of fun in her blue eyes. "Someone has been throwing tacks about in the road."

"Some beastly rotter, you know," said Tommy Dodd. "Some meanly sort of mongrel whom I shall lick into the middle of next week when I get a chance."

"I hope you will," said Jimmy Silver heartily. "It was a really reckless thing to do, whoever did it, and quite as bad as fooling about with a hose-pipe and drenching fellows who were just going out for a ride."

"Quite as bad," said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver turned to Miss Dolly with his sweetest smile.

"It's too bad that your bike should be punctured in this way, Miss Dolly," he said.

"It is very fortunate," Miss Dolly remarked—"that is, of course, if you have room for us in the trap."

"We have room for you, Miss Dolly," said Jimmy Silver hastily. "You see, the trap is only a small one. We couldn't possibly cram eight into it, and besides, it would be cruelty to the horse. And then there are the bicycles. They couldn't be left here."

"Certainly not," said Lovell.

The girl nodded. What Jimmy Silver stated was exactly correct.

"Dodd & Co. will have to walk home," said Jimmy Silver, with much commiseration. "Doddy won't mind wheeling your bike along with his own, Miss Dolly."

"Of course, I shall wheel it," said Tommy Dodd, keeping up appearances admirably. "I'm—I'm glad you came by in time to save Miss Dolly from that fearfully long walk, Silver."

Miss Dolly hesitated.

"You must go in the trap, Miss Dolly," said Tommy Dodd. "I'm only too glad it's come by in time to give you a lift. I'll take care of your machine. If you start now, you'll be in time for tea."

"I suppose I had better," said the girl.

"Oh, certainly! There's nothing else to be done."

"Exactly!" said Tommy Cook.

"Then I will go. Thank you so much for a very pleasant ride," said Miss Dolly, with a sweet smile that made the Modern chums feel much more contented. "I have enjoyed it very much indeed. And it is so kind of you to take care of my machine."

And Miss Dolly let Tommy Dodd assist her into the trap, though Jimmy Silver stood ready. Jimmy Silver gathered up the reins, and Lovell, Newcome and Raby climbed in.

They looked very cosy and comfortable in the trap, and they waved their hands

to the Modern chums as Jimmy set the horse in motion.

Tommy Dodd & Co. stood holding the disabled bicycles, looking after the trap. It disappeared down the shady lane, and then the Modern chums looked at one another. Tommy Dodd forced a grin.

"Done at the finish!" he said. "Never mind, it has been great fun, and they've only got their own back, after all."

And the Modern chums started on the long walk to Rookwood, wheeling the machines.

"Hallo!"

"Look there!"

"Silver!"

"And Miss Dolly!"

In the cool of the afternoon the trap drove in at the gates of Rookwood School. The junior cricketers were coming off the ground, and a crowd witnessed the arrival of the trap.

They had seen Miss Dolly go out with Tommy Dodd & Co., and they saw her come home with the Fistical Four.

Exactly what had happened they did not know, but it was clear to all the Fourth Form at Rookwood that the Fistical Four had triumphed in the end.

Jimmy Silver drove the trap up to the Head's house, with a flourish. Lovell jumped down and assisted Miss Dolly to alight. Raby rang the bell.

"Thank you so much," said Miss Dolly, with a sweet smile for all four of the juniors. "I have enjoyed that drive immensely."

"So have we," said Jimmy Silver, beaming. "So glad you came! I hope you will let us drive you out another afternoon, Miss Dolly, when you have time."

"Oh, yes, do!" said Lovell.

Miss Dolly smiled again.

"You are very kind," she said. "I shall be very pleased, I am sure."

And the girl tripped into the house. The juniors stood, caps in hands, until the door had closed behind her.

"We've scored this time!" said Jimmy Silver, as they turned away.

"Oh, rather!" said Lovell. "Ha, ha! I wonder when those chaps will come crawling in."

The Fistical Four had taken the trap back to the village, and returned to Rookwood before the Modern chums arrived. Tired and dusty, Tommy Dodd & Co. wheeled the machines in at the gates of Rookwood.

They found the whole Fourth Form in possession of the story, and they were exposed to an unmerciful storm of chipping until they escaped to their study and locked themselves in. When they had had tea and a little rest they went to look for the Fistical Four.

And the next morning seven members of the Fourth Form at Rookwood received impositions for appearing in class with prominent signs of combat upon their features.

THE END.

Another Magnificent Long Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. in next Friday's issue of the
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By OWEN CONQUEST.

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