

1908 Men's Team Pursuit

INDUCTED 2016



The Canadian Cycling Hall of Fame recognizes exceptional contributions to the sport of Cycling by both Athletes and Builders.

The Canadian Cycling Hall of Fame is pleased to recognize the exceptional performances of early era athletes with the 1908 Men's Team Pursuit squad from the London Olympic Games as the first inductees in this group.

At the 1908 Olympic Games seven track cycling events were contested, all for men only. The weather was poor, with rainfall causing the track to flood on occasion. The track was 660 yards long (being built around the perimeter of the White City Stadium's athletics track); some events (the 660 yards and the team pursuit) used full laps of the track; the others used metric distances.

They were the fourth chronological modern Olympic Games in keeping with the now-accepted four-year cycle. The IOC President for these Games was Baron Pierre de Coubertin who is credited as the founder of the modern era Games. Lasting a total of 187 days, or 6 months and 4 days, these games were the longest in modern Olympics history.

Canada's entries in track cycling involved five riders. The Men's Team Pursuit was made up of; William Anderson, Walter Andrews, Frederick McCarthy and Willie Morton. The fifth Canadian rider at the Game was Harry Young who competed in two events. The other four had a total of twenty individual entries plus the Men's Team Pursuit.

Frederick McCarthy of Stratford, ON had six individual event entries plus the team event. His story was chronicled in the Stratford Beacon Herald in August of 2012. There was a McCarthy Cycle shop in Stratford and three brothers that were competing in cycling. The family only had the resources to support one of the three to go to the Olympics and it was Fred who won the coin toss and set out on a journey consisting of four train rides and a trans-Atlantic trip to arrive in a giant city for the 1908 Olympic Games.

The team went up against Great Britain in the semi-final of the 1,980 yard event which was three laps of the track. They lost to Great Britain who, in turn, beat Germany in the final. Canada won the bronze medal on the basis of a better time in the semi-final over the other semi-finalist team from the Netherlands. In fact Canada's semi-final time was better than that of Germany who took the silver.

The 1908 Men's Team Pursuit squad are now honoured members of the Canadian Cycling Hall of Fame.