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SWISS SPORTS AND GARDEN PARTY

AT THE POLYTECHNIC STADIUM, CHISWICK

ON SATURDAY, 21st JUNE, 1952

There is not the slightest doubt, that for some unaccountable reason, the celestial authorities in charge of the weather department, seem to bear a grudge against the "Swiss Sports".

To substantiate this, I have compiled some statistics as to the weather conditions prevailing at twenty-one sports meetings beginning with the year 1921. (The "Swiss Sports" were started in 1917, and were interrupted during and occasionally after the war.) Here are the relevant figures: Ten meetings were held in rain, at five meetings the weather was indifferent (partly rain and sunshine) and only at five meetings the sun shone benignly on the sports community, surely not a famous record. If I had any saying in the matter, I should right away sack all and sundry engaged in that specific weather department.

No, it did *not* rain on Saturday, 21st of June, but a cold wind and heavy and threatening clouds put somewhat of a damper on this year's Sports and Garden Party; the weather might have suited the competitors, but I felt very sorry for some of the Ladies shivering in the Grand Stand, and that they could still muster a smile now and then is very much to their credit.

Before going any further, it must be said, that the attendance at Chiswick was a great disappointment; making a rough guess I should put it down at no more than 400, which is about one of the lowest attendances ever registered since the meetings were inaugurated.

Considering that this is the only Open Air event in the Colony, presenting a splendid opportunity for Swiss people and their families to meet, it surely would have deserved a better support. It is, therefore, a matter of some importance to try and find out the reasons for the lack of interest shown by our compatriots with regard to this Sports Festival, which before the war used to be one of the happiest and most coveted functions held in the Colony.

Unconsciously the worst service rendered to the "Swiss Sports" was the B.B.C. announcer, who, when reading the weather forecast on that Saturday morning, predicted rain in almost all districts and regions and many, who were undecided whether to attend or not, resolved to stay away.

This is one reason, and very likely the most important one, accountable for the small attendance. A second one is, no doubt, to be found, that during the last few months far too many functions have been held in the Colony, such as Banquets, Dinners, Luncheons, Concerts, Lectures, Meetings, Receptions, Dances, etc. etc., some of which made heavy demands on the purses of those who attended. There comes a time when people get too much of a good thing and simply refuse to be inveigled into additional expenses. A striking example was, *f.i.*, that on the occasion of the "Fête Suisse" performance held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on the 12th of June, nearly 1,000 less tickets were sold than the previous year, in spite of an attractive programme, leaving the organisers with a substantial deficit.

A further reason, but in my opinion, perhaps the least important one, was the changing over from the usual meeting place, Herne Hill, to Chiswick. Some found this Sports Ground less accessible and more difficult to find than the former, although I do not agree. I must congratulate the committee on having made such a change; both the sports arena and the accommodation for the spectators are far superior to those at Herne Hill. The view from the stands, practically all under cover, over the arena is decidedly better, and the catering arrangements were not only excellent but reasonable, and I on my part hope, that the committee will make arrangements that this change over will become a permanency.

I fully share the disappointment of the organisers, as far as attendance is concerned,—otherwise the meeting was an undeniable success and greatly enjoyed by those who attended—who have given so much time, thought and work so that this event should be an enjoyable one providing a happy afternoon's entertainment. Their efforts have earned a poor reward. Ways and means will surely be found, that on future occasions a much larger attendance can be found so that this annual event will once again become, what it once was, a real Swiss "Volksfest"

* * *

Punctuality has always been a virtue at the Swiss Sports and at 2.15 p.m. sharp the first event was run. As the results of the various events are given at the end of this report, I will, with a few exceptions, desist from commenting on the performance of individuals or teams.

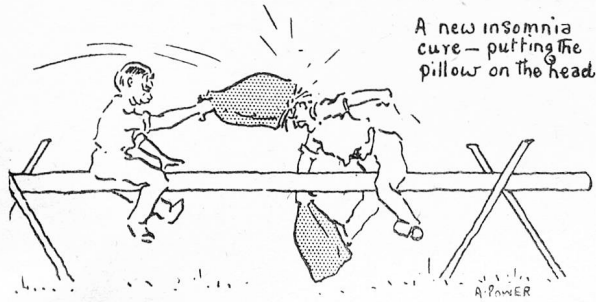
Whilst at one time a military band (London Divisional Royal Engineers) or a programme of Swiss gramophone records played with the help of an amplifier supplied the music, this year our old friend Mr. A. Gandon with some of his colleagues of the Swiss Accordion Group played a number of well-known Swiss melodies.

Shortly after the start of the programme, the Swiss Minister, accompanied by Madame de Torrenté, arrived together with a number of his collaborators at the Legation and they were received by the President of the Swiss Sports Committee, Mr. R. de Cintra and Madame de Cintra.

Comparing the results achieved with regard to the classical races, high and long jumps, etc. no former records were reached nor beaten, which is perhaps not surprising. The times of juicy steaks and "good old roastbeef of England" have long since passed away and one can hardly expect sportsmen to run and jump on the meagre rations allowed to them. However, on the whole results obtained can be considered as satisfactory.

The 880 yds. and 100 yds. Flat Handicaps (Men) and Relay races were very interesting to watch, in all these races members of the Unione Ticinese won with flying colours and they are to be congratulated on their fine performance.

Like on previous occasions, the Pillow Fight attracted the keen attention of the spectators.



As a preliminary, two members of the Swiss Diplomatic Corps, met on the pole, and being a member of the Press, I greatly regret to report, that our Press Counsellor disappeared in no time being "eliminated" by the Commercial Counsellor. I was greatly tempted to avenge the defeat of the "Press" but on second thoughts felt I would have a poor chance to withstand the deadly blows of our vivacious Commercial Counsellor. In fact, whilst I was meditating whether I should risk it, one saucy lady standing next to me very unkindly remarked, if that "fat chap" gets knocked off, he will make a hole in the ground, and that was the end of it.

If only Diplomats the world over would try to settle their differences in that way, the world would be a far happier place to live in.

Many a reputation was lost on the "pole" and many a grudge was settled with a pillow. After a great deal of punishment had been inflicted and endured, Mr. W. Bill was declared the winner.

The 440 yds. Veteran's Walking Handicap was another event which always proves attractive. To qualify for participation in this race one must have reached the age of forty, an age which hardly justifies the name of "veteran". Some of the participants were, however, not far off three score and ten, and therefore glanced at their younger competitors with some disdain.

Here too I felt somehow tempted to join in, as I used to do in former years, but shortly before the race (if it can be called thus) started I was told by an old friend (not a doctor), that I might drop dead instantaneously as my "old" heart would never stand the strain. I did not wish to be rude, but I consider that my heart has stood me in good stead for many, many years; it has harboured not a few sweet remembrances, and weathered many a storm and strain, and after all, I think I ought to know best, still as I did not wish to deprive any of the competitors of their laurels I nobly stood down, but it made my blood boil, when the Gentleman, who had spoken in such derogatory terms about my heart proudly lined up for the very race. (He came in last!) I do not agree with the verdict of one of the onlookers who called them a "motley lot", I consider that they were a fine looking collection of veterans; some seemed to get a little nervous when the starter's shot rang out, nerves at 40 and over are apt to get a little "wonky" sometimes. The only bone

I have to pick with them is, that with the exception of a few, they did not walk but ran, and I am sorry to say that a life long friend was one of the chief offenders which grieved me mightily. The winner of this event was Mr. D. E. Bonnet, (2nd time in succession) who walked and therefore deserved to win.

Then came the Tug-o'-War, in which only two teams could be mustered. I missed the "stage" management of this event; in former years; the teams of six men each, walked in single file on to the track to the accompaniment of martial music, which always reminded me of the entry of the Gladiators into the arena at Rome.

To my mind the two teams had not sufficient training for this strenuous task, and the respective managers were unable to keep them well in hand, and thus this competition, so interesting in former years, lost a good deal of its attraction. The Swiss National Tourist Office team won the Challenge Cup for which they are to be grateful to their "Anchor" man. Runners-up: Unione Ticinese.

The George Dimier Challenge Cup was won once again by the Unione Ticinese, and Mr. P. Jacomelli (Unione Ticinese) won the prize awarded to the competitor securing the highest number of points in athletic events.

Thus our brethren from the "sunny south" have gathered the plums of this year's Swiss Sports for which they deserve our heartiest congratulations.

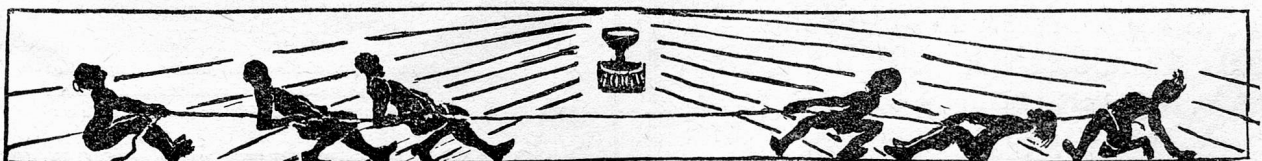
There were also a large number of races for boys and girls and grown ups, such as Wheelbarrow Race, Cigarette Race, Thread and Needle Race, Paper Hat Race, Rolling out the bottle (for Swiss over 50), which were full of amusing incidents.

Some of the little participants flatly refused to move when the starting signal was given, and not even the most appealing shouts and encouragements from their anxious parents could make them change their minds, whilst others ran in all directions treating the judges with utter contempt.



An amusing incident occurred in the Thread-and-Needle Race for adults, when through an oversight, the needles were not available and all the strenuous efforts of the competitors were frustrated much to their disgust.

In my official capacity as Press Reporter, I had the privilege of visiting another competition, which was not billed on the programme. The scene was the committee room; from various mysterious looking bags, bottles containing delicious vintages grown in our homeland, were produced by our friends René Marchand and L. Jobin. I understand, however, that no prizes were given for these "bouts" and thus I lost my last chance of carrying home a prize from the Chiswick Stadium.



Madame de Torrenté, owing to another engagement, was unable to present the prizes, and Madame E. Bernath, the wife of our 1st Counsellor of Legation, took her place, and rewarded every prize winner with a cordial handshake and a most charming smile. Previous to the presentation of the prizes, Mr. R. de Cintra, President of the "Swiss Sports" Committee, shortly addressed the Sports community.

Coming to the summing up, I can, without hesitation say, that this year's Swiss Sports, in spite of the small attendance, proved a great success.

The organisers, as well as the supporters are entitled to the hearty thanks of both competitors and spectators, and I wish to single out in particular all the officials who fulfilled their duties in such an exemplary manner, amongst them the President, Mr. R. de Cintra, ably assisted by his members of the committee, Messrs. A. Schmid, jun., R. Chappuis, J. Diviani, E. H. Schlatter and C. Krebs.

May the next "Swiss Sports" meeting be favoured by golden sunshine and a large number of supporters, this is the wish of all those who left the Polytechnic Stadium at Chiswick happy and contented.

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Results.

Special Handicap Shooting Competition organised by the SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION:

1st. Mr. F. Suter 58 points out of a possible 60 (received handicap) 2nd. Mr. Willy Fischer 58 points (started from scratch.)

High Jump:

1st: Mr J. Stierli, 5', Swiss Bank Corporation; 2nd: Mr. U. Meier, 5', Swiss Bank Corporation; 3rd: Mr. A. Akeret, 4' 9", Swiss Bank Corporation; 4th: Mr. L. Tacheron, 4' 6", Swiss Bank Corporation.

Pillow Fight:

1st: Mr. W. Bill; 2nd: Mr. A. Walther; 3rd: Mr. P. A. Adler; 4th: Mr. M. Berti.

Long Jump:

1st: Mr. U. Meier, 17' 11", Swiss Bank Corporation, 2nd: Mr. W. Hürni, 17' 10", Unattached; 3rd: Mr E. Tobler, 17' 1" M.A.T. Transport, 4th: Mr. R. E. T. Oggier, 16' 11" N.S.H.

100 yards MEN:

1st: Mr. P. Jacomelli, 11 2/5 sec., Unione Ticinese; 2nd: Mr. L. Jacomelli, Unione Ticinese; 3rd: Mr. M. Diviani, Unione Ticinese; 4th: Mr. J. B. de Maria, Unione Ticinese.

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880 yards MEN:

1st: P. Jacomelli, 2 min. 19 4/5 sec., Unione Ticinese; 2nd: Mr. J. B. de Maria, Unione Ticinese 3rd; Mr. L. Jacomelli, Unione Ticinese; 4th: Mr. U. G. Binz, Swiss Bank Corporation.

RELAY RACE:

1st: Unione Ticinese (won the "Pagani Challenge Cup"); 2nd: Swiss Mercantile Society; 3rd: Swiss Bank Corporation; 4th: Swiss Y.M.C.A.

440 yds. Veterans' Walking Handicap:

1st: Mr. D. E. Bonnet (Swiss Bank Corporation); 2nd. time in succession, Mr. Bonnet won the Challenge Cup; 2nd: Mr. G. Fluckiger (Swiss Mercantile Society), 3rd: Mr. Hediger, 4th: Mr. W. Meier, (Swiss Mercantile Society).

TUG-o'-WAR:

1st: Swiss National Tourist Office (won Challenge Cup); Runners-up: Unione Ticinese.

GEORGES DIMIER CHALLENGE CUP: won by the Unione Ticinese, Mr. P. Jacomelli won the prize awarded to competitor securing the highest number of points in athletic events.

80 yards, BOYS, 13, 14, 15:

1st: Georges Arnold. No second and third prize.

GIRLS, 13, 14, 15:

1st: Victoria Slade; 2nd: Jeanine Gandon; 3rd: Rita Hollandy.

BOYS, 11, 12:

1st: R. Whittwer; 2nd: H. Specker; 3rd: J. Greenwood.

GIRLS, 11, 12:

1st: V. Rooke; 2nd: Caroline Lindt; 3rd: Anne Mock.

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BOYS, 9, 10 :

1st : John Whittwer ; 2nd : R. Anghilieri ; 3rd : P. Meier

GIRLS, 9, 10 :

1st : Valerie Fischer ; 2nd : Penelope Whittwer ; 3rd : Maurine Berti.

50 yards, BOYS, 6, 7, 8 :

1st : Michael Gandon ; 2nd : Martin Fischer ; 3rd : S. Hediger.

GIRLS, 6, 7, 8, Heat 1 :

1st : Wendy Kreinczer ; 2nd : Erica Meier ; 3rd : Monica Fischer.

GIRLS, 6, 7, 8, Heat 2 :

1st : M. Bonnet ; 2nd : Wendy Wiseman ; 3rd : Caroline Hardy.

BOYS & GIRLS under 6 :

1st : Barbara Herbert ; 2nd : Sigrid Rutishauser ; 3rd : Peter Senn.

GIRLS, under 6 :

1st : Jane Hardy ; 2nd : Pauline Meier ; 3rd : G. Schmid.

Mixed Races: Three-Legged-Race: Children, under 8 :

1st pair, Girl : S. Rutishauser, Boy : R. Harben ; 2nd pair, Girl : Sondra Pagazzi, Boy : Barry Zügelweiss ; 3rd pair, Girl : Pauline Meier ; Boy : Peter Senn.

Mixed Races: Three-Legged-Race: Children, 8, 9 :

1st pair, Girl : Ch. Penny ; Boy : C. Harben ; 2nd pair, Girl : Suzan Herbert ; Boy : Tony Fischer ; 3rd pair, Girl : P. Whittwer ; Boy : G. Hediger ;

Mixed Races: Three-Legged-Race: Children, 10, 11 :

1st pair, Girl : Patricia Mats ; Boy : Peter Meier ; 2nd pair, Girl : Heidi Mock ; Boy : N. Slade ; 3rd pair, Girl : Valerie Fischer ; Boy : H. Mock.

Three-Legged-Race: Children, 12, 13, 14 :

1st pair, Girl : J. Neel ; Boy : James Greenwood ; 2nd pair, Girl : I. Rutishauser ; Boy : Georges Arnold ; 3rd pair, Girl : D. Orso ; Boy : A. Mats.

Adults, Heat 1 :

1st pair, Lady : Mrs. Dubelbeiss ; Gent : Mr. Dubelbeiss ; 2nd pair, Lady : Miss Nadiroli ; Gent : Mr. Hans Wirth ; 3rd pair, Lady : Mrs. H. H. Baumann ; Gent : Mr. H. H. Baumann.

Adults Heat 2 :

1st pair, Lady : Miss Bonetti ; Gent : Mr. de Maria ; 2nd pair, Lady : Mrs. Oggier ; Gent : Mr. Stucki ; 3rd pair, Lady : Miss Dorothy Mundy ; Gent : Mr. Mundy.

Wheelbarrow: Children, Heat 1 :

1st pair, Girl : Wendy Kreinczer ; Boy : Martin

Fischer ; 2nd pair, Girl : Sandra Vogetti ; Boy : Barry Dubelbeiss ; 3rd pair, Girl : Suzan Herbert ; Boy : Tony Fischer.

Wheelbarrow Race: Children, Heat 2 :

1st pair, Girl : Patricia Mats ; Boy : Peter Meier ; 2nd pair, Girl : J. Neel ; Boy : Daniel Robertson ; 3rd pair, Girl : Victoria Slade ; Boy : N. Slade.

Adults :

1st pair, Lady : Mrs. W. Meier ; Gent : Mr. W. Meier ; 2nd pair, Lady : Miss Calcutt ; Gent : Mr. E. Berti ; 3rd pair Lady : Miss Schweizer ; Gent : Mr. E. A. Tobler.

Thread-and-Needle Race: Children :

1st pair, Girl : J. Neel ; Boy : Danny Robinson ; 2nd pair, Girl : J. Rutishauser ; Boy : G. Arnold ; 3rd pair, Girl : Anne Mock ; Boy : John Whittwer.

Adults :

1st pair, Lady : Mrs. W. Meier ; Gent : Mr. W. Meier ; 2nd pair, Lady : Miss Gilli ; Gent : Mr. E. Siegrist ; 3rd pair, Lady : Mrs. Mundy ; Gent : Mr. Mundy.

Paper-Hat Race: Children :

1st pair, Girl : J. Rutishauser ; Boy : G. Arnold ; 2nd pair, Girl : J. Graham ; Boy : R. Whittwer ; 3rd pair, Girl : J. Neel ; Boy : D. Robins.

Adults :

1st pair, Lady : Mrs. Mundy ; Gent : Mr. Mundy ; 2nd pair, Lady : Miss Stalder ; Gent : Mr. K. Muller ; 3rd pair, Lady : Miss A. Rooke ; Gent : Mr. I. Rooke.

Cigarette Race: Adults :

1st pair, Lady : Miss Huguet ; Gent : Mr. Umbricht ; 2nd pair, Lady : Mrs. Dubelbeiss ; Gent : Mr. Dubelbeiss ; 3rd pair, Lady : Miss V. Abecclen ; Gent : Mr. H. Brechbühl.

Rolling-out-the-Bottle: (for Swiss over 50) :

1st : Mr. Ch. Seinet ; 2nd : Mr. R. de Cintra ; 3rd : Mr. Walther Fischer.

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