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SWISS SPORTS AND GARDEN PARTY

AT THE POLYTECHNIC STADIUM, CHISWICK

ON SATURDAY, 25th MAY, 1957

Whilst in the past the weather authorities have been none too kind to the Swiss Sports, this year at last the sun and a blue sky favoured the annual Sports Festival of the Colony.

The weather forecast predicted "a moderate or fresh north-east wind, probably dull at first with drizzle in places, becoming brighter later". This none too promising forecast may have deterred a number of would-be spectators from venturing to the Chiswick Sports Ground, but by about midday the sun made its appearance and kept us company right to the end.

It is true that a rather nasty east wind made it somewhat uncomfortable at least for the visitors in the stand. I regret to say that the attendance was unsatisfactory as far as spectators were concerned, and sooner or later it will have to be seriously considered whether it is really worth while to continue this, at one time so popular, event, which involves considerable expense and much work for the organisers.

Attendances similar to pre-war times, often exceeding over a thousand visitors, cannot, of course, any longer be expected; conditions have changed and the Colony is rapidly dwindling and ageing, but nevertheless a larger attendance than the one witnessed on the 25th of May could still be expected, and the lack of interest shown by the Swiss community is to be deplored. The number of competitors was approximately the same as last year.

When on former occasions I queried the calling of this event "a Garden Party" I was told that this was done in order to induce more spectators to come along; this "bait" has apparently not worked and I would, therefore, invite the Sports Committee to drop this title now, because it is not a Garden Party in the real sense of the word, and has never been during the last five or six years. If we *must* call it a Garden Party then let us have, as years ago, some side shows, or even a little roundabout, booths where one can "fish for bottles" or "guess the weight of a cake", etc. etc.; there is ample accommodation available at the side of the big stand. This would — as I mentioned before — be a great boon to the children, and might in addition help to defray some of the expenses which are alarmingly mounting every year.

As last year, this year again the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker attended, together with a number of his collaborators from the Embassy.

* * *

The programme started almost on time with the 100 yds. Men Heats; as all the results will be found at the end of this report I shall desist from commenting, with some exceptions, on the performances of individuals and teams.

In comparing last year's results with the present ones I noticed that some new records have been

established, especially in the high jump and relay races.

Among the more exciting races to watch were the 880 yds. Men, won by A. Sidler, Swiss Bank Corporation, the 4 by 110 yds. relay race, won by the Swiss Mercantile Society, the 100 yds. Men, won by W. Wälti, Swiss Mercantile Society, the 100 yds. Ladies, won by Miss H. Grütter, S.M.S., the 1 mile relay race won by the Swiss Bank Corporation in record time, and the obstacle race won by P. Jacomelli, Union Ticinese.

The pillow fight, which on former occasions provided an amusing spectacle for the onlookers, was a complete "flop". In spite of frantic efforts by the man at the microphone, only a handful of competitors could be lured on to the pole. A great opportunity of settling personal grievances without making it look too obvious was thus missed!

Mr. H. Graf, by winning the high jump with 5ft. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, established a record — a very fine performance indeed.

The Tug-o'-War was another event which attracted the spectators' attention. Three teams competed for the "Swiss Observer" challenge cup, which was won by a combination team of "Swissair" and National Tourist Office. Runners-up were the Unione Ticinese. The third team consisted of members of the Swiss Embassy. In years gone by members of the competing teams trained very hard for this event previously to making their appearance; this competition requires not only strength, but also a certain technique. Apparently none of this year's équipes found it necessary to do so, hence none of them presented a really interesting spectacle.

Ever since the Swiss Sports were introduced — some 29 years ago — the 440 yds. Veteran Walking Handicap for the Paravicini challenge cup has been one of the chief items, and I can remember many famous and valiant veterans competing in this walk — most of them, alas, have left us never to return. At some of these meetings often between 20 and 30 members lined up, but in recent years our veterans have become somewhat lazy, and in spite of great efforts made by the President of the Swiss Sports, Mr. de Cintra, to induce the older generation to "have a go", barely a dozen could be induced to come on to the track.

When the starter fired his pistol these warriors, who were lined up according to their age, began to walk (this time they really "walked") with grim determination; judging by their agonised facial expressions I wondered whether they really enjoyed this walk. Young and old among the spectators encouraged the competitors — amongst them husbands and fathers of the onlookers — by shouting and hand-clapping, and it seemed to me the louder they shouted the more distressed the walkers became.

Although qualifying for this walk, I had to decline the President's invitation to take part, the reason being the same as stated last year, that owing to the innumerable functions which I have to attend throughout the year, affecting to a certain degree my old heart, I decided to abstain lest I should make an inglorious exit on a stretcher.

This event was won by Mr. C. Valon, who has no less than 75 Springs behind him, and I heartily congratulate him on this remarkable achievement; in spite of a generous handicap accorded to him he finished in grand style.

This year an item — which was not mentioned in the programme — was introduced, namely the 220 yds. walking race for ladies over 35 years of age.

Some of the ladies, having been disappointed that the President's appeal for the veterans' handicap walk did not get more support, decided there and then — at the instigation of Madame Daeniker, the wife of the Swiss Ambassador — to have a competition of their own (one of the competitors telling me confidentially "We will show the men what we can do"). I would, of course, not dare to call it a "veterans" race, as none who took part came anywhere near the "veterans" status.

This competition should have been really and truly walked under handicap rules, but they generously decided amongst themselves to start from scratch, or "all in one line". About a dozen ladies lined up and when the starting signal was given began to walk like "youngsters"; some mischievous tongues would have it that one or two of the competitors "accelerated" somewhat too much, but not wishing to start an argument I will give them the benefit of the doubt. This walking race was deservedly won by Madame Daeniker, in spite of being placed at the outside, thus having to walk a longer distance than her companions. I hope that this item will become a permanent feature at future Swiss Sports meetings.

The One Lap Open Obstacle Race for Men, which was won by Mr. P. Jacomelli (Unione Ticinese), was most amusing to watch. The course took them through all sorts of obstacles, such as under nets, over hurdles, through water (one of the competitors underwent a "good soaking"), etc. etc.

There were also a large number of races for boys and girls and grown-ups, such as wheelbarrow race, cigarette race, egg-and-spoon race, three-legged race and rolling out the bottle (for Swiss over 50), which were full of amusing incidents.

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

The George Dimier Challenge Cup, awarded to the Swiss Society or Subscribing Firm scoring the highest number of points in athletic events, was won — as last year — by the Swiss Mercantile Society. The athletes scoring the highest number of points were Mr. W. Wälti (Swiss Mercantile Society) and Mr. W. Kleiner (Swiss Mercantile Society).

Soon after 6 o'clock the prizes were presented by Madame Daeniker, who rewarded every prize-winner with a cordial handshake and a charming smile. Previous to the presentation of the prizes, Mr. R. de Cintra, President of the Swiss Sports Committee, addressed the company thanking all who had attended and expressing his appreciation to the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker for having once again honoured the Meeting with their presence. The President mentioned, amidst applause, that Monsieur Daeniker attended a Swiss function for the first time with the rank of Ambassador, and called for three cheers for Monsieur and Madame Daeniker, the latter being presented with a lovely bouquet.

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

The organisers, as well as the supporters, are entitled to the hearty thanks of the competitors and spectators. There is no need to mention any particular names, as all worked in an excellent team spirit which so happily contributed to the smooth running of this festival.

May the next Swiss Sports Meeting — if there should be another one — be favoured by sunshine

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again and by a larger attendance is the wish of all those who left the Polytechnic Stadium at Chiswick happy and content.

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SWISS SPORTS 1957.

Results.

80 Yards Boys and Girls :

Girls, 13, 14, 15 years : 1st, A. Shanks; 2nd, S. Herbert; 3rd, A. Mock. Boys, 11, 12 years : 1st, M. Fisher; 2nd, T. Fisher; 3rd, K. Bevington. Girls, 11, 12 years : 1st, M. Fisher; 2nd, A. Burgaezzi; 3rd, U. Koch. Boys, 9, 10 years : 1st, D. Fässler; 2nd, C. Fässler; 3rd, P. Senn. Girls, 9, 10 years : 1st, J. Barnet; 2nd, S. Curtis; 3rd, A. M. Burri.

50 Yards Boys and Girls :

Boys, 6, 7, 8 years : 1st, J. Thurston; 2nd, P. Ernst; 3rd, J. Berti. Girls, 6, 7, 8 years : 1st, S. Morgan; 2nd, S. Rügger; 3rd, F. Benetti. Boys, under 6 : 1st, P. Jobin; 2nd, J. Hart; 3rd, P. Benetti. Girls, under 6 : 1st, M. Stettler; 2nd, A. Hart; 3rd, J. Curtis and A. Ratmann (tie).

Three-Legged Race :

Children, 12, 13, 14 years : 1st pair, S. Herbert — A. Mock; 2nd pair, A. Shanks — W. Wiseman. 10, 11 years : 1st pair, V. Koch — A. Koch; 2nd pair, P. Senn — B. Herbert. - Under 8 years : 1st pair, S. Morgan — F. Burri; 2nd pair, P. Keller — G. Slade; 3rd pair, K. Sheldon — J. Thurston.

Wheelbarrow Race :

12, 13, 14 years : 1st, A. Shanks — W. Wiseman; 2nd, T. Fisher — M. Barnet. 10, 11 years : 1st, J. Morgan — K. Bevington; 2nd, C. Fässler — P. Albertini; 3rd, R. Stettler — S. Rutishalser.

Egg and Spoon Race :

Older Girls : 1st, J. Herbert; 2nd, A. Mock; 3rd, S. Herbert and S. Curtis (tie). Younger Girls : 1st, J. Curtis; 2nd, K. Sheldon; 3rd, M. Ernst. Older Boys : 1st, T. Fisher; 2nd, M. Day; 3rd, P. Curtis. Younger Boys : 1st, R. Burke; 2nd, C. Fässler; 3rd, P. Senn.

High Jump :

1st, H. Graf, Height 5ft. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; 2nd, A. Zarro; 3rd, W. Wälti.

Long Jump :

1st, W. Kleiner, 17ft. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.; 2nd, J. De Maria; 3rd, M. Lane.

880 Yards Men. (Berti Trophy) :

1st, A. Sidler; 2nd, K. Hediger; 3rd, H. Lanz. Time 2 min. 11 secs.

100 Yards Men :

1st, W. Wälti; 2nd, R. Mottier; 3rd W. Kleiner. Time 10.7 secs.

100 Yards Ladies :

1st, H. Grülter; 2nd, H. Aberhalden.

$\frac{1}{4}$ x 110 Yards Relay Race :

1st, Swiss Mercantile Society; 2nd, Y.M.C.A.

Three-Legged Race, Adults :

1st pair, R. E. Bonetti — V. Whelan; 2nd, Mr. and Miss Slade; 3rd, R. O. Bonetti — G. De Maria.

Wheelbarrow Race, Adults :

1st, F. Bonetti — G. De Maria; 2nd, R. E. Bonetti — G. Gratarola; 3rd, P. Bonetti — V. Whelan.

Egg and Spoon Race, Adults :

1st, A. Bonetti — M. Berti; 2nd, H. Basseler — J. Luther; 3rd B. Martin — I. Helber.

440 Yards Veteran Walking Handicap :

(Paravicini Challenge Cup)

1st, C. Valon; 2nd, H. H. Baumann; 3rd, W. Fischer; 4th, D. E. Bonnet.

Obstacle Race :

1st, P. Jacomelli; 2nd, R. E. Bonetti; 3rd, P. Bonetti.

Rolling out the Bottle :

1st, W. Fischer; 2nd, E. Weber; 3rd, D. E. Bonnet; 4th, R. de Cintra.

Tug o' War :

(Swiss Observer Challenge Cup)

Winners:— Swiss National Tourist Office and Swissair. Runners Up:— Swiss Mercantile Society.

One Mile Relay Race :

Winners:— Swiss Bank Corporation. Runners Up:— Unione Ticinese. Time 4min. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ secs.

Ladies 220 Yards Walking Race :

1st Mrs. Daeniker; 2nd, Mrs. R. Burgaezzi; 3rd, Mrs. L. Bonetti; 4th, Mrs. Y. Bader.

Athlete who scored the highest number of points :

W. Wälti S.M.S. and W. Kleiner S.M.S. 6 Points each. By draw Wälti won the prize.

George Dimier Challenge Cup won by :

Swiss Mercantile Society.

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