

Obituary

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Objekttyp: **Obituary**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **30 (1967)**

Heft [10]

PDF erstellt am: **29.05.2024**

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Obituary

CHARLES HENRI DING

On 18th September Charles Henri Ding was accidentally killed when the car he was driving collided with a truck and trailer unit at Pirongia, south-west of Te Awamutu. He was aged 62. With Charles passed away a sportsman and athlete of renown, especially in the wrestling world. In 1928 his greatest achievement came when he held for a short time the world left-arm weightlifting record. As a wrestler he was well known all over Switzerland and was matched with people like the Roth brothers and Werner Burki and other well-known athletes of top rank. He also played ice hockey and travelled all over Europe.

In 1936 he captained the Swiss team to the Olympic Games in Berlin where he competed in the shot put and wrestling events. There Charles met Jessie Owens and John Weissmuhler and made friends with them and later renewed this friendship in Rome at the later Games there. Charles turned professional wrestler in the mid-thirties and as such became one of the well-known grapplers on the many world circuits and was for many years a national hero in Switzerland.

Just before the 1939-45 war Charles learned the skill of hammer throwing in Lausanne; there he met the late Henry Guisan, who was a sports promoter at that time. While on a wrestling tour of Australia in 1938 Charles was offered bouts in New Zealand by a promoter, Mr T. S. Yandall. In 1939 he decided to leave Switzerland for New Zealand but at the time was refused military leave because of the war rumours in Europe. In the Swiss Army Charles served as a Sergeant-Major in an artillery unit.

When Lord Chamberlain made his famous trip to see the German Chancellor and Dictator things eased up and Charles received leave and left his Homeland immediately. In New Zealand he wrestled for some time under the name of McGinty Ironman Ding, his wrestling being more of a straight European style because he never really cared for the showman-like style that later became so popular and after a few years in New Zealand he retired from the ring. Charles was also a turbine engineer and as such travelled many countries for the well-known enterprise Brown Boveri. At the time of his death he was the caretaker of the Te Awamutu water supply intake on Pirongia Mountain.

Charles was well liked among his fellow workers, Maori and pakeha alike, and all the Swiss people in New Zealand who knew him. He was the president of the Auckland Swiss Club for two years and was a life member of the Auckland Workingmen's Club. He loved good music and had a great library of good books dealing with many subjects. Charles loved his job and the Pirongia

mountainside—a place where he could sing and yodel as he wished and where he found peace and happiness.

From a former marriage he was the father of a son and two daughters and when he died he had just taken out a licence to be married within a week. A wonderful service was held at St. Mary's Church in Hamilton. Charles was then put to his last resting place in the Newstead Lawn Cemetery. Many of his friends came from all over New Zealand to pay their last tribute and respect to a great friend. To his family and fiancée we all offer our deepest sympathy.

—Hans Gilgan.

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AUCKLAND SWISS CLUB

The Auckland Swiss Club will hold their Kleinkaliber and Jagdschiessen for Auckland members on 11th-12th November 1967 on Frank Reichmuth's farm, Chamberlain Road, Henderson, commencing at 9 a.m. Guests will be able to shoot their programme on Saturday, 18th November.

The annual "Schuetzenball" of the Auckland Swiss Club will be held on Saturday, 18th November 1967, at the Royal Oak School Hall, Manukau Road, Royal Oak. Please note change of address; this is due to the fact that the Edendale School Committee will be using their hall on that particular date. Our Swiss Chef will once again prepare a delicious dinner, consisting of trout and venison; a good band will keep you entertained. Begins 7.30 p.m.