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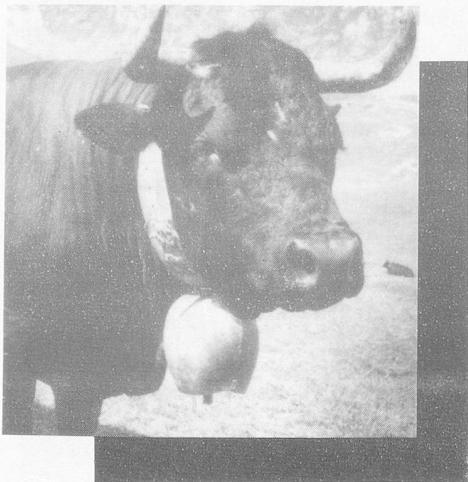
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NEW "SCHWINGER KÖNIG"

Silvio Rüfenacht from Hettiswil in Berne became "Schwingerkönig" at the 36th Federal Wrestling Championships in Olten. Silvio deposed Adrian Käser, the previous king who is a long standing friend of Silvio's sister Lisi. So both kings agree that after all the crown stays more or less in the same family.



"Schwinger König" Silvio (left) being congratulated by Adrian Käser.

BATTLE OF THE QUEENS

Staged fights between cows has been a tradition in the Wallis for time immemorial. The winning cow of these annual tournaments becomes the "queen" of the year and much honour and distinction goes to her owner. So, over the years, this pastime has gradually become big business in the Wallis. Many people who have nothing to do with raising cattle such as chemists, lawyers, doctors and real estate agents, have become cow owners, very much the same way as people become owners of race horses. Rather than buying a Ferrari, people with money invest their funds now in cows. Like race horses, the cows are kept in communal stables and are looked after by experts who train them for their fights.

A pastime which brought a bit of excitement into the life on the high alps has come down into the valleys and the cities and turned into a money making (or losing) business enterprise, certainly a far cry from the old tradition. The cows fight in a ring similar but smaller than a bull-ring and are recognisable by large numbers painted on their sides. The looser is the cow that first gives up the fight.

SWISS BLUE HELMETS

The Federal Council has decided to set up a battalion of 600 Swiss Blue Helmets to be operational by 1995 as part of Switzerland's contribution to international peace. Participation in these troops is on a voluntary basis. However, to satisfy Switzerland's neutrality in international affairs, the dispatch of these troops to trouble spots is subject to the following criteria:

- Agreement by all conflicting parties.
- The peace corps must be allowed to remain impartial.
- The use of weapons is only allowed for self-defence.
- Switzerland must have the right to pull back its Blue Helmets at any time if the above conditions should no longer apply.

HELI-BIKING

A hotel in Disentis (Graubünden) thought it had a winner when it advertised a "world novelty": transport by helicopter to the top of the nearby Crap Sogn Gion and down run by mountain bike back to Disentis. However, following some harsh protests from various opposition groups, the Heli-Biking project had to be cancelled off the hotel's promotional programme.

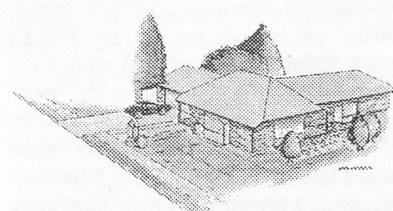
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