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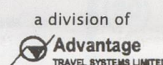
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Wehrli, followed by afternoon tea at their respective houses. Unfortunately the boat-trip to Somes Island fell into the water, Lotti Napp, cancelled at the last moment. Anyway, it was a very pleasant afternoon, and we hope that our Taranaki friends got yet another view of Wellington this time.

Well refreshed, they and some of the Wellingtonians met at the Club house in the late afternoon for a nice tea catered by Marcel Jäggi, games, talk and dance. A video adaptation of movies showing scenes from past events at the SwissClub was viewed with interest and amusement. Particular mention should be made of Flemming Sørensen: he re-painted the Clubhouse - what a job!. The paints have been **sponsored by RESENE PAINTS**. Thank you very much!

When this last evening drew to an end, everybody went home happily and looking forward to - well, the 50th anniversary celebration. Lots of planning, discussion and work had gone into this weekend - everything worked out well and we would like to thank all the organisers, helpers, sponsors and most of all the participants for their contributions to this memorable event.

Michelle KoeppelSchneider
Secretary, Wellington Swiss Club.
14.11.1997.

FAST 2000

First America's cup Swiss Team

Swiss Challenge with "European flavour" for the America's Cup in the year 2000

Can you remember the introductory articles from Swiss team - AMERICAS CUP in our HELVETIA issues of September/October and November? Now it appears that there is not just one but two Swiss Challengers intent on taking the America's Cup from New Zealand to Switzerland!

Today we would like to introduce Pierre Fehlmann's Swiss team with European flavour:

FAST 2000

First America's cup Swiss Team

We have received a press kit for the First America's Cup Swiss Team, FAST 2000 from the Chargé d'Affaires of Switzerland and quote from the accompanying letter:

In view of the significance of this being Switzerland's first entry in this prestigious sporting event, the Team has requested that the Swiss community in New Zealand be made aware of their home country's participation. The Team will be taking part in the eliminating races in Auckland from November 1999 with the main Cup races being held in February/March

2000. Of course there will be intense interest in the Cup from people in New Zealand in general, and from those from all over the world, but it will be especially interesting for Swiss here with a Swiss entry. (In the meantime we have come to understand that there is not just one but two Swiss entries). In fact, Pierre Fehlmann is involved with the Team and many Swiss, particularly in Auckland, may remember him from the Whitbread Round the World Races when he was in Auckland for that event and made many excellent contacts at that time amongst the Swiss community there. The Team is looking forward to much support from the Swiss community here.

This may be an opportune time to remind us of the history and the significance of the Challenge for the America's Cup and in the March Issue of HELVETIA we will introduce "thé European flavour"; Tactician Enrico Chi-effi, Italy, Skipper Marc Pajot, France, and Jochen Schumann, Germany together with the general crew.

The America's Cup - A challenge to the intelligence of men and of nations !

- The America's Cup, the major event of world yachting, has become the third most important sporting event in the world.

- More than a yacht race, the America's Cup is a heroic event. Today, the oldest sporting trophy in the world goes not only to a sporting team, it rewards the nation which has assem-

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(Continued from page 11)

bled the best managers, the best scientists, the best technology, the best tacticians and the best athletes.

- The America's Cup is a world media event. It reflects international economic competition to such a point that it has become a symbol.

- The America's Cup remained for 132 years (from 1851 to 1983) on the East Coast of the United States, a symbol of the "American century". Since being won by the Australians the Californians and then the New Zealanders, it has highlighted the emergence of the Pacific economies. Europe, by conquering such a powerful symbol, would acquire a unique communications tool to publicise its energy and vitality.

- On 22 August 1996, the America's Cup celebrated its 140th birthday. Only the trophy, a silver ewer, has not changed. The legend has grown, the yachts have changed, but above all, the balance of power has been reversed. This event, which for so long favoured the holders, has become an open competition where a challenger has every chance of winning the trophy.

- England, 1851. On the occasion of the Great Exhibition, the schooner "America" challenged the fleet of British yachts and wins, under the gaze of Queen Victoria. When she asks, concerned, about the results of the British, there is the famous reply: "Your Majesty, there is no second place" - an admission of the absolute superiority of the American yacht.

WHY A SWISS CHALLENGE ?

The America's Cup and the Olympic Games will undoubtedly be the key sporting events of the end of this cen-

tury. Moreover, they will take place in the region which is undergoing the most spectacular economic development - the Pacific Rim.

- The America's Cup generates impressive activities in the United States, and draws on the nationwide enthusiasm for yachting in New Zealand. European countries often find their efforts hampered more by lack of finance than by a shortage of human resources.

And while the conquest of the world's oldest sporting trophy requires mastery of technical and financial aspects, it also demands the people - highly qualified and motivated - to extract the maximum from the equipment put at their disposal. With this in mind, Marc Pajot decided to form a team to use the finest European talent to mount a very competitive Challenge, but from a "neutral" base. His long-standing and excellent relationship with Pierre Fehlmann thus led him to consider Switzerland as the base for his Challenge. At the heart of Europe, Switzerland offers a number of advantages which can unite the various elements of the challenge under its flag. The maintenance of certain values has long conferred on Switzerland an influence and responsibility far outweighing its economic scale. Its culture, like its economy, is in large measure due to the contributions of foreigners who have settled in Switzerland over the years. Switzerland has already proved that it has great sailors and match racers. Among them, Pierre Fehlmann and the many crew members he has trained during round-the-world races figure prominently, as their victory in the 1986 Whitbread on board "UBS Switzerland" demonstrated.