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## SWITZERLAND at the OLYMPIC GAMES

AMSTERDAM, JULY - AUGUST, 1928.

(Contributed by Mr. E. S. Block, President of the Swiss Gymnastic Society in London.)

Final results of all the various Sports competed for at the Games and classification of the first 10 amongst the 50 odd nations which competed are as follows:—

	Points	Firsts	Secs.	Thirds
(1) U.S.A.	118	22	18	16
(2) Germany	69	11	9	18
(3) France	61	7	12	6
(4) Finland	49	8	8	9
(5) Holland	47	8	9	5
(6) Sweden	45	7	6	12
(7) Gt. Britain	41	4	11	7
(8) Italy	39	7	6	6
(9) Switzerland	32	6	5	4
(10) Canada	27	4	4	7

When studying the above table one must take into consideration that the Olympic Games do not only consist of athletics alone, but comprise all other Sports such as Boxing, Fencing, Water Polo, Swimming, Wrestling, Cycling, Gymnastics, Football, Hockey, Rowing, Horse Riding, Jumping, Weight Lifting, etc. That our dear little Switzerland, with only 4½ million inhabitants, should be able to emerge from the ninth modern edition of the ancient classic Olympic Games, which have just ended at Amsterdam, as No. 9 on the list and therefore amongst the ten best nations in the world, is indeed a splendid achievement and one of which every one of us can be truly proud. May it be mentioned that right from the commencement of the Games proper, when the Swiss group of 80 members, including one solitary lady, took part in the march round the stadium at the opening ceremony, they created a very good impression which was maintained throughout the course of the competitions.

Nothing could be more satisfactory—from the Swiss point of view—than the knowledge that in our two national sports—*Shooting* (rifle and revolver) and *Gymnastics*—our representatives are not only good enough to compete with the best in the world, but better still, have beaten the best the world can produce and occupy *first place* amongst the nations. That our marksmen were topnotchers we always knew, and although they had to fight hard for supremacy in Holland they 'got there' by obtaining first place and showed splendid grit in adversity. Now our Gymnasts have followed suit—and they had a much harder battle still; they not only had to fight and try to equal the almost superhuman skill of the Czechs and Yugoslavs at the Rings, of the Czechs at Drill and on the Parallel Bars and of the Germans on the Horizontal Bar, at which they excel, but they also had to contend with the greatest of all difficulties—the curious and sometimes almost unjust awards of the judges, belittling the value of the magnificent work of our own men and magnifying the value of sometimes inferior work of others. Yet in spite of it all they came out on top and the somewhat daring prophecy expressed in the *Swiss Observer* of July 28th has come true. Our compatriot Miez (Olten) has come out as the Gymnastic Champion of the world and is closely followed by another Swiss—Haenggi (Burgdorf)—who was second.

On the Horse with Pommels two Swiss were first and second (Miez and Haenggi) and on the Horse without Pommels another Swiss, E. Mack (Basel) was first. On the Horizontal Bar two Swiss were first and third (Miez and Mack) and on the Parallel Bars Haenggi came third.

In *Rowing* Switzerland obtained first place in the pairs with cox and second place in the fours with cox. Both very fine achievements in face of exceedingly strong opposition.

In *Wrestling* (Catch-as-Catch-can Style) the Swiss obtained one championship only, that of Kyburz (Bern) in the middle weight. Boegli, in whom great hopes had been placed, came second in the light-heavy weight and Minder third in the featherweight.

Both the last mentioned were unlucky in having decisions on points given against them. When considering the results of our Wrestlers, of whom a great deal more was expected, one must not lose sight of the fact that, through our own 'Swiss "Schwingen"' we have a distinctly different style in Catch-as-Catch-can wrestling from other nations, which largely exploit the so-called "American or Scandinavian styles"; the difference is that, whilst our own men use the standing-up position, trying to throw their man as quickly as possible, the other styles favour matcraft, trying to get their opponents down on the mat and obtaining in the process the position on top with the object of holding their opponents down and underneath for the rest of the bout, which they would win, thanks to having obtained top position, on points. Our own men intensely dislike this style, which is foreign to their conception of wrestling based upon the principles of our own "Schwingen," where a man has to *work*.

In *Horse Riding and Jumping* our men did quite well and in the individual placings one of our compatriots, Major Kuhn, came third.

In *Football* our team did not do anything like as well as at the last Games in Paris (when they reached the Final and were only beaten by Paraguay, who, by the way, won again this time) and was defeated by Germany in the preliminary rounds.

With regard to *Athletics*, which appears to be the only really weak spot of ours, and in which we made a rather poor show, it must be remembered that Switzerland is a very young adherent to this sport, as it is probably not more than ten years since we took up athletics in earnest and even now we still seem to adhere to the old principle of all-round athletes—favouring the Decathlon or Zehnkampf—rather than specialising in one or two events and becoming proficient in them. Only by adopting the latter policy can we ever hope to compete successfully with the athletes of other nations. Olympic Championships are won by specialists only in one or the most in two events. We must furthermore learn the value of intensive, continued and scientific training on modern lines right from boyhood. Spotting youngsters while still at school, and training them as specialists for, say, the 100 and 200 meters or for the jumps or for the 400 meters, etc., must be the foremost thought and principle of those responsible for the management of athletics in Switzerland. That we have a splendid type of manhood, capable of almost anything in athletics, could be noticed at the last Gymnastic Festival in Lucerne when, only to mention one case as an example amongst many, the St. Gallen Stadt-Turnverein had an athletic section such as one could not wish to see a finer set of men; yet at the Olympic Games our men did not shine. In the Decathlon Meier only did the first 7 events out of ten, but in those in which he did take part he did really well. P. Martin (Lausanne), who had hopes of reaching the final for the 800 Meters Flat, was beaten in the preliminary rounds. He did better in the 1500 Meters Flat, where he competed in the final and actually finished 6th. In the 4 x 100 Mtr. Relay Switzerland finished 5th in the final. Our sprinter Weibel did not do badly in the 100 and 200 Mtr., but got beaten early in the preliminary rounds. Meier made Mtr. 6.90 in the long jump. In the other track events we did not compete.

Switzerland should certainly improve in athletics in years to come and our athletes may quite conceivably emulate the achievements of our Gymnasts and Marksmen at some future Games.

In conclusion may it be mentioned that our little country—dear to all of us—once again enhanced her already good reputation as a prominent and live member of the sporting world. E.S.B.

## FIRST OF AUGUST CELEBRATION.

When it was first mooted that the 1st of August should be celebrated in a more representative way than hitherto, so as to attract the largest possible number of Swiss for this auspicious occasion, there were many who shook their heads and gloomily prophesied that such an effort was bound to meet with failure. The subsequent events on the grounds of the Swiss Rifle Association, which had been selected as the venue of the proposed gathering, proved fully how groundless these fears were and that the Swiss have lost none of their love for a *Fest*, where merrymaking and good fellowship is the *ordre de jour*, and where the inner man is also coming in for his share of the good things.

Unfortunately the day started none too propitiously, lowering black clouds and copious rain in the morning filling many with apprehension that it would, in the real sense of the word, be a 'wash out.' However, Pluvius became more reasonable as the day advanced and forbore to shed further tears when the hour approached for the opening of the *Fête*, which was officially timed for 3 p.m. There were even occasional bursts of sunshine and everyone was in a happy mood and thankful that the day passed off so well.

Although the attendance was small at the beginning it became larger as the afternoon wore on and it was estimated that towards 7 o'clock over a thousand persons were in the grounds, on which a number of shows provided fun for all comers. Down by the tea tent was the coconut shy, a joy for old and young, where for a few coppers if you were lucky or adept enough, you could win a coconut. The failures to win a prize were evenly distributed between the gentle sex and the strong, thanks to a wise providence in the person of Mr. Schutz, who had seen to it that the cocoanuts outlasted the coppers by placing them rather low on the horizon. The result of this perspicacity was a handsome surplus, which constituted a welcome contribution towards the general expenses.

Further down the field Mr. J. J. Schneider had installed, entirely at his own expense, a dart competition. The two beautifully finished boards secured a continuous stream of competitors, some of whom proved themselves, after a few tries, such pastmasters that they had to be declared *hors de combat*.

Further along Mrs. Boehringer was valiantly striving to make a Chinese laundry yield dividends commensurate with the capital and work spent upon it, and in this I understand she was fairly success-

ful, the day's takings showing a considerable excess over the cost of the stand, the stock-in-trade remaining at the same time at a satisfactory figure. One of the few successful ones to win a prize was Mme. Paravicini, her feat being heartily applauded, while a certain gentleman at his first visit was fortunate enough to secure a pair of ladies' knickers, the *pièce de résistance* of the show. Many more, too numerous to mention, came away from the Chinese Laundry poorer but wiser beings although not in the least disheartened by their experiences.

Next to the Chinese Laundry was the Gallery of Swiss Celebrities, which owed its inception to the happy thought and original turn of mind of Mr. Fred Suter, of the Swiss Bank Corporation, and was in charge of the Gaillard quartette. A prominently displayed notice invited all and sundry who felt that the affairs of the Colony had not been conducted to their satisfaction to give vent to their feelings by letting them have it there and then, and to judge by the advantage taken of this invitation the records of the gentlemen portrayed in the gallery must indeed have been black, some of their adversaries spending shillings for the gratification of 'downing' the objects of their grievance. Those who were fortunate enough with five shots to knock down the whole gallery were rewarded with a packet of cigarettes or, in the case of the gentler sex, with chocolates and other prizes, the fun continuing well into the evening until darkness put an end to it.

The pillow-fights, of which great expectations had been entertained failed dismally, much to the chagrin of the writer and Mr. H. Senn, who were in charge of this forlorn hope and fortunately relieved of further oratorical efforts by the welcome collapse of the supports holding the poles, which put an end to their embarrassed feelings.

Towards six o'clock everybody gathered round the big tent near the refreshment bar to hear the Swiss Minister, M. Paravicini, delivering himself in happily-worded sentences of the following speeches in French, English and Schwyzerdürsch (owing to the difficulties which the printing of the latter presents the Editor has, with the kind permission of M. Paravicini, reproduced the last speech in German):—

Voici la première fois que les Suisses de Londres fêtent officiellement le jour de naissance de la Confédération. L'heureuse initiative de cette réunion patriotique, sous le ciel quelque peu couvert de nuages du premier août, a été prise par un groupe de compatriotes qui ont particulièrement à cœur le bien-être de notre florissante Colonie et qui, en tout temps, ne négligent aucun effort pour lui donner plus d'unité et favoriser son intime collaboration dans le travail comme dans le loisir. Nous les remercions chaleureusement de leur louable entreprise et les félicitons du succès de cette fête. Chacun de nous est heureux d'être, en ce jour-ci, au milieu du cercle intime de ses compatriotes, dans une Suisse improvisée, il est vrai, dans une petite Suisse d'un jour, sans lacs et sans vallées, et sans les feux sur les montagnes, mais une petite Suisse qui, toute improvisée qu'elle soit, offre pour quelques heures un asile aux enfants de la véritable Patrie vers laquelle nos coeurs vont dans un commun élan.

Ceux de nos amis qui ont déjà quitté Londres et qui, plus privilégiés que nous-mêmes, fêtent la naissance de la Confédération sur le sol-même du pays, ont emporté avec eux—et ceci grâce aux

## QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.	July 24		Aug. 24
	Fr.	Fr.	
Confederation 3% 1903	80.90	82.00	
5% 1917, VIII. Mob. Ln.	100.87	101.75	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K	85.80	86.55	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	101.25	101.55	
SHARES.	July 24		Aug. 24
	Fr.	Fr.	
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	816	826
Crédit Suisse	500	940	952
Union de Banques Suisses	500	722	725
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2930	3197
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	5037	5237
Soc. Ind. pour la Schapelle	1000	3935	4175
S.A. Brown Boveri	350	586	582
C. F. Bally	1000	1520	1515
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	848	884
Entreprises Suizér S.A.	1000	1145	1188
Comp. de Nav. n sur le Lac Léman	500	515	540
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	100	350	332
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	860	905

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