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SWISS SPORTS AND GARDEN PARTY

AT THE POLYTECHNIC STADIUM, CHISWICK

ON SATURDAY, 4th JUNE, 1955

The morning of Saturday, June 4th started far from promising, in fact it rained, which is not an uncommon happening where "Swiss Sports" meetings are concerned.

Out of the twenty-seven sports meetings held so far, twelve took place in rain, at eight meetings the weather was indifferent (partly rain and sunshine), and on only seven occasions the sun shone benignly on the sports community.

Amongst the latter we can include this year's "Swiss Sports", because soon after noon the sun came out and remained with us right up to the end. It is true there was a coldish wind blowing, but I am glad to say, that it did not interfere too much with the comfort of both spectators and competitors.

In spite of a dismal morning, and the railway strike, which, no doubt, kept many would be visitors away, a surprisingly large number of spectators could be counted beating all former records since the "Swiss Sports" were transferred from Herne Hill and Chelsea to Chiswick. This applies also to the number of competitors who took part in the various sporting events.

This is a good and encouraging sign, and goes to prove that this at one time so popular a Colony affair has not yet lost its pull. To compare, however, the post-war meetings with the pre-war ones, would be hardly fair, as conditions have vastly changed, partly due to the shrinking in numbers of the Swiss community; also many of the former competitors who took an active part, year after year, have either died, gone away, or have entered an age when sport has become a thing of the past.

This was clearly proved f.i. in the 440 yards Veteran's Walking Handicap (for men over 40), which in pre-war days often fetched thirty or more members on to the track. This year hardly a dozen lined up at the start.

I do not know why the committee added to the name "Swiss Sports", the words "And Garden Party"; frankly I can not see where the "Garden Party" comes in. There are no gardens at Chiswick like f.i. at Wimbledon or Ascot (tennis and races). There is the track and there are the tribunes, the former as mentioned on the programme, is only reserved for competitors and those ladies and gentlemen who are adorned with a most impressive badge. Two of my friends, who were not thus "marked", and, no doubt mistook the track for the "garden" where promptly told by a perhaps over zealous lady to "keep off the grass".

Therefore I humbly propose to the organisers either to invite the Polytechnic authorities to start laying out gardens for the benefit of Swiss visitors, or drop the title "And Garden Party". And now I make a bet that next year it will again be "And Garden Party", because, "though it is not 'according to facts', it "sounds so much better".

The Swiss Minister and Madame Daeniker attended this sports festival for the first time, and were received by Mr. R. de Cintra, President of the Swiss Sports committee. I quite expected that their arrival, as on previous occasions, would be announced over the microphone, this was, however, overlooked.

Looking back to some of the pre-war sports meetings, I seem to remember that when the then Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini arrived, mostly late in the afternoon, the band — in those days we could even afford a band — used to play the Swiss Hymn "Trittst im Morgenrot daher", which always used to amuse me in view of the late hour of his arrival. Was it meant as a reproach, I wonder?

According to the programme the Accordion Club was thanked for providing the musical entertainment, but I failed to hear them.

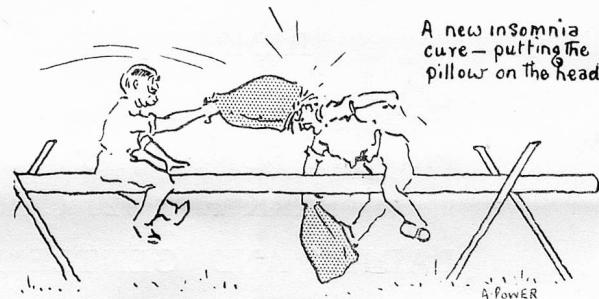
* * *

Soon after 2 o'clock the first race (100 yds. Men, Heats) was run. As the results of the various events are given at the end of this report, I will — with a few exceptions — desist from commenting on the performance of individuals or teams.

I am told that with regard to the classical races, high and long jumps, etc., some of last year's records were beaten. This is, I imagine undoubtedly due to the ending of all rationing, as once again our sportsmen can be fed on juicy steaks and "good old roast-beef of England".

Two of the most exciting races to watch were the 880 and 440 yards for men, both won by Mr. Pietro Jacomelli of the Unione Ticinese; in each race he made a spurt at the last moment, and, like lightening, overtook his opponents. It was a remarkable performance, and I feel almost tempted to call him the "Swiss Bannister".

No less interest was caused by the 4 x 110 yards Relay Race won by the Unione Ticinese.



The pillow fight, which is always a source of great amusement, was rather slow in starting, and it was only after some of the girls had made a start that the stronger sex followed on.

One of the onlookers tried very hard indeed to lure me on the pole, in fact his insistence to partner me became almost embarrassing, when suddenly I remembered that he was the gentleman to whom, some

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time ago, I had refused to publish an article of his in this paper. He, no doubt thought that this would be a splendid opportunity to have "a go at me", what a blessing I "smelt a rat", I am sure I would have been knocked off "with flying colours!?" It is indeed a most excellent opportunity to settle personal grievances without making it look to obvious.

The Tug-o'-War was another item which claimed the interest of the spectators, who invaded the track in large numbers to witness this event from close quarters.

This year three teams competed namely the Swiss Legation, the National Tourist Office and the Swiss Bank Corporation.

In pre-war days the competing teams walked in single file on to the track, whilst the band played a martial tune, which used to remind me somewhat of the entry of the Gladiators into the arena in Rome, alas, there was no band, and we were thus deprived of a most impressive spectacle.

The first round was between the Swiss Legation and Swiss Bank Corporation. Having been at one time connected with the Legation my sympathies were with their team, and I was pleased to witness the eclipse of the Bankers who were "erledigt" without much effort, but when they had to face the *equipe* of the National Tourist Office they had to face a tougher proposition. The latter team was much heavier, and obviously better trained, so, in spite of almost super-human efforts the "Diplomats" were beaten by the "Tourists", a well deserved victory, which all the same saddened me a little.

As mentioned in my introduction the 440 yards Veterans' Walking Handicap for Swiss over 40 years of age, could muster but few entrants, which is a pity as it is always enjoyable to watch these valiant veterans "running", I beg their pardon, "walking" with grim determination. Judging from the expression on the faces of some of the competitors, I have grave doubts as to whether they really and truly enjoyed this race, their panting and puffing when passing the finishing post was distressing to watch.

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In my younger days, I regularly competed in this race, without much success I am sorry to say. Twice I was "invited" by one of the Judges to "step out", as he considered my "walking" to be "running". In fact this event has on previous occasions been the cause of some heart burning by entrants who were disqualified for "running", when they were 100 per cent convinced that they were only "walking". I understand that this year again there was a complaint from one of the competitors which may lead to a "challenge" with regard to the exact rules governing this race.

The innumerable functions throughout the year, which I have to attend in the Colony, have, I am sorry to say, played havoc with my old heart, and therefore I reluctantly decided to desist from performing, lest I should make an inglorious exit on a stretcher.

Winner of this race was Mr. D. E. Bonnet, who, I believe, has won this race on several occasions.

The "George Dimier Challenge Cup" awarded to the Swiss Society or Subscribing firm scoring the highest number of points in athletic events, was won by the Unione Ticinese. The athlete scoring the highest number of points was Mr. C. Caselini, also a Ticinese.

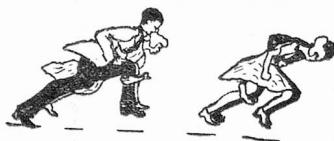
Once again our compatriots from the "sunny south" have gathered the plums of this year's Swiss Sports, for which they rightly deserve heartiest congratulations.

Just before the many races for boys, girls and grown ups started, all eyes were suddenly turned "heavenwards". Amidst much cheering a "Swissair" machine circled gracefully over the Sports ground on its way to our homeland. I have a shrewd idea that this was done on "higher authority", it was a "beau geste" which was greatly appreciated.

The events, such as thread-and-needle, three-legged races and rolling-out-the-bottle, etc., were most amusing to watch and judging from the excited faces, especially of the younger ones, seemed to have given intense enjoyment to the onlookers.



In some of the races the little ones were so anxious to get to their destination, that they kept on running long after they had reached the finishing post.



A sweet little girl with tears running down her rosy cheeks passed me apparently in great distress; on enquiring for the reason of her apparent unhappiness, she informed me that she wanted to go home. "Why", I asked, and the answer "Because I did not win in the race". But when I told the poor little mite that she would win next time, she smiled again, saying, "I am sure I shall".

Having myself not the slightest sense of direction, I could warmly sympathise with both those boys and girls, who when starting a race, ran in all directions, and all the prompting of their parents and friends was of no avail.

Unfortunately an accident happened to a little boy, although not on the track, and I sincerely hope that it will not have any serious consequences.

Shortly before 6 o'clock, Madame Daeniker, the wife of the Swiss Minister, presented the prizes to the lucky winners, after which Mr. R. de Cintra, President of the "Swiss Sports" gave a short address calling for three cheers, and so ended another Sports Meeting, and I am sure nobody will contradict me if I say that it was a successful one in all respects.

I would like to close my report by thanking particularly the organisers of this Sports Festival, who worked very hard indeed, and fulfilled their duties in an exemplary manner, amongst them the President, Mr. R. de Cintra, ably assisted by members of the committee, Mr. C. Krebs (Sports Supervisor), Dr. E. M. Bircher (Referee), Messrs. H. H. Baumann, C. Berti, D. E. Bonnet, W. Burren, W. D. Grant, E. M. Huber, A. Jaccard, F. de Maria, C. Mayr, H. Mock, C. Slade and A. W. Sommer (Judges), W. Meier (Starter) Messrs. Louis Baume, B. E. Hart, Lucien Jobin (Timekeepers), Messrs. F. Bassi, V. Berti, and E. Decosterd (Linesmen), Mr. G. R. Kitchin (Competitors' Steward), Messrs. E. Berti, R. Chappuis and J. Hauser (Official Recorders), Mrs. W. Meier, Messrs. J. W. Bonjour and E. H. Schlatter (Recorders for Children's races), Messrs. A. Boog,

F. Delaloye and E. Holzherr (Recorder and Judges).

In addition all those Swiss firms and individuals, who by their financial support and generosity enabled us to again hold this Festival deserve our sincere gratitude.

It is my ardent wish that the next "Swiss Sports" will again be favoured by golden sunshine, and be as happy as the 1955 one.

ST.

Results.

High Jump:

1st: W. Meier, 5ft. 3in., 2nd: R. Baierlé, 3rd: H. Leuenberger.

Long Jump:

1st: C. Casellini, 20ft. 8in., 2nd: W. Meier, 3rd: H. Leuenberger.

Pillow Fight:

1st: M. Costa, 2nd: R. L. Rossier, 3rd: Neff.

Ladies: 1st: Jennifer Lunn.

880 Yards, Men:

1st: P. Jacomelli, 2min. 7.8sec., 2nd: W. Kast, 3rd: K. Hediger.

100 Yards, Men:

1st: C. Casellini, 11.4secs., 2nd: L. Jacomelli, 3rd: O. Schumacher.

100 Yards Ladies in Sports Costume:

1st: Miss M. Nydegger, 14.8sec.

4 x 110 Yards Relay Race:

1st: Unione Ticinese, 49sec., 2nd: Swiss Bank Corporation, 3rd: Swiss Mercantile Society "A".

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*Three-Legged Race, Adults:**1st Heat:*

1st pair: Mr. C. Slade & Miss Vicki Slade, 2nd pair: Miss E. Watson & Mr. R. Rossier, 3rd pair: Mr. W. Bachmann & Miss J. Luthert.

2nd Heat:

1st pair: H. Faessler & Miss S. Richards, 2nd pair: J. De Maria & M. Locatelli, 3rd pair: Mr. P. Latty & Miss G. Burnier.

Egg-and-Spoon Race, Adults:

Mr. J. De Maria & Miss Locatelli, 2nd Mr. Faessler & Miss Richards, 3rd: Mr. C. Slade & Miss V. Slade.

440 Yards Veterans Handicap:

1st: D. E. Bonnet, 2nd: W. Stettbacher, 3rd: A. W. Sommer, 4th: W. Meier.

440 Yards, Men:

1st: P. Jacomelli, 55sec., 2nd: K. Hediger, 3rd: E. Benz.

Rolling-out-the-Bottle:

1st: J. Huber, 2nd: D. Bonnet, 3rd: C. Mayr.

Tug-o'-War:

Winners: Swiss National Tourist Office.

Runners-up: Swiss Legation.

One Mile Relay Race:

1st: Unione Ticinese, 2nd: Swiss Mercantile, 3rd: Swiss Mercantile.

The athlete scoring the highest number of points was Mr. C. Casellini of the Unione Ticinese who scored 10 points.

The George Dimier Cup was won by the Unione Ticinese with 33 points.

80 Yards, Boys and Girls:

Boys 13, 14, 15 years: 1st: Francis Bonetti, 2nd: Peter Bonetti, 3rd: Peter Meier.

Girls 13, 14, 15 years: 1st: Jacqueline Herbert, 2nd: Pamela Kitchin, 3rd: Ann Reynolds.

Girls 11, 12 years: 1st: Sandra Krugel, 2nd: Georgina Tollyfield, 3rd: Margaret Bonnet.

Boys 9, 10 years: 1st: Claude Bernath, 2nd: Michel Bader, 3rd: Jan Humphrey.

Girls 9, 10 years: 1st: Erica Meier, 2nd: Francis Hill, 3rd: Susan Hertzberg.

50 Yards, Boys and Girls:

Boys 6, 7, 8 years: Peter Senn, 2nd: Nichol Sommer, 3rd: Robert McMillan.

Girls 6, 7, 8 years: 1st: Francesca Bonetti, 2nd: Susie Baumgarthner, 3rd: Pauline Meier.

Boys under 6 years: 1st: Michel Leuba, 2nd: Rene Blumer, 3rd: Ian Berti.

Girls under 6 years. Heat 1: 1st: Gay Slade, 2nd: Francois Burri, 3rd: Ruth Hertzberg.

Heat 2: 1st: Monique Stettler, 2nd: Karin Sheldon, 3rd: Barbara Ryzer.

Three-Legged Race, Children:

Children 12, 13, 14 years: 1st pair: Jacqueline Herbert & Ann Moch, 2nd pair: Erica Meier & Peter Meier, 3rd pair: Nicholas Slade & Jean Sharp.

Children 10 and 11 years: 1st pair: Georgina Tollyfield & Sandra Krugel, 2nd: Margeret Bonnet & Francis Hill, 3rd: Susan Herbert & Julia Morgan.

Children 8 and 9 years: 1st pair: Barbara Herbert & Annemaria Burri, 2nd pair: Peter Senn & Pauline Meier, 3rd pair: Claude Bernath & Savdra Burgäzzi.

Children under 8 years: 1st pair: Gay Slade & Robert McMillan, 2nd pair: Mary Marchant & Cherrill Kitchin, 3rd pair: Neil Humphrey & Ruth Hertzberg.

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*Wheelbarrow Race, Children:**1st Heat:*

1st pair: Peter Meier & Erica Meier, 2nd pair: Peter Bonetti & Francis Bonetti, 3rd pair: Margaret Bonnet & Frances Hill.

2nd Heat:

1st pair: Theresa Miesch & Roger Stettler, 2nd pair: Georgina Tollyfield & Sandra Krugel, 3rd pair: Jill Reynolds & Julia Morgan.

*Egg and Spoon Race, Children:**1st Heat:*

1st: Jacqueline Herbert, 2nd: Francis Bonetti, 3rd: Ann Joder.

2nd Heat:

1st: Margaret Bonnet, 2nd: Georgina Tollyfield, 3rd: Susan Herbert.

3rd Heat:

1st: Claude Bernath, 2nd: Sandra Burgazzi, 3rd: Theresa Miesch, Roger Stettler.

HELP BY SWISSAIR.

Our readers will be interested to hear that Swissair was able to help in the movement of the stranded Cunard passengers going back to the United States.

On Saturday, June 18th, 30 passengers travelled from London via Manchester to New York by a special chartered Swissair plane. The aircraft returned on Sunday, June 19th from New York carrying a further 30 passengers bound for Great Britain.

A CHALLENGE.

Owing to a dispute, questioning the fairness of my walking at the recent Swiss Sports Meeting, which prevented me from winning the Veteran's handicap race for the third time. I am obliged, as a sportsman, to issue the following challenge:

1. I challenge the Sport's Supervisor, the officiating judges collectively, and the judge who, early in the race threatened me with disqualification if not walking according to rules, to show cause why I did not walk "in accordance to rules laid down by the English Road Walking Association".

2. I challenge the winner to re-walk the race for a wager of £20 before neutral and competent judges. I would start from scratch accepting the same handicap as on June 4th, subject to official proof of age on either side, and without restriction as to dress or footwear to be worn.

I propose that the above mentioned amount be paid by the loser to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

W. Stettbacher.

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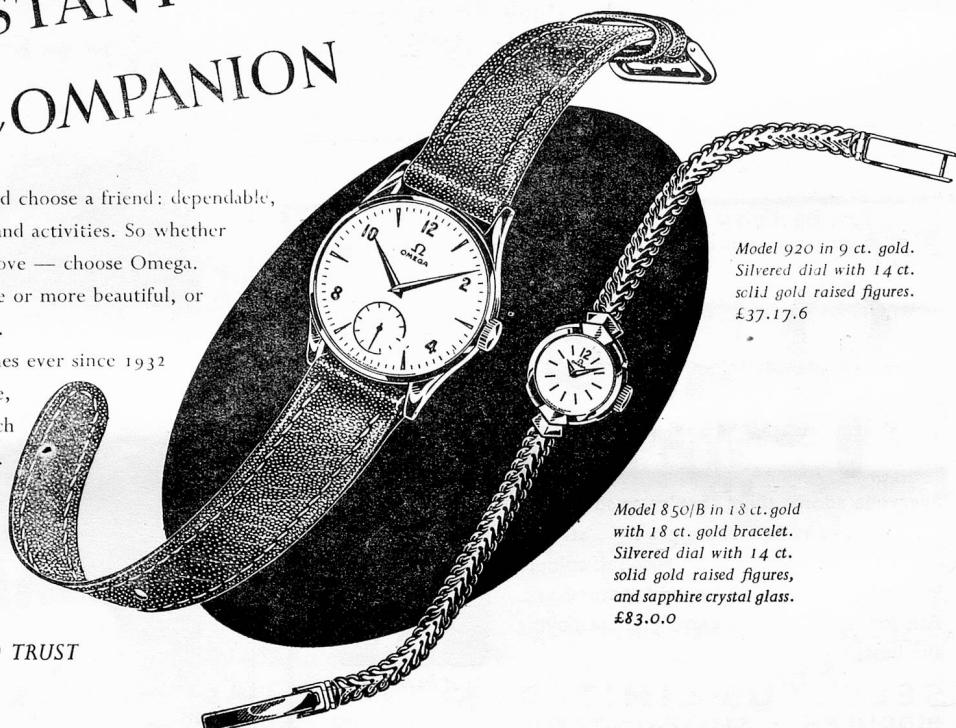
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