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Sports News From Switzerland

THE TWO great events this year are the Federal Gymnastic Festival in Lucerne and the Federal Shooting Festival in Zurich. But other events, too, deserve mention. Last year brought the first world championships in rowing to Switzerland; they were held in Lucerne where there is now a rowing centre on the shores of the picturesque Rotsee. In Geneva there were the ice skating title championships. Looking back over 1962, exactly thirty medals from amongst several hundred competed for at world and European competitions went to Switzerland.

Young Franzi Schmidt got the crown in roller skating, and there were successes in cycle acrobatics and motor-cycle racing, the latter prohibited in Switzerland since 1st January. After many years the Swiss reputation as first class shots was redeemed when Vogt and Schoenenberger got world titles in Cairo; in addition the Swiss team returned with thirteen medals. The two Messrs Fehlmann from Morges won the European sailing championships. In athletics it was Peter Laeng who made a name for himself at an international meeting in Zurich, and the Swiss 400 m. relay team received a bronze medal in the European championships in Belgrade. Also a third place went to the brothers Waser in the rowing championships in Lucerne.

The Swiss football, handball, hockey and basketball teams competed in various events, but without any notable success; the same goes for tennis and gymnastics. As regards winter-sports, in which the Swiss used to be so successful, there is no special achievement to report. Ice hockey, too, brought only minor successes, and all hope in ice skating now rests on Franzi Schmidt, who is as at home on ice skates as she is on roller skates. It is now 200 years since ice skating was started in Switzerland.

1963 began with the international ski-ing championships of customs officials and frontier guards at Zermatt.

In June, England beat Switzerland 8-1 at football in Basle. Later in the same month the Zurich rowing regatta was interrupted by heavy storms. Whilst 400 pontoneers competed in Basle (pontooning, similar to punting, is a typical river sport and a great favourite on parts of the Rhine) Gopf Kottmann managed to gain a splendid victory at Henley on 6th July when he won the "Diamond Sculls" from Bill Barry and thus replaced the almost legendary McKenzie, who had been the winner since 1957. This thirty-one-year-old Zurich cantonal policeman is the first champion Switzerland has produced at the Henley Regatta for nine years.

Finally, it might be interesting to note that there is now a "House of Sport" in Berne and that Switzerland had eight Presidents of international sports associations at the beginning of this year, more than any other country in the world. The sports concerned are motoring, ice skating, handball, skittles, rowing, shooting, skiing, and gymnastics. The three largest world organisations (football, athletics and table tennis) are presided over by Englishmen.

(Mainly based on reports received by courtesy of the "Basler Nachrichten.")

NEWS OF THE COLONY ★ ★ ★ ★

Auckland Swiss Club

The "Mardi-Gras" held on Saturday night, September 28th, was really terrific! In fact, it was the greatest success we have had so far with a "Maskenball." Not only was the Hall as usual gaily decorated with lanterns, masks, balloons and streamers, but a life-size "Boeg"—with huge hanging ears (listening to all the crazy talk of the town) and a big, big nose!—greeted you on the stage with a funny grimace painted all over his face! Mr & Mrs E. Flueck certainly made a marvellous job of it—it gave the Hall the right atmosphere!

A record attendance filled the Hall to capacity and when the Band started to play the enchanting melodies of the South Seas on their guitars and drums it was the beginning of an almost non-stop dance for the whole night! The contact between the music and the guests was so happy that they just kept on playing, playing all the time!

A spectacular sight was all the costumes and it was great fun watching all the dressed-up follies acting their part. It was rather difficult to remember all of them, they were so colourful and an extremely hard task awaited the Jury to decide the prizes. However, they solved the problem quite successfully and among the prize-winners were two Kiwi-girls dressed up as the cutest "Buremeitschi von Daheime," two bouncing Rabbits, a Creoline Beauty from the West Indies, Merry Widow, Buccaneer and quite a few more.

Shortly before midnight an excellent supper was served and not long afterwards, with replenished strength, dancing started again—almost uninterrupted until early in the morning! In fact, it was a Fastnacht like at home with all the intrigues, fun and laughter and becoming more popular each year, especially among our N.Z. friends.

—H.B.M.