

# Swiss Sports : held at Herne Hill Athletics Grounds o May 26th

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## SWISS SPORTS, held at Herne Hill Athletic Grounds on May 26th.

The seventh annual Swiss Sports festival took place last Saturday on the admirable grounds at Herne Hill, an event which, more than any other, with or without their families to meet each other offers an excellent opportunity for the London Swiss in ideal surroundings, provided inclement weather conditions do not spoil the occasion.

In view of the persistent attempts of some maleficent spirit, alleged to hover over Spitzbergen to turn our May into a winter month, great anxiety was felt in Committee circles as to the weather that would eventually prevail on the 26th. Postponement of the affair is not possible, since the grounds had to be definitely booked long ago, and the thought of the only alternative of a complete abandonment of the meeting was not a cheerful one. All the greater was the relief when early on Saturday morning a blue sky promised a fine day. The utmost hopes were not fulfilled, but we all have to be thankful for the rainless afternoon, with quite a good portion of sunshine, particularly from five o'clock onward, although the temperature insisted on preserving that touch of freshness which we like to see disappear at a much earlier date than the end of May.

Saturday's gathering was more numerous than many of us ventured to expect in the circumstances. The little ones, with their mummies and daddies, were there, to our great satisfaction, and a picture of brightness and natural gaiety presented itself to our eyes when turning from a distance towards the well patronised stand, with its long table in the centre, covered with glittering prizes, and the Swiss banner flying high from a pole in the field.

Our highly esteemed Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, again honoured the meeting with his presence, and amongst the visitors we also found Messrs. X. Castelli (General Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation), J. Baer (President of the N.S.H.), De Brunner (President of the Swiss Mercantile Society), the Rev. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, P. A. Carmine, Cav. Montuschi, etc.

We looked in vain for the prospective champion boxer, Robert Roth, but we were pleased to see his valiant trainer, Mr. Abplanalp.

Considering the large number of young Helvetians residing in London, the "athletes" might have shown a better attendance for the numerous and varied events provided for their benefit. However, some splendid running and jumping was witnessed, causing excitement amongst the spectators, who were not sparing with their applause, both for the winners and losers.

Some events are always taken special interest in, as, for instance, the Tug-of-War. Would it at last be possible to check the triumphant march of the victorious team of the Swiss Bank Corporation, or were they going to win a fifth time in succession? There were only four competing teams: Schweizerbund, Swiss Mercantile Society "A" and "B," and Swiss Bank. The first-named team was matched against S.M.S. "A," and after a magnificent struggle, during which the fortunes were swaying to and fro for quite a long time, the "A" team came out the victors. Thereafter the Swiss Bank made short work of S.M.S. "B," in fact, it looked little more than a walk-over. The result of the final pull, which took place later in the afternoon between the Swiss Bank and S.M.S. "A," was a foregone conclusion. The latter's exhausting work in the first round had killed the last bit of chance they might have had to win, and their well-balanced opponents pulled them over the line twice without much effort. Once more, therefore, the "Bankers" dealt very inconsiderately with the ambitious "Merchants."

The Veterans' Walking Race is also one of the outstanding events. The number of competitors seemed to be smaller than in previous years. Sincere and joyful acclamation greeted the beloved President of the Swiss Sports Committee, Mr. Georges Dimier, 69 years of age, when he broke the tape, closely followed by Mr. Sermier, 42 years. It was noticed that the successful veteran finished the race with a pale face, and we may be allowed to utter here a word of warning that he shall not over-exert himself in the future. We all require his selfless services for many more years to come, and we wish to see him in unimpaired health.

The Relay Race was held rather late, and the fact that only three teams were taking part in it robbed it of its best feature. We were consequently faced with the spectacle of the last three runners

merrily covering their 880 yds. at a very comfortable pace at distances of about 200 yds. one from the other, and at least one of them cracking jokes on the way, or explaining why he was taking it so easy.

The Hurdles provided better sport, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the men's keenly contested 100 Yards, 220 Yards, and Half-mile Flat Handicaps, and the Ladies' 100 Yards.

The Wrestling combats for a moment carried our minds back to bygone times, when we used to watch our wrestlers on the "Alp" or on the "Festplatz." During the engagement of two "heavyweights" the only somewhat serious accident happened, one of the wrestlers injuring his shoulder, which necessitated his being attended to at a neighbouring hospital. We wish the brave fighter a speedy and complete recovery.

Small was the number of competitors for the Men's One Mile Walking Race. Signor Donati, nevertheless, gave us a brilliant exhibition of quick walking as it should be done. He left his comrades "miles" behind.



Passing from the aforesaid contests to those of a less serious character, we can mention the Men's Pillow Fight as having undoubtedly been the funniest bit of sport of the day. It took place in front of the big stand, and peals of hearty laughter followed one another from the first fight to the last. The inclusion of this item in this year's programme was a happy thought.

The races of the little girls and boys also provided most amusing sport, and so did the Ladies' Potato, and Egg-and-Spoon Races. In the last-named event a serious-looking young lady, who passed the "post" first, found herself disqualified by the watchful judge by reason of her having, during the race, pressed her finger on the egg, so that it should not fall from the spoon! This reminds us of a cycling race in Switzerland some years ago, when one of the competitors allowed himself to hang on to a motor-cycle over a considerable distance.

There was also a Three-legged Race; but all these brighter contests, with the exception of the pillow-fight, would have been enjoyed much more by the spectators if they had been held a little nearer to, or right in front, of the stands. The parents love to have a good view of their girls and boys, and everybody likes to see all the fun of the potato-picking ladies, the drop of the egg from the spoon, the toppling over of the three-legged ones, etc., etc.



It was nearing 7 o'clock when the advertised "Surprise" Race came off, a 440 yds. walking race for couples. It caused a great deal of hilarity.

Let us not forget to say a word for the Beckenham and District Military Band, who played the whole afternoon, and often, by their merry tunes, visibly shortened many a long interval that slipped into the programme.

It must have been about 7.15 when the distribution of prizes commenced. To the general regret, Mme. Paravicini was prevented from officiating again this year at this function, and as the Minister had to leave by 7.30 owing to other engagements, Mr. Dimier requested the sympathetic Madame Paschoud, the wife of the Director of Sports, to take on the task of handing over the prizes to the happy winners, and she readily consented to do so.

Last year, if we remember rightly, Mr. Dimier opened his little speech by saying something like this:—"Let us thank the Maker of the Universe for the beautiful weather He has given us," but on this occasion he uttered no such words; he may, perhaps, have had a little grudge against some invisible influence (say, that fellow at Spitzbergen) that might possibly be to blame for mysteriously diverting the warm rays of the sun from our neighbourhood.

The above vignettes were drawn by Miss Betty Haemig, to whose courtesy we are indebted for their reproduction.

Hearty acclamation greeted the winning athletes, veterans, ladies and children as they passed up the flight of steps leading to the table with the prizes.

After the distribution of prizes, an *impromptu* dance was held on the cycle track and lawn, in order to put the finishing touch to a very pleasant afternoon and evening. About two dozen enthusiastic couples made merry until the band struck up "God save the King" at 9 p.m.

Elsewhere, at the Union Helvetia and the Swiss Club "Schweizerbund," dancing continued until late into the night.

Criticizing is always easier than "to do the job," but it certainly struck us that there was, on the one hand, too much delay in carrying out the various events in keeping with the times indicated on the programme, and, on the other hand, something wrong with the organisation in respect of the placing on the field of most of the amusing contests. The spectators must be considered a little more, and an attempt should be made in future to make the intended funny part really funny and the serious part really serious. Some unkind spectator, when referring to the numerous gentlemen walking about with the Committee badge pinned to their coat, said that the defects were due to "Too many cooks . . ." Perhaps he was right, but we live and learn, and often progress is slow. Those desirous of knowing something about the amount of work involved in preparing and carrying out the Swiss Sports should communicate, for instance, with Mr. C. Kiefer, hon. secretary, or Mr. M. Paschoud, director of sports, who at least have unselfishly attended to their multifarious duties, giving up much of their time for the last two months.

### SWISS SPORTS WINNERS.

100 Yards.—1 Schwendener, 2 Sturm, 3 Oggier; time, 10 1-5 sec.

220 Yards (Swiss).—1 Scwendener, 2 Oggier, 3 Herzog; time, 23 2-5 sec.

220 Yards (Staff of Subscribing Firms).—1 Lacey (Nestlé), 2 Meyer (Nestlé); time, 23 3-5 sec.

1 Mile Walking.—1 Donati, 2 E. Nussle; time, 8 min. 52 3-5 sec.

Halfmile Flying Handicap.—1 Steiner, 2 Perret, 3 Pietsch; time, 2 min. 15 1-5 sec.

120 Yards Hurdles.—1 Sturm, 2 Herzog, 3 Studer; time, 17 4-5 sec.

Veterans' Race.—1 G. Dimier (age, 69), 2 Sermier, 3 G. Riederer, 4 Wyss, 5 F. Riederer, 6 Houver, 7 Monastier.

Relay Race.—1 Schweizerbund, 2 Swiss Mercantile Society; time, 4 min. 22 1-5 sec.

Tug-of-War.—1 Swiss Bank Corporation, 2 Swiss Mercantile Society "A."

Long Jump.—1 Sturm (19 ft. 10 in.), 2 Nozières, 3 Pietsch.

High Jump.—1 Pietsch (5 ft. 2 in.), 2 Sturm, 3 Schönholzer.

Putting the Weight.—1 Sturm (34 ft.), 2 Schenker.

Wrestling.—Lightweight: Jacquenoud; Middleweight: 1 Schneeberger, 2 Arnold; Heavyweight: 1 Lenzinger, 2 R. Schmid.

100 Yards Ladies (Sports Costume).—1 Miss Edward (11 1-5 sec.), 2 Miss Kiener.

100 Yds. Ladies (Town Dress).—1 Miss M. Fletscher, 2 Miss E. Wright, 3 Miss G. Bosshard, 4 Miss P. Fletscher, 5 Miss Burger, 6 Miss Fischer.

Girls' 60 Yards.—Heat 1: 1 Miss R. Linder, 2 Miss M. Buxley, 3 Miss Y. Lehmann, 4 Miss M. Sury; Heat 2: 1 Miss M. Aschenbrenner, 2 Miss P. Light, 3 Miss L. Valon, 4 Miss M. Hopkins; Heat 3: 1 Miss C. Bosshard, 2 Miss Kiener, 3 Miss D. Leyes, 4 Miss W. Freeman.

Boys' 80 Yards.—Heat 1: 1 P. Sermier, 2 O. Boehringer, 3 Duhasky, 4 Giordani; Heat 2: 1 Fletscher, 2 Mather, 3 Miscini, 4 Lampert; Heat 3: 1 Light, 2 E. Kiener, 3 A. Kiener, 4 Keene.

Egg-and-Spoon Race (under 12 years of age).—1 Miss C. Bosshard, 2 Miss Burger, 3 Miss Tomlinson.

Do. (over 12 years of age).—1 Miss Strehler, 2 Miss Fletscher, 3 Miss Ceresca.

Potato Race.—1 Miss E. Wright, 2 Miss G. Bosshard, 3 Miss Williams, 4 Miss D. Bosshard, 5 Miss Hosler, 6 Mrs. Erler.

Pillow Fight.—1 J. Ryter, 2 E. Weber.

Three-legged Race.—1 Miss Kiener and Mr. Kiener, 2 Mrs. Suter and Mr. Towers, 3 Miss De Cris and Mr. Oggier.

Surprise Race.—1st lady Miss Williams, 1st gent Mr. Weber; 2nd lady Miss A. Campart, 2nd gent Mr. Fischer; 3rd lady Miss Lebeuf, 3rd gent Mr. Oggier.

### EGLISE SUISSE, 79, Endell St., W.C. 2.

Dimanche, 3 Juin, 11h.—M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, 6.30.—Pfr. U. Wildbolz.

Mrs. Emma ECKENSTEIN, widow of W. E. Eckenstein, Swiss Vice-Consul at Liverpool, and mother of Dr. K. Eckenstein, of 4, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W.1.—died on May 29th at the age of 81.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Friday, June 8th, at 5.30 p.m.—University College, Gower Street, W.: PUBLIC LECTURE by Dr. Paul Lang on "The Contemporary Literature of German-speaking Switzerland."

Tuesday, June 12th, at 7 p.m.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Monthly Meeting, preceded by a Supper, at Nuthall's Restaurant, Kingston-on-Thames.

Friday, June 15th, at 5.30 p.m.—University College, Gower Street, W.: PUBLIC LECTURE by Dr. Paul Lang on "The Contemporary Literature of French and Italian-speaking Switzerland."

Friday, June 15th, from 5 till 10.30 p.m.—FETE SUISSE at Caxton Hall, Westminster, W.

On account of pressure on our space, the report of the N.S.H. council meeting is unavoidably held over.

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