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Swiss Sports at Herne Hill,

SATURDAY, MAY 23rd, 1936.

Faithful to traditions, Swiss Sports day, started with a steady downpour, and in more than one Swiss Home there must have been disappointment, when father authoritatively declared that a trip to Herne Hill was "taboo." —

In fairness to the weather authorities, however, it must be said, that not one drop of rain or one gust of wind interfered with the Sports arrangements, and half way through the afternoon the sun appeared and smiled benignly on the sporting community; but I am afraid the damage was done, and the attendance undoubtedly suffered from the whimsical way with which the weather had seen fit to tease us.

The attendance at Herne Hill was about the same as last year, i.e. about 300, which is insufficient, and goes to prove once more, that this sporting event has lost its pull. I am sure many of my readers will remember how not so many years ago, an attendance of 600 to 800 could be registered.

Many excuses have since been mentioned, why the attendance has dwindled year by year; the weather has had to take principal blame; then the slowness in arranging the various events, the out-of-the-way position of the ground, and the fact that no new Swiss are arriving here, etc., etc.

Some of the above reasons might have contributed in one way or another to reduce attendances, but I maintain that the chief factor of the poor meeting, is simply that the majority of members of the Swiss Colony have lost interest in an event, which used to be at one time, apart from the sports side a social affair. There are still enough Swiss residing in London, to fill the seating accommodation at Herne Hill. If one considers that every year over a thousand Swiss attend the "Fête Suisse," at Westminster Hall, surely to muster at least half that number for the Swiss Sports should not be very difficult. There were many faces missing last Saturday, who ought to have been there, and that so many were absent, confirms my belief that the Swiss Sports, in its present form, is not anymore wanted, and before long the Committee will have to seriously consider a total reorganisation of this event.

It would be a great pity if the "Swiss Sports" should have to be discontinued; because those who have watched the children and saw with what eagerness and delight they entered for the various events, and with what joy they received their prizes, would not have the heart to deprive them of their little pleasures.

Unless the Colony as a whole shows a greater interest, the Swiss Sports are doomed to die a natural death; as it is to-day, the result can be in no way justified with the heavy expenses and the hard work which is entailed.

This is plain speaking, and I quite expect that I shall be called over the coals for it, and that my appointment as "Official Press Reporter" will be terminated forthwith; but the Press has a privilege to criticize and I am taking full advantage of it.

It is, of course, not a bit of good only to grumble and criticize, and I heartily invite the readers of the Swiss Observer to come forward with suggestions as to how the Swiss Sports should be conducted in the future; the columns of this paper will be at the disposal of anyone who can furnish ideas to bring the Sports back to their former popularity. I am convinced that the Committee will study these with an open mind.

Now having relieved my mind, I will try to describe the Sports events, mentioning that on the whole it was a successful afternoon.

The first event started punctually at 2.45 p.m. and consisted of a 100 yds. Flat Handicap for Boys; as the results of the various events will be given at the end of this report, I will, with a few exceptions, desist from commenting on the achievements of each individual performer. A very attractive event was the 100 yds. Scratch Race for Ladies although the entries were rather poor. The Ladies in their sports costumes looked very smart but oh my! what would our grandmothers have said about the scantiness of their attire. —

As in former years, a musical programme was provided by an Ampligram; this instrument consumed a great number of fine gramophone records which were supplied by our compatriot, Mr. Newman; some of the hearty yodels and popular Swiss folk songs must have inspired both competitors and onlookers alike.

During the afternoon, the Swiss Minister, accompanied by his daughter, Mademoiselle Livia Paravicini arrived. The arrival of the head of our Colony was made known by the announcer through the microphone, and much to the surprise of the Community the Ampligram gave forth a tune which nobody seemed to know. Some of my friends told me that the tune played was the new Swiss Anthem, but I had my doubts, and afterwards found out that it was called "Prière Patriotique;" by an oversight the wrong side of the record was inserted, the other side being the National Anthem. The prayer, which thus greeted the Minister, was answered by the celestial authorities, because later on Monsieur Paravicini actually won one of the events, but about this later.

Very remarkable results were registered in the Putting the Weight and the High Jump, in the latter M. Hans Alioth of the Swiss Mercantile Society equalled the record established at former Swiss Sports of 5 feet 8 inches; this fine achievement received great applause.

Once again that fine sportsman, Mr. H. H. Baumann, (S.M.S.) won the 120 yds Veterans' Handicap, in fine style.

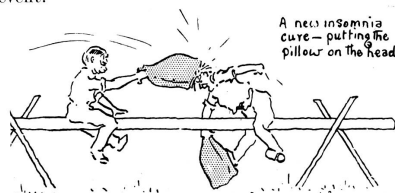
An event which always attracts the attention of the onlookers is the Veterans' 220 yds. race for men over 40; there were about a dozen valiant men lining up on the track, and I do not agree with the disparaging remark of one of the spectators who exclaimed "look what a mouldy lot!"

They were far from mouldy, as when the shot rang out, they started to walk like heroes, some were even so keen to get to the post that they indulged in little spurts of "running," which resulted in being asked by some of the judges to "step out." Mr. v. Bergen, a former winner of this race, was leading almost the whole way, but a few yards from the post, he was overtaken, by Mr. Hauschmid, who kept a steady pace throughout the race. So once again our veterans' have come well out of this "test of endurance."

The music then played some martial tune, and in single file the two teams for the Tug-o'-War marched out. They were the team of the "Union Helvetia" and the "Circle Valaisan." The latter won the first pull with comparative ease. The second pull was also won by the "Circle Valaisan" and thus they took revenge for the defeat which they suffered last year from their opponents. The "Union Helvetia" team was perhaps a little unfortunate to lose the second pull, as they were not quite ready when the referee gave the signal, but it must be said that the "Circle Valaisan" team was undoubtedly the better one. I noticed that the wife of one member of the "Circle Valaisan" team arrived hot and bothered with a glass of beer to refresh her gallant warrior, and that is no doubt why this team won, remember the slogan "beer is best!"

Amongst the classical races, the Relay Race, which was won by the Swiss Mercantile team, was followed with the greatest interest, the fine sprinting was a treat to watch.

Another attraction proved to be again the Pillow Fight, this event used to be judged for many years by Mr. P. F. Boehringer. Unfortunately, this year he was unable to be present and Mr. Ch. Strubin efficiently handled this amusing event.



A stir went through the community, when it was announced that the Swiss Minister was going on the poll with Mr. Ch. Barbezat, the popular President of the Swiss Sports Committee, a race began from the four quarters of the field to witness this "historical" event. Within 5 seconds the portly countenance of the Sports Committee President disappeared and the splendid victory of our Minister was greeted with deafening cheers. And thus the prayer for our Minister was beneficently answered.

If only all diplomats would settle their accounts in this way, the world would undoubtedly be a better place to live in.

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It was then further announced that the "Swiss Observer," would fight a member belonging to the Stock Exchange profession, there was a fairly big attendance to witness this event, and I am convinced that many amongst the onlookers, who, for one reason or another bear a grudge against the official organ of the Swiss Colony, wished that its editor would get a hefty "smack in the eye." It must have come as a sad disappointment to them, when his opponent received a hearty smack on his "rosy" cheek, which brought him to earth before he could count two. Two stalwart St. John's Ambulance men, tried hard to massage the face of the loser into its proper proportion.

Two other prominent members of the Colony, Mr. Alfr. Schmid and Mr. A. C. Baume, sat on the pole like two fighting cocks, one lightning blow from the pillow of Mr. Schmid, ended the aspirations of Mr. Baume.



There were, of course, innumerable races for little girls and boys. Such fancy events as the Cigarette, Egg-and-Spoon, Obstacle, Blindfold and Three-legged Races caused great hilarity.

On interviewing one tiny tot who looked obviously upset and distressed, he mournfully acquainted me with the fact that he was disqualified by the referee for some technical offence, and with a knowing look he whispered in my ear "that there was some twisting going on." His face, however, soon brightened up, when Mr. Senn, with his great heart, presented him with a large bar of "Toblerone." Another little girl was so disgusted with the performance of her boy partner, that she tried to pull a few curls from his head, no doubt to be kept as a souvenir. When she was told that it was not very sportswomen like behaviour, she returned: with sobs, — the fragments of hair, which she had kept in her tiny fist. — Another bar of chocolate soon dried her tears.

A short break was made in the programme, to allow the Swiss Minister to address the Sports gathering. The Minister expressed his pleasure to have again been able to attend, if only for a short time, at this annual event, and he congratulated the organisers on their splendid efforts.

Punctually at 6 o'clock, the distribution of the prizes was announced; unfortunately Mlle. Livia Paravicini was prevented from presenting the prizes, and her place was taken by Mlle. Joan Barbezat, the daughter of the President of the Sports Committee, who bestowed on each one of the winners a charming smile and a hearty handshake. It was most delightful to watch the happy faces of some of the little ones who carried off their prizes with great pride and happiness. Mlle. Barbezat was presented with a beautiful Bouquet of flowers.

The "Georges Dimier Challenge Cup" for scoring the highest aggregate number of points was awarded to the Swiss Bank, which scored 15 points; runners up were the Swiss Mercantile Society with 9 points.

In summing up, I must heartily congratulate the members of the Sports Committee for their unselfish efforts in trying to make this annual Sports rally a success, and I can only express my fervent wish, that their untiring endeavours will be rewarded in future by an attendance which is in accordance with the hard work they render year by year to provide the colony with a first class entertainment. I wish to single out M. H. H. Baumann, the Hon. Secretary of the Committee, who bore the brunt of the work, as well as Messrs. Schneider, Levy, Senn, Dupraz, Hilfiker, Ritzmann and De Cintra.

The attendance for next year should be doubled so that it will be a real demonstration of a patriotic gathering, and I appeal sincerely to those who have been conspicuous by their absence.

ST.

(Official Press Reporter).

RESULTS.

100 Yds. Flat. Handicap (Boys): Heat 1. 1st, Albert Wernli; 2nd, Ernst Frank. Time 11½ secs. Heat 2. 1st, T. v. Bergen; 2nd, Ernest Volken. Time 12½ secs.

Putting the Weight: 1st, Hans Alioth, 35 feet 9 inches; 2nd, M. Amiguet, 34 feet 11 inches.

100 Yds. Flat Handicap (Men): Heat 1. 1st, W. Meier; 2nd, H. Schmitter. Time 11 1/5 Secs. Heat 2. 1st, M. Weber; 2nd, R. D. Glaser. Time 10 7/10 secs. Heat 3. 1st, H. Alioth; 2nd, M. Amiguet. Time 10 9/10 secs.

440 Yds. Flat Handicap: 1st, A. T. Boog; 2nd, H. Barnfield. Time 55 1/10 secs.

100 Yds. Scratch Race (Ladies): 1st, Mrs. Meier, 2nd, Miss Ris.

High Jump: 1st, H. Alioth, 5 feet 8 inches; 2nd, R. P. Kueffer, 5 feet; 3rd, A. Stammbach, 4 feet 10 inches.

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- 120 Yds. Veterans' Handicap:** 1st, H. H. Baumann; 2nd, F. A. Pont. Time 12 4/5 secs.
- 100 Yds. Flat Handicap (Men):** 1st, R. D. Glaser; 2nd, M. Weber; 3rd, M. Amiguet.
- 440 Yds. Relay Race (Boys):** 1st, Swiss Gymnastic Society.
- Long Jump:** 1st, H. Alioth, 18 feet 3 inches; 2nd, F. Kaelin, 17 feet 8 inches; 3rd, A. Keller, 17 feet 2 inches.
- 220 Yds. Flat Handicap:** Heat 1. 1st, Maurice Weber; 2nd, D. C. Lock. Time 23 4/5 secs. Heat 2. 1st, H. Schmitter; 2nd, M. De Maria. Time 25 3/4 secs. Heat 3. 1st, R. D. Glaser; 2nd, J. Becker. Time 25 1/10 secs.
- 440 Yds. Veterans' Walking Handicap:** 1st, Mr. Hauschmid; 2nd, F. v. Bergen; 3rd, E. v. Bergen; 4th, E. Weber; 5th, L. Jobin; 6th, Mr. Bloch.
- 75 Yds. Hurdle Race (Boys):** 1st Heat. 1st, Wernli; 2nd, Kummer; 3rd, L. Jaeggi. Heat 2. B. Jaeggi; 2nd, K. S. Sterchi; 3rd, A. Finger.
- 220 Yds. Flat Handicap:** 1st, Maurice Weber; 2nd, Robert D. Glaser; 3rd, J. Becker.
- Tag O' War:** Winners, Cercle Valaisan; Runners up, Union Helvetia.
- 100 Yds. Handicap (Ladies):** Heat 1. 1st, Miss Lilywhite; 2nd, Miss Archer; 3rd, Miss Charnaux. Heat 2. 1st, Miss Bowes; 2nd, Miss Wells; 3rd, Mrs. Hickmann.
- 60 Yds. Handicap (Girls):** Heat 1. 1st, Betty Hauswirth; 2nd, Helena Jaeggi; 3rd, Rosemary Müller; 4th, Mary v. Bregen. Heat 2. 1st, Mary Mayes; 2nd, Joyce Burckhard; 3rd, Mary Piccamiglio; 4th, A. Jacquery. Heat 3. 1st, Ruby Burckhard; 2nd, Mary Ward; 3rd, Nancy Mackenzie; 4th, Lina Hauswirth. Heat 4. 1st, Pauline Jaeggi; 2nd, Yolande de Cintra; 3rd, Alma Flückiger; 4th, Mary Hoch.
- Pillow Fight (Men):** 1st, Baehler; 2nd, Glaser; 3rd, Gerig; 4th, Kuenzli.
- 80 Yds. Handicap (Boys):** Heat 1. 1st, P. Ruf; 2nd, P. Ammann; 3rd, J. Morris; 4th, J. Gardelli. Heat 2. 1st, J. Notari; 2nd, D. Mayes; 3rd, D. Bangarter; 4th, J. Bangarter. Heat 3. 1st, R. F. Sterchi; 2nd, T. v. Bergen; 3rd, M. Bloom; 4th, A. Finger. Heat 4. 1st, J. Müller; 2nd, B. Jaeggi; 3rd, Ch. Strübin; 4th, Th. Kummer.
- Cigarette Race (Mixed):** Heat 1. 1st, Doris Hausschmid and A. Norris; 2nd, P. Dupraz and E. Zürcher. Heat 2. Mr. and Mrs. Hickmann; 2nd, Vera Wells and Jack Scott.
- Egg-and-Spoon Race (Ladies):** Heat 1. 1st, Sheila Bucher; 2nd, Ruby Burckhard. Heat 2. 1st, Pamela Bushford; 2nd, Marjori Bushford. Heat 3. 1st, Daphne Archer; 2nd, Anita Day.
- Boys' Obstacle Race:** Heat 1. 1st, B. Jaeggi; 2nd, L. Jaeggi. Heat 2. 1st, D. C. R. Smith; 2nd, A. Wernli. Heat 3. 1st, T. v. Bergen; 2nd, R. F. Sterchi.
- Blindfold Race:** 1st pair, J. Hauswirth and Gladys Hauswirth; 2nd pair, Doris Hauswirth and A. Norris; 3rd pair, Lydia and Léon Jaeggi.
- Three-Legged Race:** Heat 1. 1st Lady, Marjorie Bushford; 1st Gentleman, L. F. Jobin; 2nd Lady, Yvonne Huybrecht; 2nd Gentleman, André Huybrecht. Heat 2. 1st Lady, Lydia Jaeggi; 1st Gentleman, L. Jaeggi; 2nd Lady, Doris Hauswirth; 2nd Gentleman, A. Norris.
- Relay Race:** Winners, Swiss Mercantile Society "A"; Runners up, Union Helvetia; 3rd, Swiss Mercantile Society "B".
- George Dimier Cup:** Winners, Swiss Bank Corporation, Points 15; Runners up, Swiss Mercantile Society, Points 9; Swiss Young Mens' Christian Association, 8 Points.

PERSONAL.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. M. Grether, of 3, Fieldsway House, Fieldsway Crescent, N.5, Mr. Grether's sister having died in Basel; and to Mr. and Mrs. P. G. Oberhänsli, of 8, Gordon Street, W.C.1, Mr. Oberhänsli's mother having died in Zurich at the age of 72.

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Tuesday, June 2nd — City Swiss Club — No Meeting.

Wednesday, June 3rd, at 7.30 p.m. — Société de Secours Mutuels — Monthly Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Tuesday, June 16th, at 7.30 p.m. — City Swiss Club — Réunion d'été — at Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon. (See Advert.)

Thursday, June 18th — 67th "Fête Suisse" at Central Hall, Westminster.

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