

Piano recital by Albert Ferber

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A FAMOUS SWISS ICE SKATER.

The various international Ice Hockey Matches, which are taking place at present at the Wembley Stadium, between England and Switzerland, bring once again skating, in its various forms, before the public.

We deem it appropriate to direct the attention of our readers to a compatriot of ours, who ranks very high in the skating profession.

His name is Arnold Gerschwiler, whose achievements on various Ice Rinks, have been universally acknowledged. Arnold Gerschwiler was born in Arbon, and during his first stay in England he learnt to skate at the old Ice Rink at Golders Green, London. On his departure from this country, he took up the post as professional skating teacher at Neuchâtel, and it was there, that he taught his nephew, Hans Gerschwiler, to skate — who was then only 13 years old — the latter has remained with him ever since.

In 1935, he returned to England and obtained an appointment as a teacher at the Wembley Ice Rink, where he taught for three years. In 1938, he took up the post as a teacher at the Richmond Ice Rink, where he has remained until to-day.

Amongst the distinctions and prizes which he obtained, during his career as a professional teacher, are the following:

Holder of two Swiss gold medals, and the gold

medals of the British National Skating Association for figure skating, ice dancing and teaching, thus becoming the only man to hold all the highest awards for ice skating in this country. It is interesting to learn that ever since these contests were introduced, ten years ago, there have only been three people who have won the teachers' gold medal, one of these being Mr. Gerschwiler's elder brother Jacques, who, by the way, trained Miss Cecilia Colledge, the well-known British and European champion.

Amongst the many pupils of Mr. Arnold Gerschwiler is his nephew Hans, who became champion of Switzerland. Miss Ursula Arnold and Doris Blanc, second and third in the Swiss Ladies' championship, were coached by him as small children, and the South African champion, Arthur Apfel, also received his tuition when still a small boy, and is now training for the senior British championships, which are being held next month. The Swedish Lady champion and the well-known British skater, Miss Daphne Walker, are also pupils of his. One of his English pupils is the holder of a skating record; she is Valdo Osborn, now aged 11 years, whom he has taught since she was 2½ years old. At the age of nine, she was successful in gaining a gold medal, thus becoming the youngest girl to have won this high and much coveted award. An exceptional achievement, when taken into consideration, that the British medal tests are considered to be the most difficult, and a very high standard is required.

These short biographical notes are a shining testimonial to our countryman, who is not only a brilliant skater but a modest and delightful companion.

ST.

PIANO RECITAL BY ALBERT FERBER.

The young Swiss pianist, Albert Ferber, who has been living in England throughout the war, proved again at his Recital, on the 2nd of this month, at the Wigmore Hall, that he is an artist of great achievements, and the large audience appeared fully conscious of this fact.

His programme consisted of rather less known or seldom heard masterpieces, which require a complete mastery of technique. The Bach Toccata in F sharp minor revealed the wide range of his tone colour and the freedom and suppleness of his phrasing, and the very difficult Beethoven Sonata op. 120 his intense susceptibility to the poetic idea involved. Every bar was carefully thought out and one has to agree with one of the critics, who says of Albert Ferber, that he plays more for the composer than for himself.

Brilliant was Chopin's ballade in F major. The Boesendorfer piano could be of a better quality and more even in tone and strength. One had the feeling that certain ranges did not respond sufficiently. This is definitely not the artiste's fault and has been noticed already in Albert Ferber's previous recitals when he had to play on the same instrument. Owing to immediate post-war conditions no better instrument is available.

Albert Ferber is a pianist of outstanding merit, and we are sure that lovers of music will do well to watch his future career.

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