

TENNIS TOPICS.

BY 'VANTAGE.'

posse of reaching the Alps as our friends at Home, who have to pay as much for a second-class return ticket to Zermatt as a whole fortnight's expedition costs here at present.

In this paper I have confined my remarks to Switzerland, but of late years a new field has attracted much attention, namely the Caucasus, in which, from what I have heard, the work is more or less akin to that in

THE SOUTHERN ALPS OF NEW ZEALAND,

being at present very rough pioneer work, the natural difficulties of which more nearly resemble ours than those in Switzerland. There, too, they find large and troublesome moraines, soft snow, and many avalanches, but they have this 'pull' over us, that they can get Swiss guides to accompany them, and find a population near the mountains from which to obtain porters and other conveniences. However, I do not think that climbing there will ever reach the same pitch of luxury that it has in Switzerland, for that is due to Swiss enterprises to attract English and other tourists who form their chief source of income, and the huts are built almost entirely with Swiss Alpine Club money. The Alpine Club itself is able to contribute very little to such undertakings. The fact also that the Caucasus lie so far from the general tourist countries of Europe will hinder its development.

THOSE OF US WHO CLIMB IN NEW ZEALAND

may feel proud of overcoming the great difficulties which oppose our progress, and of having so early been able to form an Alpine Club. I think that, if the same drawbacks existed in Switzerland, we should see a decided diminution in the numbers who climb, for a great many are essentially 'feather-bed' mountaineers; but, if we can only follow the example shown us by the great pioneers in the Alps and leaders of the Alpine world in England (and what finer example could we have?) we may feel assured of the ultimate success of our efforts and of our infant club.—*Alpine Journal.*

NOTE.—Next week further particulars will be given of the Southern Alps, including a NEW AND MAGNIFICENT PHOTO ENGRAVING OF MOUNT COOK, specially prepared for this article by the GRAPHIC process. Other new and splendid photo engravings will likewise appear. A large extra demand being inevitable, kindly order early.

[NOTE.—In one of our last week's pictures of Wakatipu and the Tooth Peaks, tooth pearls was inadvertently printed and overlooked. It should manifestly have read 'Tooth Peaks.']

LAWN TENNIS QUERY.

THE Hon. Sec. of the New Plymouth Tennis Club, Mr J. E. Wilson, has written, asking 'whether a person when serving should have both feet upon the ground? one upon the base line and the other beyond it? I am pleased to have the opportunity of answering this very pertinent query, not only for the benefit of my New Plymouth correspondent, but also for the enlightenment of most of our local players. Rule 7 of the All England Lawn Tennis Association reads as follows:—'The server shall stand with one foot beyond that is further from the net than the base line, and with the other foot upon the base line, and shall deliver the service from the right and left courts alternately, beginning from the right.' This rule is perpetually disregarded, and one may often see players serving with both feet within or perhaps with both feet beyond the base-line. Others lift up one foot. This is a fault, as according to a decision of the Field given July 30th, 1881, 'if the server lifts one foot before the ball served has left his racquet it is a fault.' If one foot is lifted up in the act of serving it cannot be either on or beyond the base line, as indicated by the rule, as it is in the air. Moreover, if one foot may be lifted, so might both, and thus destroy the whole idea of the correct service. I may mention that the decision quoted is given on the authority of Messrs W. and E. Renshaw, B. C. Eveleigh, N. L. Jackson, and R. D. Sears. I shall be pleased at all times to answer any queries of like nature.

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THE entries received for the Men's Championship Singles number fourteen. These are: Paton, Macfarlane, Elliott, Peel, Scherff, Gillies, Uppill, Hall, Goldie, Tempest, Stevenson, Paterson, Cooke, Harrison. The drawing results as follows:—Macfarlane v. Elliott, Peel v. Scherff, Gillies v. Uppill, Hall v. Goldie, Tempest v. Stevenson, Paterson v. Cooke, Paton and Harrison receiving byes in the first round. The first series of matches are to be played off by the 10th inst., the second round by the 17th inst., the third by the 24th, and the fourth to be concluded not later than the 3rd of March. The winner has to meet Hooper, the present champion.

A FEW critical remarks on those who are making a bid for the place of honour may prove of interest.

PATON, J.—A member of the Eden and Epsom Club. He has improved his game most distinctly this season, and is becoming a consistently steady player. Has a moderate service overhand. Gets good length returns in, and places fairly. Volleys from the back hand with great accuracy and fair speed; his fore hand volleying is, however, weak. Plays chiefly from the back line, and effects a stroke that ranks somewhere between a drive and a full Lawford. Weak on back hand base line returns.

MACFARLANE, J. B.—A member of the Eden and Epsom Club. Possesses a fast overhand first service, which when it comes off is usually worth 15 to him; his second service is soft. Easy to pass on the forehand unless he stays right back. Returns his back hand strokes rather softly, but frequently scores with a hard, horizontal fore-hand stroke—a stroke, by the way, peculiarly his own. Loses many points by slamming at long volleys. Would do well to come up more and go in for volleying from inside service line.

ELLIOTT, E. G.—Member of Eden and Epsom Club. A junior player, but fast coming on in his game. Playing much harder this year than last. Being left handed, many of his strokes are confusing. Plays almost entirely from base line, and gets low returns back with great accuracy and speed. His weak point is undoubtedly on the volley.

PEEL, A.—Member of Eden and Epsom Club, and plays in the championship contest for the first time. His game is from base line. A master of 'the drive,' and when in form can be reckoned to get four out of every five drives. Very sure on back-hand, and in addition can place all his strokes. Rarely returns a bad length ball. Altogether the best exponent of back play in Auckland, but loses many points by not volleying more. Plays a pretty game. His service is fairly strong, and a double fault is rarely scored against him. Can volley if he tried, and one wonders why he doesn't. Never plays a soft shot.

SCHERFF, P. D.—Member of Auckland Club. Serves fairly, but all through plays a rather soft game. Erratic in volleying, but can get about the court with great activity. Should study 'length' and placing. A young player who has all the requisites in eye and activity, and with practice against good players will develop into a player.

GILLIES, C. E.—Member of Parnell Club, and can be reckoned on to be somewhere near the finish in the present tournament. Understands the theory of the game, and is an old match player. Serves well, hits hard, and can make a hard clean drive off anything soft. Volleys sharp and clean, and understands the making of the overhand return off a high ball.

UPPILL, T. F.—Member of Eden and Epsom Club. Affects back line play almost entirely. His service is weak. Puts as much exertion into his games as any other three men, but seems to like it, being apparently tireless. His favourite stroke is a cut drive from left to right, and which he sends over low and hard, and against which a volley is the only reply. Fairly strong on back hand. Has tremendous reach, and great power of recovery. Weak on volley line, his play from this part of the court being 'tappy.' Plays consistently to his opponent's back-hand. Can lob with considerable accuracy when in form.

HALL, J. W.—Member of Eden and Epsom Club. Has a fairly strong service. Plays the volley game whenever he can. Very erratic, being 'off' one day and in fair form the next. Weak on back-hand, and apt to get into three-quarter court more than he ought. Gets a hard drive in now and then, and can smash sometimes.

GOLDIE, A.—Auckland Club. Service not dangerous. When in form volleys fairly, but all his strokes lack speed.

Powers of placing not good, but he understands the value of lengths. Makes a hard fore hand drive occasionally.

TEMPEST, A.—Parnell Club. The 'Veteran' of tennis. Has a fairly strong service, and gets difficult balls back in an astonishing way. Places to the corners with good judgment, and can kill pretty effectively if anywhere near the net. Weak on the back hand, and clings fondly to the habit of playing with his left hand any balls that come that way. Usually comes up and plays from volley line, but has good defence if driven back.

STEVENSON, J. R.—Parnell Club. Played the final against Hooper last year, and has a good chance of doing it again this year. Has a fair service, of which he makes the most by placing it. Possesses a telling cut-drive from base line, and brings off a half-Lawford with fair accuracy. Understands the value of placing, and gets up to the volley when a good chance presents itself. Very sure on the back-hand. Volleys clean and hard. Is very hard to pass. Plays a hard game throughout. Understands the game, and uses his head.

PATERSON, J.—West End Club. Has a good service. His best game is from the base line. Can send in a hot drive when in form, and plays the Lawford stroke when he gets a chance. Does not give sufficient attention to placing, and is caught too frequently in three-quarter court. Should cultivate volleying more. Weakest on the back-hand.

COOKE, N. G.—West End Club. Has a fairly good service, but plays usually a rather wild game. Drops his balls too short, and often comes up when he ought to stay back. Lifts the ball when driving, but gets in a good volley across court. Rather uncertain in placing.

HARRISON, N. T.—Parnell Club. The best back-hand player in Auckland; in fact, prefers to play back-hand rather than fore-hand, running away frequently to make a back-hand stroke out of what ought to be a forehand. Places well into the corners, and volleys with great accuracy. Can usually kill anything rising over his left shoulder with a back hand volley. Has rather a cunning serve.

THE contest for the Championship will excite some interest. The present Champion, J. R. Hooper, has now won the Cup twice in succession, and it looks as if he were likely to make it his own this year, for I don't see anything to beat him. My anticipations are that the runner up will be found among Peel, Gillies, and Stevenson. In the first round Peel meets Scherff, and will, I reckon win. He then meets the winner of Uppill or Gillies, and my opinion is that the latter will win. Peel and Gillies will thus meet in the second round, and my forecast is that Gillies will win, but not by much. Stevenson should beat Tempest in the first round, and will meet the winner of Goldie and Hall. He will doubtless beat either of these, and then probably meet Harrison, whom I look to beat the winner of Paterson or Cooke. Paton, who receives a bye in the first round, meets either Macfarlane or Elliott, and I look for him coming through. If so, he meets Gillies, who will beat him, thus—if my prognostications prove correct—leaving the penultimate to be fought out between Gillies and Stevenson, the winner to do what he can to win against Hooper.

I WILL treat in similar manner the competitors for the Lady Championship next week. There are some new aspirants for the coveted honour, of whose play I am not at the moment sufficiently conversant. There'll be a 'chief among ye takin' notes,' therefore during the coming week, 'an' faith he'll prent' em.'

THE New Zealand Association's Championship cup won at the late tournament has not, up to the present, been presented to the winner, Miss Spiera. Those in authority please note.

THE first round of the '120 up,' men's bantams, at the Eden and Epsom Club, has been played with the following results:—

Baker (received 20) beat McIntosh (received 15), 120-109.
Maclean (received 10) beat Cook (received 30) a bye.
Peel (owe 20) beat Sykes (scratch), 120-100.
Paton (scratch) beat Uppill (owe 20), 120-116.
Macfarlane scored a bye.
Stevenson (owe 20) beat Hall (owe 5), 120-83 in the doubles.
Hooper and Peel (owe 30) beat Maclean and McIntosh (received 10), 120-105.
Hudson and Baker (received 20) beat Johnston and Harvey (received 30), 120-118.