

Sports and Pastimes.

FOOTBALL.

RUGBY.

THE championship matches under the auspices of the Auckland Rugby Union were continued on Saturday afternoon. Among the seniors, City beat Newton by 23 points to nil, University beat Parnell by 6 to nil, and Ponsonby defeated North Shore by 23 to nil. Second grade results were: Parnell beat University by 25 to nil; only one spell was played. Newton beat City by 8 points to 3, Ponsonby beat Grafton by 16 to 12, after an exciting game. Mariat Brothers defeated North Shore by 11 points to nil.

ASSOCIATION.

The Auckland Association games, which were continued on Saturday, resulted: Seniors—Corinthians 3, v. Ponsonby nil; Y.M.C.A. 2, v. W.Y.M.I. 1; North Shore 3, v. Caledonians 2. Second grade—Gordon 3, v. Corinthians 0; North Shore 4, v. W.Y.M.I. 1.

AUSTRALIAN GAME.

Playing at Auckland on Saturday under the Australian rules, Newton 23 points, beat Mt. Roskill 21 points; and Imperial made a draw of it with Eden (36 points each), after a very interesting game.

LACROSSE.

The first round of the championship matches under the auspices of the Auckland Lacrosse Association began on Saturday last. Auckland beat Ponsonby by 11 goals to 4; and West End defeated Grafton 6 to 3.

HOCKEY.

The Auckland Hockey Association's Cup matches were continued on Saturday. The results were: Auckland 8, v. Grafton 3; College Rifles drew with Y.M.C.A., one goal each; University 7, v. Ponsonby 1; United 7, v. North Shore nil.

CRICKET.

THE AUSTRALIAN XI IN ENGLAND.

Programme of Matches.

MAY.

- 13—v. Essex, at Leyton.
- 17—v. Surrey, at the Oval.
- 20—v. M.C.C., at Lord's.
- 24—v. Oxford University, at Oxford.
- 27—FIRST TEST MATCH, at Birmingham.
- 31—v. Leicestershire, at Leicester.

JUNE.

- 2—v. Cambridge University, at Cambridge.
- 7—v. Hampshire, at Southampton.
- 10—v. Somerset, at Bath.
- 14—SECOND TEST MATCH, at Lord's.
- 17—Vacant (probably Scotland).
- 21—v. Yorkshire, at Bradford.
- 24—v. Lancashire and Yorkshire, at Manchester.
- 28—v. Scotland (two days), at Edinburgh.

JULY.

- 1—THIRD TEST MATCH, at Leeds.
- 5—v. Warwickshire, at Birmingham.
- 8—v. Worcestershire, at Worcester.
- 12—v. Gloucestershire, at Bristol.
- 15—v. Surrey, at the Oval.
- 19—v. Yorkshire, at Sheffield.
- 22—v. Derbyshire, at Derby.
- 26—FOURTH TEST MATCH, at Manchester.
- 29—v. Yorkshire and Lancashire, at Hall.

AUGUST.

- 2—v. South Wales, at Cardiff.
- 5—v. Lancashire, at Liverpool.
- 9—FIFTH TEST MATCH, at the Oval.
- 13—v. West of England (Dorset, Cornwall, etc.), at Exeter.
- 16—v. Gloucestershire, at Cheltenham.
- 19—v. Kent, at Canterbury.
- 23—v. Middlesex, at Lord's.
- 26—v. Sussex, at Brighton.
- 30—v. M.C.C., at Lord's.

SEPTEMBER.

- 3—v. Essex, at Leyton.
- 6—v. An England Eleven (Mr. Bamford's), at Uptoneter.
- 9—Scarborough Festival, at Scarborough.
- 13—v. South of England, at Hastings.

The Australian Tour.

The Australians again registered an easy win in their second match, defeating Northhamptonshire by the big margin of nine wickets.

Following are the scores:—

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.—First Innings, 203.

| | |
|---|-----|
| J. A. T. Vials, lbw, b O'Connor | 18 |
| W. H. Kingsford, c Carter, b Macartney | 30 |
| Heywood, b Noble | 39 |
| Smith, c Carter, b O'Connor | 29 |
| G. J. Thompson, c Bardsley, b Armstrong | 26 |
| C. J. T. Pool, st. Carter, b Armstrong | 14 |
| W. Wells, c Ranford, b O'Connor | 29 |
| Snell, at Carter, b Armstrong | 31 |
| W. East, lbw, b Armstrong | 0 |
| T. E. Manning, lbw, b Armstrong | 7 |
| A. Buswell, not out | 3 |
| Sundries | 11 |
| Total | 235 |

Bowling Analysis: O'Connor, took three wickets for 30; Armstrong five for 57; Macartney, one for 47; Noble, one for 32; Cotter, none for 53; Ranford none for 2; Hartigan, none for 4.

AUSTRALIA.—First Innings.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| R. Hartigan, b Smith | 14 |
| W. Bardsley, lbw, b Thompson | 76 |
| M. A. Noble, lbw, b Thompson | 32 |
| J. A. O'Connor, b Smith | 6 |
| H. Carter, b Smith | 0 |
| A. Cotter, c Manning, b Thompson | 27 |
| V. Trumper, c Smith, b Thompson | 56 |
| W. W. Armstrong, c Buswell, b Smith | 79 |
| W. Ranford, lbw, b Thompson | 6 |
| S. E. Gregory, b Smith | 15 |
| C. G. Macartney, not out | 0 |
| Sundries | 9 |
| Total | 310 |

Bowling Analysis—Smith took five wickets for 410; Wells, none for 35; Thompson, five for 108; East, none for 60.

Second Innings.

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| R. Hartigan, at Buswell, b Smith | 26 |
| Bardsley, not out | 63 |
| Noble, not out | 27 |
| Sundries | 4 |
| Total for one wicket | 120 |

Bowling Analysis: Smith, one wicket for 51; Thompson, none for 35; Wells, none for 20; East, none for 7.

The third match—against Essex—ended in a draw, the second innings of the Home team being incomplete when stumps were drawn.

Following are the scores:—

AUSTRALIA.—First Innings.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| R. Hartigan, c Freeman, b Buckenham | 4 |
| W. Bardsley, run out | 0 |
| M. A. Noble, b Buckenham | 210 |
| V. Ranford, c Young, b Buckenham | 174 |
| V. Trumper, c Fane, b Reeves | 74 |
| A. J. Hopkins, b Mead | 15 |
| W. W. Armstrong, not out | 59 |
| C. G. Macartney, not out | 48 |
| Sundries | 19 |
| Total for six wickets | 609 |

Bowling analysis: Buckenham took three wickets for 164; Young, none for 60; Douglas, none for 125; Mead, one for 59; Read, none for 47; Reeves, one for 58; and McGahey, none for 78.

ESSEX.—First Innings.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| J. W. H. T. Douglas, b Cotter | 1 |
| F. S. Fane, b Cotter | 7 |
| P. Perrin, run out | 22 |
| C. McGahey, b Whitty | 42 |
| Rev. F. H. Gillingham, b Cotter | 4 |
| C. J. Freeman, played on, b Whitty | 2 |
| W. Reeves, b Whitty | 6 |
| U. P. Buckenham, not out | 15 |
| A. Read, c Bardsley, b Armstrong | 24 |
| H. Young, c Hartigan, b Macartney | 4 |
| W. Mead, c Bardsley, b Macartney | 3 |
| Sundries | 16 |
| Total | 148 |

Bowling analysis: Cotter took three wickets for 82; Whitty, three for 28; Macartney, two for 15; Armstrong, one for 22; Noble, none for 4.

ESSEX.—Second Innings.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| C. P. Buckenham, b Cotter | 13 |
| H. Young, b Cotter | 23 |
| J. M. H. Douglas, c Carter, b Cotter | 18 |
| F. S. Fane, c Ranford, b Hopkins | 115 |
| P. Perrin, c Cotter, b Armstrong | 53 |
| C. McGahey, c Ranford, b Hopkins | 55 |
| Rev. F. H. Gillingham, b Hopkins | 33 |
| C. J. Freeman, not out | 4 |
| W. Reeves, c Hartigan, b Cotter | 13 |
| A. Read, c Trumper, b Whitty | 6 |
| W. Mead, not out | 2 |
| Sundries | 10 |
| Total | 344 |

Nine wickets for 344
Bowling analysis: Cotter took four wickets for 80 runs; Hopkins, three for 70; Whitty, one for 46; Armstrong, one for 49; Macartney, none for 34; Noble, none for 49.

English County Cricket.

Last year's county champions, Yorkshire, suffered their first defeat of the season on Saturday, when Worcestershire beat them by the narrow margin of twelve runs.

Worcester, batting first, scored 205, to which Yorkshire replied with 280, establishing a lead of 86 on the first innings. In their second venture Worcester scored 231, leaving Yorkshire 145 runs to score to tie. The last wicket fell at 133, Worcester thus winning with twelve runs in hand.

The Difference Between Australian and English Wickets.

(By W. W. ARMSTRONG, Australia's Successful Bowler; an All-round Player.)

My experience on English wickets has been rather unique, for my first visit to England was in 1902, one of the wettest and coldest summers the cricketers of England had to contend with for some years, and I can confidently assert that at the end of that particular season no one could have shown me any kind of wicket I had not batted upon. During the whole of the 1902 season the Australians only batted on two grounds where the pitch had any pace in it, which was quite a new experience for me, who was playing out of Australia for the first time, and who was accustomed to true and very fast wickets. My first match was played at the Crystal Palace against an eleven of W. G. Grace's, and it had not been in progress long before snow began to fall, the first time I had seen snow fall, so my first impressions of English cricket were not very encouraging.

In 1905 I again visited England, and this time it was my good fortune to have a fine summer with faster and truer wickets, which was more to my liking, and it was quite a contrast to my experience in 1902.

Sticky Wickets.

From my experience, the conclusion I have come to, is that the wickets in England never become really bad, owing to the grounds being of natural turf. The ball may break a good deal, but very seldom kicks and flies, as is the case on bad wickets in Australia; the ball comes along much slower and is easier to watch. Of all the "sticky" wickets I have seen I do not think any of them as bad as those on the Melbourne Cricket Ground, where the ground is not of natural turf, and is sown with English grasses. The wickets on this ground remain "sticky" for days after a good rain, and a Test match would be very nearly finished, if not finished, at the end of one day's play if the wicket were sticky at the beginning. It is practically impossible to make many runs on these wickets against first class bowlers, unless one has a great amount of luck. The ball kicks and flies one minute and probably shoos the next, and will break very quickly almost at right angles; the conditions of play in fact are quite different from those on the majority of wet wickets in England.

A Peculiar Soil.

In South Australia the wicket is very similar to that of Melbourne in wet weather, but in Sydney the ground is made of soil obtained from Bulli, the locality of the coal mines, and it is peculiar on account of its resistance to water. I have seen the Sydney ground absolutely under water at midday, and at 5 o'clock in the afternoon have been playing on it, and on a really good wicket. The wickets only remain very bad on this ground for about an hour on account of the soil

only becoming wet on the surface; the water seems to run off rather than soak through it. On one occasion after rain I batted on this ground on an easy wicket; the ball cutting through for some time; then it became sticky, and when I finished my innings it was a perfect wicket. This all happened in the course of a few hours, and it will give one an idea how wonderful the Sydney ground is after rain. I do not suppose there is any other to be compared with it in this respect.

A Contrast in Colour.

In England the wickets do not undergo the same amount of preparation as those in Australia, and the consequence is they do not last so well, and the bowler is, in nearly all cases, able to make the ball turn from the commencement. I have batted on some wickets in England which have played just as fast as our own wickets the first day, but after that they show signs of wear and begin to crumble. Another thing which I noticed about the wickets in England was their colour. They are always green, and on some grounds it would be hard to find the pitch were it not for the white lines. They never become brown, cracked, and polished like the wickets in Australia. At the present time I consider the best wickets are made on the Sydney ground. They are the fastest and truest, and last longer than any other I have played on. Just recently we finished a six days' inter-State match on this ground, and at the conclusion the wicket hardly had a mark on it, and it was quite good enough to commence another match. The Sydney wickets do not crack with the sun as they do in Melbourne, and, consequently, do not begin to crumble at the end of four or five days' play. The Melbourne ground becomes like a piece of honeycomb after a spell of dry weather, and a stranger would consider it would be dangerous to stand up to a fast bowler on one of these cracked wickets; but until the edges of these cracks become worn, which does not take place for some days, the wicket will play as true as a billiard table. I have seen these cracks open so wide that it was possible to put your finger down.

Back Play in England.

Another important fact I noticed in England, and which may be useful to players going there, was the way the ball had to be watched right on to the bat, and how much the batsman has to rely on his back play. My opinion is that anyone to become a good player on English wickets must be a good back player, able to use his legs well, and be a strong on-side player, for the majority of the wickets are too slow to make many strokes behind the wicket on the off-side. This accounts for some of the failures in England of fine batsmen, who have gone there from Australia. They have been accustomed to the ball coming along fast, and perfectly true, and have been hitting at the pitch of the ball and not watching it afterwards.

The Bowler's Paradise.

As to bowling I think England is the paradise of a bowler, because, as before stated, the wickets are not prepared in the same manner as in Australia, and the bowler never always receives assistance from the wicket from the commencement. Another thing which is in favour of the bowler is the atmosphere. It is far easier to make the ball swerve in England. I do not know what the reason is, but give nearly any bowler a new ball, and he will make it swerve even if there is no wind. In Australia, where the wickets are like billiard tables, being prepared for months before a match, every ball comes along practically straight and much faster than in England, and all the batsman has to do is to have plenty of patience, and to play with a straight bat. How different it is to bowl, too. No matter how much one spins the ball, it still continues straight, and as I heard a great bowler remark, when asked, after he had secured several wickets, how he managed it, he replied, "They got themselves out"; and nine times out of ten that is the way most of the good batsmen get out on true Australian wickets.

GOLF.

LADIES GOLF.

The "Graphic" has been appointed the official organ of the Ladies' Golf Union, New Zealand Branch.

Secretaries are requested to forward