

Sports and Pastimes.

TURF FIXTURES.

May 24 and 25—Takapuna J. C. Winter
 May 24 and 25—Dunedin J.C. Winter
 June 8, 11—Auckland Racing Club Winter
 June 20, 22—Hawke's Bay Jockey Club
 June 26, 27—Gisborne Park Racing Club
 June 27, 28—Napier Park Racing Club
 July 14 and 15—Wellington R.C. Winter

DATES OF COMING EVENTS.

May 24—Wanganui Steeplechase
 May 26—Epsom Derby
 June 2—The Oaks
 June 3—A.R.C. Grand National Hurdle Race
 June 11—Great Northern Steeplechase
 June 22—Hawke's Bay Steeplechase

NOTES BY MONITOR.

With this week's issue we give an excellent likeness of the ex-Australian horse The Graftor. This horse, as will be remembered, hails from the famous Warwick Farm stable, a short distance out of Sydney. This racing establishment has at its head Mr Wm. Forrester ("Black Bill"), one of the most popular sportsmen on the Australian turf. The Graftor belongs to a distinguished family, being by Gozo (imp.) from Industry, by Muskiet. He is, therefore, a full brother to Gaulus, the Melbourne Cup winner of 1897, in which race he finished alongside his relative, with nothing else near them. The Graftor won the big Victorian Spring race in 1898, and was afterwards sent to England, where a recent cable records his victory in the famous City and Suburban Handicap. Although only a commoener in appearance, being one of the ugliest horses in training. The Graftor has proved himself possessed of rare staying power, and with the courage of a lion, which has been proved in many a hard-fought battle. Now that he has struck his old form in England we may expect to hear of further successes by the son of Gozo.

To-day (Wednesday) the Coursing Club commence operations for the season at the Avondale enclosure. The heavy rain that has fallen has made the ground somewhat heavy, but as the hares are in fine going order some excellent sport should be provided. Mr E. W. Coombes will, as usual, occupy the judge's chair, while Mr D. Brennan once again will act as slipper. There are two stakes to be disposed of, a Maiden Puppy Stakes and the Avondale Cup. Very fair entries have been received.

The Takapuna meeting will be held next week, and as far as at present possible to judge a very big success should be achieved. If the weather keeps fine there can be little doubt that the pretty suburban course will be thronged with visitors on the Queen's Birthday. Entries have ruled unusually large, and Mr Knight seems to have compiled an exceptionally good scale of weights for the different races so that the various winners will take a lot of finding. Mr Ilobi, Wynyard, the popular secretary, has all the arrangements for the meeting well in hand, while as the Ferry Company intend putting on a number of extra boats patrons will have no difficulty in crossing the water. Next week I will be able to criticise the various handicaps, and will hold over further mention until then.

Mr Ihu McLeod's smart little mare Miss Delaval was brought back from her Southern trip last week, and she looks none the worse for her journey. The daughter of Seaton Delaval is now located at F. McNaumen's stable, by whom she is to be trained in future, but at present is to be given a well-deserved holiday.

The owners of Okoro are having rather hard luck with the mare this season. At the Egmont meeting held last week she ran two seconds, while the week previously at the Wellington meeting Waiuku's sister ran two thirds and a first.

The Sydney-bred mare Minerva II, whom Mr Beckett purchased when over three some short time ago changed hands last week. Mr A. Robertson was the purchaser, the price being 150 guineas. The mare will in future be a stable mate of the speedily firefly.

The backers of Sundial at the Egmont meeting have been on good terms with themselves. No less than three wins went to the credit of this speedy equine. The races were the Railway Handicap (dividend £6 4/), the Borough Handicap (dividend £2 14/), and the Mania Handicap (dividend £3 16/).

Several well known horses were offered by auction last week, but in each case failed to bring the reserve placed upon them. Among these was the steeplechaser Conscript, who after the bidding had reached 30 guineas was passed in. The ponies Leona and Motokorea were also among the lot.

The old fashioned Chester Cup, at one time one of the most celebrated races in England, was run for last week. The prize for this is 2500 sovs, a cup valued at 50 guineas, and an immense cedar cheese to each of the place getters. The winner turned up in Mr C. A. Brown's chestnut horse Roughside, by Hignoscope—Disruption, which had as his nearest attendant the Duke of Portland's bay colt Manners, by St. Simon out of Tact, this four-year-old being followed home by Lord Carnarvon's bay colt Baldr by Sheen out of Sunshine.

The Sydney trainer M. McAuliffe, who came over to Auckland to train for the Hon. Mossman at the latter end of last winter, returned back home in the Mararoa last week. He was accompanied by J. Gainsford, who has given Auckland best. This rider came here with a fine reputation, but for some reason or other he utterly failed to uphold it, although many chances were given him.

I notice in the "Weekly Press" the following list of winning two-year-olds for the season 1899-1900. Renown won three races, £846 5/; Beddington (4), £804 15/; Formosa (3), £767 15/; Annie Chief (3), £736; The Shannon (5), £593 15/; Val Rosa (3), £336 15/; Military (1), £450; Romanoff (1), £340; Heirress (2), £313 10/; Melita (3), £304 5/.

Handicappers never seem to encourage straight running more than they can help. A notable instance of this is in the case of Record Reign, which, as he is always sent to win, is a very popular selection with the general public, but is always asked to carry tremendous imposts. The first appearance of this son of Castor over sticks was to have been in the Grand National Hurdle Race, but Mr Evelt has loaded him up with 11.9, and this, in the best company to be found in New Zealand. Mr Roultson, his owner, naturally feels somewhat aggrieved at the bursh measure awarded to his favourite, which, he points out, is a perfectly untried performer at the game, but is asked to give lumps of weight away to winning horses. There seems, therefore, to be some doubt whether the Pukekohe horse will be started in the event in question.

Sportsmen will regret to hear of the death of the hurdler St. Simon when being schooled last Saturday at Napier. At the time he was being ridden by Sweeney, who came in for a very nasty fall. St. Simon first saw the light at Mr J. Roultson's farm, Pukekohe, and was by St. Leger—Winnie. Among numerous races which went to his credit, perhaps the best was the Grand National Hurdle Race which he carried off in 1897. Mr Skipwith has persevered with the horse for a long time past without getting a race out of him; it is therefore very hard luck to lose him just prior to the jumping season.

Betting on the Grand National Meeting has been fairly brisk during the week. Popular doubles have been Social Pest and Dummy, at 1000 to 20 against, the same odds being written about Torpina and Dummy; Korowai and Dummy figure at 1000 to 125 against. Other selections are Verdi and Dentist, Drum Major and Venture, Record Reign and Black Dust.

Blackberry and Kanaka have been withdrawn for all their Grand National engagements.

A cable to hand gives the result of the Grand Jubiler Handicap of 2000

sovs, run at Kempton Park. This resulted in a win for Mr L. Neumann's black mare Sirenia, by Galiaule—Concussion, which beat Merry Methodist and Royal Flush.

THE NORTH NEWZEALAND NATIONAL MEETING.

Mr Evelt has come out with the weights for the two big events of the winter meeting, these being the G.N. Handicap Hurdles and the G.N. Steeplechase. The task set the veteran handicapper has been rather a severe one, but he has made an apparently very successful adjustment, and the winners will take no end of finding.

In the shorter race Social Pest heads the list, and it must be considered that the aged son of Abuca could have received no less. St. Simon follows with 12.4, and I am afraid has been rather harshly dealt with. It remains to be seen whether Nor-West will face the starter, but this seems improbable. Record Reign, with 11.9, is in a nice position, and if this fine son of Castor can only jump as well as his half-brother, St. Simon, he should be one of the picks of the handicap. Dummy has 11.7, but I like his chance better in the longer race; while Favona might have been let down more leniently. Torpina is a gelding for which I have a distinct fancy, and he should prove one of the dangerous division. Light, Troubadour and Tim are overweighted, but Black Dust and Volcano both possess undeniable chances. Drum Major should be quite capable of carrying 10.9, and although it is uncertain at present as to the condition of the big son of Cuirassier, there are many who greatly fancy his chance. Cuckoo is very highly spoken of in well-informed circles, and I am told that the son of Cruiser is one of the good things of the handicap. The Temple, with 9.9, is a very possible candidate, and should be about when the whips are cracking. Reading down the list of light-weights, Korowai, Paria and Cannongate possess outside chances; but to make an early selection I have weeded out the following half dozen which are likely to provide the winner. These are: Record Reign, Blackdust, Torpina, Volcano, Drum Major and Cuckoo.

As might have been expected, Nor-West heads the poll in the G.N. Steeplechase, but there is a doubt about this fine jumper starting. Dummy, with 12.4, is left with rosy prospects, as, although the weight is a big one, he has proved his ability to win under it. I have a greater liking for Social Pest in the Hurdle Race than across the big timber. Dentist is a popular selection, but I am slightly dubious about his ability to last out such a long trip, although he has many admirers. Musculet, with 10.12, reads a likely one, but I prefer Black Dust on the same mark. Voltigeur II, with 9.9, is very likely to prove a thorn in the sides of some of the more fancied heavy-weights, and this may also be said of Dingo, who, I think, has a good race concealed about him. I have no fancy for any other of the light-weight division, and it is probable that the scratching pen will be fairly busy among this division. To put the matter in a nutshell, the horses left with the best winning prospects are Dummy, Musculet, Dentist, Black Dust, Voltigeur II, and Dingo.

The following are the weights:—

GRAND NATIONAL HANDICAP HURDLE RACE of 2000sovs: second horse 250sovs, and third horse 150sovs out of the stake. Two miles.	
(Run Saturday, June 9.)	
at lb	st lb
Social Pest.....	12 0
St. Simon.....	12 4
Nor-west.....	11 9
Record Reign.....	11 9
Black Dust.....	11 7
Dummy.....	11 7
Torpina.....	11 3
Light.....	11 1
Troubadour.....	11 1
Black Dust.....	10 11
Tim.....	10 10
Volcano.....	10 9
Drum Major.....	10 9
Paria.....	10 8
Cuckoo.....	10 8
Ruby.....	10 2
Kanaka.....	10 2
Blackberry.....	10 2
Shylock.....	10 0
Cavalier.....	10 0
Cairo.....	9 12
The Guard.....	9 12
The Temple.....	9 9
Kaimate.....	9 9
The Weaver.....	9 9
Cannongate.....	9 7
Voltigeur.....	9 7
Strathbraun.....	9 6
Korowai.....	9 5
Gobo.....	9 5
Tukapa.....	9 3
Paria.....	9 3
Forty-seven.....	9 3
Strathbraun.....	9 3
Pills.....	9 0
Cuirassette.....	9 0
Verdi.....	9 0
Whitney.....	9 0
Thi.....	9 0

GREAT NORTHERN STEEPLECHASE HANDICAP of 500sovs: second horse 50 sovs and third horse 25sovs out of the stake. Winner of any steeplechase of the value of 150sovs after declaration of weights to carry 5lb penalty. About three miles and a half.

(Run Monday, June 11.)

at lb	st lb
Nor-west.....	12 7
Voltigeur II.....	9 9
Shylock.....	9 7
Blackberry.....	9 7
Kaimate.....	9 7
Conscript.....	9 7
Forty-seven.....	9 7
Silver Hay.....	9 7
Sirathbraun.....	9 7
Toughhouse.....	9 7
Ronald.....	9 7
Pho.....	9 7
Voligeur.....	9 7
Tringou.....	9 7
Pills.....	9 7
Gobo.....	9 7
Tomoka Ballagh.....	9 7
Heart.....	9 7
Kowhai.....	9 7
Tukapa.....	9 7

EGMONT RACING CLUB'S WINTER MEETING.

The winter meeting of the Egmont Racing Club was held last Wednesday and Thursday at Hawera. Very heavy rain had fallen, and the course was accordingly soft and holding, while the attendance was considerably below the average.

Proceedings opened with the Railway Handicap, in which Sundial defeated Okoro by a length. In the Hurdle Race, which followed, Haydn and Haungora fought out a great finish, the former just struggling home by a neck. He, however, failed to survive a protest entered against him, and the race was accordingly awarded to Haungora. The Mokoia Handicap was taken by Waylay, who had as his nearest attendant Crawler and Taplaw. In the Telegraph Handicap Momoaki proved successful, the other place-getters being Coma and Sonnet. A fine struggle occurred in the Tawhiti Handicap, in which Bonus just struggled home ahead of Waylay and Coma. The Wahi Handicap completed the first day's running, and in this Tawara had very little trouble in getting home. The second day's racing commenced with the Trial Handicap, which fell to Postaniwha, who was a length to the good from Klondyke, returning the fine dividend of £29 6s. Another great finish took place in the Stewards' Handicap, in which Taplaw and Heart Whist ran a dead heat. The Borough Handicap was also productive of a fine struggle, Sundial once again getting the better of Okoro by a bare length. The Second Hurdle Race resulted in a win for Whetu, who beat Silver Bay by two lengths. As was the case in the First Hurdles, a protest was entered in this race, but it was subsequently dismissed by the stewards. In the Opeke Handicap Tawara scored another win, this time having Pyroxyllin as her nearest attendant. Sundial was evidently in a fine winning vein, for yet a third victory was scored in the Mania Handicap, Bona Fide and Man-o-war supplying the other places. A good day's sport terminated with the Ngamotu Handicap, in which race Momoaki first caught the judge's eye, Bonus and Mamaku being next behind him.

TAKAPUNA JOCKEY CLUB WINTER MEETING.

Mr Wm. Knighi has declared the following handicaps for first day's events to be decided on May 24 (Wednesday):—
 Handicap Maiden Steeplechase of 500sovs; about 2 miles; Tim 10.12, Haungora 10.7, Forty-seven 10.5, Christiana 10.4, La Belle 10.2, Onga 10.2, Jenkin 10.2, Reporter 10.0, Rapid Bay 9.9, Tiki 9.10, Dunga 9.9, Verd 9.0, Woolman 9.0, Puhok 9.7, London 9.7, Bob 9.7, Kowhai 9.7, Rangitoto 9.7, Phil 9.7, Moline 9.7, Rommie 9.7.
 Handicap Maiden Steeplechase of 500sovs; 7 furlongs; Tukapa 9.8, Honesty 9.2, Alghun 9.2, Brigham Young 8.5, St. Denis 8.2, Chancellor II 8.4, Defender 8.2, Gault 7.3, Hancock 7.2, Conspirer 7.0, Ruffout 6.7, Tiki 6.6, Miracle 6.12, Belfast 6.12, Bessie 6.10, Reputation 6.10, Regulus 6.10, Volo 6.7, Minerva 6.7, Para 6.7, Bob 6.7, Major 6.7, Cuirassier 6.7.
 Handicap Hurdles of 500sovs; 1 1/2 mile and 100 yards; Tukapa 10.12, Cavalier 10.12, Telegraph 10.10, Para 10.6, Heart Whist 10.4, Conspirer 10.4, Phil 9.12, Takaka 9.10, Tiki 9.7, Rapid Bay 9.8, Tip 9.6, Phil Play 9.6, Onga 9.5, Reporter 9.4, Woolman 9.4, Lepperton 9.4, Lightning 9.0, Bullion 9.0, What's Wanted 9.0, Ludo 9.0, Kowhai 9.0, Haungora 9.0, Phil 9.0, Bonale 9.0.
 Pony Hop of 500sovs; 5 furlongs; The Slave 1.12, Reputation 9.10, Lena 9.8, Mura 8.2, Clara 8.2, Cuirassier 8.0, Trooper 7.12, Athel 7.6, Tararua 7.5, Minton 7.5, Myo 7.5, Onga 7.5, Miracle 7.5, Belfast 6.12, Bessie 6.10, Reputation 6.10, Regulus 6.10, Volo 6.7, Minerva 6.7, Para 6.7, Bob 6.7, Major 6.7, Cuirassier 6.7.
 Royal Handicap of 500sovs; 5 furlongs; Hobson 9.10, Okoro 9.8, Teitoku 9.6, Telephus 9.2, Tiki 9.2, Rapid Bay 9.8, Tip 9.6, Phil Play 9.6, Onga 9.5, Reporter 9.4, Mura 9.4, Minton 9.4, Lepperton 9.4, Lightning 9.0, Bullion 9.0, What's Wanted 9.0, Ludo 9.0, Kowhai 9.0, Haungora 9.0, Phil 9.0, Bonale 9.0.
 Handicap of 500sovs; 7 furlongs; The Slave 1.12, Reputation 9.10, Lena 9.8, Mura 8.2, Clara 8.2, Cuirassier 8.0, Trooper 7.12, Athel 7.6, Tararua 7.5, Minton 7.5, Myo 7.5, Onga 7.5, Miracle 7.5, Belfast 6.12, Bessie 6.10, Reputation 6.10, Regulus 6.10, Volo 6.7, Minerva 6.7, Para 6.7, Bob 6.7, Major 6.7, Cuirassier 6.7.