

Up to two miles Oban seems always to be able to take his own part over country or hedges, and every day it is curious about that he would never do his best on the flat in this country. He had shown brilliant winning form in Australia just before he left, and that he was equally good when he arrived here is demonstrated more than once, but unfortunately only in private, and we all remember the disastrous results which followed when he was asked to reproduce his form in the Cambridge-shire. He has, I believe, a delicate constitution, but he would hardly account for his amazing failures on the flat. However, he seems to be honest enough at his new business, and seems likely to do good service for his owner during the "illegitimate" season.

LONDON, April 3, 1903.

THE GRAND NATIONAL.

A Grand National so brimful of stirring incident from start to finish as that decided at Aintree last Friday, has seldom, if ever, been witnessed. No less than sixteen of the twenty-three engagements to grief and even the ultimate winner, Manifesto, in the course of the race, found it necessary to (as one championed backer of the second horse ironically remarked), "make a dash for it of his own free will." The fact that only seven passed the Judge is a fair test of the "quality" of the field. Certainly, a dozen of the starters were fattered when they were set down as "non-probationers," and only two of those that did complete the course could beat the fifteen-year-old Manifesto (winner in 1897 and 1899, and third last year), who was carrying no less than 12.5, and was giving a stone to the winner, rest, but the King, the 1900 winner, Ambush II., which carried 12.7.

The better-forehanded Drumree's victory, for the best odds against Mr Morrison's nine-year-old son of Assevic and Witching II, four years ago, was his nearest attendant being Detail (7yrs, 8.13) at 100 to 14; whilst Aunt May (7yrs, 10.0) and Matthew (7yrs, 10.7), and Pride of Mahetown (7yrs, 10.8), were 10 to 1 chances, and 100 to 1 was against Kirkland—a son of Australian-bred Kirkham—(7yrs, 10.8). At 100 to 6 the King's horse, Fanciful (8yrs, 11.7), and Inquisitor (8yrs, 10.13), had a fair following, as also did Harpessa (8yrs, 10.11), Fairland (10yrs, 10.13) and Kilmallog (8yrs, 10.9), at twenties. Manifesto, Drumree (7 years, 11.4), and Deerslayer (7yrs, 10.11) were 25 to 1 odds, whilst being laid against Patlander (7yrs, 10.7), Expert II. (8yrs, 10.5), and Orange Pat (7yrs, 9.9), at sixes, Saxsilly, and 100 to 1 against the rest.

From a ragged start Ambush led the way, and the "fun" started at the first fence, where Expert and Orange Pat came purring, and the next obstacle put Fanciful, Inquisitor, and Kilmallog in a tight group, whilst a little further on Cushman, Pride of Mahetown, and Aunt May left their backers' money literally "in the ditch." At this point Matthew took up the running with a lead of five or six lengths, and as his nearest attendant, but the first named dropped back after negotiating Beecher's Brook. With changes in the order of his followers, Matthew landed on the race-course for the first time in his career, but his pursuers were thinned out by the fall of Harpessa and Gillie II. before the water, and only thirteen completed the first round. Going into the contest for the second time, Patlander fell at Beecher's, and Detail assumed the lead with Matthew, Kirkland, Drumree, Drumree, Ambush, and Manifesto in close pursuit. At Barn House fence Matthew took off two stones and came a terrible crash. Here Drumree took his first place, in front of Kirkland, who, however, began to fall back, on which Detail took second place, with Ambush, Saxsilly, Manifesto, Drumree, and Deerslayer lying next. Two fences from the water, Saxsilly and Deerslayer fell, leaving Drumree with half a length's lead of Ambush and Detail, Drumree being close at hand, and Manifesto and Kirkland some lengths away. The excitement of the spectators was now intense, for it seemed probable that the King, who was present, might once more lead in the winner of "The National." But Ambush and Drumree were both "rooking" badly, and at the last fence the King's horse never rose, and as a result of dismay went up as the gallant "chaser crashed through the obstacle and fell, fairly "done." Drumree managed to get over the fence, but as he landed on the flat he staggered, and his horse had the time to throw himself out of the saddle ere the horse collapsed. Meanwhile, Detail and Drumree were fighting for the lead, and it was only in the last 100 yards that the favourite managed to get ahead, and he lightly weighed down for Curley and Rosary, who compounded in the last fifty, and allowed Drumree to win by three lengths. Twenty lengths behind old Manifesto was having a brittle royal with Kirkland, and he was only by a head that the steered gained the judge's fat for third honours. Benvenir, Pawmbroker (two 100 to 1 outsiders), and Fanciful, finished in the order named, some considerable distance behind the graded horses. Though Zalis was so plentiful one of the jockeys was severely hurt, and of the horses Kilmallog alone received bad injury, a broken leg leading to this course unable to race for a long time, but pulled round sufficiently to walk to his stable. The winner's time for the race, which is decided over four miles 858 yards, was 10m 9 2-50, the record for the race being Curley's 9 42 2-50 in 1893, that grand "chaser" carrying 12.7, which weight has only been borne to victory twice in the history of the National, the second occasion being in 1809, when Manifesto won in 9m 49 4-50. The value of the race is £2000.

A JOCKEY'S FEAT.

April 6th, 1903. The opening of the flat racing season in the South of England, at Windsor, last Saturday, was remarkable for the unique feat of little John Watts (a son of the

famous "Jack") who had five mounts in the six races which constituted the day's programme, and caught "the Judge's eye" on each occasion. Consisting on his side in the Taplow Handicap, Watts managed to finish in front of the favourite, Consequence, by two lengths. He did not ride in the Holport Handicap, but appeared on Grey Dick in the Royal Cattle Handicap. Buckers chiefly supported more 11, and Australian Star, but Watts' mount won to a canter. Then on Palace Yard, in the T.Y.O. Belling Plate, he secured his third winning ride, again relegating the favourite to second place. In the following event, the Romney Handicap, Strattington gave Watts a clever half length verdict, but in the Slough Maiden Plate, on Lady Lightfoot, he gained another runaway victory. Although not a record as regards the number of races won (the late Fred Archer having ridden six successive winners on one afternoon at Lewes in 1882), the performance of Watts was notable from the fact that only one of the five horses he rode started favourite. Indeed, three of the winners mentioned to have been outsiders, their prices being 7, 8, and 10 to 1 respectively, while in the case of Archer, already mentioned, five of the winners were favourites, three of them starting at odds on Archer, on several other occasions rode five winners on the same day (once at Windsor, in 1884), and also six out of a possible seven, but in the majority of instances the horses were well supported. At Edinburgh Meeting, in October last, Trigg, an apprentice, rode five successive winners, and a third, though four of the victors were favourites in this case also. Perhaps the best performance on record as regards number of races won, was by Fortham, at the Ribby Club Meeting, 1887, when he won all the seven races he took part in, excepting the deciding heat for the Hamilton Post Sweepstakes.

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GOLF NOTES.

(By Stoney Dead.)

The ladies' tournament was continued last week. Though the weather broke at the end of the preceding week, yet it pulled itself together for Monday, and the ladies enjoyed as good weather for the second week as they had done in their first. To get a fortnight of good weather, let alone almost perfect weather, is very lucky at this time of the year. Wednesday to Saturday of last week was as near perfection as one could wish. Clear bright days, lovely sunshine, little or no wind, and the air fresh and bracing. The greens were in good condition, though the wormcasts are troublesome this time of year. It is extraordinary how quickly a green becomes bad through wormcasts. One plays over a green, and it is in beautiful order, and one comes to it again after even two hours, and it is almost spoiled by this pest. I understand that there is a method of treating greens which will kill the worms, but it is expensive. So far the committee have not felt justified in going to the expense of adopting this method, but perhaps now with the increase of subscription, they may go in for it, and it seems to me that money so expended would be well spent, not only as it would improve the greens so unreasonably, but also as it would save the green-keeper's time. Without wormcasts the greens would require very little attention, as the grass grows slowly at this time of the year.

On Monday of last week the semifinals of the handicap foursomes took place. The result was that the scratch pair, Mrs W. R. Bloomfield and Miss Lewis beat Miss Shuttleworth and Miss Draper by 5 and 4, notwithstanding the handicap of 7 strokes. Miss E. Pierce and Miss Torrance receiving 10 strokes, beat Mrs O'Rourke and Miss Gillies by 4 and 2.

On Wednesday the scratch pair played and beat Miss E. Pierce and Miss Torrance. The latter received strokes at sixteen out of the eighteen holes, and it was generally expected they would win. However the moral effect of playing two scratch players in a final of a competition told its tale. Probably had these pairs met at the same odds earlier in the competition the result would have been different. As it was a very close contest took place. The scratch players were two down at the turn, but they settled down to it on the return journey, and just managed to win by one up. Mrs Bloomfield played particularly well.

A handicap medal match was played on Tuesday. The results were:—Miss R. Buckland, 110—20—90; Miss M. Cotter, 120—30—90; Miss M. Richmond, 107—11—96; Mrs W. R. Bloomfield, 99—scr.—99; Miss Featon, 130—30—100; Miss R. Gorrie, 115—10—105; Miss G. Gorrie, 117—12—105; Miss Torrance, 120—14—106; Miss Draper, 137—30—107; Miss J. Richmond, 123—10—107; Miss E. Pierce, 127—18—109; Miss Barstow, 124—14—110; Mrs O'Rourke, 132—20—112; Mrs W. Heather, 175—30—145; Miss Ching, 178—30—148. Miss R. Buckland and Miss M. Cotter tied at 90, and they are to play off this one day this week. Miss Gillies returned a very fine score. She was not playing in the competition, as she was playing with a Haskell with the view to getting accustomed to the cored ball for her match against Miss Lewis two days later. Though it is not against the rules ladies have got Haskell's. Miss Gillies undoubted advantage to be had with them at some home, and as few of the ladies have got Haskell's. Miss Gillies thought it fairer to consider herself as not competing. Her round was 87. This lowered the record 10 strokes, Miss Lewis and Miss Gillies holding between them the previous record of 97. Miss Gillies' score in detail was:—4, 8, 8, 5, 5, 6, 4, 4, 3, 4, 6, 5, 6, 4, 5, 4—87. I expect this will stand as a ladies' record for some time.

5, 6, 4, 4, 3, 4, 6, 5, 6, 4, 5, 4—87. I expect this will stand as a ladies' record for some time.

On Thursday morning Miss Lewis and Miss Gillies played the final of the ladies' championship. Both played extremely good golf. Miss Gillies played particularly well at the beginning, and Miss Lewis shone at the business end of the match. The match was a striking example of the racing adage, "There is nothing certain till the numbers are up." Several times Miss Lewis' chances seemed very foreboding, but in the end she won by one up at the nineteenth hole. A large gallery followed the match, and the excitement was very keen towards the end. The winner deserves all praise for her real plucky game. Many a player would have lost heart and been beaten badly, but she stuck to it really well, and played better and better as the match went on.

Miss Gillies won the first hole in three, and at the fifth hole was three up. At the sixth hole both got good drives; then Miss Gillies' second shot struck a tree guard, which cost her the hole. The next hole (the Outpost) fell to Miss Lewis in a beautifully played four, and the next hole was halved. Miss Gillies then won the next three holes—the Eastern Crater in five, Jacob's Ladder in three, and the Angels' in three strokes. This left Miss Gillies four up, and the match looked as if it would be hers. At the Pah hole Miss Gillies overran the bank, and the hole fell to Miss Lewis. The Rauparts were halved, and at the Amphitheatre Miss Gillies got a beautiful drive and approach shot, but fozled her putting for the first time in the match, and the hole was halved. The match then stood Miss Gillies three up, and the next two holes fell to Miss Lewis in a well-played five and three. The seventeenth hole was halved in four. This left Miss Gillies dormy one. At the eighteenth hole both lay on the green with the third shot, and the green, newly rolled, was very fast. Miss Gillies over-ran the hole with her putts, and Miss Lewis laid her putt dead and won the hole in five. This left the match all square at the eighteenth hole. The nineteenth hole was then played to decide the match. Miss Lewis played and sliced her ball badly, and Miss Gillies fozled hers. Miss Lewis played a good second, and lay on the green with her third stroke. Miss Gillies, with her drive, then got on to rough ground, and Miss Lewis won the hole in five to Miss Gillies' six. This made the match one up for Miss Lewis.

In the driving competition all the honours went to the young players. Miss M. Richmond won with her three drives of 159 yards, 157 yards, and 118 yards, three very steady, good drives. Miss B. Gorrie was second with 150 yards, 142 yards, and 146 yards, also a good performance. To Miss E. Pierce was left the honour of driving the longest ball of the competition. A drive of 169 yards is a very fine drive for a lady. It shows what a good clean, full swing will do. Her other drive was 153 yards, and with a straight one for her third she would have gone very near to winning.

The approaching and putting competition was for three distances of 80 yards, 50 yards, and 30 yards, and resulted in a tie between Mesdames O'Rourke and Bloomfield and Miss J. Richmond, each holing in eight. In the play-off Mesdames O'Rourke and Bloomfield again tied at nine strokes, and on playing off again Mrs Bloomfield holed in nine and her opponent in 10. There were 33 entries.

Owing to the darkness it was impossible to hold the putting competition, and it will be held on Friday next at two p.m., after which Lady Ranfurly will present the prizes at the club-house.

Last Saturday the men held the Fry competition. The prize is a valuable trophy presented by Messrs. Fry and Sons, of Bristol, the well-known cocoa