

Why Makomako paid £15 5s in the dead heat was because he had just run a great horse in the Bracelet of a mile, won by Brookfield, who just got home, and it was thought absurd that he could go out and win a mile and a half event against the best horses on the ground after he had got such a gruelling. He must be a good horse. Vain Glory would have won had she not stumbled coming into the straight. As it was, the judge could not separate the pair. Royal Tar was alongside the pair, and Silent Friend and Springtime were locked together next.

Brookfield, winner of the Bracelet, only won one race last year.

A Hawke's Bay horse named Prince Charlie figured in the big event. He was one of the "dead birds" whispered about by the clever division, and was paying a nice little dividend. His weight was 6.11, I think, but a jockey could not be found to ride him, and he was obliged to carry two stone overweight, which, of course, spoiled his chance. He paid £4 in the Farewell Handicap, though, next day, when he beat five others, and let nothing get near him from start to finish. He is by Foul Play, and is a good out of a horse.

Quite a number of horses had to carry overweight at the meeting, boys not being procurable who could raise the scale at the handicapper's adjustment.

Oddfellow had a walk over in the First Hurdles, or at least practically one, for he was not extended. Pikihiua was more than an equal favourite with him, though, but could not pace it at the finish. Tricky Jack won the Second Hurdles, after laying a terrible way behind, when pursuit seemed hopeless. The son of Emir Bey came with a great rush at the finish and landed the stake. He had won a race previously and there was a protest, but as it was under £10, owing to the deduction of the percentage, the stakes were awarded him. However, this was not done until the racing was all over and visitors left for Wellington. A protest against Konini on the ground that it was not a Maori horse was upheld, and the owner and animal passed out for life! Who ever heard of such a thing? Surely the Metropolitan Club will not endorse such a sentence as this! I do not think so, at any rate. Had both protests been upheld the third horse, Tirarua, would have got the money, and as the owner had £1 on him (the only investment, with £107 on the machine) he appeared rather anxious about it.

There were about half-a-dozen protests altogether, one being laid on the ground "that start no bloomin' good." This, however, was not proceeded with. There is no doubt but that the start was shocking, and the winner, in whom the starter is said to have an interest, won comfortably.

Silent Friend, although he raced fairly well, did not appear to be as blooming as usual.

Mr Macara informs me that his two imported fillies by Lochiel—Minerva and Russley—Rheda are getting on fine.

When the improvements are carried out the Carterton-Taratahi course will be wonderfully improved.

The Okura Maori course is situated near a pah. The scenery comprises burnt bush on one side and a couple of haystacks on the other.

Mr Macfarlane, the handicapper, ran the tote satisfactorily at the meeting. Mr Henry made the handicap for the Farewell event.

The proprietor of the ground, a native, told me that he intends to effect improvements before next year in the way of ploughing the course, fencing it round, etc.

From Hastings I am informed that the Hon. J. D. Ormond's horses will in future be trained by Con. Boyle, Walter Wood having left. Boyle takes up his new responsibilities almost immediately. Mr Ormond's horses have been a peculiar lot to train, and have not done much good for some time past. It will be remembered that Wood brought Dreadnought, (Chester—Trafalgar) over from Australia to Karamu for Mr Ormond, and had charge of the stud. He took charge of the horses in training subsequently, Carrington taking his position. Boyle trained Pinrose and won a good deal of money for "Mr Portland" with the pony three-year-old.

Consequent on the above change Pinrose, Prairie Grass—Lady Somnus, and a filly two-year-old by Juilt—Uira, which cost 30gns, go to Kaikora, where they will be trained by Alf. Ellingham, who once before trained Mr Portland's animals.

Pikihiua, who ran second to Oddfellow in the Hurdles at Okura, used to be called Tuna. Piscatorious is the sire.

I hear that a Hawke's Bay sport offered £150 for Prince Charlie before he came down to run at the Masterton Meeting. His idea was to secure a good candidate for the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club's Bracelet, to be decided next month.

I think it is a pity that there should be two distinct hunt clubs down here, to wit, the Wellington and Wairarapa institutions. If amalgamation were effected a very strong organisation could be formed, and there need be no reason for the existence of anything else but amicable relations. I believe that, if anything, the Wairarapa Club is stronger than the Wellington one, and both think they are strong enough to stand alone and weather the storm unaided by the other. If they joined hands and formed a general hunt club for the two districts, there would be nothing lost, but a good deal gained. Unity is strength, all the world over, and any practical sporting man thinking the matter out cannot fail to be struck with the fact that the interests of hunting would be better conserved by the amalgamation of the two bodies. Of course there is one barrier in the way, but it is not an insuperable one. Both hunt clubs at present have their steeplechase gatherings, one being held at the Hutt, and the other at the other end; and the probability is that neither would care to give way in this particular connection. However, this might be easily and amicably arranged. With regard to the hounds, they could be shifted from Carterton, their present location, and stationed at the Upper Hutt, and taken from there to either side of the country over which hunting was fixed to take place.

The result of the Wanganui Steeplechase came somewhat as a surprise here, Nanakia's chance not being fancied at all. His dead heat with Bootles and win in the final was a good performance. Dead heats in Steeplechases appear to be as common in New Zealand now as bankruptcies.

Waiuku and Delusion were not scratched by their owners for the races in which they were entered, and a fine of a fiver was entered up in each case.

Unfortunate ran a terribly bad race in the Glasgow Plate. He was last the whole way after Jacobite passed him, and was totally out of it. Nor did he show up in the Stewards' Handicap, won by Huia, but his backers got a dividend, for he was bracketed with the winner on the machine. Some people are undoubtedly born lucky and others rich. I have seen Unfortunate run some much better races in Hawke's Bay.

From Hastings I hear that Gondolier is not quite as right as his trainer and owner would like to see him. My correspondent thinks it will be a long time before he will carry silk again, that is unless it is intended to knock him about, which I think is a very unlikely contingency. Gondolier has won many a good race, both on the flat, over sticks, and cross country. I have watched him ever since he won a couple of races at a country meeting called Rissington, located away beyond Puketapu, in the Hawke's Bay district, and the career I then predicted for him afterwards turned out singularly accurate.

Tricky Jack, by Emin Bey, who won a hurdle race at Akura and one at Otaki, was originally purchased for £20 as a stock horse.

Marama is not a stayer. He is about the fastest animal knocking about New Zealand over five furlongs, no matter what his weight is, but anything much beyond that distance finds out the weak spot. His five furlong galloping propensities are well known. All the Izaak Walton's were fast, and I remember The Barb as one of them. At Otaki, the other day, Marama jumped off the mark in the Flying Handicap in a Bungebah like fashion, and made things as merry as measles right round into the straight. At the bend the field were scattered behind him in a hopeless looking manner, his nearest attendant being Voltaire, who was lengths behind him. Six furlongs proved too far for the leader, who died away to nothing after five and a half furlongs had been traversed, and actually was not placed. Voltaire got home easily and paid a decent dividend, while Bonovoree, who was looking fairly well on it, ran up into second place. Mairua, whose violet jacket was prominent at each break away, was third, and ten finished afterwards. The whole field were fairly well backed except Langdale, on whom five speculated, but he had no chance. He was presumably given 8.10 on account of his reputation, but he would have had no possible chance had he a considerable amount less to carry.

The Maori definition of the name Makomako is "small bird"

Before the start for the First Hurdle Race at Otaki there were a number of breaks away, and the result was that some of Rangipai's saddle fixings gave way. McTaggart, the rider, informed the starter of the fact, and a delay took place while substitution was effected in the saddling paddock. It is a good thing it did not happen during the race as an accident might have happened. Trainers should always make it a point to see that their racing gear is quite sound, as not only is there a chance of accident if a breakage occurs in a race, but there might be many a race lost through it.

Thame would have beaten Tempest in the Dunedin Cup had not the stirrup leather broken, and if I remember rightly a similar accident happened to Waterbury's gear the year Victrix won the Wellington Steeplechase.

Pihanga had her field beaten rounding into the straight in the Glasgow Plate at Otaki, carrying her 8.6 to easy victory in racehorse style and in a very easy manner. Nothing had a chance with the daughter of Miss Constance when she bounded down the straight, and the thought arose in my mind as she waltzed in as to whether Waiuku, the top weight, who was handicapped to give her eleven pounds, could have beaten her. Somehow or other, if he is the horse they say he is, I think he could have got home. Makomako did not run up to expectations. He should have run better, although he carried a seven pound penalty for his win with Vain Glory at Akura. Buckler, my other fancy, did not put in an appearance either. Kalmea ran into third place, and, as at Foxton, beat Swift, who was on the same mark.

To-day Mr Douglas' trio Couranto (Patriarch—Quickstep), Waterbury (Nator—Sunshine), and Mutiny (Mute—Lady Maxwell) in charge of Hope, left Wellington for Sydney via Auckland by the same boat that conveys this letter. Fergus and Morrigan are with the team. Munn could not go over with the trio, but an efficient pilot has been secured in the well-known cross-country rider, who has done a lot of riding for Mr Douglas. The latter goes over to see his horses run. They compete at Randwick first, and then go to Melbourne, where they ought to make a good show. That they are three really good horses there can be no doubt, and New Zealand sportsmen would rejoice were their owner to secure a good round cheque as a result of his visit. Mr Douglas' Australian crusading is a pleasant feature in one way, but on the other hand I am sorry, because the horses' absence from the colony will rob our jumping and cross-country events of a deal of interest. Most people were anxiously looking forward to the meeting of the big guns in the jumping line to see which was really the best chaser. Of course Norton is regarded as towering above his compeers, but last season's running was most unconvincing in many respects. If Norton does not go to Australia with Kulnine, his owner should feel pleased at the departure of a trio of big gun opponents. The quality of the three animals is immeasurably superior to that of the last contingent the Te Mahanga studowner took over, although Chemist was a tough customer. However, he had apparently seen his best day, for he has not set the Thames on fire since.

The secretary of the Otaki Maori Racing Club informs me that it is intended to shortly effect a number of improvements on their property. The course is to be considerably widened all round, its narrowness being at present rather a striking feature about it. Then fencing will be erected right round, and twenty boxes will be put up in the saddling paddock. This latter improvement will be much appreciated by horse owners and trainers. The work was decided on through one of the Maori officials calling in and looking at one of the racecourses in Hawke's Bay. He was struck with the convenience afforded by the boxes, and got his native brother officers to go in for the innovation on their course. The club is in a very good position financially, having had a credit balance at the bank before their late meeting, which resulted most successfully from a monetary point of view.

I tipped Unfortunate for the Stewards' Stakes at Otaki, but he ran nowhere. However, his backers got £23.17s dividend, for he was bracketed with the winner.

I notice that W. Barnard, of New Plymouth, former owner of the chaser Jenny, and who had to file his schedule, has been granted his discharge subject

to paying 5s. in the pound on all proved claims.

Entries for the Champagne Stakes of the C. J. C. for their Autumn Meeting next year, are due next Friday.

A son of Musket named Ener, who has been doing stud duties in Queensland, died recently.

A good number invested on Besant in the Flying at Otaki, believing it to be a really good thing. He was actually third favourite, but was never in it. His breeding is by St. Leger out of a Day Dawn mare.

Silver was distanced in the race for the Stewards' Stakes.

The winning jockeys at the meeting were Jenkins, Shaw, Morrigan, G. Reid, McTaggart, H. Reid and Kean.

Somnus sired two winners at the Otaki meeting, and Feve, Emin Bey, Escutcheon and Sou-Wester one each.

Tamarere, the full brother in blood to The Workman, did not show up at all in his races.

Crystal, who doesn't shape badly over jumps, is by Voltigeur out of Maori Girl. Miser, who scored a second in the Boyle Plate, is out of that well remembered mare Germaine. Puriri is his sire.

Up Masterton way the other day two Maori prads were brought out by their owners to have a trial. They took an eight day clock with them, and the starter held it to take the time. As the horses came up the straight he got terribly excited, and waved the one who had a slight lead, and in which he was interested, to come on. He did, and beat his opponent. After the jockey pulled up he said "What time?" "Oh!" said the holder of the clock, "good time—half-past seven."

Pasha's full brother, Aphony, won his first race at Taradale the other day.

Hippomenes, winner of the Birthday Handicap at Dunedin, has proved himself a very respectable oat winner. He was a cheap horse at 100 guineas, and Mr Ormond lost the best in his stable when he parted with him.

Merry England's full brother, Midas, came out of his shell at Taradale, where he won the double. He can gallop when well.

Old Scot Free must be in terribly good nick to get home in the Taradale Handicap with 9.9. Some of those behind him, to whom he gave an astounding lot of weight, appear to be frosts.

May 28.

Strange thing that Vain Glory, who was bracketed with another horse both times she won at Akura, should be again bracketed with an animal at Otaki.

Spreydon ran up against a couple of snags in Tricky Jack and Rangipai in the two hurdle races at Otaki. Tricky Jack beat both he and Rangipai in the first event and Rangipai beat the pair in the second.

Bert Newman, trainer, of Hastings, has filed his schedule, his liabilities being a trifle over £154. Bert has had bad luck lately, and has not had any Carabines to train.

Langdale was nowhere in either the Trial Handicap, in which he had 9.7, in the Flying (8.10), or in the Boyle Plate, in which he had 9.0, at the Otaki meeting. He was palpably unfit to race. This horse was bred in Australia, and is by His Grace out of Misfortune. He was brought over for the purpose of being used as a hack sire.

Aotea, who ran a good second in the Trial Handicap, is by Black Rose, who was bred by Mr Henry Redwood. The animal's name did not appear on the programme at all, but it was posted on the notice board. It was an unfortunate thing that Huia's name was omitted from the list in the Stewards' Handicap, which it won. When I say it was unfortunate there is no doubt but what it was, and it was a strange thing that the winner should have been bracketed with Unfortunate on the machine. There is no question about a great many people not knowing Huia was in the race. There were only 22 backers of the two horses in the race, and this after Huia had run a good second in the big event of the day, the Glasgow Plate of a mile and a half, while the present race was a quarter of a mile less. The book only showed 22 acceptors, but Huia made the 23rd, but five were scratched. Still it was a big field for the public to inspect prior to the race, which the officials wanted to get off as quickly as possible owing to impending darkness. Then Silent Friend and Huia had jockeys up, who were both attired in a green jacket and a black cap, and there was some misconception on this score. When the leaders were coming passed the post, I shouted "Huia" and was answered with "Silent Friend—Huia is not in the race." This was on the stewards' stand, and offers of wagers