

[By Vigilant.]

THE CUP MATCHES.

An unusual amount of interest attached to last Saturday's district cup competitions, and more particularly in the Newton v. Parnell match, played in front of the stand. Newton had won five matches in succession, passing through without defeat, thus establishing a clear lead of one match for the cup honors, and in the event of their not receiving a check it was generally conceded that the other clubs would have very little chance of reaching them in the second round. Parnell recognised this, and laid themselves out to bring about the defeat of the red and whites, but although they made a great bid for victory they proved unable to accomplish the task, Newton again coming out on top by 16 points to 9, the win being full of sterling merit and showing that the district is possessed of a fine fifteen. As the matches completed the first round in the competition, and it is hardly likely that Newton will lose the season's honors—having two clear wins to the good—I append the table showing the positions of the different clubs:—

Club	Played	Won	Lost	Points	
				For	Against
Newton	6	6	0	71	12
Parnell	6	4	2	73	39
Ponsonby	6	3	3	42	30
Grafton	6	3	3	34	36
Suburbs	5	2	3	22	28
North Shore	5	2	3	21	56
City	6	0	6	3	63

Note—It will be seen from the above table that North Shore and Suburbs have only played five matches, this being due to the postponement, through some misunderstanding on the part of the clubs concerned, of the match arranged for Saturday fortnight.

Pillinger played a rattling good game at full back for Newton, getting out of difficulties very smartly.

Roberts was the pick of the Newton three-quarters, and in addition to a strong attacking game showed good defensive play.

Kirkwood played very well, as did also Freeman at times, though the latter muddled his takes rather badly on two or three occasions.

Mynott is undoubtedly a smart five-eights, and clever in making openings, but nullifies his value in this respect by clinging to the ball too long instead of passing.

Clarke distinguished himself on the wing for Newton, while in the forwards Otway, Lewis, Wilson, and Eaton were the best of a good all-round lot, not a man shirking his share of the "graft." Eaton scored two of Newton's tries and kicked a goal from a mark, thus contributing 10 of the 16 points scored by the team.

Hedges, at full-back for Parnell, kicked very well, and with the exception of an error in attempting to force a ball on the bounce, which cost Parnell three points, played a useful game.

Asher was as good as ever, and played a dandy three quarter game for Parnell. That run in which he and Laws were the principal factors, and which ended in his scoring a try, was as pretty a bit of work as we have seen this season, and illustrated the wonderful pace of which he is possessed. Other features were his fine tackling and taking of the ball.

Laws was up to his best form, and kicked splendidly.

Laing made a great five-eights, but Pierce, behind the scrum, was not up to the mark.

Murray played a fine forward game, but his place-kicking was decidedly off. Others in this division calling for mention are Handcock and Hogan, and Whitley on the wing.

While the result of the Parnell v. Newton match was a surprise to the majority at Potter's Paddock, a greater surprise was the drubbing meted out to Grafton by the North Shore fifteen, who won by 14 points to 5.

The best full-back game in Saturday's matches was undoubtedly that of Smith, at full for Grafton at the Shore. The clean and skilful manner in which he pulled his side-out of tight places was a treat to witness.

Of the other Grafton backs the Hume brothers (2) and Tait were the best, though the whole of the combination in this division was not what it has been in previous matches, due no doubt in a measure to the absence of D. Hay and the fact that Fielder, who replaced him, did not play anything like so well as I have seen him in by-gone days.

The Grafton forwards were undoubtedly over-matched in weight, but played determinedly. McGregor, Cucksey, and Brady were always conspicuous.

Cardno, the North Shore full-back, was again below his best form, and though very little was lost to his side by his indifferent taking of the ball, this was nevertheless his weak point.

Francis proved himself a valuable addition to the Shore three-quarters, and played a strong aggressive game right through.

Nicholson played right away above himself, doing a wonderful amount of work, and the Gerrards both showed themselves in a favorable light.

The Shore forwards showed great improvement in combination, and pulled together right well. Marshall was always in the thick of the fight, and veteran though he is, there are few that can beat him among our younger players. Others prominent were Pitt and Dacre, though not a man dodged his full share of work.

City went under once again, this time to Suburbs, who won by 11 points to nil. City have now lost the six matches played, and had 63 points scored against them, and have only scored 3 themselves.

McPike, Absolum, and Gage were the best of the winning team's backs, the first-named playing a rattling game.

McKenzie, Speight, and Gillett were again on the scene, and as usual were always in the van. Others noticeable in the front were Waterman and Williams.

Donovan was very safe at full back for City, while of the others in the rear division none showed up better than Siddle and Meehan, while Cories did good service behind the pack.

Browne, McKean, Beeston, and Tyler gave a good account of themselves in the forwards.

On Friday evening last at a general meeting of the Auckland Rugby Union the proposal to extend the residential qualification of visiting players to four weeks instead of one week as was previously the case. The motion was only adopted by a narrow majority, some offering objection on the ground that as Parnell had benefited by the old system, the week limit should be allowed to continue until the close of the present season, in order that other clubs desirous of so doing might benefit by it.

The firm stand taken by the Referees and Auckland Rugby Union in the suppression of insulting remarks on the part of spectators to those in charge of the game has had its effect, and the matches are now particularly free from objection-practice. Any onlookers found guilty will be warned off the ground.

The crowded nature of the Grandstand at Potter's Paddock last Saturday showed the necessity for an auxiliary grandstand.

The well-known City back, Frank Surman, has returned to Australia.

Wellington v. Canterbury "reps" meet on August 20th.

Coromandel play Thames next Saturday on the latter's own ground.

The Otago Union will probably send a team to Wellington this year.

and golfer, and at present is indulging in his passion for the last-named game in the North. Mr Gollan established almost a record as an amateur rider during the jumping season; out of six mounts he won five races.

Ebor, as we all know, was a very profitable speculation for Mr Gollan. The son of Robert the Devil won close on £4000 in stakes, and was then sold for £1200. Hickey says the old fellow was a veritable champion over a couple of miles; he used to settle his opponents the first mile by the pace he travelled. The steeplechase courses in England are not to be compared with the Australian, as far as jumping requirements are concerned. Hickey declares that any ordinary Australian hurdler would have no difficulty in negotiating the average steeplechase course in the old country.

Galway, so far, has not distinguished himself in England, but Hickey says the bay gelding is doing well, and should pay his way next season. The Possible also will probably win races when the N.H. meetings recommence. It is the close season for jumpers at present.

Erl King, of whom great things were expected as a hurdler, has not fulfilled expectations. Hickey says he does not quite stay two miles, and there are few, if any, hurdle races under that distance. Some horses take longer to acclimatise than others, and that is the reason why horses like Galway, who could literally "fall down and win" here, and The Possibles have not done better.

Mr Gollan had a difficulty in disposing of the stallions he brought from New Zealand, notwithstanding the craze for Musket blood, but a week or two before Hickey left, Culloden (Nordenfeldt—Nelly Moore) was either sold or leased to an Irish breeder. Culloden, who is a half-brother to that successful sire, Lochiel, is a very fine horse, and had he not been so difficult to train, would have been quite at the top of the tree as a racehorse. As it was, he won the V.R.C. St.

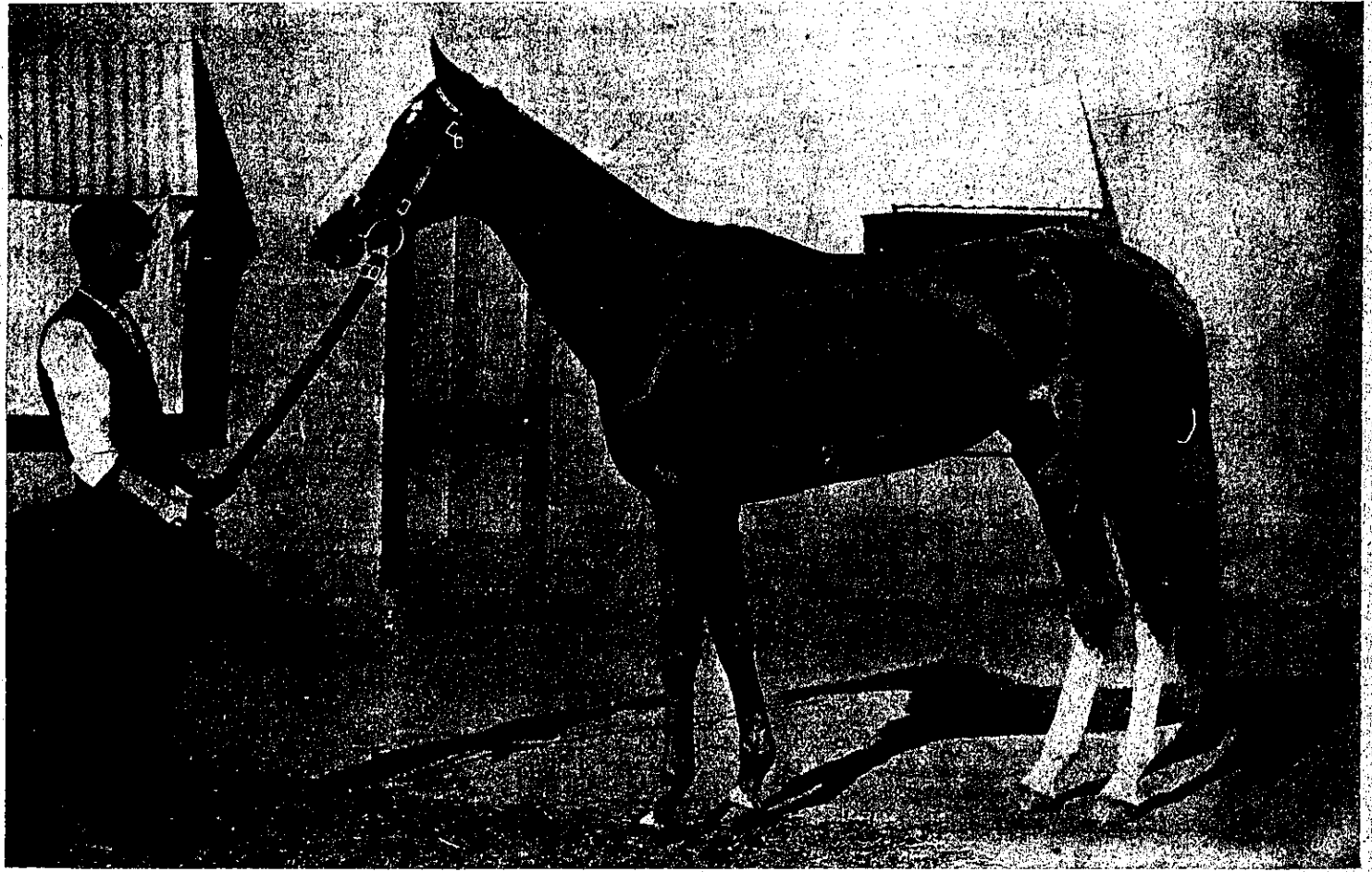
his field so often that the English riders now ride a much truer race than they formerly did.

Hickey saw Newhaven last February at Newmarket (Mr Gollan's horses are trained at Lewes), but did not see the chestnut run. He also saw Maluma at "the little village in Yorkshire." The sister to Malvolio had been doing good work, but Hickey says she looked very light compared to what she was in Australia. Mr James Redfean was greatly interested in Hickey's description of the daughter of Malua, and was very emphatic in his opinion that Maluma was being raced out of her distance in England. "Although she won the Newmarket Handicap, staying is the little mare's game," declared the Caulfield trainer, and it is rather curious that his opinion was verified a few days afterwards, for a cable came through on Saturday announcing that Maluma had won the Lewes Handicap (a mile and a half) in a canter.

It is said that Newhaven practices a pernicious habit peculiar to stallions, and this will always go against the chestnut if he is not broken from the habit. If I remember aright, Newhaven was supposed to have acquired the failing as a two-year-old, and it was said that Mr James Wilson sold the son of Newminster for that reason.

Hickey will probably take three or four horses back to England, and several of the youngsters that were entered as yearlings for the Mammoth Britannia Steeplechase—a kind of Futurity Stakes—to be run in 1900, may be included in the lot, though none of them were showing any promise when Hickey last heard from New Zealand.

"£100 FOR THREE WINNERS!"—That is the prize for picking the winners of the Caulfield, Melbourne, and New Zealand Cups. Full particulars on page 20.



THUNDER QUEEN (BY THUNDERBOLT—QUEEN CONSORT) WINNER OF THE ADELAIDE CUP.

Referees and players would do well to note the following rulings agreed upon at a meeting of the Association last week in conference with the captains of clubs:—1. That a fair catch must be taken at the first attempt, and any rebound whatever is a knock on. 2. In every case of a man throwing himself on the ball as in stopping a rush, it shall be strictly dealt with and penalised as lying on the ball. 3. In law 11, paragraph B shall be construed as subject to the second portion 7, law 8, as to the option, choice, or penalty (free kick or scrum).

A CHAT WITH A NEW ZEALAND JOCKEY.

(By the Special Commissioner in the Melbourne Sportsman.)

To my surprise, one of the first persons I ran against at Epsom on June 7th was the well-known cross-country rider, Jim Hickey, who has been associated with the victories of Ebor and others of Mr S. H. Gollan's horses in England. Hickey had only landed that morning, and was en route to New Zealand. Whatever effect the English climate has on Australian horses, it evidently agrees with Australian jockeys, if Hickey's appearance is any criterion. His weight is now close on 10st 7lb, and, having fallen in with the English custom of clean shaving, looks more like a fashionable actor than a jockey.

Hickey is a very intelligent, observant young man, and has kept his eyes open during his sojourn in the old country, consequently a chat with him could not fail to prove interesting. Mr Gollan, he says, is just as energetic as ever, and trains harder than most professionals. The New Zealand sportsman is an enthusiastic carman

Leger, for which Camoola was such a hot pot Mousquetaire, the good-looking three-parts brother to Trenton, Niagara, etc. (by Nordenfeldt—Frailty), also was a long time on Mr Gollan's hands, but he is now doing stud duty in the North of England.

Hickey is not at all hopeful of the early adoption of the starting machine in England. "The trainers and jockeys won't have it at any price," he says, "and you have a better chance of getting the totalisator at Flemington than the English public have of seeing the gate in general use." Still with influential supporters like Lord Durham and Mr Allison, the starting machine may be installed at Newmarket sooner than Hickey imagines, especially if there are many more delays at the post in important events, such as took place in the City and Suburban, when the horses were despatched three-quarters of an hour late.

Lord Durham is a great believer in Australian methods. Hickey tells me his Lordship is laying down a circular track, which will be marked off in furlongs in the approved Australian style, so that all trials may be accurately timed. The "watch" is gaining many friends in England, its worth, when used in conjunction with a trial horse, being now recognised, even by the ultra-Conservative English trainers.

"What do you think of English jockeys?" I asked Hickey. "Well, they are a fine lot of fellows, and, as a body, I fancy are better horsemen than our jockeys, but they are trained under much stricter supervision than Australian boys. Nearly every rider in the Old Country has served a long apprenticeship in a training stable, while here many a jockey has never worked in a stable at all. Since the recent invasion of American horses and jockeys the "waiting tactics," for which English riders were noted, have, to a great extent, been abandoned. "Tod" Sloan slipped

FOOTBALL FOOTBALL
SATURDAY NEXT.
POTTER'S PADDOCK
NEWTON v. GRAFTON
PONSONBY v. SUBURBS
PARNELL v. CITY

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