

SPORTING FIXTURES, ETC.

COMING EVENTS.

June 23	Hawkes Bay Trotting Club
June 25	Hawkes Bay J.C. Winter Meeting
July 11	Wellington R.C. Winter Meeting
July 11, 18	V.R.C. Grand National Hurdles and Steeplechase
Aug. 18	N.Z. Grand National Steeplechase meeting
Sep. 12, 15, 17, 19	A.J.C. Spring meeting
Sep. 24, 28	Hawkesbury R.C. Spring meeting
Oct. 17	Caulfield Cup
Oct. 31	V.R.C. Derby
Nov. 9	Melbourne Cup

NOMINATIONS CLOSE.

June 20	N.Z. Grand National Hurdles and Steeplechase
July 25	N.Z. Grand National General entries
Oct. 12	General entries V.R.C. Spring meeting

WEIGHTS APPEAR.

June 22	Melbourne Cup
June 26	Wellington R.C.
June 29	Caulfield Cup
July 1	New Zealand Cup
July 18	N.Z. Grand National Hurdles and Steeplechase
Aug. 1	N.Z. Grand National Minor events

ACCEPTANCES DUE.

June 18	Hawkes Bay Trotting Club
July 8	Wellington R.C.
July 25	N.Z. Grand National Hurdles and Steeplechase
Aug. 8	1st forfeit Melbourne Cup
Aug. 8	N.Z. Grand National Final payments
Aug. 25	2nd payment Caulfield Cup
Oct. 18	Final payment Caulfield Cup
Oct. 27	2nd forfeit Melbourne Cup

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HARRY H. HAYR, PUBLISHER.

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The Secretaries of Racing, Rowing, Cricket, Football, Tennis, Polo, Yachting, Bicycle, Dramatic—in short of any and every kind of Athletic, Sporting, and Dramatic Clubs are cordially invited to send us any information that may be of interest to the public and of use in furthering their interests. The Editor will at all times be willing to do his best to answer any questions or decide any disputes on matters of sporting or general interest. In every case correspondents must enclose their correct names and addresses (but not for publication), as no notice whatever can be taken of anonymous communications.

To oblige Sporting friends at a distance, the result of important races will be wired immediately after they are run on receipt of a letter containing instructions, and 2s. in stamps.

Sporting Review.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 1891.

A CONTRIBUTOR to the *Canterbury Times* still maintains that the rule proposing to raise the weights in handicaps when the highest weight accepting is less than 8st. 12lb. would be injurious to racing. We would like to discuss the matter with him, as the racing season is now nearly at a finish. The rule of raising the weights in handicaps was first, if we remember right, introduced into the Newmarket rules some forty-five years ago by the late Admiral Rous, who, everyone will admit, was the best handicapper and judge of racing known during the present century. It was found to work so well that it has never been rescinded. Our contemporary goes on to say, "But we repeat that the intentions of a handicapper may be entirely upset by raising the weights all round by 15lb. or 20lb." Supposing, for instance, that the highest weight accepting should be 7st. 6lb. and the lowest 6st., would our contemporary contend that the addition of 20lb. to the former would be of no more account than 20lb. to the latter? We will take

these remarks as follows:—In the first place, that a handicapper is not fit for his position if the highest weight accepting be as low as 7st 6lb. He would certainly commence his handicap at 9st. or 9st. 7lb.; therefore, if the highest weight accepting was only 7st. 6lb., it must be a precious bad handicap. The late Admiral Rous, as a rule, commenced his handicap on the weight-for-age scale, which would be in New Zealand 9st. 7lb., and if a horse was entered that had never run he would get about weight for age. With regard to the 20lb on the 7st. 6lb. being no more than on to 6st., we contend that it would be no more difference, also that many horses would run better under the increased weight. For confirmation of this, let our contemporary look through the time test, on which so many in the Colonies pin their faith in, and it will be found that horses have done quicker time with 8st. 12lb. on their backs than with 6st. 12lb.—notably on the Riccarton course. Then again, it is well known that most horses run better with a man on their backs than a child. Let our contemporary look through his valuable library and he will see that such is the case. Our collection of racing records is not large at present, and we have to trust to memory, but if one is required let our contemporary look up Blinkhoolie's and Bromielaw's running in 1866, '67, '68, *cum multis alis*—even at Riccarton—and he will see that we are correct in our theory. One must remember there are no Kitcheners, Carrols, Grimshaws, Kenyons, and others in the Colonies. In conclusion, we venture to say that if a plebiscite of owners, trainers, and jockeys was taken they would be in favour of the rule being adopted. We are willing to discuss this matter further.

It appears from the following statement in the *Canterbury Times* that the distressed jockeys' fund of the Canterbury Jockey Club remains in a very unsatisfactory condition:—"At a meeting of the committee of the Club, held on June 9th, an application was read from Mr. E. Cutts for a grant to the lad Ross, who was injured at one of the Napier meetings, and the committee resolved that the jockey did not meet with his accident on the Riccarton course he could receive no allowance from the funds." This is a repetition of a rather melancholy farce which has been enacted more than once during the last two or three years. The members of the committee may be right from a legal point of view in refusing assistance to jockeys who suffer injuries on other courses; but the persistent refusal has created a most unpleasant feeling among members of the profession. If the custodians of the fund wish to do the right thing—and we presume they do—they should at once separate the money from their general account and publish the rules and regulations under which it should be available to the persons for whom it was intended. Some years ago Mr. John Marshall introduced the same fund into the A.R.C., but on his return from his travels he found that the fund had not been kept from the general account, and had been drawn upon for other purposes. These two cases point more than ever to the necessity of having a New Zealand Jockey Club for the whole Colony, so that all these kind of funds, as well as other matters, be invested under one general management, and that the whole racing rules, etc., should be assimilated to the Newmarket Jockey Club. Until this is done there will be no encouragement or satisfaction to either owners, breeders, trainers or jockeys in racing here. Not a week passes but we hear of horses and jockeys leaving for Australia. In fact, New Zealand is simply a nursery to supply them with materials. In conclusion, let us ask where Australia obtains its best light weight jockeys and horses from?

We notice that some of our Southern contemporaries are making remarks of the bad practice indulged in by many New Zealand Clubs in advertising their races, especially steeplechases, as about so many miles. Many courses to our knowledge have never been properly measured, and that instead of three miles and a half they are nearer four miles, and those at three miles are nearer three miles and a half. We should very much like to see the Ellerslie course measured by a practical surveyor who understands chaining a racecourse, and we have no hesitation in saying that the

distances, both flat and over country, will not be found correct, thus accounting for the fast times that have been made at different meetings. It makes a great difference to a horse running three miles and a half, or nearly four, over a country. Some years ago the Liverpool Grand National Steeplechase was called about four miles and a half, and it was accepted as such. Recently it was found out to be a little short of five miles. The only reason that one can account for such a practice is that it protects the starter if he should make a mistake, also protects the Club from being proceeded against. In some instances it has been known that owners have used their influence to get the races, especially jumping ones, to be run over distances to suit themselves. The Grand National Hunt Club (England) have a rule that no races shall be advertised in the racing calendar unless the distance is correctly stated, and clerks of the courses will be held responsible for any infringement of the N.H.C. rules, which state that no hurdle race or steeplechase shall be under two miles.

The stewards of the Town and Suburban Racing Club have made the following recommendation, which might, in their opinion, be adopted by the next Conference, shortly to be held at Wellington:—"That the Metropolitan Clubs should make a rule giving power to the stewards of any club to seize any horse that may be suspected of running under a false name until an inquiry has been held; and in the event of its being proved, that the animal should be branded in some conspicuous place with a large brand supplied by the Metropolitan Clubs." This application has some sense in it, but it is carrying the thing too far, also giving too much power to the stewards of a country meeting, who really have, as a rule, little knowledge of racing. At the same time it appears odd to us that when a horse has once run that they cannot identify him, either by his marks, action, or otherwise, so we consider that it would be inadvisable for the Metropolitan Club to pass a rule as requested, and there are many other obvious reasons for not making it law.

WANGANUI LETTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The well-known stallion Voltigeur was sold at the Aroua Downs sale to Mr. Joe Hayward for £57. Two of our well-known light weights, B. Hickey and F. Price, have gone to Napier under engagement to Mr. Douglas. Hickey goes to Australia as stable lad, while F. Price enters the Napier stable. Alick McCormick has got another addition to his string of horses in the shape of a gelding by Natator out of a Nutworth mare. He is a fine big upstanding gelding close on 16 hands, and judging by his looks he should be heard of later on. McCormick is very busy at present schooling Worth over cross country jumps in view of the Hawke's Bay Steeplechase. The horse is jumping well, and if he continues to improve he will run well forward at the above meeting. Te Ata by Papapa, and Oaklands by The Clown Reserve, are being schooled by R. Wheeler in view of their Hawke's Bay engagements. Te Ata is a splendid jumper and is also possessed of a good turn of pace. Oaklands is taking to the jumping business very kindly, and he should give a good account of himself at the illegitimate game during next season. Mr. T. Bristol, the owner of Norton informs me that he is going to take in hand Norton's half brother, by Souwester—Romp. The price paid for this colt was £60.

Mr. James Hunter, formerly part owner of Takapu and Silvio, has become the proprietor of the Alexandra Hotel, Parnell, and solicits a visit from all his old friends. Mr. Hunter was for a considerable time a warder in the Mount Eden Goal. We can confidently recommend Mr. Hunter to the favourable notice of our readers for civility, cleanliness, geniality, and all that is necessary to make a successful hotel-keeper. We wish him every success in his new sphere.