

same if conditions of race state that the "winner of a handicap is to carry a penalty."

Rule 20 might have added to its present form the words (a) "Before time of running if for running at an unregistered meeting," and (b) "before time of nomination if disqualified for corrupt or fraudulent practices."

Part of Rule 20 says, "disqualified from owning, nominating, &c." "unless the Club see cause to remove such disqualification." But the question arises—Remove it when?

Rule 22. It might be better for the fostering of genuine races and racing clubs if the words "if required" in the second clause were omitted altogether and make it compulsory to produce a balance-sheet in order to show that the particular Club in question is carrying on a legitimate business.

After Rule 42 to insert Rule 42A to read: "In all cases where the conditions of a programme state winner of any handicap to carry a penalty, it shall be deemed to mean that—(a) no winner of a flat race shall incur a penalty in any subsequent hurdle race or steeplechase on that programme; and (b) no winner of a hurdle race or steeplechase shall incur a penalty in any subsequent flat race, hurdle race, or steeplechase, or vice versa."

The necessity of some such provision will be apparent, for, at present worded, the Rules legally bind the winner of a flat race to put up a penalty in a hurdle race subsequently.

Rule 46 was referred to country secretaries for their future guidance, and will be found fully "remarked" upon in the issue of 21st April.

Rule 55 to provide for entry by delayed telegram, provided a letter be posted at the same time is recommended to the notice of racing authorities.

Rules 56, 60, and 61, to be far more strictly enforced than has been the practice generally heretofore.

Rule 62 I previously pointed out as ambiguous. I suggested the insertion of the words "advertised by the same club" after the words "closing on the same day," as set forth in this rule. The ambiguity is then removed.

Rule 64 to be more strictly enforced. In fact a very strict compliance should be insisted upon.

Rule 75 requires looking into thoroughly. A great many persons assume that if a horseowner A sell his No. 1 horse to B, that B is clear if he pay the arrears on No. 1 horse only; notwithstanding the fact that A also is a defaulter on his No. 2 and other horses. Others aver that all arrears on the whole of A's horses must be paid (if required) before B can run his new purchase No. 1 horse in any race. Such diversion of opinion should be removed by a clearer rendering of the rule in question.

Rule 75 taken with Rules 80 and 81 will be found very difficult of interpretation. The whole matter hinges on whether, if the owner A be a defaulter on two or more horses, the new owner is liable for the whole forfeit before being qualified to win or not with any one of the said horses which he may happen to purchase.

The other rules are dealt with in the first part of this article.

In drawing attention to these matters it is to be hoped that no one will run away with the idea that I am trying to pick holes and do a bit of carping. These items are repeatedly argued out, and I have drawn attention to them simply in the hope that, wherever deemed necessary, reforms may and will be made, thereby rendering our Metropolitan Rules easy of interpretation to the densest of intellects. I commend them to the further consideration of "the powers," trusting they will accept them in the same spirit as given, and hope they will make all such alterations and amendments they may look upon as being requisite.

OUR WELLINGTON LETTER.

[BY WIRE.]

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

WELLINGTON, May 10.

At the Magistrate's Court to-day Mr. Skerrett, who appeared for Messrs. Yuille and Nathan in charge against them of illegal betting, asked that judgment might be delivered that day. Mr. Nathan backed up the application, by stating he wished to leave Wellington during the afternoon. Mr. Robinson, R.M., said he would endeavour to comply with the request, and accordingly at 2 p.m. the Court sat for that

purpose. His Worship remarked that after consideration of evidence, the question, it appeared to him, turned upon whether he could take it that defendants were representing themselves as acting as agents, or whether they were betting on their own account. That seemed to be the point upon which the case of Selig and Bird, of the *N.Z. Referee*, was decided. He had examined the decision given by Mr. Justice Denniston in that case, and he gathered that he had held that the evidence was not sufficient to justify a conviction. In the present case the evidence was in many respects similar to that in the case above referred to, nor did he think it went any further as against the defendant. He felt bound, therefore, by Mr. Justice Denniston's decision, and should dismiss the case. In doing so he wished it to be understood that he was acting entirely upon what appeared to be authority, and not altogether according to his own view of the case, and if he had not felt bound by the decision of the superior court he might have found differently. If Mr. Justice Denniston's decision, which he might have misunderstood, did not bind him in the present case, it was a proper matter for appeal. Mr. Gully gave notice of appeal, but stated that he did not wish to continue the embargo upon defendant's property, of which the police had possession. The decisions in the cases against J. H. Simmonds and R. Paterson will be given on Tuesday next, to which date the hearing of the charge against Martin, Piper, and Pollock has been adjourned.

The heavy rain on Saturday last has done so much damage to the newly-made track of the Johnstonville and Hutt County Trotting Club, that after viewing it on Monday the stewards decided it would be impossible to repair it in time for holding their meeting on the 28th inst., and have withdrawn their programme and postponed the meeting *sine die*. Meanwhile it is probable they will call for tenders for making a cinder track.

The Foxton Racing Club have sustained the protest against Scraps, winner of the Novel Race at their recent Hack meeting, and have paid stakes and totalisator to Survivor, the second horse. It will be remembered that a protest was entered that Scraps was not eligible for the race, on the ground that he had won races other than hack races. Since the meeting, the stewards have communicated with Mr. Armstrong, secretary of the Lower Valley Jockey Club, who has informed them that Scraps won both the L. V. J. C. Handicap and Flying Stakes at the Lower Valley Meeting in 1887. There are only seven investors on Survivor, and the dividend is £20 15s. The dividend on Scraps would have been only £3 9s.

Mr. J. E. Henry on the 6th inst. declared the weights for the Horowhenua J.C. meeting, to be held at Otaki on Queen's Birthday. The following are the weights for the Cup of 35 sovs., one mile and a half—Oddfellow 9.0, Sunbeam 8.9, Homai 8.6, Huia 8.2, Shellback 7.13, Benbolt 7.8, Gunner, Traitor and Rahui 7.3, Priscilla and Poinsettia 7.0, Rangitika and Jenny Lind 6.11, Escalade 6.9, May Queen 6.7. Acceptances are due on Saturday next.

Murtagh has Fisk's Sir Garnet going very well, and he will be a certain starter for the Wanganui Steeplechase if he keeps right. This horse won that race three years ago.

The improvements on the Hutt Course are still delayed by the bad weather; but the new culverts which are to be made for the grass gallop will be taken in hand as soon as fine weather sets in. The Club I hear made over £700 over their Autumn meeting, so that they will be able to spend a bit in improving the training accommodation, and will probably add a classic race to their next year's programme. They were very lucky to have two fine days for the meeting, as it rained for a week before, and has rained nearly every day since.

Owing to a heavy downpour on Saturday the course was under water in parts on Sunday and Monday.

Torpedo was very fit at the Wellington meeting, and I think Tulloch will be his most dangerous opponent in the flat races at Wanganui.

The Steeplechase should fall to Couranto if he is a good across country as he is over hurdles. Next to him I prefer Commotion.

Whakawai has joined Applause in Mr. Dallinger's stud, near Albury.

Volunteer News.

GREAT praise is being bestowed upon the locally-manufactured Martini-Henry ammunition, in most papers, especially in the South, which is certainly misleading. I am sorry to say it, but there is no gainsaying the fact that the ammunition made by the colonial company is not at all equal in regularity of strength to the English Government article. Another instance of it occurred on Saturday, when Parslow, who was getting excellent hits, got one away equally as well to his own satisfaction, but it ploughed the turf a hundred yards from home. There were several other similar failures which befell less distinguished shots.

At this season of the year great difficulty is experienced in getting through with the shooting at the Rifle Range on Saturday afternoons with sufficient light, and many "upsets" and "flukes" are the consequence. On this account it was an unfortunate "fluke" for that Thames veteran shot, Peter Weir, that he did not win Clarke's Belt. On that occasion a large number of shots persisted in taking their turn although they had no possible chance of winning, and thereby they delayed the shooting to such an extent that Peter had to shoot in the dark, but for that the belt was a moral for him. In this respect the Champion Doughty shows good taste. When he sees he is "out of the running" he gracefully retires so as to allow another good shot the good light. It is not, I am informed, that he "funks" is the reason of his retiring recently from important contests. He does it simply to facilitate the shooting on the range, and a host of others would do well to follow his really well-intentioned example, and thereby give men an opportunity of distinguishing themselves who have previously shown their capacity under all sorts of conditions. I will go further, and say that the Range Committee ought to take this matter into their serious consideration, and make a "counted out" limit at each range.

MARTINI-HENRI RIFLE CLUB.

At the Mount Eden Rifle Range on Saturday afternoon, the final competition for quarterly aggregate prizes took place. On account of thorough weather only moderate scores were recorded. Three matches are fired and the two best scores are counted. Seven shots each were fired on Saturday, the ranges being 300 and 600 yards, there being two classes with prizes for each. The following are the results, from which it will be seen that the "A" Battery provided the six top men for Saturday's match:—

| | CLASS A. | | TL. |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|-----|
| | 300 yds. | 600 yds. | |
| Wheeler Head, A Battery | 26 | 29 | 55 |
| Gunner McCallum, A Battery | 28 | 27 | 52 |
| Sergt. Doughty, G.M., A Battery | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| Corporal Hazard, A Battery | 25 | 26 | 51 |
| Gunner Greenshields, A Battery | 24 | 23 | 47 |
| Gunner Buchanan, A Battery | 24 | 23 | 47 |
| Captain Tobin, Royal Irish | 24 | 22 | 46 |
| Sergeant Soall, City Guards | 24 | 20 | 44 |
| P. O. J. Spinley, Ponsonby Navals | 32 | 12 | 44 |
| Sapper Baddily, Engineers | 18 | 19 | 37 |
| Gunner Henderson, A Battery | 23 | 11 | 34 |
| CLASS B. | | | |
| Gunner P. Browne, A Battery | 29 | 27 | 56 |
| Mr. Traves, Civilian | 19 | 20 | 39 |
| Sergeant Kearsley, A Battery | 21 | 8 | 24 |
| Sapper Waite, Engineers | 16 | 7 | 23 |

The following are the prize-winners and scores made during the quarter—seven prizes in Class A and four prizes in Class B:—

| | CLASS A. | | | |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| | 1st match | 2nd match | 3rd match | Total best 2 |
| M. M. McCallum | 54 | 46 | 55 | 109 |
| H. Head | — | 52 | 55 | 107 |
| E. Buchanan | — | 58 | 47 | 105 |
| W. H. Hazard | — | 54 | 51 | 105 |
| M. Tobin | 54 | 50 | 46 | 104 |
| C. F. Taylor | 50 | 51 | — | 101 |
| H. Doughty, G.M. | 49 | 42 | 52 | 101 |

J. Spinley, 100; J. Nutt 98; J. C. Soall, 94; W. Greenshields, 93; J. Ansell, 91; A. Henderson, 91; A. G. Baddily 89. A number of others fired in one match only.

| | CLASS B. | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | 1st match | 2nd match | 3rd match | Total |
| P. Browne | 30 | 56 | — | 86 |
| W. Traves | 21 | 39 | — | 60 |
| J. Orr | 36 | — | — | 36 |
| T. Kearsley | — | 24 | — | 24 |
| W. Waite | — | 23 | — | 23 |

Hune has only done walking exercise since the A.R.C. Autumn meeting.