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RACING CALENDAR

NEW ZEALAND.

FIXTURES—1904

August 16 18 and 20—C.J.C. Grand National

NOMINATIONS.

August 5—C.J.C. Grand National, general entries

WEIGHTS DECLARED.

August 8—C.J.C. Grand National, minor handicaps

ACCEPTANCES.

August 5—C.J.C. Grand National, Grand National

Steeplechase, Grand National Hurdle, Winter Cup

August 12—C.J.C. Grand National, minor handicaps

FINAL PAYMENTS.

August 12—New Zealand Grand National, Grand

National Steeplechase, 8 sovs; Grand National Hurdle

Race, 5 sovs; Winter Cup, 5 sovs

AUSTRALIAN FIXTURES.

September 10—A.J.C. Derby and Epsom Handicap

September 12—A.J.C. Metropolitan Handicap

October 22—Canfield Cup

October 29—V.A.C. Derby

November 1—Melbourne Cup

November 4—Williamstown Cup

Sporting and Dramatic

REVIEW

AND

Licensed Victuallers' Gazette.

With which is incorporated the Weekly Standard

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 1904.

NEW ZEALAND'S REPRESENTATIVE
FOOTBALL TEAM.

VERY considerable curiosity was evinced as to who would be chosen to represent the full strength of the colony in the coming test of strength between the British team and New Zealand, which will take place at Wellington on the 13th inst. The team has now been selected, and may certainly be considered a powerful combination, although it will be very generally admitted that an improvement could have been made. To begin with the back division very genuine surprise was felt at the inclusion of P. Gerrard, of the North Shore Club, as full back, and no doubt not the least astonished man was Gerrard himself. True, he is a fine tackler, a fair kick, and a very cool player, but even so it seems a hazardous thing to do in the biggest match of the decade to take a man from his accustomed place and put him where he has had but little experience. Surely throughout the colony there must be a better man in this particular position than the Auckland three-quarter, but it is evident the selectors, who should know, think otherwise, and there is this to be said that Gerrard is a solid trier all the time,

Curiously enough he has not been placed in this position in the Auckland v. Wellington match.

With the three-quarter line some fault can be found, but then it is impossible to please everyone. Wallace, although we would have preferred him at full back, has shown himself equally good in the three quarter line, and no exception can be taken to the Wellington player, but can this be also said of his town's mate, D. McGregor? Recent reports of his play do not suggest that he is in form, a point which the selectors should always bear in mind. The other three quarter, Harper, is considered to be one of the best Canterbury has put into the field for many a long day, and although Aucklanders will be inclined to think the inclusion of one of the recognised cracks of the Northern City, such as McKenzie, would have strengthened the line, yet the point is of course a debatable one.

No exception can be taken to the next line of defence, which consists of three very sound exponents of the game Wood is a very fine player, who, however, has "developed a leg," as they say in racing, which may possibly come against him. W. T. Stead, who acts as captain of the team, is said to be showing splendid form, and to him has been given the honour of leading the team. He plays a slashing game, but against Canterbury did not show up well, a local scribe stating that his judgment was at fault, and that he was easily tackled. No fault can be found with P. Harvey, whose quick work behind the scrum and whose good kicking and sound defensive work have gained him golden opinions in Christchurch.

Coming to the forwards opinions differ as to whether Porteous, the Otago wing forward, should have been included. We are of opinion that two wingers should be played, as to these men the duties of smothering the work of the British halves should be entrusted, and the Wairarapa player, Warner, is highly spoken of in this respect. The pack is a very solid one, all the men being good hard workers. Three in Tyler, Gallaher and Seeling belong to Auckland, Canterbury has two in Fanning and Cooke, while Cross (who might have been improved upon), of Wellington, and Glenn, of Taranaki, make up the balance.

It will thus be seen that players have been chosen from all over the colony, and taken altogether the men should render a good account of themselves. To do this, however, a lot of practice together will have to be done to gain the much-needed combination, and also the members will have to train properly, and not take the half-and-half measures that are customarily indulged in. In Australia the home team has generally held its own in the first half, but has tired greatly in the second spell. On the other hand the Britishers have played the game right through, most of the scoring being done after the Australians had played themselves out. Our men must be ready to be on the ball from start to finish, and nothing but solid training will enable them to do this. The New Zealand Rugby Union has been villified by all sorts of critics, competent and otherwise, for doing this or not doing the other, but we are confident that the Union is fully cognisant of the difficulty of the task ahead, and that every possible step will be taken to achieve the success so dear to every New Zealander's heart, a victory over the British team at our own national game of Football.

THE DEARTH OF CAPABLE
HORSEMEN.

THERE are many people who complain that there is a very marked falling-off in the racehorses of the present day—as compared with those equine giants of former years whose names are so familiar to us all. Possibly there is a certain amount of truth in the assertion, but are the horses alone in fault, and is it not a fact that innumerable races are thrown away through the utter incapacity of many of the present-day jockeys? How many really first-class horsemen were there seen wearing silk in the season just closed? True, there were plenty of jockeys of a kind, but of the genuine artists in the pigskin the number was quite exceptionally small.

The famous jockey, Mornington Cannon, himself the son of one of Eng-

land's greatest riders, in a most interesting article in "Fry's Magazine" has something to say on how a horse should be ridden.

"Some people imagine" (he writes) "that there is nothing in riding a race-horse beyond ordinary horsemanship. I have even heard trainers say that they have stable boys who can ride as well as any man living; and that there is only 3lb difference between an experienced jockey and a stable boy. I have noticed, however, that these very trainers are the ones who are keenest on having the services of the best jockeys for their particular stable. From which it may be seen that trainers, as the saying is, 'know a thing or two.' They don't give themselves away. There is not the slightest doubt that jockeyship invariably tells. It probably tells more in a long race than a short one, but tell it always does.

"A race does not consist in just getting away well at the start, and riding a strong finish. Those two things are, of course, essential, but the most critical part of a race is half-way through it. There are so many little things that one can do to help one's horse; you have to judge the best time to give him a breather; you have to see—and this is a point which is not generally known—when you may safely rest him by changing the gallop from one leg to the other. Much, naturally, depends on the horse's disposition. Many people think that all horses are filled with the excitement of racing, and run for the pure pleasure and sport of getting in first. This may apply to old horses that have won several races, but, generally speaking, a young horse is ready to do anything on the course except go right to the front, and you have absolutely to force it. The reason of this may be that in exercise the youngsters are usually led by other horses, and get so into the habit of following that they cannot forget it when actually racing. With some horses, however, in the middle of a race, it pays to drop at another horse's heels for a while, and come out at the finish to win.

"But the skill required to win a race is not all expended in the middle of the run. The finish, which is the most dramatic part to watch, is not by any means as simple as it looks. There are a hundred and one things to think of besides mere speed. You must, for instance, be careful not to pick up your whip on the same side as the leg on which your horse is galloping—a thing that is not so wonderfully easy to attend to when another horse is there. You must be careful, too, not to touch another horse. A tired horse may, without intention on the jockey's part, hit another ever so slightly, and thereby put him out of his stride, which is enough to turn the issue of a race."

Have we any horsemen riding in this province who would take the trouble to attend to these little details even if he knew of them? There are some there is no doubt, but unfortunately they are all too few, and the average rider does not worry over-much about using his brains in a race. Who can go out to Ellerslie, for instance, and watch a race for which a strong field of horses is being started without coming to the conclusion that pretty well half the riders are badly in need of a little tuition in the art of race riding? These jockeys show but the most elementary judgment of pace, and when it comes to a finish it is a case of calling "all legs and arms" into action for the last furlong. No doubt they consider that this method really assists a tired horse, but as a fact nothing stops a horse who is beginning to falter in his stride more effectually than this monkey-on-the-stick performance.

Fortunately there are a few very capable horsemen riding, and the younger school of jockeys would do well to closely scrutinise their methods. Something also in the way of improvement might be effected if the several of whom have been mentioned in their younger days, gave attention to the subject, and advised the centaurs as to how to be ridden. That for such improvement, as has been said, and the looking into the matter for at present, is a matter of credit.