

THE FOOTBALL WORLD.

AUCKLAND R.V. FIXTURES.

September 5: Auckland B v. Wednesday Union.
September 12: Against Otago.

AUCKLAND V. TARANAKI.

The third match in which the Auckland representatives were this season called upon to defend the Ranfurly Shield was contested at Alexandra Park on Saturday, when the Taranaki fifteen, challengers, made an unsuccessful attempt to wrest the coveted trophy from the present holders. After handsomely defeating the Wellington representatives by 15 points to nil, the Taranaki men were expected to put up a very tough fight against the Aucklanders, but from the expiration of the first quarter of an hour's play until the call of time the issue cannot be said to have ever been in doubt, the blue and white combination proving too solid for their opponents. The match was played in the finest of weather, the only disadvantage being a fairly strong breeze which was not very favourable for kicking operations, but despite the anticipations of a hard-fought game, only 8000 persons were induced to put in an appearance at the Park. The small attendance can perhaps be attributed to the fact that, owing to the many big matches that have been played here this season, enthusiasm is now on the wane. Saturday's game, however, did not by any means provide the onlookers with the keen and exciting exhibition which many were looking forward to, and after a short period of play the prediction that Auckland would win appeared to be a foregone conclusion. Great achievements were expected of the Taranaki backs, wherein the strength of the team from the butter country is chiefly centred, but the splendid work of the Auckland forwards afforded the amber and black rear division comparatively few opportunities of distinguishing themselves. Realising that their success lay in making the game a forward one, the Aucklanders kept play very close, and though this was a sure means of placing a victory to their credit—the blue and white forwards, as is well known, being quite powerful enough to do justice to a New Zealand team—it nevertheless had the effect of considerably spoiling the match from a spectator's point of view. The Taranaki forwards were a weighty lot, but were unable to show up to advantage against so formidable opponents as Francis, Cunningham, Seeling and Co., whose tactics were far superior both in the scrum and in the open to those of the amber and blacks. The Auckland backs gave a good account of themselves, their handling of the ball being smart and certain, and they suffered nothing by comparison with the Taranaki rear division, who were but seldom seen on the attack. The final score: Auckland 9, Taranaki 0, indicates that there is very little difference in the strength of the relative sides, the winners managing to secure tries on only two occasions. A noticeable feature of the play of the Auckland fifteen in Saturday's match was the passing of the ball over the shoulder, a practice that was followed with no end of success, the various members of the team displaying splendid judgment in this respect. Now that the Auckland representatives have defeated Wellington and Taranaki, the result of both matches being convincing as to the merits of the teams engaged, there can be little doubt regarding their ability to keep the Ranfurly Shield in their possession for the present season at least.

During the course of the afternoon West's Band rendered a musical programme, the various selections being of an enlivening nature and being greatly enjoyed by those in attendance.

The teams lined out as follows:—
Auckland:—Fullback: A. Renwick. Three-quarters: F. Wilson, G. Murray, J. Johnson. Five-eighths: G. Bater and R. Magee. Halfback:

J. Morse. Forwards: G. Gillett (captain, wing), F. Herring, J. McGuire, A. Francis, W. Cunningham, G. Nicholson, C. Seeling, H. Hayward.

Taranaki: Fullback: A. Hardgraves. Three-quarters, C. Sheahan, D. Cameron, and E. Dive. Five-eighths: J. Hunter (captain) and H. Mynott. Halfback: B. Frewin. Forwards: J. Colman (wing), H. Whittington, C. Kane, Tamu, Pukere, J. Crowley, H. Rothery, and J. O'Sullivan.

Mr J. Williams, of Dunedin, controlled the game in a most able manner and his decisions gave no cause for dispute.

Auckland, winning the toss, elected to play with the wind and sun behind their backs in the first spell, and for the greater part of the time were engaged on the attack. The bright sun was a source of trouble to the Taranaki men, while the stiff breeze which they had to face hampered their kicking to no small extent. Colman set the ball rolling for the amber and blacks, Gillett returning into touch. The game had only been

and with a dodgy run, eluded a number of Taranaki men, and on reaching the full-back, jumped over him and scored amid a scene of wild enthusiasm. Magee failed to add the major points. Just before the close of the spell, the Taranaki backs indulged in a likely-looking passing run, but solid tackling by Murray, frustrated their efforts to get over and half-time was called with the score:

Auckland	6 points.
Taranaki	0 points.

With the weather conditions in their favour in the second half, it was thought Taranaki would prove a source of trouble to the Aucklanders, but on the contrary the home team still continued to assert their superiority. Play had not been long in progress, when from a penalty kick Colman had an unsuccessful attempt at goal from about half-way. Taranaki then took a turn at attacking, but without success, the Auckland backs breaking away with a neat passing run, and the leather,

the other's defence, the game ended in favour of the Auckland representatives by 9 points to nil.

For Auckland Renwick, at full-back, was responsible for some fine line-kicking, but on the other hand detracted from the merit of his display by waiting on more than one occasion for the ball to bounce. No fault could be found with the three-quarter line, Wilson Murray and Johnson proving a reliable trio and all putting in some sound work. The last-named player's solid tackling is a treat to witness and is a very strong feature of his play. R. Magee, at five-eighths was a veritable tiger for work and he played a most serviceable game throughout. Bater, the other five-eighths, lost no time in smothering the opposing backs, and his services in this respect were invaluable. Morse, at half, gave further proof of his capabilities in that position, and left nothing to cavil at.

It is unnecessary to single out any of the forwards for individual mention, as one and all grafted like Trojans. Gillett, on the wing, was, however, the hero of the match, the popular Auckland skipper being always in the thick of it and playing up to the top of his form.

Of the Taranaki backs, Hargraves, at full, was below his usual form in the first spell, but in the second half rendered a much better account of himself, his powerful kicking particularly proving very effective. Of the three-quarters Sheahan had the most work to do but was only responsible for an ordinary exhibition. Dive and Cameron seldom got any chances, but each of them made the most of what came his way. Cameron would undoubtedly have shone out had he played on the wing-three-quarter instead of centre. Hunter, at five-eighths, gave a very heady display, his "corkscrew" runs and clever tricks baffling the Aucklanders a good deal. Mynott was a tower of strength to the Taranaki team at five-eighths, and his work throughout was of a very creditable order. Frewin, at half, was not a success in the position and his exhibition was of a rather poor standard.

Whittington and O'Sullivan were the pick of the forwards, both men playing rattling good games. Colman, on the wing, spoilt his display by off-side tactics. Still he rendered good service for his side by paying special attention to the Auckland skipper.

JUNIOR REPS. V. WAIUKU.

Prior to the Auckland-Taranaki match a "curtain raiser" was played between the Auckland junior representatives and a team from Waiuku. In previous years the contest between these two teams has always formed a keenly-fought-out struggle, and Saturday's game proved no exception to the rule. The match was not one calculated to arouse a great deal of excitement, but both teams, however, were very evenly matched. In the first spell Fricker scored a try for the junior reps, while Middleton got over for Waiuku, and neither of the tries being converted half-time was sounded with the score equal—three points each. In the second half the only score obtained was a try for the junior reps. by Smith, making the home team winners by 6 points to 3.

NOTES.

It is stated that the tour of the Australian team to the United Kingdom will cost £9000.

Thus the Sydney "Referee":—"In the forwards of the Anglo-Welsh team there is no one with the bounce and ubiquity of D. R. Bedell-Sivright and A. F. Harding, of four years ago. It has been stated in New Zealand that the British team is superior to Sivright's. So far as form in Sydney indicates, there is a big difference between the two teams, with that of 1904 the stronger. There cannot be any two opinions on that point.

E. Booth, the ex-Otago player, who has been residing in Sydney of late, left with the Australian Rugby team for England a couple of weeks ago. Booth is going on private business,



MR GEORGE GILLETT, the Auckland skipper, whose fine play on Saturday did much to win the game against Taranaki.

in progress a few minutes when Colman was penalised for off-side play, Auckland being awarded a free kick, but Francis' shot proved fruitless. Soon after Bater took a mark, and Magee being entrusted with the kick, made an unsuccessful attempt. Taranaki then attacked hotly and lost a certain score as the result of one of the forwards knocking the ball on. A forward rush by the Aucklanders gave promise of ending in a score, but Gillett, at the critical moment, knocked the ball on. Seeling shortly after lost a certain try by failing to take a pass when in close proximity to the goal line. Play onwards was mostly confined to the forwards who got to work vigorously, until finally Colman getting off-side, Auckland were given a free kick. Gillett took the shot and kicked a splendid goal. A period of open play followed, in which the excitement of the barrackers reached fever heat. The next incident of note was a line-out, in which Gillett obtained the ball,

finding its way into Johnson's possession, the speedy Goldfields three-quarter sprinted down the line and when about to be tackled transferred the ball over his shoulder to Murray, who took the pass in fine style and ran in and scored Auckland's second try. Gillett's kick at goal proved a failure. From the kick off at quarter way the Aucklanders carried matters into Taranaki's 25 and Seeling, with a determined dash, dived over at the corner flag, but in doing so was shoved into touch. Shortly after Hardgraves, the amber and black full-back, securing the leather at halfway, attempted a pot at goal, the kick, though not successful, being a highly praiseworthy one. A passing run by the Auckland forwards resulted in Nicholson being collared and falling over the line, the referee ordering a scrum, from which the visitors heeled the ball out and forced. The remainder of the spell was not of a very exciting character, and neither side succeeding in breaking through