



(By "The Reefer.")

The Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron will open the season on Saturday with the customary evolutions. As this is the first opening under the new title, it is to be hoped that as many yachts as possible will be present, so as to make a brave showing to the general body of spectators. Last year much disappointment was felt at the very small number of yachts which assembled at the rendezvous, and it is sincerely to be wished that on Saturday every yacht on the club register will be found under Commodore Murdoch's command. It is surely not asking very much to give up about an hour before dispersing for a cruise to make an effective display, and all yacht owners are cordially invited to do this so as to give the season a good send-off.

The opening day for the North Shore Yacht Club will be on November 29, when the fleet will be under the command of Commodore Jenny, whose flag will be flying on the oil yacht Naomi II.

Messrs. Gray Bros' well-known cutter Rainbow has been registered at the Customs with a view to obtaining the Admiralty Warrant.

Speculation is rife among yachtsmen as to the identity of the unfortunate passenger by the Elingamite, who was washed off the raft, and whose father was said to own a yacht in Auckland.

The Home Bay Sailing Club will hold an opening cruise on Saturday, probably to Kohimarama. The membership of this club, which caters entirely for small yachts and open sailing boats, now number about eighty, and it is a very live institution. Mr. C. H. Palmer is honorary secretary.

The new regulations for Flag and General Etiquette, framed by the committee of the Royals, have now been printed. They are very neatly got up on stiff card, so as to admit of being nailed up in the cabin.

The famous Mercer Regatta will eventuate on Saturday week, and from the present indications it promises to be unusually successful. The Maoris are taking a very keen interest in the event, and promise to have four or five of the so-called war canoes ready to compete. This race last year was very exciting, and aroused the greatest enthusiasm. Most of the Auckland Rowing Clubs intend sending up crews to compete, so that there should be no lack of amusement for the spectators, while the canoe hurdling will provide plenty of fun. Special trains will be run as usual to the township on the Waikato.



Leslie Hinge, photo. HALBERDIER, b g (by Cuirassier—Miss Stead). Winner of the New Zealand Cup at the C.J.C. Spring Meeting. Christchurch.

The Auckland Rowing Club intends having a picnic at the Lake next Saturday. The p.s. Eagle has been chartered for the occasion, and a band will be on board. Over three hundred invitations have been issued, and if only the afternoon should be fine the outing must prove very enjoyable. Dr. Reid, the Auckland captain, will be in command.

The committee has been working hard to put matters on a sound footing for the approaching Ponsonby Regatta. Although, of course, there are many details to be arranged, still everything is well up to date, and present indications point to the western regatta proving one of the most successful ever held. The favourite steamer Whakarewa will be chief flagship, with other vessels in readiness in case the number of spectators is excessive.

I notice that one or two alterations have been made in the sailing regulations of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron this season, the principal of which is that yachts under the new order of things may luff as they please except in the case provided for in Rule 7, which reads:—"In races where time allowances are conceded

at the start a yacht running free or with the wind aft shall never alter her course by luffing or bearing away to hinder an overtaking yacht passing." In the event of a yacht being over the line at the start, the starter will recall her by megaphone or some such signal, at the same time exhibiting her official number, when she must return and recross the line. The rule relating to the carrying of a lifebuoy on deck or in the cockpit is also to be enforced. The latter is certainly a capital proviso, as a man is often liable to be knocked overboard, and although most of our yachtsmen are adepts in the art of navigation, it not infrequently happens that the unfortunate who takes an involuntary bath is not.

A serious accident happened to crews from the Banks and Yarra Yarra clubs, returning by way of Saltwater River from Flemington racecourse on Cup Day (says the "Australasian.") The Banks eight in their best practice clinker were ahead, and were "shooting" through the scaffolding rigged for the building of the new bridge, when the fresh wind that came up with the change caught the boat, and bore her broadside on to one of the piles. The

water was very rough, and in a very short time had broken the boat in two. The crew swam to shore. While they were still entangled the Yarra eight came on, and not hearing the warning of the Banks men rushed into the same trap. They escaped, however, with nothing worse than a bad split in the planking of the boat. Both crews had to get back to their quarters along the bank, carrying their oars with them. The Banks lose all but the irons and fittings of their boat. Other crews following these were warned in time, and were taken through the obstruction with the aid of ropes.

POLO.

A general meeting of the members of the various Polo Clubs was held on Friday last, representatives being present from the Clevedon, Waingaro, Cambridge, Auckland, and Remuera Clubs. It was decided that the annual tourney should take place about the third week in March, at Alexandra Park. A design for the challenge cup was approved, and it should be a handsome piece of work, as it will cost about £25.

Only a few players mustered on Saturday, the Agricultural Show being too strong a counter attraction. Still, some very useful practice was indulged in by those who did roll up. Players are hardly getting enough practice at present, and it will be absolutely necessary to alter this state of affairs if success is to be achieved. One cannot rely upon always keeping in form, so better far is it to remember the old adage that "practice makes perfect."



Leslie Hinge, photo. SIEGF. GUN, br h (by Hotchkiss—Frailty). Winner of the Metropolitan Handicap at the C.J.C. Spring Meeting. Christchurch.

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