

BILLIARDS.

The well-known left-handed long jenny champion, Mr. W. Lyons, is at present on a visit to Australia. He arrived there just too late to witness the V.R.C. Autumn meeting.

A good deal of soreness was felt by E. Diggle when the handicappers for the big tournament allotted him no fewer than 4000 start from H. W. Stevenson in 18,000 up. Diggle strenuously objected to such implied inferiority on his part, and specially laid himself out in last week's heat with Stevensons to prove that he was right. As a matter of fact, he won on Saturday night by practically half the points he had been given—to be exact, he defeated Stevenson by 1993 points. As was mentioned recently, both men made some big breaks during the earlier stages of the game, and these were added to on Friday by Diggle contributing a carefully-played 303 and Stevenson a fine all-round run of 459.—“Referee.”

A recent writer of acknowledged repute, in writing on proper methods of manipulating the cue (says an exchange) is positive that the one great thing in billiards is true cueing, and he is undoubtedly right, for without that consideration no one can ever become a really good player. By true cueing is meant a cue-movement backwards and forwards without the slightest deviation from one imaginary line, no matter how long the movement is maintained. A player first takes his aim at the object ball, then draws his cue away from the ball, advances it to the ball again, and as a rule repeats these movements several times before actually striking the ball—sawing wood it is sometimes called. But unless the cue, as it is drawn away from the ball, travels exactly on a line which is a continuation of the line of aim, and further, unless the cue, as it travels backwards and forwards, moves as though it were sliding to and fro in a tight-fitting groove, true cueing does not take place. It is not too much to say that every professional owes the excellence of his play in a very great measure to this piston-like action of his cue. No doubt this perfection of cue-movement is exceedingly difficult to attain, but the nearer one approaches to such perfection, the more rapid will be his progress, and to make progress consistent practice is absolutely necessary.

Lovejoy did not “make good” with his “sitting down” billiards. In fact, he received a most severe dressing-down from Harverson in their game of 8000 up, in which he introduced “the stool.” The ex-amateur's contention was that to such a tall player as himself the new position would make the playing of losers so easy and sure that large breaks of the Gray order would come from his cue with much frequency. The mountain brought forth a mouse in the shape of 99 off the red as his best run, and, although he received 1250 start, Harverson won by 1567 points in addition. During the game only two breaks over 200 were made. Lovejoy's best run was 179.

The initial number of “Billiards Illustrated”—a journal which has taken the place of the defunct “New World of Billiards”—is to hand, and in its general get up is an improvement on its predecessor. In giving reasons for its being, the management says:—“The feature of the paper will be the added prominence given to all amateur competitions and news of all kinds concerning the performances and personalities of the amateur players. We base our view of what is wanted upon the undeniable fact that it is the amateur, or lover of billiards, whatever degree of skill may be his, who keeps the game going.”

In answer to criticism by Stevenson, the inventor of the “Lovejoy seat” challenged the champion for £100 aside on a 3ft 1in table, 18,000 up, level, and put in £25 to prove his bona fides. Lovejoy thinks that on a table 3ft high Diggle would easily defeat any other player in the world. So it would appear that the time is coming when the championship of billiards will have varying designations, such as the 2ft 9in champion, the 2ft 10in champion, the 3ft, and so on, ad lib. Somewhat on the lines of the American boxing title, where there is a champion for almost each ounce over 7st.—“Referee.”

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WRESTLING.

BIG WRESTLING MATCH AT STRATFORD.

BAIN EASILY DEFEATS SCOTT.

When it was announced a few weeks back that a match had been arranged between Bob Scott, champion wrestler of the Dominion and Alex Bain, Hackenschmidt's wrestling partner, in which the New Zealander agreed to forfeit £20 if he failed to throw Bain three times (catch-as-catch-can style) within the hour, followers of wrestling expressed grave doubts regarding the local man's ability to do so. Whereas Bain always proved troublesome to Hackenschmidt when the pair engaged in combat on the mat, Scott fell an easy victim to the big Russian, being thrown twice in two minutes, so that matters certainly looked favourable for the Scotchman, who was able to justify the confidence which he has expressed in himself ever since the match was mooted, when they met in the Town Hall, Stratford the other evening. A large attendance assembled to witness the match, and Mr. Jas. Sexton acted as referee and Mr. R. H. Burrell, as time-keeper. When the men made their appearance it was seen that Alex Bain, whose weight was 16st 9lb, was much heavier than Bob Scott, who scaled 14st 3lb, and those present were able to realise the task the New Zealander had taken on.

THE FIRST BOUT.

Two minutes had gone before the men got to the mat, and as the time-keeper called “four minutes” Scott was doing some very hard toil trying to shift his huge opponent, who knew too much to be moved a great deal unless he felt like it, and at eight minutes the big fellow was reclining face downwards, while the Stratford man

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pulled and tugged without producing much visible effect. Tiring somewhat of head, arm and body holds Scott next turned his attention to his opponent's legs, but the result not being very encouraging returned once more to the upper portion of Bain's anatomy, and as the timekeeper called “eleven minutes” was sitting well back while endeavouring to pull his foot away from Bain's affectionate clasp. At twelve and a half minutes the big man appeared in trouble by reason of a Scott leg lock under the arms and over the neck, but managed to wriggle out of it, the same thing occurring as fourteen minutes was recorded.

“HARD WORK MR. SCOTT?”

queried Bain, and as “fifteen minutes” was called added in a tone of conviction: “Thank goodness: One quarter gone.” At eighteen minutes both men were again on their feet, whence Bain fell composedly to the mat, face downwards, leaving Scott to resume the heart-breaking task of endeavouring to turn the Scotchman's massive bulk on to its shoulders. At twenty minutes Bain suggested a “breather,” which the conditions provided for after twenty minutes wrestling. Scott consented, but expressed his opinion that the agreement signed (which unfortunately had not been forwarded from the “Dominion” office in Wellington) only provided for a ten minutes spell after each fall. “You're a toff,” quoth Bain, and the men arose from the mat.

THE SECOND BOUT

differed but little from its predecessor, Scott strenuously tugging and hauling at his bulky opponent without, for the most part, producing any particular effect. On two or three occasions, however, the big man appeared to be somewhat in trouble, but each time managed to escape being thrown, though a peculiar leg hold under the arms and over the neck practised by Scott at intervals throughout the match, seemed to cause Bain a certain amount of puzzlement. Shortly after seventeen minutes had been called excitement ran high in the body of the hall, as Scott appeared to have his opponent all but over. To those on the stage, however, it was apparent that Bain's position was not one of particular danger, and the big fellow finally rolled himself back into safety, time being called shortly afterwards.

THE THIRD BOUT

was then begun, the men taking four minutes to get to the mat. A minute later Bain reminded Scott that he would have to gain three falls in that spell, and advised him not to over-exert himself. “Three falls in thirteen minutes, Robert,” said the big fellow as seven minutes was called, a remark which he repeated at intervals until eight minutes was recorded, when he changed the tune to “Three falls in twelve minutes, Bobby.” Just as “ten minutes” was called Scott, with the leg hold mentioned previously, gained what the referee declared was a fall, though many of those on the stage were of an entirely different opinion; and even Scott said that he did not consider it was a pin fall. After a spell of ten minutes, wrestling was resumed for the remainder of the stipulated hour, but the Stratford man was unable to again throw his opponent, who when time was called was declared the winner of the match.

It is probable that another match will take place between the pair, this time on level terms, soon after Scott returns from the championship meeting, which is shortly to be held at Greymouth.

LOSER CHALLENGED BY ROBERTSON.

During the evening Louis S. Robertson, addressing the audience, offered to deposit £25 to say that Mr. R. J. Scott could not throw him (Robertson) three times in one hour under the same conditions as those granted to Mr. A. Bain for the forthcoming match. Mr. Scott then stepped forward, stating that in arranging matches heretofore he had been in the habit of giving way on certain points, but that after that evening he would insist that anyone at all making a match with him should wrestle under New Zealand rules. The rules of the Affiliated Caledonian Societies of New Zealand, continued Mr. Scott, had been in force since 1889, and provided that immediately both a man's shoulders touched the mat he was down. These remarks brought Robertson one more to the footlights, whence he was understood to express wonderment that although Mr. Scott had not objected to pin falls when meeting the great George Hackenschmidt, he yet was unwilling to wrestle a 10st.