

# THE FOOTBALL WORLD.

The Auckland representatives were pitted against the first of the visiting Southern teams on Saturday at Alexandra Park, when they had as their opponents the South Island country team. The latter fifteen, which is composed of Buller, Nelson, Marlborough, and West Coast country players were expected to give the Aucklanders a fairly close game, and another large crowd was present at the Park to witness the first representative fixture of importance in the northern city. The Auckland fifteen opened their list of representative matches in a promising manner by defeating the Southerners by 29 points to 3, after an unexciting game. The South Island country players are a well set-up lot of young fellows, and on taking the field neatly attired in white they gave the impression that they would render a good account of themselves. Play had not been long in progress, however, before several weak spots were discernible in the work of the visiting combination, while it was also apparent that they lacked the knowledge possessed by the Aucklanders. For a time the Southerners managed to stem the attacking movements of the Auckland fifteen, and may well take credit for putting up a stubborn fight in the first half of the game. In the second half the visitors' defence crumbled up, and the local team had no difficulty in running up a big total of points. The South Island men would undoubtedly have fared much better had they had an opportunity of playing a couple of games together before meeting Auckland, as they were responsible for many brilliant individual efforts, which, had the necessary combination been forthcoming, would have lessened their uphill task considerably. Not only did their failure to combine properly count against them, but several golden opportunities went begging through fumbling of the leather at the critical juncture.

The South Island country team is fairly strong in the forwards, but such cannot be said of the backs, among whom there are no really first-class players. Had their forwards met a weaker team than Auckland the Southern backs may have displayed their capabilities to much better advantage than they did on Saturday, when, however, their efforts were confined mostly to defence. There were occasions on which the visiting backs did, through the clever hooking of the forwards, secure the ball when in a good attacking position, but they appeared uncertain of their ground, there being a want of system in their movements, which were easily checked by the Aucklanders. It was early realised that the visitors were a beaten team, and seldom has so little enthusiasm been displayed by the onlookers in a representative match. The superior play of the Aucklanders robbed the game of nearly all interest, as they simply ran over the Southerners in the second half, plainly revealing the disparity in the relative strength of the two teams. After making a creditable showing against the Auckland team in the early stages, condition told its tale with the visitors, whose staying power was much below that of the well-trained local players. The dash which the South Island forwards displayed in the first spell was missing from their efforts during the remainder of the game, whereas the Aucklanders only seemed to get going properly in the second half of the match, with the result that the score commenced to creep up rapidly. Even allowing for the fact that the South Island men played well in the first spell, the exhibition given by the Aucklanders during that period was none the less disappointing, and they will need to settle down to their work quicker than they did on Saturday, when the Taranaki and Wellington fixtures come up for decision in a few weeks' time.

Despite their victory being lightly won, the Auckland fifteen did not impress the spectators in their match against the South Island country representatives. In the first place the work of the backs was far from convincing, there being too much individuality about their play. They

were not, however, overburdened with openings, mainly as a result of their half-back playing much below his customary form. There were few passing bouts in which the Auckland backs handled and passed the leather with precision, the tendency among them being to get out of their positions when engaged in attack. The majority of the tries scored by Auckland were largely due to brilliant individual effort, and it was only in the concluding stage of the game when the visitors were lacking in energy that the ball travelled through the hands of the Auckland backs as it should do, Macky, the wing three-quarter, being given several nice opportunities to put his try-scoring abilities to the test, which he did to advantage.

The Auckland forwards for a time on Saturday looked to have met a combination that would keep them busily employed during the match, but the pressure of the South Island vanguard gradually relaxed as the game progressed, and towards the end of the match the Auckland front

been far more productive but for the lack of finish which characterised their play.

So solid a resistance did the South Island men meet the Aucklanders with that it was late in the first half before the latter scored, McGregor, accepting a pass from Hall, and with a smart, dodgy run the nippy three-quarter was across the line like a flash. Walshe landed a good goal. Auckland 5, South Island nil. Following this score, the visitors were awarded a penalty, and Church managed to pilot the ball over the cross-bar from a difficult angle. No further score was obtained in the first half, which ended: Auckland 5, South Island 3. In the second spell McGregor secured his second try shortly after the kick-off, the Ponsonby three-quarter cleverly dribbling the ball over, and touching down in the nick of time. Ifwerson kicked a neat goal. Tries were then scored in succession for Auckland by Carroll, Tre-size, Sellars, and Mackay (2), two of which were converted by Ifwerson.

his first appearance as an Auckland representative. His pace and clean handling of the ball proved very useful at times, and he is without doubt a handy man in an attacking team. His superb goal-kicking alone entitled him to a place in Saturday's team, three of his attempts in succession resulting in tries being converted.

Walshe, at five-eighths, was patchy, erratic passing and failure to hold the ball being his principal mistakes. He is inclined to attempt too much on his own, and would do well to remedy this defect in his play.

McGregor was the shining light in the threequarter line, and both of his tries were the result of heady play. The Ponsonby threequarter is the most dangerous scoring man playing in Auckland this season, and judging by his clever exhibition on Saturday his services should prove invaluable in the big rep. fixtures.

Stewart, at centre, on several occasions dropped his passes, and tak-



THE AUCKLAND BOXING REPRESENTATIVES WHO COMPETED AT THE NEW ZEALAND CHAMPIONSHIPS IN WELLINGTON.—Reading from left: S. C. Whalley (lightweight), E. McKenzie (featherweight), Mr M. Ballin (delegate), Mr Frank Burns (manager), M. Dwyer (heavyweight), H. Payne (bantamweight), S. Mitchell (welterweight).

division practically had the visitors at their mercy. Several of the Southern forwards played very fine games, Nolan, on the wing, in particular, leading his side on with great determination and dash. With a little more knowledge of each other's methods the South Island country forwards would stand up to the best provincial representative teams without any possibility of being outplayed, for, in addition to being fast and weighty, they lack nothing on the score of willingness. In the first few scrums the visitors more than held their own against the solid Auckland pack, while on several occasions they succeeded in screwing the scrum and coming away with the ball at their feet. This manoeuvre promised to give the Southerners a big advantage in the scrums, but the Auckland forwards soon found a method of counteracting it, and once their front rangers settled down to their work properly the Northerners demonstrated their superiority in securing the leather. The South Islanders, which team cannot be called a representative one so far as the country is concerned, Southland, Otago, and Canterbury country players being excluded, afforded a good idea of the standard of Rugby in the country districts north of Canterbury, which are able to boast of some very fair exponents of the Dominion's national game. In nippiness they were completely overshadowed by the Aucklanders, while their efforts would have

Hall, at wing forward, was seldom prominent, and will have to show marked improvement in his play to warrant his inclusion in the team to meet the chosen of the leading southern provinces. Carroll, who played in the pack, made his presence felt by dashing and serviceable methods, and his form has been so consistent during the season that Auckland will suffer a big loss in his selection as wing forward in the big rep. matches is overlooked. Sellars was one of the hardest grafters in the Auckland pack, while he shone out conspicuously as the result of his fast following up, and the useful part he took in the forward rushes. Wilson also accomplished good work in the loose, breaking away with the ball at his feet on several occasions and gaining considerable ground for the blue and whites through his clever dribbling tactics.

Webb, at half, rarely gave glimpses of his true form, his handling of the leather being plainly at fault. He was repeatedly beaten by the ball, while the South Island forwards were upon him times out of number. His play was hard to understand, since speed and nippiness are usually his strong points, while it is seldom that he errs in gathering in the leather.

Ifwerson, at first five-eighths, acquitted himself very creditably for

en altogether his display was much below his usual standard. However, he has been shaping exceptionally well this season, so that he should have no difficulty in improving on his game of Saturday in matches to come.

Macky, at wing threequarter, was not very prominent in the first half owing to having but little to do. In the second spell he was given plenty of chances, which he made the most of, a couple of brilliant tries going down to his credit. Macky, besides possessing pace, plays with judgment, and is never slow at taking advantage of an opening, as was evidenced by his cool showing on Saturday.

J. O'Brien's exhibition at full-back was not free from mistakes, but his errors were never serious, and in one or two instances he made wonderful recoveries. Most of his work was of a sound order, and being a brainy player, who is always cool when danger threatens, he is easily the best man in the position in Auckland.

J. Nolan, the South Island skipper, played a remarkably fine game on the wing, towering over his vis-a-vis. He is a sterling forward of the vigorous type, who keeps going from start to finish, and his brilliancy in the open much impressed the onlookers.