



Racing Notes.

DATES OF MEETINGS.
SEASON 1920-21.

September 11.—Otago Hunt Club (Wingatui).
October 8, 9.—Dunedin Spring Meeting.
October 23, 25.—Gore Spring Meeting.
November 6, 8, 10, 13.—N.Z. Cup Meeting.
November 17, 18.—Winton Jockey Club.
November 25, 27.—Forbury Jockey Club.
December 15, 16.—Lake County Jockey Club.
December 27.—Gore Trotting Club.
December 27, 28.—Dunedin Summer Meeting.
January 1.—Wyndham Annual Meeting.
January 3, 4.—Invercargill Summer Meeting.
January 19.—Wairio Annual Meeting.
January 26.—Tapanui Annual Meeting.
February 2.—Winton Trotting Club.
February 5, 7.—Forbury Park Trotting Club.
February 9, 12.—Dunedin Cup Meeting.
February 23.—Clifden Racing Club.
March 9, 10.—Gore Autumn Meeting.
March 16, 17.—Southland Autumn Meeting.
March 26, 28.—Riverton Annual Meeting.
March 26.—Lawrence Annual Meeting.
March 28.—Beaumont Annual Meeting.
May 5, 7.—Forbury Park Trotting Club.
June 1, 3, 4.—Dunedin Winter Meeting.

Winton Jockey Club had a very successful season, and secretary Harry Price presented a good account of the year's working to the annual meeting last night.

The seven stone minimum advocated by the Dunedin Jockey Club was again thrown out by the Racing Conference. It really doesn't matter because every club has the right of fixing its own minimum when drawing up its programme.

The Birchwood Hunt Club had a nice little spree after their steeplechase on Wednesday evening, but the Digger bloke wasn't on the list of invitations. Bad luck when one drinks so much that it is too costly to invite him to a smoke on.

For the first time for seven years Marton has lost pride of place in the winning sires list this season. Demosthenos with £27,756 heads him off, his stock having won £24,466. Each had forty-four winners of place money going for them.

Josh Lewis who should know, writes in this week's "Referee" that Silverpeak is not the short-pedigreed mare on her dams side that many would make her out to be. Short pedigreed or not she can make fast times over a short course, and has won £2130 for Bill Stone this season.

President Hazlett was known on the Racing Conference a year of two ago as "the stormy petrel from the South," but he has quietened down with the experience he is getting each year on this body, and was only heard enough last week to be reported two or three times.

What sort of a job will bookmaking be when Mataura Anderson has fixed up his bill? The fine business don't cut much ice, but the "cooler" is quite another matter. It is reported that the leading man in Dunedin is packing up his traps for the other side, where the law allows the game. But still it will be carried on throughout New Zealand until the end.

Despite Curry and Co's strong recommendations, the question of licensing jockeys by the Conference was again thrown out. Representative Hazlett was a strong opponent to the motion, and made strong representations for another chance being given to repentant sinners. A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind!

Jockeys are to get more money for their work and so they should. They had only to ask for it, or almost anything else in reason in a nice manner and they would get it. There is no more generous employer in the world than an owner, and he is always open to receive suggestions that will improve the conditions of the sport and its followers. But one does like to be asked in a nice way, and not demanded as a highway-man would have done in the bad old days.

A good crowd witnessed the flag steeplechases at Otatau on Wednesday afternoon. Martin O'Brien (a brother of Te Tui Mick), won the heavy-weight race with Lady Betty, and J. Flynn's Miss Trixie with Digger Joe Taylor astride was first home in the light-weights. H. Marshall's good little pony Glenisla had a couple of spills in the heavy division but ran two good races finishing second on each occasion.

The Nature Column.

Rain, the source of water supply, has come into prominence of late owing to the activity in connection with hydro-electric undertakings.

The lack of sufficient rainfall data must handicap our hydro engineers, in that they have either to under-develop the powers or run a risk of failure during exceptional periods of drought. No lake control system can fully safeguard a power supply unless the amount of water entering the lake for a series of years can be foretold with some accuracy. If the average annual draw-off amounts to more than the average annual inflow there must inevitably come a time of stringency. This presupposes that all the water entering the lake is impounded. But where great seasonal changes take place in the rainfall it may not be economical to construct a dam to hold all the inflow. This makes it all the more necessary to ascertain the inflow during the longest likely dry period. It is held by some authorities that the gauging of a stream over a short period, without taking the rainfall at the same time, and comparing it with long period rainfall statistics is unsafe. Unfortunately it is not possible to make this comparison properly in the Dominion, for the water-powers are mostly in inaccessible places, with sparse population, and the Government with a not unusual lack of foresight has not encouraged scientific investigations. We should not wait for the Government so far as our own system is concerned. For less than £200 five or six automatic rain gauges could be installed round Lake Monowai and would afford most valuable information. The gauges would need to be read once a year and the work could probably be done for nothing if the Board invited the assistance of the right people. These gauges would only afford close approximation, as rainfall varies enormously between stations only a short distance apart, and greatly from month to month. In the Sudbury watershed, Boston, which is comparable to the Monowai in size and is hilly, the maximum run-off in July, the dry month, was 20.9in. and the minimum 3.6, and many other months showed similar differences. The average rainfall in England is 25 inches, yet in one place it averages nearly 139 inches. The world's record rainfall is held by Cherra Poonjee, in Assam, with an average of 439 inches. If the figures given by Mr Fowler in a lecture previously published in this paper are correct, some places round Monowai must approach this record. Fortunately for us, the rainfall of New Zealand, owing to its configuration, is very steady, but even so there is a great discrepancy between the amount of rain on the West Coast and on the Canterbury plains. The cause of this is as follows:—

Rain is generally preceded by cloud formation, being the condensation of the invisible water vapour in the air. The only process in nature by which this condensation can occur to produce rainfall, is the cooling involved by transfer of air from a lower to a higher level. We are all aware that air compressed in a bike pump gets hot, conversely when it is expanded it becomes cooler. Air at different temperatures has the power of holding a certain amount of water vapour. The hotter it is the more vapour it can hold. As we ascend through each 180 feet the temperature of the air, owing to its expansion, will fall about 1 degree. If the ascent of the air be sufficient it will be cooled to the dewpoint. The dewpoint is that degree of temperature (varying with the amount of moisture) at which the water vapour can no longer exist as such. The dewpoint having been reached small drops of rain are formed, and it is necessary for this formation that minute particles of dust shall exist in the air. As the process goes on more water is thrown out and the droplets grow until they ultimately become large enough to fall to the ground as rain. While the droplets are small they float like so much thistledown. Now we can see why the rainfall in the Fjord country and on the West Coast is heavy. The wind sweeping over the ocean becomes saturated with moisture, on striking the Southern Alps or other mountains it is forced abruptly upwards, a lowering of temperature takes place and heavy precipitation follows. A large amount of what is known as latent heat is locked up in water vapour and the condensation of this vapour releases the heat.

Systematic weather records would do much to boom Southland, and stations should be established all over the province as they are in England. Most of the observations in the Old Country are made by unpaid enthusiasts who vie with one another in producing the best sunshine and rainfall records. We have a longer day in summer than Auckland and we should endeavour to prove by records that this end of the Dominion is not the cold bleak spot pictured by our northern neighbours.

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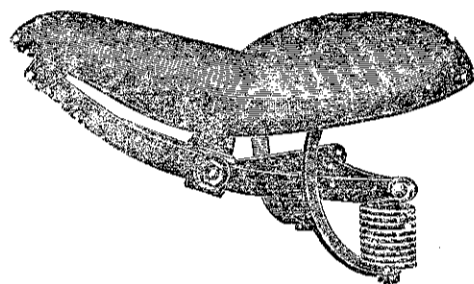
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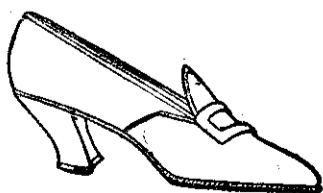
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