

BOXING NOTES

A Popular Referee + More About Strickland + The Boxing Conference

ONE of Palmerston North's best known business men is Geoff Watchorn, ex-champion boxer and prominent referee. "Geoff," as he is known to his associates, was one of New Zealand's best boxers in the days before the Great War, and to-day is one of the foremost boxing referees in the Dominion.

It was in 1908 that he became light-weight champion of Manawatu, and in succeeding years he annexed the welter-weight and middle-weight titles in that district. In 1909, 1910 and 1912 he was Dominion welter-weight champion, and in the year 1910 he won the Australasian title in the same division, as well as the medal for being the most scientific boxer in the Dominion.



GEOFF WATCHORN
Capped his previous performances

Since those distant days, he has refereed many important contests, and he capped his previous performances in this respect when he officiated as referee for the big fight at Palmerston North on Boxing Day.

Reports concerning Maurice Strickland's future contests appear to change weekly. For a time it was on the cards that he would meet the Alabama Kid in Wellington. Then it seemed he was to meet Ron Richards in Auckland, but the latest is that he will meet the Australian during the present month in an open-air bout in Sydney. If this arrangement does not fall through, the bout will be staged as being for the Australasian heavy-weight title. Richards, according to a still later report, seems unwilling to meet Strickland, apparently because of the difference in weight.

When the Boxing Conference is held next month there is likely to be some discussion in regard to the rules govern-

ing the sport in New Zealand. A wave of opinion appears to be in favour of a decided alteration in the rules as they stand, as it is considered in many quarters that they are antiquated and a decided obstacle in the way of big boxing events.

Another thing that may be given the "once-over," is the suggestion that private promotion be allowed. The New Zealand Boxing Association has always shown strong opposition to any suggestion of

this kind, but the present dormant attitude of many associations has awayed public opinion to some extent in favour of the proposition.

Once again Joe Louis has skittled a challenger, this time Red Burman, the Baltimore heavy-weight, who was last year rated as fifth contender for the Louis crown.

Glancing over Burman's record, one is left wondering how it comes that he was given a bout with the champion, but it

can only be accepted that the chance came owing to all the other contenders on the list having previously fallen in a row before the mighty punches of the negro. It seems that Burman was just the "next best pug."

Young Gildo, the clever Filipino, is still in Auckland. He made good money during the 1940 season and at the moment he is enjoying a well earned rest.

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