

# Heeney-Tunney Fight Ably Described

## Outstanding Radio Feat Successfully Organised

FULLY alive to the intense interest prevalent throughout the Dominion in the contest for the heavy-weight boxing championship of the world, in which Tom Heeney, a New Zealander, was the challenger, and Gene Tunney the defender, the Broadcasting Company did all that was humanly practicable to make it possible for all interested to listen-in to the description of the Homeric struggle, which was broadcast from far Schenectady, New York State.

For weeks previously Mr. A. R. Harris, the general manager, and the executive officers of the company, were planning so that every available means of securing satisfactory reception should be linked up in a perfected scheme of Dominion-wide co-operation for the vital hours during which the transmission was due to reach New Zealand.

THE company embarked on this big experiment with no little apprehension as to the result, for from the outset it was realised that the conditions to be faced were such as to render the likelihood of satisfactory reception very small indeed. Having this in mind, it was decided—very wisely as it proved—not to depend on the actual ringside description. Testing receptions from New York had been conducted every afternoon for some time. These experiments showed that there was more than a possibility of reception in the early afternoon lacking the necessary clarity to warrant its being put on the air, and with this in view, Mr. A. R. Harris, general manager, cabled to the company's representative in New York, Mr. Edgar H. Felix, requesting him to arrange for a broadcast resume of the contest at midnight, New York time (3.30 p.m. New Zealand time). That gentleman quickly effected the necessary arrangements, with the result that promptly at the suggested time the short-wave station 2XAD, Schenectady (the General Electric Company's demonstration station) was on the air with greetings to England, Australia, and New Zealand, followed by the requested story of the fight.

THUS it came about that in addition to the round-by-round description, which was broadcast as the fight proceeded, listeners were further privileged to hear the whole story of the fight told again by the American announcer.

This transmission was well-nigh perfect, the voice of the announcer coming through with remarkable clarity and distinctness, and enabling 2YA to put over a brilliantly successful rebroadcast which was again rebroadcast by 3YA.

THUS, for the first time in the history of New Zealand radio, crystal-set owners in our main cities and suburbs were able to listen to an American station and hear with absolute clearness every word of the story the announcer had to tell them. This—the Broadcasting Company's own special service—was in itself sufficient to make the Tunney-Heeney fight an epoch-marking event in the history of radio broadcasting. It was a distinct

THANKS to complete arrangements, and the successful use of both Morse and telephony transmission, listeners to 2YA and 3YA were able to secure immediate news of the progress of the Heeney-Tunney fight. 1YA did not fare so well, as interference from outside sources was particularly bad, completely spoiling reception of 2XAD. The 3.30 summary given out by 2YA was, however, very well received in Auckland.

"brain-wave" on the part of the Radio Broadcasting Company, and its success exceeded the highest anticipations.

THE scheme which worked so admirably involved the making of special and elaborate arrangements at each of the company's four stations. This included the linking up with each station of four or five independent short-wave receiving points, each in direct touch with the station. By this means, with the co-operation of the P. and T. Department, 2YA, for instance, had a number of strings to its bow, so that in the event of faulty reception at one point success might be hoped for from another. A party of

departmental experts was at Lowry Bay, operating a specially-constructed short-wave receiver. This site was selected by reason of its being far removed from interferences from power leakages—the prime source of interference with broadcast reception. This was the chief channel through which information was supplied to the studio after having been received by wireless telegraphy. The superintendent and staff at VLW also kept in touch with the American broadcasts, and telephoned reports to the studio. This served as a reliable check on reception and reduced the margin of possible error to a minimum.



Gene Tunney.



Tom Heeney.

## Japanese Entertainment Broadcast

THE day of the big fight was a big day for radio, for it was topped off, so to speak, with still another very pleasing and highly successful "stunt"—the broadcast in the evening of the very fine entertainment given in the Town Hall in aid of the funds of the Red Cross Society by a talented company of sailormen from the training squadron of the Imperial Japanese Navy. The entertainment which was staged by courtesy of Vice-Admiral Kobayashi, comprised a delightful recital by the band of the squadron—one of the Emperor's favourite bands—and thrilling demonstrations of ju-jitsu, double-hand fencing, and wrestling.

The evening's studio concert was suspended for the occasion in order that listeners might have the opportunity of hearing and enjoying the unique entertainment provided by our overseas visitors. With but a few hours in which to make the necessary arrangements, and despite the heavy work in-

involved in the Major's effort of the day, this broadcast also proved an unqualified success, and, in addition to enjoying the excellent music of the band, listeners were given quite a thrill by the realistic description of the thrilling contests which took place during the evening.

But there was still something more for them, for the broadcast included a message of greeting and goodwill to the people of New Zealand from the Japanese Admiral whose happily-worded message was admirably voiced through the microphone at 2YA by Flag-Lieut. Kaseda, A.D.C. Reference to this very pleasing broadcast cannot be concluded without an expression of warm appreciation of the courtesy and consideration shown to the company's representatives by Vice-Admiral Kobayashi, Mr. Tokugawa (Consul-General), Lieut. Kaseda, and Mr. Arthur Young (hon. consul at Wellington).

At the studio another party of departmental experts were operating short-wave receivers, and picking up the signals passed from Lowry Bay and VLW. Their previous experience as radio operators, and their keen sense of hearing, were contributing factors to the successful reception of the morse signals.

A further link with the American broadcast was provided by Mr. Guy Tinney (owner and operator of 2BG), the well-known amateur of Hataitai, who held a special line to the studio and kept a check on the doings of 2XAD. Still another string to the radio bow was afforded by Mr. McCarthy, of Macks Radio. These facts show the thoroughness of the arrangements made by the company as a safeguard against any mishap. Everyone associated with the enterprise was keen on his job.

At intervals, too, listeners were afforded an opportunity of listening direct to what could be heard of the actual-ringside broadcast itself, which, however, owing to the adverse conditions prevailing, was the least successful feature of the unique event. Still, despite the predominance of extraneous noises, the voice of the announcer at the ringside was audible, though his description was not intelligible, and it was possible to gain at least some impression of the intense excitement attending the encounter. But it was the description received by morse and put out by the New Zealand announcers which constituted the real triumph of the day.

PRIOR to passing to the Schenectady station for a rebroadcast of musical items and the resume of the fight, the New Zealand operators, while "sweeping the ether," picked up the Nauen station (Germany) working with Rio Grande (Argentina, South America), and in order to give listeners an idea of how the first round-by-round description was received, the morse code signals from these stations were put on the air, the announcer explaining just what they were and where they originated from.

THE success achieved by the Radio Broadcasting Company on this memorable occasion was due in no small measure to the enthusiastic, whole-hearted and able assistance rendered by the responsible officers and wireless experts of the Post and Telegraph Department. Realising the event to be of great national interest, the secretary of the Department (Mr. A. MacNamara), and the chief telegraph engineer (Mr. A. Gibbs), did all in their power to help ensure that the thousands of anxious and keenly-interested listeners-in should not be disappointed. By so doing they demonstrated in a most practical manner the sincerity of their desire (as representatives of the responsible department, authority under whose license radio broadcasting service is carried on), to facilitate to the utmost every means by which the service can be made of the widest possible public utility.