

## Broadcasting of Sporting Fixtures

### Logical Arguments Advanced by Australian Magazine

IN view of the repression of broadcasting of certain of the sporting fixtures in this country, the following article, written for "Wireless Weekly" (Australia), should have great significance. Evidently a position has arisen in Australia regarding the broadcasting of cricket somewhat akin to the position here regarding the racing, though the matter is yet in the embryo stage.

In opposing the suggestion this magazine has, in our opinion, struck at the principle involved, that is: that these authorities have not the moral right to suppress a public demand. The march of progress demands wireless, wireless must satisfy the public, the public demand sporting. Where, then, is the justification for the suppression of this valuable news?

SOME comment has been caused by the discussion of a suggestion recently made that a cricket association should restrict or prohibit the broadcasting of sporting fixtures. Readers' opinions expressed in the daily press naturally show that the proposal is not popular. The opinions obviously would, in the main, be those of interested broadcast listeners. The subject is worth examining. The interest taken in the discussion is at once an indication of the popularity of sport-

ing items in broadcasting programmes, and evidence of the manner in which the new service is invading the domain of older services. In short, it shows the advance of the "novel stunt" of broadcasting, as it was termed but a very few years ago.

**"Broadcasting is a community service, if, indeed, it is not a public utility."**

"All sections of the community, young or old, look to it for some information, instruction, or entertainment. Some there are who do not care a rap for sport; some want only religious services; others want jazz, and plenty of it; while sections not to be overlooked rely on broadcasting for information, for education and for matters of general interest.

"Thus it is that the theatre, the church, the school, the markets, bureaux, and the sporting fields find a new avenue for interesting their particular adherents as well as the general public.

And none of them can afford to say, 'We will not let this be broadcast;' they cannot adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude. Similarly the newspapers, the musical entrepreneurs and the sporting promoters will not be able to stop the broadcasting of matter which the listeners want. The march of progress cannot be stopped.

"Not that broadcasting is likely to render those institutions of less utility or attractiveness; it is not likely to put the newspapers out of business, or reduce the attendances in church or at sporting meetings. On the contrary, it is calculated to be of value in giving publicity in quarters where it has not been felt previously. It will be complementary to other methods of publicity—not competitive. Already in Melbourne 3LO has been the means of interesting many people in sport and other matters, who otherwise would not have been attracted to the events. And the large volume of correspondence from all parts of the Commonwealth testifies to the interest taken in sporting descriptions and results by listeners.

[New Zealand listeners, too, are indebted to the excellent broadcasts of the Metropolitan meetings. They have become quite a feature.]

"... Generally, the Australian experience is that sporting bodies are sufficiently public-spirited to listen to public demands, and are always willing to be influenced by 'sweet reasonableness.' That being so, there is no fear of retrograde steps being taken."

IT is to be trusted that Australian "sports" will not try to emulate their New Zealand confederates, for the broadcasts of these Australian fixtures have already become a feature among New Zealanders both in the relays and in listening-in direct.

## Wireless in the Sahara Desert

### A Story of French Enterprise and Endeavour

THE Sahara, known to the average person as a vast desert in the north of Africa, and the home of the Foreign Legion, has now come before us with a new interest. It has claimed its right in the great wireless fraternity. Inhabitants of that vast sea of sand before the advent of wireless have had no means of communication with the outside world except by the painfully slow camel. Now it has changed and wireless is doing its best to alleviate the burden of the desert dweller.

#### Early Radio.

THE establishment of the first radio stations in this wilderness date back to the days of the war. Faced with a danger of a rebellion which threatened to disrupt Southern Algiers, the French Ministry for War ordered in 1915 the erection of two radio stations in the Sahara. Working under very adverse conditions, the engineers of the French Army succeeded in completing the first of these stations in 1916. In the south of Algiers several stations were erected.

At the end of hostilities all the stations in Algerian Sahara were converted into radio telegraphic stations. Staffed by capable operators, these had performed a very useful service during the war period. From then on little real progress was registered. During these years the only move was to erect a new station and to reorganise two of the existing ones. Other than that, the scheme to link that great waste with a network of stations stood still. This was due to the difficulty of getting anyone to remain at the stations. The existing staff was from the sappers of the Foreign Legion. These operators after a training extending over several months were sent out to staff these outposts of France. It has been found that this term of instruction was not

long enough to turn out experienced operators for such important posts.

To meet this difficulty the military considered that the sending out of more experienced operators and the formulating of arrangements for their periodic relief would do much to improve the position. These measures were put into effect and showed good results.

Travellers pay great tribute to the service in spite of all its shortcomings. In addition to a traffic, civil and military, the stations transmit a considerable number of private messages addressed to the families of the colonists or to commercial houses. In this manner the radio network is doing great work to assist the colonisation of the great Sahara.

#### Portable Transmitters.

IN accordance with the nature of the country and the nature of the work the legion have to perform, the question of equipping the motor transport with wireless equipment arose. A conference held some 12 months ago decided that in the interests of the colony the motor convoys should be provided with portable transmitters to operate on shortwave. One of the detachments already possessed such a transmitter, and it was proving that equipment of this nature was indeed beneficial.

Acting on the advice of the Commission the Governor of the Colony then set about equipping the various mobile detachments with wireless.

The business of training the young sappers to become efficient radio operators has been seriously considered, and a large post in Algiers has been turned into a wireless school. In addition, four new posts are being equipped with radio—these correspond to the four companies of the legion, and are for the use of the police.

Everything now points to the establishment of an effective service in these desert regions, and the opinion of the French is that these new developments are to make for greater solidarity, both within the colony and between it and Mother France.

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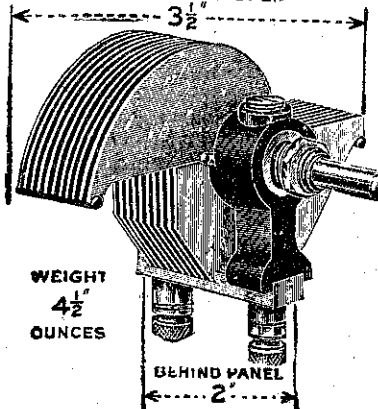
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