

Cook Strait Swim

Radio on Accompanying Launch

WHEN Miss Mercedes Gleitze, the celebrated English long-distance swimmer, sets out early next month on an attempt to swim across Cook Strait, radio-set owners in New Zealand, and in Wellington particularly, will have an opportunity of following her progress.

Arrangements have been completed with Miss Gleitze, Mr. J. Tait, whose launch will accompany the swimmer, and station 2YA by Messrs. Green and Dixon, two Wellington radio enthusiasts, who for several years have had considerable experience in amateur transmitting. Their calls signs, ZL2GR and ZL2BO respectively, have at various times been heard in all quarters of the globe.

The apparatus which they intend employing is a portable short-wave telephonic transmitter using the Heising system of modulation. The wavelength will be about 80 metres. Power will be supplied from heavy-duty dry batteries. The set will be sheltered from the weather in a cabin in the bow of the boat, and the microphone will be so arranged as to be able to be carried about within a radius of six or seven feet. For some time the transmitter has been on test and has given every satisfaction, having been heard all over New Zealand.

During the trip across the strait the apparatus will be working all the time, and at intervals the messages will be broadcast from 2YA. For reception purposes an ordinary broadcast set will also be carried. Another mast will be temporarily erected on the launch to support an aerial.

Open-Air Concerts

A Christchurch Innovation

THE public has appreciated the fact that the Broadcasting Company has by holding 3YA band concerts in the open air made them generally available. Crowds of several thousand people have attended each concert and much appreciation has been expressed. The atmosphere of an open-air concert on a fine summer's night seems to be imparted to the actual broadcast as well, for letters commenting on the enjoyableness of these concerts have been received from as far north as Tauranga.

Christchurch has proved an ideal place for holding open-air concerts. The city is singularly favoured in respect of the number of parks which it possesses and in the spell of glorious weather it has experienced.

2YA's Silent Night to Go

Special International Concerts

ANOTHER great advance has been made in New Zealand broadcasting. The silent night at 2YA is to go. For some time now a considerable amount of discussion has centred round the silent night question. There have been difficulties, but they have now been overcome, and listeners will no doubt be delighted to hear the announcement. This innovation is to take place on the first Wednesday in February.

One of the main obstacles that has held back the introduction of this extra programme has been the limited available talent, but Mr. A. R. Harris's recent trip to the United States has resulted in this difficulty being overcome. Listeners will remember that in August last the announcement was made that 2YA would broadcast special recordings of overseas programmes. These recordings have made possible almost perfect reproduction of programmes as they are presented in overseas studios. In New York, for instance, there is no end to the amount of broadcast material offering, and wonderful material it is. This profusion of talent is now to be broadcast from 2YA on Wednesday evenings. The entertainment will be a departure from anything previously broadcast in New Zealand, or for that matter in Australia. The evening will be known as "International" and as well as the musical programmes there will be a talk on international affairs.

Apart from the very interesting nature of this broadcast, Wellington listeners who have been annoyed on Wednesday evenings by oscillating valves will welcome the decision. Since the inception of our present system the oscillating valve has marred programmes on the local station's silent night. The inability of small sets to eliminate the local station has been evidenced by the absence of the noise on nights other than the silent.

The smaller set-owner who, whether he has been oscillating or not, has been able to receive outside stations on Wednesday evening, may not welcome the idea, but when it is remembered that this programme is to be altogether different from anything that he has ever heard before, and, because of its nature, must remain different, he will have adequate compensation.

When further details come to hand they will be published in the "Radio Record."

Unusual Turn for 1YA Lightning Strikes an Aerial

A Balalaika Item

SIMON PHILLIPOFF, who since leaving the Ukraine eight or nine years ago has been travelling round the world, will broadcast from 1YA on Wednesday, January 21. He is an adept exponent of the balalaika, the Russian national instrument, and as such gave an excellent performance from 1YA about ten months ago. The instrument is somewhat similar to a guitar with a triangular body, and it has three strings, two tuned to B and the other to A. It is a difficult instrument to play and exponents such as Phillipoff are rarely met.

VERY few instances of lightning striking an aerial are on record, but such an occurrence took place in Melbourne recently during a heavy storm.

A house was being wired for electricity, and it was necessary for the electrician to hold the wireless aerial out of his way while certain alterations were being effected. He had actual contact with the aerial for some fifteen minutes, and had released it a matter of seconds only when a tremendous lightning flash struck it directly.

There was an ear-splitting detonation, a blinding blue flash, and a deluge of rain. Investigation showed that more than six feet of the heavy wire of the aerial had been burnt, leaving the electrician still standing almost in contact with what remained! The efficiency of the lightning arrester was proved when the radio receiver was examined later. It was switched on and immediately brought in one of the local programmes.

A Military Radio Course

For French Youths

YOUNG men in France are now given an opportunity of a three weeks' course of instruction in military radio telegraphy. The recruiting offices draft applicants into various regiments, according to the special aptitude of each. Those who have served any previous time are naturally sent to their old regiments, as the reservist knows a few tricks of the trade, and enjoys the prestige that experience commands over novices.

The first day of the course is taken up by formalities of registration, medical examination, vaccination, etc., and in becoming acquainted with the camp. With the second day instruction commences in earnest. The first thing to be done is to refresh in the memories of the reservists all they learnt during their previous training with the engineers. Each day commences with a lecture on telegraphy, given immediately after arising in order to clear the mind from the haze of sleep. Interest wanes until the old familiar knowledge of dots and dashes has been revived, and then enthusiasm knows no bounds. The result is that by the end of the first week the majority of radio telephonists are capable of sending 400 words per hour, and after three weeks' training, 900 words per hour. Then there is practical instruction in assembling and dismantling, culminating in competitive examinations, together with the ordinary military training.

Then there is still another group of reservists who during the three weeks work through a considerable number of text-books on military telegraphy, radio-electricity, and carrier pigeons, with a view to obtaining promotion to the rank of section commanders.

The aim of this course is to teach the recruit how to maintain communications between the different sections of the infantry divisions of each regiment. Each infantry division has a telegraphic company, in charge of communications by telegraph and semaphore, and a radio detachment. If necessary a loft of carrier-pigeons is included.

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