

**AMATEURS, CASH AMATEURS
AND PROFESSIONALS: A
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
HISTORY OF BICYCLE RACING
IN NEW ZEALAND,
1869-1910**

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ABSTRACT

Amateurs, Cash Amateurs and Professionals: A Social And Cultural History of Bicycle Racing in New Zealand, 1869-1910

The thesis explores the early history of bicycle racing in New Zealand, from its introduction in 1869, until the major decline of public interest in bicycle racing on specially constructed oval tracks which was, practically speaking, complete by 1910. Particular attention will be paid to the development of “cash amateur” bicycle racing, which began in Melbourne in 1890, before spreading to New Zealand in 1892.

The position will be taken that sport is socially constructed and that the institutions which are grown around it are shaped by, and reflect, broader cultural, political and social norms. It will, therefore, examine the social construction and meaning of the terms “amateur”, “cash amateur” and “professional”. It will contend that while athletes were classified by such behaviours as the acceptance of cash prizes or membership of governing bodies, concepts of race, sex, and class also informed descriptions of these behaviours by stakeholders in the construction process such as the press, bicycle manufacturers, promoters of bicycle racing and by the bicycle racers themselves

Focus will be placed on bicycle racing in New Zealand, with comparative reference to Australia, Britain, the United States and Continental Europe (primarily France). A central premise of this thesis is that nineteenth century New Zealand society was highly interconnected with a wider Anglophonic cultural, political and economic world, and that industrialised communication – steam ships, railways and telegraph – enabled and hastened the diffusion of trans-national cultural phenomena such as “velocipede mania” and the “bicycle boom”. Within these broader movements there was, however, room for localised variations. Cash amateurism, it will be argued, was one such local solution to the problem of reconciling the ideologies of amateurism and *laissez-faire* capitalism, the divergence of which was sharply identifiable in bicycle racing.

The overarching thesis is thus one of social and cultural history, exploring the social and institutional organisation of bicycle racing within a broader social and cultural context. It is structured as a narrative with chronological organisation. Within this framework, it explores themes of class, race, sex and identity, amateurism, professionalism and commercialism in sport, cultural construction by the press and modernity as a commercialised commodity.

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Researching the above sports weekly and other archived sources would have been impossible without the dedicated staff of the Aotearoa New Zealand Room in the Christchurch City Library. I can say without hyperbole that they go beyond the call of duty in their preservation and cataloguing of New Zealand's historic records. Moreover, they provide access to this material and their own considerable store of knowledge in a "user friendly" manner not always associated with archived collections.

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GLOSSARY

Blue Riband – Blue Ribband, Blue Ribbon. From an unofficial prize for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic by an ocean liner. A **Blue Riband** event was thus the premier or championship event at a sports meeting. All three spellings were used in nineteenth century newspapers, **Riband** is used here for consistency.

Chop, the – The Joke. An informal arrangement made between riders, deciding who should win. Presumably referring to the prize money being “chopped up” between the co-conspirators.

Cronk (Riding/Running) – Crooked Riding, Running Dead. Dishonest racing. Usually, not trying to win. Cronk riding was associated with gambling and betting against oneself. It might also be employed to assist another to win in return for a share of the prize. See **Chop**.

Drafting. See **Pacing**.

Drasienne – Drasine, Hobby Horse, Dandy Horse, Laufmaschine. A progenitor to the bicycle. The **Drasienne** enjoyed a brief period of popularity in 1819. The **Drasienne** featured two wheels arranged in line fore and aft, the front wheel being steerable. It lacked any means of propulsion bar the rider’s feet pushing or paddling against the ground. Named after Karl Draise, a German inventor of aristocratic birth and democratic principles.

Handicap (Race). A race where the slowest riders were given an advantage over the fastest riders. On the track, this was achieved by reducing the distance ridden by the slower riders, with all the riders starting at the same time. In a race of 100 yards, for example, if limit was 20 yards, then the slowest riders would start 20-yards in front of the fastest riders. In road races, slower riders were given a time advantage. Handicaps were allocated based on past performances. See **Limit** and **Scratch**

Headwork. Racing tactically rather than relying on physical effort alone. See **Loaf**.

High Wheeler. See **Ordinary**.

Limit (riders). The first riders to depart in a handicap race (nominally, the slowest group of riders).

Loaf – Crawl. To ride slowly in a race, trying to get one’s rival to take the lead, thereby gaining aerodynamic advantage. Loafing was originally frowned upon, but has since been incorporated into the Olympic discipline of the 200-metre sprint.

Multicycle. A bicycle designed for two or more riders. See **Pacer**.

Ordinary – Penny Farthing or High Wheeler. A bicycle developed from circa 1870 with a large, driven, front wheel and a small rear wheel.

Pacer. A cyclist, cyclists, motorcycle or other machine used to offer aerodynamic advantage to a cyclist in a race or record attempt. Originally pacers were solo cyclists, but these were quickly superseded by multicycles (tandems, triplets, quads and quints) ridden by two or more riders. See **Stayer** and **Pacing**.

Pacing – Drafting. Riding behind a bicycle, motorcycle or other machine to gain aerodynamic advantage. Pacing was a popular form of racing at the end of the nineteenth century. Today, it is still used in record-attempts and some specialised races. See **Pacer** and **Stayer**.

Peleton – The Bunch. The main group of riders in a road race. Sometimes used to refer to professional bicycle racers as a body; e.g., “drug use in the professional peleton”.

Penny Farthing. Originally a pejorative term used to describe the **Ordinary** after it had become unfashionable. Although sometimes frowned upon by purists, “**Penny Farthing**” has, through widespread usage, gained some ground amongst veteran-cycle enthusiasts. See **Ordinary**

Road Racing. Bicycle racing conducted on public roads. See **Track Racing**, **Time Trialling** and **Road Record**.

Road Record. An individual record, sometimes paced, set over a measure distance or time on open roads. See **Time Trial**.

Safety. Although **Safety** originally meant any bicycle that incorporated features designed to increase the physical safety of cyclists, after 1896, it commonly referred to a bicycle developed in the 1880s and widely adopted from the mid 1890s. Now commonplace, the **Safety** has two wheels in line, the rear wheel driven by a transmission (usually a chain, but also a belt or shaft).

Scratch (Race). A race where all the riders leave from the same mark at the same time.

Scratch (Riders). The last riders to leave in a **Handicap** race (nominally, the fastest riders in the race).

Sociable. A bicycle, tricycle, quadracycle, etc., on which two riders are seated side-by-side in a “sociable” arrangement.

Sprint. A race of 200-metres which evolved from mile or kilometre scratch race. See **Loaf**.

Spurt. To sprint or increase effort.

Stayer. A rider in a paced race. A **Stayer** rode at high speed, behind a **Pacer** or **Pacers** mounted on **Multicycles** or large motorcycles. See **Drafting**, **Pacing**, **Pacer**.

Tactics. See **Headwork**.

Time Trial. “The race of truth”. In a time trial, cyclists set off as individuals or teams at timed intervals and race “against the clock”. The resulting effort may be recorded as distance or time; e.g., the 40km time trial or the 12 hour time trial. In the case of the former, the winner is the cyclist who covers the 40km in the shortest time. In the latter, the winner is the cyclist who covers the greatest distance within the 12 hours. See **Road Record**.

Track Racing – Path Racing. Bicycle racing conducted on a **Track** or **Velodrome**, usually oval and surfaced in grass (in New Zealand, Australia and Britain), clay, wood, asphalt or concrete.

Velocipede – Boneshaker. A bicycle developed in the 1860s. Constructed of wood and/or iron, using coachbuilding techniques, the **velocipede** was superseded by the **Ordinary** in the 1870s.

Velodrome – Path, Track. Originally French, **velodrome** is now the accepted term for an oval bicycle racing track. The English favoured the term **path**. In Australasia, the term **track** was widely used in the nineteenth century (although **path** and **velodrome** were also used occasionally). For the purpose of this thesis, **track** will be used as it is the most common contemporary term.

Wheel. Late-nineteenth century jargon for bicycle.

Wheeling. Cycling.

A NOTE ON PRIMARY SOURCES

Some confusion may arise from the fact that the Christchurch Press Company published two titles in one weekly issue: *The Weekly Press* and the *New Zealand Referee and Sporting Record*. Further adding to the confusion, each issue used consistent pagination from cover to cover, despite containing two discrete titles. The *Weekly Press* was published in Christchurch from 1865. From 1891, it incorporated the *New Zealand Referee and Sporting Record*. The latter became New Zealand’s longest-running sports weekly, finally sputtering out in the mid-1920s. Despite the shared pagination, I have treated the *Weekly Press* and the *Referee* as separate titles in the footnotes of this thesis. I have done so because the *Referee* is readily identifiable as a separate title devoted solely to sporting news.

Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION

Cycling occupies a somewhat unusual position among sports. It is an old sport, originating at the moment of the birth of the modern bicycle in the late 1860s; it is an extraordinarily well documented sport; it is even a sport about which [much has] been written through the years – and yet...it is not a sport that has been well explored from a critical and academic point of view.¹

Aim of this Thesis

What was cash amateur bicycle racing? The answer to this first question is deceptively simple. Cash amateurs were cyclists who raced for cash prizes but who did not earn a living from doing so. But an answer which appears straightforward in the post-amateur, privatised leisure, pay-to-play environment of the twenty-first century was far less so in the late-nineteenth century and also for much of the twentieth century. When the Melbourne Bicycle Club launched cash amateur bicycle racing in Melbourne in 1890, many contemporary commentators, together with advocates and providers of amateur sport, simply refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the term “cash amateur”. They instead referred to cash amateur bicycle racers as “professionals”. This conflict raises further questions: why was “cash amateur” controversial? And why was it important to retain the “amateur” in cash amateur?

To those even casually acquainted with sports history, the answers to these questions will, once again, appear clear and are succinctly enunciated in the proselytising of Walter Camp, promoter of the English model of athletic amateurism in the United States, and doyen of American football:

A gentleman against a gentleman always plays to win. There is a tacit agreement between them that each shall do his best, and the best man shall win. A gentleman does not make his living, however, from his

¹ Andrew Ritchie, “J. A. Mangan: Guru of International Sports History,” in *Serious Sport: J. A. Mangan's Contribution to the History of Sport*, ed. Scott A. G. M. Crawford, (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 141.

athletic prowess. He does not earn anything by his victories except glory and satisfaction...a gentleman never competes for money, directly or indirectly.²

Given that for amateurs such as Camp, earning money “directly or indirectly” from sport precluded gentility, it is tempting to assume that any attempts to introduce cash prizes were lower class (petit bourgeoisie and working class) incursions on sport.³ The most challenging discovery to spring from the primary research for this thesis was, therefore, the knowledge that the founders of cash amateur bicycle racing in New Zealand were socially and economically indistinguishable from contemporary advocates of “pure” amateurism. They were largely middle to upper middle-class professionals and entrepreneurs who were often extremely engaged in other political, civic and sporting institutions including – most significantly – amateur sports clubs. Moreover, both cash amateur and self-defined professional bicycle racers were endorsed and officially fêted by members of the colonial socio-political élite. The development of cash amateurism in Australia and New Zealand is clearly due to more than simple downward diffusion of cycling as a sport.

It is the aim of this thesis to show that cash amateurism was a solution to the problem of reconciling the tenets of amateurism with dominant late-nineteenth century paradigms of progress, industrialism, evolution and *laissez-faire* capitalism. While structural elements of bicycle racing caused it to be particularly susceptible to friction between commercialism and amateurism, it will be argued that cash amateur cycling was a symptom of a wider crisis suffered within amateurism in the 1890s. Although amateurs have tended to look back to a “golden age” of sport situated some time in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, their ideology was really at its most powerful (in name at least) during the middle of the twentieth century.

Because the notion of cash amateurism is inextricably reliant upon the ideology of amateur sport, an equally important goal is to understand the process of when, how

² W. C. Camp, *Walter Camp's Book of College Sports*, (New York: The Century Co., 1893), 2-3.

³ I have borrowed the term “amateurist”, that is, an ideological proponent of amateurism, from S. W. Pope, “Amateurism and American Sports Culture: The Invention of an Athletic Tradition in the United States,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 13, no. 3 (December 1996): 290-309.

and why bicycle racing in New Zealand became amateur. It will be argued that the foundation of amateur bicycle clubs and, more particularly, a body to govern amateur bicycle racing in New Zealand represented an attempt to gain control of this new code of sport in the colony. This control of bicycle racing by middle-class Pakeha men was achieved at the cost of inclusiveness, especially for women, who had actually enjoyed more active participation under older models of sports organisation and delivery in nineteenth-century New Zealand.

Subsequent to these primary goals, an attempt will be made to shed light on the process whereby bicycle racing became a popular spectator sport in New Zealand over the last decades of the nineteenth century, only to suffer severe decline during the first decade of the twentieth century. It will be shown that this sequence of popularity and decline closely echoed similar experiences in Australia, the United States and Britain. This level of synchronisation has significant implications for notions of sport and national identity in New Zealand social history. Contemporary criticism and historical analysis tended to blame corruption driven by cash prizes, industry sponsorship and, in particular, the activities of bookmakers as responsible for track racing's rapid loss of popularity. This thesis will question that position, and will argue that "corruption", that is, predetermined competition outcomes, was not a sufficient and necessary cause for the failure of bicycle racing as a mass-spectator sport.

As noted above, there is a disjunction between the amateur=gentleman, cash=working-class image of nineteenth century sport and the reality that cash amateurism in New Zealand was founded by members of the respectable middle class, and that professional sporting stars were hosted and fêted in the way described above. Similarly, it was during the primary research for this thesis that axioms such as the notion that gentleman amateurs "regarded practising with disdain", were seen to be based on the writings of individuals rather than upon beliefs which were universally held even amongst amateurs.⁴ While examples of anti-practice rhetoric can readily be found, it is equally easy to discover examples of amateurs promoting practice and

⁴ Robert J. Paddick, "Amateurism: An Idea of the Past or a Necessity for the Future?" *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 3 (1994): 5.

physical training as necessary to the moral and aesthetic benefits of sport.⁵ Moreover, the argument that amateurs eschewed training is directly contradicted by innumerable examples of nineteenth century amateur cricketers, cyclists, runners, footballers, and so on, actively training. In short, the rhetoric is not matched by behaviour. This problem illustrates the danger of extrapolating historical meaning from examples of ideological rhetoric. (This and other methodological problems will be discussed in the following section of this Introduction). It is the aim of this thesis to show that in the late nineteenth century, ideas such as amateurism, professionalism and respectability were very much contested space, and that late-Victorian social, moral and political mores were much more complicated than has sometimes been allowed in sports history. “Unpacking” such terms as “amateur” and “cash amateur” can prove complicated and, at times, frustrating, but in attempting to do so, one is able to access a more complete and ultimately more satisfying understanding of late-nineteenth century society in New Zealand.

Methodology and Primary Sources

This thesis is organised as a broadly chronological narrative, examining four periods within the terminal research dates:

- 1) 1869-1878: the pre-club period, characterised by “velocipede mania” and locally-organised holiday sports meetings;
- 2) 1879-1891: the club period, characterised by ostensibly amateur bicycle clubs, “ordinary bicycles” and growing bureaucratisation;
- 3) 1892-1899: the cash amateur period: characterised by cash amateur bicycle racing, pneumatic-tyred “safety bicycles” and rapid growth in popularity (the “bicycle boom”);
- 4) 1900-1910: the period of rapid decline: characterised by track racing’s loss of popular support as a mass spectator sport.

Data has been gathered mainly from contemporary newspapers, periodicals, books and pamphlets. Bicycles and bicycle racing represented a popular newspaper topic in the nineteenth century, and cycling or “wheeling” columns grew into multi-page

⁵ See, for example, *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 5 February 1859, 3.

sections in weekly newspapers. In addition, specialist cycling periodicals rapidly developed as part of a wider sport and recreation press. Specialist magazines, books and “how-to” manuals catered to the three major (and sometimes overlapping) fields: racing, touring and technological development. Together, these published sources, and particularly newspapers, comprise the most comprehensive and detailed source of data on bicycle racing in New Zealand.

The introduction of electronically archived material and searchable databases has greatly enhanced the ability of researchers to access and use printed sources in a meaningful way. In New Zealand, the National Library’s “Papers Past” collection facilitates quantitative analysis by providing a search engine which can be used to find single words or phrases from a database of 52 newspapers dating from 1839 to 1935. In this thesis, this facility has been used to assess the relative importance of cycling as a sport in New Zealand at various points of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Newspapers were, however, speculative and risky ventures. Between 1840 and 1966, some 500 different newspapers appeared in New Zealand “but most failed to survive”.⁶ With this in mind, longitudinal quantitative analysis has been restricted to two daily newspapers that enjoyed print runs succeeding the terminal dates of each study: the Wellington *Evening Post* and the Christchurch *Star*. The advantage of data not being skewed by the sudden demise of a source comes at the expense of wider geographic sampling. Addressing this problem, qualitative comparison shows that the *Evening Post*, which was situated in Wellington, New Zealand’s capital city and home to the Press Association, published a wide range of telegraphed sports news from throughout New Zealand.

Another longitudinally successful newspaper, the weekly *Otago Witness* is a particularly useful source of qualitative data, having contained a comprehensive cycling column and, later, section. Taken together with two competing Christchurch-based weeklies – *The Weekly Press and New Zealand Referee and Sporting Record* and the

⁶ Austen Graham Bagnall, “New Zealand Press,” in *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, ed. A. H. McIntock, (Wellington: R. E. Owen, Government Printer, 1966), 667.

Canterbury Times – the *Otago Witness* provide a wealth of detailed information on cycling in New Zealand, Australia, Britain, the United States of America and Europe. Neither the *Canterbury Times* nor the *Weekly Press* is included in the Papers Past Collection; microfilmed holdings of both are, however, available.

The limitation of relying on newspapers and periodicals as primary historical source raises a fundamental epistemological question. A decision must be made as to how this source will be treated. Are newspapers to be taken as a source of facts which the researcher marshals and assembles to form a grand narrative of bicycle racing in New Zealand? Or are they to be treated with inherent scepticism, a selected cultural construction of a past that is ultimately irrecoverable? Narrative history relies on the existence of irrefutable facts that, if collected in sufficient quantity and with sufficient accuracy, allow researchers to reconstruct the past. On the face of it, newspapers appear to provide sports historians with a rich source of facts, providing a wealth of straightforward data – who played whom, where, for what and who won, are the basic building blocks of a sports history narrative.

Facts are not, however, all created equal. The result of the five-mile national championship is infinitely more likely to be reported in a newspaper than the impromptu bicycle race between two telegram delivery boys on their way back to the post office. The facts, then, have already undergone a selection process before they are presented to (or uncovered by) those seeking knowledge of the past who, in turn, contribute their own selection criteria to the process. This rigorous selection of facts is central to the problem of socially constructed evidence which continues to exercise the minds of social historians.

The even more fundamental problem of veracity has been simply and eloquently raised by Ross Harvey:

The student of the history of New Zealand newspapers needs to be constantly vigilant about distinguishing fact from fiction, and this is as true for recent material as it is for the 19th century. Journalists and editors, perhaps because their stock in trade is skill with words,

manufacture their own myths and history rather more than other writers.⁷

It is clear that if newspapers are to be used as a primary source of data, an element of caution is required.

In an attempt to stimulate a theoretically informed approach to sports history in New Zealand, Douglas Booth has referred to the uncritical reliance on recovered “facts” as “conservative reconstructionism”. He highlights problems with the “traditional narrative paradigm”, citing the example of Rex Thompson’s history of rugby in Otago, in which “Thompson appears to uncritically accept newspaper sources as credible evidence.”⁸ The point is valid. Newspaper reports constitute the first telling of sports history. They are constructed narratives intended to inform a wider audience of the events that took place at a sporting contest. In nineteenth century New Zealand, newspapers also undertook to instruct, persuade and shape public opinion.⁹ From its foundations in the 1840s, New Zealand’s press had assumed a civilising purpose that justified the ruling class’ involvement at ownership, editorial, and journalistic levels. Even in the midst of the twentieth century tradition of objective journalism, the sports pages remained one of two sections within newspapers in which open journalistic opinion was valid (the editorial pages being the other).

The relationship between reportage and persuasion, class and power is illustrated

⁷ Ross Harvey, “Newspapers,” in *Book & Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa*, eds. Penny Griffith, Ross Harvey & Keith Maslen, (Wellington: Victoria University Press), 1997, 128.

⁸ Douglas Booth, “Searching for the Past: Sport Historiography in New Zealand,” *Sporting Traditions*, 21, no. 2, (May 2005): 8.

⁹ Patrick Day, *The Making of the New Zealand Press: A Study of the Organizational and Political Concerns of New Zealand Newspaper Controllers: 1840-1880*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1990), 66-7. Day has shown that in the Crown Colony era, (1840-52), New Zealand newspapers were uneconomic, and ownership could only be undertaken by those with sufficient income to capitalise and maintain a newspaper for little or no return. Moreover, editorial and journalist duties were often undertaken voluntarily. Hence, in contrast to England, where journalism was not a respectable occupation, “in New Zealand such work came to be the preserve of the higher ranking settlers who saw it as a combination of public service and political activity”. While newspapers became more economically viable in the provincial era, political bias and conservative moral authority remained hallmarks. Ironically, Beatrice and Sydney Webb, who were often cited in the “classless society” view of New Zealand, noted the lower middle-class tastes of the editor of the Auckland *Star* while simultaneously accepting the opinion “that the good tone and general capacity of the press had always been remarkable in New Zealand” (Webb, 1959, 13-14). It appears that the Webbs’ measurement of class was based on overt material wealth, and that they were not privy to the matrix of social, political and economic power within which the press was entwined.

by the multiplicity of roles assumed by Walter G. Atack. Editor of the weekly *Canterbury Times*, and the *New Zealand Cyclist*, Atack also held various executive positions on cash amateur cycling's governing body, the League of New Zealand Wheelmen, including that of chairman. He was also was president of the New Zealand Amateur Athletics Association and an executive member of both the Amateur Swimming Association and the Amateur Boxing Association. His brother William H. Atack, manager of the Press Association, is credited with inventing the referee's whistle at a Christchurch rugby match. Atack thus administered and promoted individual sports, and directly controlled a major conduit of sports news and opinion, a conduit which has become a central source of data for research into the history of bicycle racing.

A solution, or mitigating factor, is provided by the truism that a range of different newspapers will display a range of different, often *differing*, opinions, even if the caveat must be added that they still represent a middle class, male, social grouping. Indeed, individual newspaper titles and even single issues could offer different opinions within the confines of a particular topic such as bicycle racing. These serve to illustrate internal conflict and variation which becomes lost when one treats social groupings such as "the middle class" as homogeneous. Moreover, a distinction can often be made between opinion and raw reportage of such facts as race outcomes, weather conditions and crowd size. Even though these facts have already undergone the hierarchical selection outlined above, they still have the power to corroborate or refute observations made by reporters, committee members, letter writers and other expert witnesses. This rests on the premise that events happen independently of the labelling process, and that the reportage or recording of data such as the number of people attending a bicycle race can be regarded as undistorted observations.

To extend the example, if a reporter were to observe, "Gate takings indicated that a fair-sized crowd of 5,000 people paid a shilling each to watch the racing", one might differentiate between the undistorted data (an entrance fee of a shilling was charged, 5,000 shillings were collected) from the constructed data (the audience of 5,000 constituted a fair-sized crowd). Each observation is useful and each is rendered

more so by mutual existence. Further corroboration of the constructed data can be achieved by cross-referencing other “fair-sized crowds”. Via this method the distortions introduced by social construction might be identified.

Because the premise that there is a relationship between amateurism and social class is implicit in this thesis, a definition of social classes needs to be made. The application of class schema is, by necessity, an act of compromise; this is particularly true of settler and post-settler society in New Zealand, where the art of social and economic mobility was neatly summarised in the concept of “getting on”. This mobility renders, for example, the four tier Weberian model of social classification somewhat difficult. In Weber’s model, “a social class makes up the totality of class positions within which individual and generational mobility is easy and typical”.¹⁰

Weber suggests that, as a matter of empirical fact, four major social classes can be identified under capitalism, between which social mobility is infrequent and difficult but within which it is relatively common. The first distinction is between those who own property or the means of production, and those who do not, but both groups are ‘further differentiated...according to the kind of property...and the kind of services that can be offered in the market’¹¹

In late-nineteenth century New Zealand, there was a demonstrable level of mobility into and out of ownership of the means of production, perhaps hastened in the 1890s by the Liberal Government’s land reforms. Yet this mobility does not signify the total absence of social stratification within New Zealand society or imply that life chances were somehow universally distributed throughout the colony (one might argue that the perceived necessity of the land reforms proves that the exact opposite was the case). Moreover, mobility can explain certain modes of class behaviour – the purchase of country houses by members of middle to upper bourgeoisie seeking entry to the ranks of the socially élite or the conservatism of members of the lower middle class trying to

¹⁰ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* Vol. 1, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 302.

¹¹ Richard Breen, “Foundations of a Neo-Weberian Class Analysis,” in *Approaches to Class Analysis*, ed. Erik Olin Wright, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 32.

maintain moral and social separation from blue collar workers.¹²

The existence of behaviours governed by social class implies an awareness or perception of social class by those seeking, or seeking to maintain, class membership. It is argued here that this awareness and, more precisely, the perceived criteria which it encompassed, should be included or acknowledged in any schema that delineates social class in an historical context. Birthright (inherited status), income and, especially, expenditure (“keeping up with the Joneses”) were all useful indices of social class. In a settler context, however, occupation was a more overt, reliable and easily identified marker. Notions of honesty, respectability, prestige, wisdom, dishonesty, notoriety, disreputability, and foolishness were (and are) attached to different occupations, and there was also a correlation between occupation and such tangibles as wealth and political power.

¹² The second observation was made by W. Lloyd Warner when describing the behaviour of the American lower middle class. See W. Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker and Kenneth Eells, *Social Class in America: A Manual of Procedure for the Measurement of Social Status* (Chicago: Science Research Associates Inc., 1949).

Figure 1.1: Model of Social Class by Occupation

Source: Ryan, "Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps," 21-22.

I) High White Collar	
1)	Professionals Architect Solicitor Clergyman Doctor Teacher (secondary)
2)	Major Proprietors, Managers & Officials Merchant Manufacturer Banker Hotelkeeper Builder or Contractor Sheep Farmer
II) Low White Collar	
3)	Clerks & Salesmen Auctioneer Agent Clerk
4)	Semi-professionals Photographer Surveyor Journalist School Teacher (primary)
5)	Petty Proprietors, Managers & Officials Storekeeper Fruiterer Grocer Draper Policeman Farmer Settler
III) Blue Collar	
6)	Skilled Carpenter Saddler Compositor Printer Plumber
7)	Semi-skilled & Service Workers Carter Shepard Dairyman Sawyer
8)	Un-skilled Labourers & Menial Service Workers Groom Labourer Seaman

This thesis will, therefore, use the occupation-based definition of social class in New Zealand employed by Greg Ryan in his analysis of New Zealand Cricket, a schema which was, in turn, drawn from Claire Toynbee's analysis of the Return of Freeholders of New Zealand.¹³ The model consists of eight class groupings which are divided into three major class divisions: High White Collar, Low White Collar and Blue Collar (*see Figure 1.1*).

Previous Research

As Andrew Ritchie has suggested, bicycle racing has received little academic exploration, despite the scale of its popularity at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ With research on cycling history in New Zealand being embryonic, much of my reading has been contextual. Broadly, this reading falls into three categories: New Zealand social history, specialist cycling history and more general sports history. These categories will now be discussed in more detail.

New Zealand Social History

General histories of New Zealand provide rich insight into the country's social and cultural past.¹⁵ To this a caveat is added that their collective assessment of the historical role of sport in New Zealand society is most succinctly summarised by the index entry in Sinclair's classic *A History of New Zealand*: "Sport: *see* Rugby Union".¹⁶ Although the impact of rugby on the twentieth century New Zealand cultural landscape is undeniable, it remains somewhat surprising that such phenomena as New Zealand's

¹³ Greg Ryan, "Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps: The Making of New Zealand Cricket 1832-1914," (Ph.D. thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996).

¹⁴ Ritchie "J. A. Mangan," 141.

¹⁵ See Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, revised ed., (Pelican: Auckland, 1988); W. H. Oliver with B. R. Williams, eds., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*. (Oxford: Clarendon; Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1981; reprint, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1988); Keith Sinclair, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand*, (Auckland: Oxford University Press 1990; reprint, Auckland: Oxford University Press 1993); Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand Illustrated*, (North Shore, NZ: Penguin, 2007); Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand*, (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2005); James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, (Auckland: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1996; reprint, Auckland: Penguin, 2001); *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*. (Auckland: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 2001).

¹⁶ Sinclair, *A History*, 358.

dominance in middle distance running during the middle decades of the twentieth century might be noted, but with little or no meaningful contextualisation or explanation in terms of the cultural and social conditions which might have given rise to such success. The focus on rugby as the “national sport” emphasises national identity over distinctions of class, ethnicity and gender, producing a somewhat unsatisfying image of the past, like a photograph in which the focus is slightly off.¹⁷ The overall composition is discernable, but not the detail.

Although, as Daley points out, James Belich has adopted the idea of “rugby as nation” in *Paradise Reforged*, he has, nevertheless, attempted a more nuanced view of the role of sport in New Zealand society than either Sinclair or King.¹⁸ Belich devotes several pages to rugby, but contextualises the sport’s dominant position in twentieth century New Zealand cultural life. He, for example, notes the popular and democratic nature of such field sports as pig and deer hunting, shooting and angling. Belich also includes a pertinent observation on the uneven distribution of leisure time within New Zealand households, which allowed for male participation in sport at a rate of five times that of females.¹⁹ Rugby’s impact on New Zealand society is thus presented within a more general theorisation of the cultural role of sport itself. Belich also offers something of a challenge to historians by noting the divide between academic history in New Zealand – which largely ignores sport – and the many sports histories emanating from outside the academy, which decline to “engage with history as a whole”.²⁰ He offers a novel and culturally enlightening reason for the “scholarly neglect” of sport in New Zealand’s historiography, blaming not academic snobbery, but instead musing that it “is almost as though sport is a religion too important for scholars to tamper with”.²¹

Building on the overview provided by general histories, specialised works and

¹⁷ Caroline Daley has mounted a particularly strong attack on the school of “nationalist history”, exemplified by Sinclair and King. She questions the validity concepts of national identity and, particularly, of “rugby as nation”, as expounded in such works as Finlay MacDonald’s *The Game of Our Lives: The Story of Rugby and New Zealand – And How They Shaped Each Other*, (Auckland: Viking, 1996). See Caroline Daley, “Women Endurance Swimmers: Dissolving Grease Suits and Decentering New Zealand History,” *Sporting Traditions* 21, no. 2, (May, 2005): 29-55.

¹⁸ Daley, “Women Endurance Swimmers,” 48-49, note 18; Belich, *Paradise*, 368-393.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 377.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 370.

²¹ *Ibid.*

monographs provide more detailed context. Social, cultural, economic and political histories all provide knowledge of the conditions in which bicycle racing developed in New Zealand. Transport and communication history has received welcome attention in recent years and is of immediate relevance to the development of massed sporting events.²² That improved transport, especially excursion trains and steamers, allowed access to a broader range of recreational activities is also shown in Alison Clarke's survey of Christmas, New Year and Easter activities and celebrations in nineteenth century New Zealand.²³

Given the centrality of the press to this thesis, social political and financial studies of nineteenth century newspapers have been of particular interest.²⁴ Although there has not yet been a comprehensive analysis of newspaper ownership in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Patrick Day's work covering the years between 1840 and 1880 provides valuable insight into the relationship between newspaper ownership, class, wealth and political power.²⁵ Rollo Arnold has drawn on and expanded Day's work in his masterful investigation of New Zealand society in the 1880s, magnified by the catastrophic lens of the 1885-6 firestorms.²⁶

Class, gender, ethnicity and imperialism (cultural and political) are central organising themes in sports history. The amateur/professional debate is, in particular,

²² James Watson, *Links: A History of Transport and New Zealand Society*, (Wellington: GP Publications in association with the Ministry of Transport, 1996); Neill Atkinson, *Trainland: How Railways Made New Zealand*, (Auckland: Random House, 2007); Graham Stewart, *The End of the Penny Section: When Trams Ruled the Streets of New Zealand*, (Wellington: Grantham House, 1993). A. C. Wilson, *Wired and Wireless: A History of Telecommunications in New Zealand, 1860-1987*, (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994).

²³ Alison Clarke, *Holiday Season: Christmas, New Year and Easter in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007). Interdisciplinary reading of such works as Harvey C. Perkins and Grant Cushman, eds., *Time Out?: Leisure, Recreation and Tourism in New Zealand and Australia*, (Auckland: Longman, 1998) also helped to develop an appreciation of sport and cycling within a broader leisure landscape.

²⁴ Penny Griffith, Ross Harvey & Keith Maslen, eds., *Book & Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press), 1997; Eric Pawson and Neil Quigley, "The Circulation of Information and Frontier Development: Canterbury 1850-1890," *New Zealand Geographer* 38, no. 2, (October 1982): 65-76.

²⁵ Patrick Day, *The Making of the New Zealand Press: A Study of the Organizational and Political Concerns of New Zealand Newspaper Controllers: 1840-1880*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1990).

²⁶ Rollo Arnold, *New Zealand's Burning — The Settlers' World in the Mid 1880s*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1994).

inextricably linked with notions of class, race and national character. Class has not been as popular as gender or ethnicity as an organising paradigm in New Zealand's historiography. There exists, nevertheless, a broad range of works which deal with issues of social class in New Zealand either directly or tangentially.²⁷

Cycling History

In contrast to the majority of sports histories generated outside the academy, popular cycling histories are generally presented in a social historical context. The bicycle has, amongst other things, been identified in these histories as the *de rigueur* accessory of fashionable society, the subject of a catastrophic investment bubble, a symbol of modernity and female emancipation, a useful vehicle for mobile infantry, transportation for the masses and a symbol of green consciousness.²⁸ Even the most prosaic accounts of cycling's material culture tend to offer social and cultural contextualisation of the machine. Yet, there still exists a schism in cycling histories between social analysis, which describes the bicycle as an agent for change, and descriptions of the sport of

²⁷ Stevan Eldred-Grigg, *A Southern Gentry: New Zealanders Who Inherited the Earth*, (Reed: Wellington, 1980); *A New History of Canterbury* (Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1982); *Pleasures of the Flesh: Sex and Drugs in Colonial New Zealand, 1840-1915*, (Wellington: Reed, 1984); *New Zealand Working People 1890-1990* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1990); Melanie Nolan, ed., *Revolution: the 1913 Great Strike in New Zealand*, (Christchurch, Canterbury University Press, 2005); James Bennett, "The Contamination of Arcadia? Class, Trans-national Interactions and the Construction of Identity, 1890-1913," *The New Zealand Journal of History* 33, no. 1 (April 1999): 20-42; Erik Olssen, "The 'Working Class' in New Zealand," *The New Zealand Journal of History* 8, no. 1 (April, 1974): 44-60; *The Red Feds: Revolutionary Unionism and the New Zealand Federation of Labour, 1908-14*, (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1984); "Towards a New Society," in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, eds. W. H. Oliver with B. R. Williams, (Oxford: Clarendon; Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1981; reprint, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1988) 250-278; Len Richardson, "Parties and Political Change," in *The Oxford History Of New Zealand*, eds. W. H. Oliver with B. R. Williams, (Oxford: Clarendon; Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1981; reprint, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1988), 197-225; Ian Hunter, *Age of Enterprise: Rediscovering the New Zealand Entrepreneur, 1880-1910*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007); Jim McAloon, *No Idle Rich: The Wealthy in Canterbury and Otago, 1840-1914*, (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2002); John Cookson and Graham Dunstall, eds., *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards a City Biography 1850-2000*, (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000).

²⁸ Within the huge range of bicycle histories that have been produced, the following were regularly consulted during the course of writing this thesis: David V. Herlihy *Bicycle: The History* (New Haven; London: Yale, 2004); Andrew Ritchie, *King of the Road: an Illustrated History of Cycling*, (London: Wildwood House, 1975); Fredrick Alderson, *Bicycling: A History*, (Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1972); John Woodforde, *The Story of the Bicycle*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970). One of the most comprehensive social commentaries on the bicycle is provided in David B. Perry, *Bike Cult: The Ultimate Guide to Human Powered Vehicles*, (New York: Four Walls, Eight Windows, 1995). This ambitious work synthesises an extremely broad range of topics, from transportation advocacy to the diet of professional racing cyclists. Within this broad framework, *Bike Cult* offers some insight into the cultural meanings of bicycle racing.

bicycle racing, which is largely dealt with as a separate entity in a manner reminiscent of other sports histories.

In 1987, Jim McGurn produced a three page-section on “Cycle Sport and Social Class”, concisely describing the origins of professional and amateur cycling and effectively contrasting the social class of an early amateur champion Ion Keith-Falconer with that of his professional counterpart George Waller.²⁹ But McGurn’s work on amateurism constitutes a brief introduction to a topic which has prompted the expenditure of much ink by professional historians. Moreover, his observation that “by the 1890s, cycling was giving way to football as a major spectator sport” is presented as a punctuation mark to his section on nineteenth century racing, without examination of this major shift in public taste.³⁰

Bicycle histories which have been written since the 1973 oil crisis display a strong environmentalist underpinning within a broader social democratic framework. McGurn, for example, examines the bicycle as an agent of social change, arguing that “the basic but incomparably efficient act of propelling oneself on an arrangement of wheels can still upset established values, as cycling has revived in the midst of the motor age”.³¹ A utopian socialist role is implied when he insists that, in the second half of the twentieth century, the bicycle “became a generally liberating and harmonious form of transport in countries such as China”.³² This contrasts with his observation that “transport politics are not the concern of bicycle sport spectators, nor of the 1000 or so professional cyclists whose world is rigidly contained by commercial considerations and the self contained ethics of their occupation”.³³

The era of modern European bicycle racing intersects rather than overlaps the timeframe covered by this thesis.³⁴ Some general reading of academic histories and

²⁹ Jim McGurn, *On Your Bicycle: The Illustrated Story of Cycling*, new ed., (York: Open Road, 1999), 60-63.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 63.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 179.

³⁴ Arguably, the modern era of bicycle racing began with the birth of *Le Tour de France* in 1903. David B. Perry writes:

cycle racing almanacs was, nevertheless, useful. While McGurn's assessment of the relationship (or lack thereof) between bicycle racing's *cognoscenti* and transportation politics might be fair, the implication that the professional *peleton* exists independently of social, political and cultural forces is not supported by evidence from Europe. The roots of Le Tour de France lie in the Dreyfus affair, and although the primary motivation of the race founder Henri Desgrange was to improve circulation of *L'Auto*, the sports paper which he edited, he also intended its cyclists would represent and inspire heroism in French youth.³⁵ The poetic reference to the race as *La Grande Boucle* (the great strap) reflects its strategic role as an agent of national unification which educated French citizens about the geography of their own country. Nor was bicycle racing in France exempt from industrial or political disputes. Over its first century, "Le Tour" was subjected to occasional strikes, both by its riders and by groups from outside cycling who sought nationwide publicity by disrupting the race.

In Italy, the presence of *Tifosi* (socially organised, openly obsessive sports fans) precludes the divorce of sport from cultural meaning. The starkest example of the relationship between European bicycle racing and politics is provided by the 1948 Tour de France. After an assassination attempt on communist leader Palmiro Togliatti, the Italian prime minister telephoned Italy's conservative Catholic cycling champion Gino "The Pious One" Bartali, "begging him to win the Tour in order to distract the country from civil chaos."³⁶ Despite being in a winning position, Bartali and the entire Italian team were on the brink of withdrawal from the race due to the political turmoil at home. After the prime minister's call, the team continued and Bartali won the 1948 Tour de France. An obituary for Gino Bartali quoted a post-war Italian politician:

The birth of the Tour de France in 1903 has been compared with other historic events of the same year, including the first motor-powered flight by the Wright Brothers, the Nobel Prize awarded to Marie and Pierre Curie for their pioneering work with radioactivity, the filming of the first Western movie in America, and the Serbian revolution that instigated World War I.

Perry, *Bike Cult*, 404.

The common thread of modernity running through Perry's examples is significant.

³⁵ Ibid. For a detailed examination of the relationship between the Tour and heroic sporting achievement as a symbol of French nationalism, see Christopher S. Thompson, *The Tour De France: A Cultural History*, (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2006).

³⁶ Les Woodland, ed., *The Yellow Jersey Companion to the Tour de France*, London, Yellow Jersey Press, 2007, 37-40.

“To say that civil war was averted by a Tour de France victory is surely excessive,” said the former prime minister Giulio Andreotti, 81, who at the time was a young Christian Democrat politician. “But it is undeniable that on that 14th of July of 1948, day of the attack on Togliatti, Bartali contributed to ease the tensions.”³⁷

This acknowledgement of the social, cultural and even political meaning of bicycle racing by politicians and journalists suggests that if the sport was “self contained”, it nevertheless maintained open dialogue with wider societal influences.

Two major fields of thought which have included cycling history within their analysis are “modernity” and the “social construction of technology”. Glen Norcliffe uses modernity as the central organising structure of his examination of bicycle manufacturing and use in nineteenth century Canada.³⁸ Norcliffe adapts the information technology “carrier wave” theory developed by Peter Hall and Paschal Preston and applies it to the social history of bicycle use.³⁹ In so doing, he highlights the media’s role for “‘manufacturing consent’ for things modern”, a position which has informed my own understanding of the relationship between newspapers and the construction (and dismantling) of bicycle racing as a popular mass spectator sport.⁴⁰

Equally influential is Wiebe E. Bijker’s “social construction of technology” (SCOT) theory.⁴¹ Bijker used the development of the safety bicycle to support SCOT as a model of technological development which argues that human action shapes technology, rather than the other way round.⁴² Bijker’s use of the pneumatic tyred safety

³⁷ Alessandra Stanley, “Gino Bartali, 85, a Hero in Italy for His Cycling Championships”, *New York Times*, 6 May 2000. <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/05/06/sports/gino-bartali-85-a-hero-in-italy-for-his-cycling-championships.html#> (accessed 2, January, 2010).

³⁸ Glen Norcliffe, *The Ride to Modernity: The Bicycle in Canada from 1869-1900*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

³⁹ Peter Geoffrey Hall & Paschal Preston, *The Carrier Wave New Information Technology and the Geography of Innovation, 1846-2003*, (London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988).

⁴⁰ Norcliffe, *Modernity*, 15.

⁴¹ Wiebe E. Bijker, *Of Bicycles, Bakelites And Bulbs: Towards a Theory of Social Change*, Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press: 1995.

⁴² The bicycle history used in the case study was later questioned by Nick Clayton, one of the chief instigators in a renewed interest in cycling history through the foundation of the International Cycle History Conference. The ensuing debate centred on the relationship between empirical evidence and theory and was, perhaps, inevitable in a field that enjoyed a rapid expansion of historical research. See Nick Clayton, “SCOT: Does It Answer?” *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 2, (April 2002), 351-360; Wiebe E. Bijker & Trevor J. Pinch, T. J. “SCOT Answers, Other Questions: A Reply to Nick Clayton,” *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 2, (April 2002), 361-369; Nick Clayton, “Rejoinder,” *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 2, (April 2002), 369-370; Bruce Epperson, “Does SCOT Answer? A Comment,”

bicycle to illustrate SCOT is particularly pertinent to discussions of the relationship between the expenses of bicycle racing and the amateur definition. In New Zealand, the Kennett brothers are collectively responsible for the largest and most cohesive body of work on New Zealand cycling history. They briefly examine the amateur/cash divide in a New Zealand context, but do not move beyond the aristocratic amateur, blue-collar professional athlete paradigm.⁴³ Their biographies of prominent racing cyclists do, however, provide a wealth of biographic detail, and their rigorous footnoting is a welcome boon to those seeking to engage in further research.⁴⁴

In an exception to the lack of academic interest in New Zealand's cycling history, Clare Simpson has approached the subject from the perspective of female respectability, and has also researched the early development of cycle touring.⁴⁵ Her perspective on cycling, modernity and respectability has, in particular, informed this thesis.

Sports History

Modern sport has been identified as a British, and, often, a more specifically English, invention, by both contemporary commentators and sports historians. Since it will be asserted in this thesis that sport was imported to New Zealand by British migrants and by books, newspapers and other print media, it is difficult to argue against contextualisation via the rich historiography of nineteenth century British sports.⁴⁶

Technology and Culture 43, no. 2, (April 2002), 371-373.

⁴³ Jonathan Kennett, project ed., *Ride – the Story of Cycling in New Zealand*, (Wellington: The Kennett Brothers, 2004), 96.

⁴⁴ The volume most relevant to this thesis is Jonathan Kennett and Bronwen Wall, *Phil O'Shea: Wizard on Wheels*, New Zealand Cycling Legends 01, (Wellington: The Kennett Brothers, 2005).

⁴⁵ Clare Simpson, "A Social History of Women and Cycling in Late-Nineteenth Century New Zealand," (Ph.D. thesis, Lincoln University, 1998); "Capitalising on Curiosity: Women's Professional Bicycle Racing in the Late-Nineteenth Century," in *Cycling and Society*, eds. Dave Horton, Paul Rosen and Peter Cox (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 47-66; "The Development of Women's Cycling in Late-Nineteenth Century New Zealand," in *Sport, Power and Society in New Zealand: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ASSH Studies in Sport History, no. 11, ed. John Nauright, (Sydney: University of New South Wales and Australian Society for Sports History, 1995), 21-45.

⁴⁶ Neil Tranter, *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain, 1750-1914*, (Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Martin Polley, *The History of Sport in Britain, 1880-1914: The Varieties of Sport*, (London: Routledge, 2004); Derek Birley, *Playing the Game: Sport and British Society, 1910-1945*, (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1995); Peter Borsay, *History of Leisure: the British Experience Since 1500*, (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Tony Mason, ed., *Sport in Britain: A Social History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Relevant and interlocking fields of enquiry in sports history include the development of commercialised sport, amateurism and the public school games cult, the amateur/professional debate, ludic diffusion/cultural imperialism and the role of rational recreation in the development of modern sport. The elements of cycling history which coincide with more general sports histories centre upon themes of social change, middle-class recreation and the slightly later “escape” from urban environments by blue-collar workers via bicycle rides into the countryside.⁴⁷ Lowerson takes a particular interest in the “clubability” of the English middle classes, providing a more measured image of sporting life than the “aristocratic amateur, blue collar professional” axiom. He notes that cycling was

By far the most widespread ‘growing pleasure for the middle classes’ relying on a club core with a wide periphery of individual pursuits and shifting over the whole pastime-athletic sport gamut whilst resisting historians’ attempts to identify class-specific attributes.⁴⁸

The identification of “class-specific attributes” has been a major concern in sports historiography. Paradigms such as the enforced vacuum in working-class sport at the beginning of the Victorian era have been established and subsequently challenged.⁴⁹ Mike Huggins has claimed that a concentration of research effort on working-class sport has left the middle-class contribution to sport under-represented.⁵⁰ He argues:

The over-emphasis on working-class sport by some key practitioners,

1989); Thomas S. Hendricks, *Disputed Pleasures: Sport and Society in Preindustrial England*, (New York; Westport, Ct.; London: Greenwood Press, 1991); Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, (London: Hambledon and London, 2004); Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution: c.1780-c.1880*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, c1980).

⁴⁷ Richard Holt, *Sport and Society in Modern France*, (London: Macmillan, 1981); *Sport and the British*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle-class, 1870-1914* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1993); Wray Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Steven A. Riess, *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

⁴⁸ Lowerson, *Sport*, 116.

⁴⁹ The argument that working class sport had been almost entirely suppressed during the Industrial Revolution is made in R. W. Malcomson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973). In *Sport, Economy and Society*, Tranter suggests that this is an exaggeration but the most comprehensive counter argument is provided by Adrian Harvey, *The Beginning of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793-1850*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004).

⁵⁰ Mike Huggins, “Second Class Citizens? Middle-Class Culture and Sport 1850-1910: A Reconstruction,” *History of Sport* 17, no. 1, (March 2000): 1-35.

and the *collective myopia* towards the middle-class contribution this entails in sports history circles has tilted sports history downwards to its detriment in terms of making a more accurate, complete and substantial contribution to social and cultural history.⁵¹

Huggins contends, “we need more recognition of complexity, diversity, adaptation and projection as well as the shifting nature of class”, a suggestion which is especially relevant to the socially mobile colonial environment.

A number of general sports histories and monographs on sports other than cycling have been immensely useful to this thesis.⁵² In particular, Geoffrey Vincent’s work on the origins of amateur rowing and athletics in Christchurch provided a wealth of historical detail and theory about the interplay between sport and social class in nineteenth century New Zealand.⁵³ Scott A. G. M. Crawford’s pioneering “History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Colonial Otago” sheds light on the origins and role of sport in that province, with some findings applicable to a wider colonial society.⁵⁴

Caroline Daley, as mentioned above, has used the example of female endurance swimmers to critique the “rugby as nation” model of New Zealand sports history:

There are times when we need to remove the explanatory frameworks

⁵¹ Ibid., 29.

⁵² Scott A.G.M. Crawford, “Recreational and Sporting Values on The Fringe of an Imperial Empire: The Reshaping of a British Heritage In Colonial New Zealand.” *Sport & Colonialism in 19th Century Australasia*, A.S.S.H. *Studies in sports History* 1, (Sydney: University of New South Wales and Australian Society for Sports History, 1986), 65-79; Douglas Booth, “Searching for the past: sport historiography in New Zealand,” *Sporting Traditions* 21, no. 2 (May 2005): 1-28; *The Field: Truth and Fiction in Sport History*, (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2005); Peter N. Heidenstrom, *Athletes of the Century: 100 years of New Zealand Track and Field*, (Wellington: GP Publications, 1992); Chris Laidlaw, “Sport and National Identity: Race Relations, Business, Professionalism,” in *Sport, Society and Culture in New Zealand*, ed. Brad Patterson, (Wellington: Stout Research Centre, University of Wellington, 1999), 11-18; Camilla Obel, “Amateur Rugby’s Spectator Success: Cultivating Inter-Provincial Rugby Publics in New Zealand, 1902-1995,” *Sporting Traditions* 21, no. 2 (May 2005): 97-117; Greg Ryan, “Sport in Christchurch”, in *Southern Capital: Christchurch, Towards a City Biography, 1850-2000*, eds. Graeme Dunstall, and J. E. Cookson, (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 325-352; *The Making of New Zealand Cricket, 1832-1914*, (London: Frank Cass, 2004); David R. Thomas and Lorna Dyal, “Culture, Ethnicity, and Sport Management: A New Zealand Perspective.” *Sport Management Review* 2 (1999): 115-132.

⁵³ Geoffrey Vincent, “Sports and Other Signs of Civilization in Colonial Canterbury, 1850-1890,” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Canterbury, 2002); “‘Impossibly Elitist And Snobbish’: Amateurism in Canterbury; 1850-1880: the Examples of Aquatics and Athletics” *ASSH Bulletin*, 31, (December 1999): 6.

⁵⁴ Scott A. G. M. Crawford, “A History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Colonial Otago,” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Queensland, 1984).

that cover up and distort our past. In New Zealand history, this means sometimes stripping away the national, nationalistic paradigm and thinking about what has been ignored, marginalised and falsified by such an approach. A re-examination of New Zealand history outside of a cultural nationalist framework allows us to consider both the place of New Zealanders in the wider world, and the wider world's place in New Zealand.⁵⁵

This challenge has been a central premise in this thesis. Bicycle racing was, in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, an international sport dominated by peripatetic stars. From the first newspaper reports of “velocipede mania” in 1869, cycling columns – later, sections – in daily and weekly newspapers comprised a mixture of local and foreign news and race results. Britons, Europeans and Americans raced in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. New Zealanders raced in Britain, Europe and America. To explain this phenomenon in a meaningful way requires one to heed Daley’s call to abandon “‘the nation’ as a category for historical analysis”.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Daley, “Women Endurance Swimmers”, 45.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

Chapter 2 – ANTECEDENTS: VELOCIPEDA MANIA, HOLIDAYS AND RURAL SPORTS MEETINGS

*The Velocipede mania is having its day here as elsewhere, and in all parts of the Colony the press teems with accounts of velocipede-making and of attempts at driving the new-fangled hobby-horse.*¹

Introduction

Organised bicycle racing arrived in New Zealand during the last quarter of 1869, when velocipede races appeared on the programmes of holiday fêtes and sports meetings in Dunedin, Christchurch and Nelson. But while these general sports meetings provided a ready-made venue, an equally significant bicycle race took place on the dusty streets of a coastal town. In this race, a maker and an importer of the new-fangled velocipede organised a match race with one another in order to promote their own particular machines to a not-altogether-convinced general public.

This chapter will briefly chart the spread of organised velocipede racing from its Parisian origins, examine the relationship between holiday sports meetings and the velocipede and seek an explanation for why velocipede racing failed to sustain itself beyond 1872. It will also show how news of a brief social phenomenon –“velocipede mania”– travelled along inter-cultural and intra-cultural communication lines from Continental Europe to Britain, the United States and Australasia.

In examining the brief glory days of the velocipede and the much longer-lived popularity of mass sports meetings in New Zealand, an undertaking will be given to do more than simply provide a background to the “real” events of the cash prize versus trophy debate that unfolded two decades later. It will be shown that in New Zealand, as in Britain, organised sport displayed strong commercial characteristics and mass appeal

¹ *North Otago Times*, 28 September 1869, 3.

in the years prior to the wide adoption of games culture and the amateur rule.² Commercialisation is defined here as the introduction of business interests and practices to sporting events – including the levying of entrance and admission charges, the sale of liquor and refreshments, gambling, staking, newspaper reportage and the provision of *extra sportif* entertainment at sporting events. The extra commercial dimension which velocipede racing added to this mix was the machine itself. As a manufactured artefact, the velocipede was conceived and marketed as a recreational tool by coachbuilders and blacksmiths seeking to develop and exploit new markets. Thus, a commercial proposition lay at the very core of the bicycle's early development.

The commercial features of early sports meetings did not prevent local authorities from promoting and investing in them on the basis that they provided “rational entertainment” for an urban populace that was increasingly perceived as unruly and licentious. This belief was consistent with a wider movement for “rational recreation” which radiated from the British middle-classes in the mid-nineteenth century. The adoption of a commercial model for delivering rational recreation is implicated in the enclosure of sport within increasingly sophisticated stadia. In the case of New Zealand, this shift is distinctive because some of the pressures on public spaces that had developed in industrialised British cities were largely absent in the frontier landscape of the British Empire's most distant colony. It will be argued that limitations on the use of public spaces in the colony were more social than structural, and that the move towards enclosure can be more clearly identified as a commercial development rather than a by-product of industrial urbanisation. This chapter will examine more closely the relationship between the enclosure of sport and the adoption of a commercial model to deliver rational recreation.

² Sports historian, Adrian Harvey contends:

Between 1783 and 1850, a substantial, essentially homogeneous, commercial sporting culture grew up in Britain, servicing a mass public. The interests of this audience were stimulated by a sporting press that disseminated this information nationally. Throughout the period, sporting events were based upon particular skills and restricted by strict rules. Sport, itself, was a highly sophisticated business, employing professional players and utilizing specially created stadia.

Adrian Harvey, *The Beginning of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793-1850*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 1.

In later chapters, it will be shown how the tension between commercial origins and the notions of amateur purity (which has traditionally linked with the movement for rational recreation) resulted in not one, but several crises that struck sport in general and cycling in particular. Examining the relationship between rational recreation and commercialised sport prior to the establishment of bureaucratically-organised bicycle clubs will shed light on an aspect of middle-class involvement in sport that is often overlooked.

From Draisienne to Velocipede

The history of the bicycle is punctuated by a series of booms and fads, each of which has run its course sometime during the last two centuries. The first fad was for the *Draisienne*, hobby horse or dandy horse as it was variously known, which manifested briefly in Western Europe in 1819. Named after its developer, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Christian Ludwig, Freiherr Drais von Sauerbronn, the *Draisienne* was a heavy, two-wheeled device that riders propelled simply by paddling against the ground with their feet.³ Severe technical limitations are usually cited as responsible for the *Draisienne*'s demise: paddling left the rider's feet in the mud and dust of the road, and the machine's extreme weight and lack of suspension resulted in strains, ruptures and other physical injuries. Although Karl Drais may have envisioned practical uses for his device, its use never extended beyond that of a recreational toy, briefly adopted by young male members of élites in European capitals.⁴

Subsequent experiments in human powered vehicles centred mainly on three and four wheeled, hand or foot driven carts. Then, in the first half of the 1860s, a French machine dubbed the "Velocipede" brought all the elements of the bicycle – two wheels in line, a steered front wheel and a foot driven rotary crank – together in one marketable

³ Although aristocratic by birth, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Christian Ludwig, Freiherr Drais von Sauerbronn was of democratic inclination and preferred to be known simply as Karl Drais, by which name he will be referred to for the remainder of this thesis.

⁴ For a succinct examination of the *Draisienne*, its development and limitations, see Wiebe E. Bijker, *Of Bicycles, Bakelite and Bulbs: Towards a Theory of Sociotechnical Change*, (Cambridge, Mass.; London MIT press, 1995), 20-25.

package.⁵ Commercial viability was achieved in 1867 with the shift from wood to iron for the frame, forks and handlebar of the machine. By 1869, the second two-wheeled “craze”, this time for velocipedes, reached its zenith before disappearing almost as quickly as it had sprung up. At the height of the velocipede’s popularity, France boasted more than a hundred makers, thirty velocipede clubs “and as many as fifty thousand machines.”⁶

Velocipede racing officially began in Paris on 31 May 1868, when *Michaux et Compagnie*, the industry leaders in velocipede production and marketing, sponsored a race in the suburb of Saint-Cloud.⁷ The event was a successful marketing exercise by *Michaux et Compagnie*, and established a pattern of commercialism that would influence bicycle racing throughout its history. Over the next year, the French velocipedists continued in the vanguard of sporting innovation. Velocipede clubs comprising young, male, members of the bourgeoisie promoted their sport by joining forces with municipal authorities to run races sponsored by, and identified with, individual French cities.⁸

Interest in Velocipedes also was apparent in Britain, but it was in the north-eastern United States of America (USA), and especially in New York City, Boston and New Haven that the craze commonly referred to as “velocipede mania” erupted most violently.⁹ The rise and fall of velocipede riding as a fashionable pastime in the USA was reminiscent of the earlier enthusiasm for *Draisiennes* in London and Paris but was even greater in scope:

Of the immediate post-Civil War sporting crazes none took hold more quickly than the velocipede boom. Beginning in the fall of 1868, no less than 16,000 bicycles were reportedly sold nationwide during the first four months of the boom, one-fifth of the purchases occurring in New York¹⁰

⁵ David Herlihy, *Bicycle: the History* (New Haven; London, 2004), 75.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 75 & 127.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 134-135.

⁹ Jim McGurn, *On Your Bicycle: the Illustrated Story of Cycling*, new ed., (York: Open Road, 1999), 41.

¹⁰ Melvin L Adelman, *A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics, 1820-*

The machine's popularity grew rapidly in the northern winter of December 1868 to January 1869, and was supported by the hasty construction of indoor rinks on which new riders learned and practised the art of velocipede riding.¹¹ The use of indoor venues was dictated by the harsh winter climate, which prevented outdoor riding.¹² More velocipede halls were opened in spring; skating rinks were converted into riding rinks and fashionable citizens looked forward to a summer of outdoor riding. By mid-summer, 1869, however, velocipede riding had failed to move convincingly outdoors and the rage for velocipedes was declared all but over. The *New York Times* summed up the situation:

Compared with the number of velocipede halls opened in the Spring, there are now but few patronized. Some have become the resort of roughs who monopolize the floors, and those which are respectable are but thinly attended.¹³

The newspaper also examined the central problem of utility:

As a practical conveyance the velocipede has proved itself of little value, while as a source of amusement or exercise its use cannot be general.¹⁴

This perceived lack of utility was, to some degree, exacerbated by official belligerence towards the new mode of transport. Municipal authorities quickly banned riders from footpaths, including those found in public parks.¹⁵ Unfortunately, material and design limitations made velocipede use on the notoriously bad American roads difficult and dangerous.¹⁶ The ban from footpaths might not have been so devastating had it not extended to parks, for without sanctioned access to these summer venues, the velocipede lost its usefulness as a tool for public displays of wealth, fashion and athletic vigour. Completing the set of problems faced by the American velocipede was a near-farcical dispute that began when Calvin "Royalty" Witty purchased a velocipede patent and proceeded to charge US\$10 per machine for the right to manufacture.¹⁷ It has been

1870, (Urbana; Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 262.

¹¹ *New York Times*, 4 September 1868, 8; 7 December 1868, 3; 4 April 1869, 8.

¹² McGurn, *On Your Bicycle*, 41.

¹³ *New York Times*, 28 June 1869, 8.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ John Woodforde, *The Story of the Bicycle*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 32.

¹⁶ McGurn, *On Your Bicycle*, 43.

¹⁷ Herlihy, *Bicycle*, 108-109, 126.

suggested that this profiteering stimulated a “get rich quick” mentality, stifling the nascent bicycle industry in the USA and arresting the development of innovations which may have met the challenges of bad roads and heavy materials.¹⁸

A notable feature of velocipede mania was its rapid dissemination via print media. Books, pamphlets and even sheet music devoted to the subject supplemented a broad range of newspaper articles ranging from the satirical to the technical. The speed with which the fad for all things velocipede spread from Paris to London and New York is directly attributable to the enthusiasm with which it was embraced by the press as a newsworthy topic. This process was not restricted to the Northern Hemisphere alone. By the end of 1869, news of the “mania” had spread to the small port cities that dotted the coast of one of the British Empire’s most far-flung colonies.

New Zealand’s first recorded velocipede race took place in the North Otago town of Oamaru. In mid-1869, a Velocipede had been manufactured locally “according to the most approved model” by “Messrs Reid and Grey,” coachmakers.¹⁹ The possibility of a race arose on 4 September 1869, when another machine arrived on the *P.S. Wallace*, imported from Melbourne via Dunedin by an Oamaru resident.²⁰ This machine already possessed a racing pedigree, having “won the first prize at a Melbourne race”.²¹ It was not long before two intrepid velocipedists – “Mr John Haggie, of the Commercial Hotel, and...Mr Thomas Woonton”, an employee of Reid and Gray – were seen practising on the streets of the North Otago town.²² The actual race, a mile-long run up the main street of Oamaru, took place on Saturday, 9 October 1869, just over a month after the importation of the Melbourne machine and a bare 17 months after the Saint Cloud races in France.²³ The stake was £5, in addition to which “a little money (was) ventured...in the shape of bets.” A crowd of spectators trekked out to the starting line, a mile out of town, to witness the beginning of the contest, while a

¹⁸ Ibid., 126.

¹⁹ *North Otago Times*, 27 August 1869, 4.

²⁰ *North Otago Times*, 7 September 1869, 2.

²¹ *North Otago Times*, 12 October, 1869, 2.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

further 200 gathered outside the Commercial Hotel to view its finish.²⁴ In the event, the local machine soundly beat the imported one – a success attributed, in part, to its larger front wheel.²⁵

This nascent bicycle race had much in common with such early commercial and professional sports as prize fighting, pedestrianism and horse racing.²⁶ Human and equestrian racing had, in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, mostly been run as match races for stakes, with rules drawn up on an event by event basis and agreed upon by the competitors and their backers.²⁷ The Oamaru race followed this pattern of organisation. Run as a stand-alone event, it was precipitated by the existence of two velocipedes, perhaps by design, in the same town at the same time. It is likely that Reid and Gray, who had advertised their velocipede in the *North Otago Times*, viewed the race as a way of putting their own velocipede before the public in much the same way as *Michaux et Compagnie* were doing (albeit, on a much larger scale) in Paris (see *Figure 2.1*).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 2. The size of the front wheel is critical in both velocipedes and the Ordinary bicycles which superseded them because gear ratio is directly governed by wheel size on direct drive machines. If two velocipedes are being driven at the same RPM (revolutions per minute), the machine with the larger front wheel will naturally travel a further distance in a given time.

²⁶ “Until the middle of the nineteenth century, British and American runners were called ‘pedestrians’ and prizes for races were invariably money.”
Edward S. Sears, *Running through the Ages* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2001), 180.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, John Henry Walsh defined pedestrianism as “the contest between a man and time, in walking, running, leaping &c.”

John Henry Walsh, *Manual of British Rural Sports: Comprising Shooting, Hunting, Coursing, Hawking, Racing, Boating, Pedestrianism and the Various Rural Games and Amusements of Great Britain*, seventh (revised) edition, (London: Fredrick Warne and Co, 1867), 508.

Pedestrianism evolved from staked races between footmen, each backed by his employer. By 1830, pedestrian events were, according to Vamplew, “usually endurance feats for large wagers”.

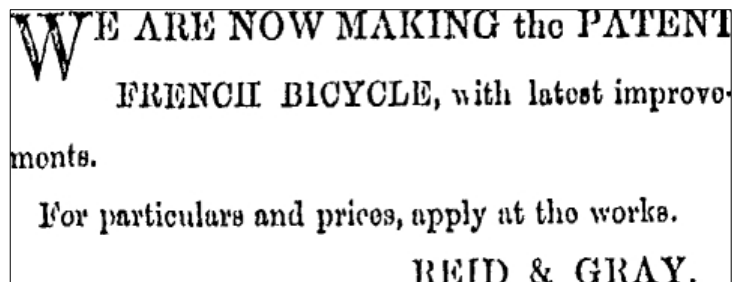
Vamplew, *Pay Up*, 40.

²⁷ See Thomas S. Hendricks, *Disputed Pleasures: Sport and Society in Preindustrial England*, (New York; Westport, Ct.; London: Greenwood Press, 1991), 151-154, for a succinct description of English horse racing in the eighteenth century. See also, Adrian Harvey, *The Beginning of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793-1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing), 2004. As the title of his work indicates, Harvey has identified the existence of commercial sport in Britain before the so-called mid-nineteenth century “sports revolution”. On page 198, he notes:

Long before the Napoleonic war a number of people were employed for their athletic skills. Footmen were often chosen for their speed at running, or talent at boxing, while good cricketers were employed as estate workers and jockeys as grooms.

While Harvey admits that these physically talented liveried servants were, in the late eighteenth century, still treated largely as the “playthings” of their employers, he argues that the economic independence of working-class sportsmen rose in the first half of the nineteenth century as the opportunities to earn money from sporting success broadened from patronage to include stakes, gambling, tuition and display (Harvey, *Beginning*, 198-200).

Figure 2.1: Advertisement, North Otago Times, 17 August 1869, 3.



Just as in Paris, London and New York, bicycle racing in its most original form was, in New Zealand, an enterprise with distinctly commercial overtones. Before the end of 1869, two more velocipede races would take place, one in Dunedin and another in Christchurch. These races involved multiple machines and were held alongside a host of other events that made up the programmes of public sports meetings. While these meetings exhibited a greater degree of bureaucratic organisation than did the Oamaru race, they still resembled the old gambling sports – with their backers and gamblers – as much as the rationalised games of the late-nineteenth century.

Velocipede Racing at Holiday Sports Meetings

Up until 1880, the dominant sporting events in New Zealand were the various Caledonian games, rural sports meetings and Friendly Society fêtes that might be collectively referred to as holiday sports meetings.²⁸ Held in New Zealand’s cities, towns and villages, these meetings were lightly bureaucratised versions of traditional folk events brought to New Zealand by its settler migrants. Novelty races, music, refreshment stands selling both alcoholic and non-alcoholic treats, women’s races and children’s entertainments were borrowed from “the boisterous festivals or ‘wakes’ held annually in rural parishes throughout England until at least the 1850s”.²⁹ Like those bucolic English festivals and the holiday rowing regattas and horse races that were similarly established during the pioneering era, holiday sports meetings were as much social as ludic occasions. In the language of social capital as defined by Robert Putnam,

²⁸ See Geoffrey Vincent, “Sports and Other Signs of Civilization in Colonial Canterbury, 1850-1890,” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Canterbury, 2002).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

they provided both social glue and social lubricant in New Zealand's fledgling communities.³⁰ Thus, it is not surprising to find that between 1862 and 1868, holiday sports were not pioneered in cities or substantial towns, but rather "in the hamlets" that dotted the Canterbury Plains.³¹

In December 1868, however, a regular Anniversary Day sports meeting was established in Christchurch after several years of "widespread indifference".³² The event was initially held in Latimer Square and then, as crowds grew, in the more capacious Hagley Park. This use of public domains precluded the imposition of an admission fee for spectators, though donations were collected at the gate with varying degrees of success. Additional income came via an "Art Union" lottery and from the erection of a grandstand, entry to which carried a charge of one shilling. Vincent notes that this stand may have served a social function, dividing the socially élite from the general populace of spectators, but adds the caveat that with a relatively affordable entry fee:

The number of visitors seeking entry was usually far in excess of what could be accommodated, a circumstance that suggests the existence of a clientele drawn from outside the local élites. Hence the extent to which the grandstand actually constituted a barrier should not be exaggerated.³³

In contrast to the Popular Sports (as the Anniversary Day rural sports meeting became known), the Friendly Society Fêtes and Caledonian Games that shared many of its features not only charged admission, but were run as profit-making exercises by their organising committees. The Friendly Societies' social function of providing welfare for their members meant that their fêtes should turn a profit. These events were, therefore, held on private grounds, allowing an admission fee (usually one shilling) to be charged.³⁴

As the Popular Sports Committee and Caledonian Society succeeded in

³⁰ See Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

³¹ Vincent, "Sports", 81.

³² *Ibid.*, 82.

³³ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

establishing their gatherings as the year's dominant sporting events, some of the lodges and friendly societies carved out a social niche in the annual leisure calendar. In 1885, for example, Christchurch's Foresters Lodge decided that, despite having collected "a number of very valuable prizes", there would "be no formal sports" at their annual Boxing Day Picnic, which would instead be "more of a social friendly gathering of the members, their wives and sweethearts."³⁵ Running, jumping, throwing, fighting and climbing had become "serious leisure".³⁶ And while these activities could be undertaken with little or no preparation (as, indeed they are, on a daily basis, by millions of children around the world) the Christchurch chapter of the Foresters' Lodge was, by 1885, able to distinguish a difference between "casual" and "serious" sporting competition.

For those who wished to be more "serious" and to chance their arm at some lucrative prizes, the major sports meetings provided regular, if not frequent, opportunity. They also provided a convenient venue for introducing bicycle racing to New Zealand's sporting public. In 1869, the Dunedin Foresters' Fête, then in its fifth year, was still very much a sporting event. Held on the Prince of Wales' Birthday, the Fête attracted 2000 spectators and offered a variety of athletic, folk and cultural events, including a velocipede race.³⁷ The race between four bicycles, two tricycles and one quadracycle proved popular with spectators:³⁸

A variety of athletic sports was improvised, as well as a velocipede race, which, being the first of the kind that has taken place at a public gathering in Dunedin, was watched with great interest, and the numerous "spills" that occurred were productive of much amusement.³⁹

As with the other events at the Fête, the velocipede race offered cash prizes – £3 for first and £2 for second. In common with the Oamaru event, at least one competitor,

³⁵ *Weekly Press*, 3 January 1885, 18.

³⁶ R. A. Stebbins, *Amateurs, Professionals and Serious Leisure*, (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 2.

³⁷ *Tuapeka Times*, 13 November 1869, 2.

³⁸ In 1869, a bicycle was a kind of velocipede, but a velocipede was not necessarily a bicycle. The term "bicycle" was being used (see, for example, *Nelson Evening Mail*, 9 July 1869, 2) but the term "velocipede" remained more popular and generic.

³⁹ *Otago Witness*, 13 November 1869, 10.

Samuel Thomson, was the employee of a velocipede manufacturer, “Messrs Morgan and M’Gregor, of Port Chalmers”.⁴⁰ The velocipedes were given flamboyant names such as “the Duke of Edinburgh”, “King Cobb”, “Flying Jib”, and “Prince of Wales”. This naming is reminiscent not only of naming traditions in horse racing, boating and yachting, but also of the impressive-sounding, even grandiose names given to railway locomotives. It highlights the fact that velocipedes were not mass-produced consumer durables, but rare, hand crafted, machines that warranted individual attention and even names.

The next recorded velocipede race took place in Christchurch on Canterbury Anniversary Day, 16 December 1869, when a race between six machines was placed on the programme of the Rural Sports held in Latimer Square. The 1869 sports meeting built on the success of the previous year’s event and established a pattern of popularity which lasted into the 1880s. While the majority of competitions were held in a roped off arena inside the square, the velocipede race ran down Madras Street to the railway station gates and back. Like the Dunedin and Oamaru races, the Christchurch event was popular with spectators, and was “looked upon as the great event of the day” by those present.⁴¹ The race was also popular with those wishing to take a punt. The *Lyttelton Times* reported that “some considerable betting took place amongst the admirers of the respective competitors as they gave steeds a preliminary stretch on the adjacent roadway.”⁴² By displaying themselves and their machines before a betting audience, the racers were imitating practices already established in horse racing. The reporter’s use of an equine metaphor to describe the machines reinforces this placement of velocipede racing within a familiar, socially acceptable context and demonstrates an amused tolerance of gambling within this context.

As had happened in Dunedin, several “spills” marred (or, perhaps, enhanced) the racing, and one of the competitors eventually wrote to the papers, protesting its outcome. George Hyde had raced on a remarkable machine which his brother, Thomas,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Lyttelton Times*, 17 December 1869, 3.

⁴² Ibid.

built in his spare time while employed at Shanley and Son, coachmakers, in Christchurch.⁴³ George had been leading the race all the way to the grandstand, where he fell “within a yard or two of the post” and was passed by a Mr Hindman on a locally built tricycle, who won £4 for taking first place.⁴⁴ In his letter, Hyde claimed: “We were told at starting that we must go down to the railway station, and back to the grand stand, no mention being made of any marking post” (emphasis original). The incident illustrates the relatively unorganised nature of the first holiday sports meetings, and how disputes over the decisions of officials contributed to the successive layers of bureaucracy that became associated with sport.

The Popular Sports Committee soon began to regularly review protests at meetings held a few days after each event, at which time results were adjusted and disqualifications handed down.⁴⁵ Such meetings would not have been required had winning been unimportant. As Hyde’s letter shows, graceful acceptance of defeat was not universal, and this lack of equanimity might have stemmed from more than hurt pride. Had the Hyde brothers been hoping to stimulate interest in Thomas’ machine, then winning bore commercial implications. Furthermore, the gambling which attended the racing provided opportunity for more immediate financial gain or loss. Backing oneself to win was common practice, and if George Hyde had done so, his failure to reach the ill-defined finishing line first had caused him direct financial loss. Of course, the £4 prize itself was a substantial enough sum to stimulate post-race debate over its outcome. The quantification and adjudication of sporting performance that necessitated

⁴³ *New Zealand Referee*, 13 January 1898, 24. The Hyde brothers, and especially Thomas, were remarkable cycling pioneers. The machine ridden in the 1869 race was said to be New Zealand’s first ordinary bicycle, based on the fact that it had a small rear wheel. In truth, it might more accurately be described as an intermediate machine, in that it was much smaller than a true ordinary (a high-wheeler or “penny farthing” – see Herlihy, *Bicycle*, for a full description of intermediate machines). All the same, in a case of parallel development, Tom Hyde experimented with his machine at exactly the same time as the intermediate machine was being raced successfully in France. The following year, Tom not only won races on his second velocipede, but had, together with his brother, ridden velocipedes over the notoriously steep “Bridle Path” which connects Christchurch with Lyttelton. It is likely that Tom Hyde was encouraged in his experiments by his employer. At the same time that Tom was building his velocipede, Shanley and Son were building a three wheeled, hand cranked mobility device for the inventive Dr Barker, Christchurch’s first doctor and pioneer photographer. Shanley himself had been an apprentice to Denis Johnson, a coachmaker in London, who patented the dandy horse (*Drasienne*) in 1818 (see Herlihy, pp. 31 & 32). Shanley had also been a proficient *Draisienne* rider in his youth.

⁴⁴ *Lyttelton Times*, 17 December 1869, 3.

⁴⁵ See, for example: *Press*, 23 December 1882, 3.

the early bureaucratisation of cycle and athletic races were thus driven as much by financial concerns as they were by more abstract notions of fairness and the importance of winning. This argument is reinforced by the surprisingly high number of official observers who were required at staked sporting matches in Britain during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when a pedestrian race could be observed by as many as six umpires, two of whom were mounted.⁴⁶ This level of observation was required only in organised (prearranged) events featuring stakes or cash prizes or gambling, and was specifically emplaced to prevent cheating.⁴⁷

Virtual Velocipede Mania?

One of the most interesting aspects of the velocipede craze in New Zealand is that it took place more within the pages of the country's newspapers than it did in reality. Admittedly, it is true that the public showed interest in velocipedes and turned out to watch races in comparatively large numbers. Moreover, considerable enthusiasm, ingenuity and perseverance in the quest for sport and personal transportation was shown by individuals such as Tom Hyde, a certain Mr Morgan, who tested his "water velocipede" in Dampier's Bay on Lyttelton Harbour and, for that matter, by the members of the Timaru Velocipede club, which formed despite the absence of any actual velocipedes in the South Canterbury town. But did the enthusiasm of certain individuals really warrant the newspaper announcements that Velocipede mania had arrived every time a bicycle was built or imported in a New Zealand town or city?⁴⁸ Based purely on the numbers of velocipedes being raced – two in Oamaru, seven in Dunedin, six in Christchurch – velocipede mania had not bitten very deeply into colonial New Zealand society.

If the level of velocipede ownership was low in New Zealand, velocipede racing *had* proved popular with the public, though much of this interest might have been stimulated by novelty rather than a sustainable interest in velocipede racing as a

⁴⁶ Harvey, *Beginnings*, 121.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ See, for example: *North Otago Times*, 6 July 1869, 2; *Otago Witness*, 17 July 1869, 14; *Otago Witness*, 14 August 1869, 13; *Daily Southern Cross*, 24 August 1869, 4; *North Otago Times*, 27 August 1869, 4; *Evening Post*, 31 August 1869, 2; *North Otago Times*, 28 September 1869, 3.

spectator sport. In any event, after the handful of races that took place around the colony in the 1868-1869 summer, the frequency of velocipede races diminished and reports of racing remained thin throughout that 1870s.⁴⁹ Whilst bicycle racing still appeared on the programmes of fêtes and sports meetings, the actual races were often scratched on the day due to lack of competitors.⁵⁰ In other cases, the races went ahead, but were contested by only a small handful of riders. In April 1872, the Dunedin Amateur Athletic Club held a velocipede race as part of its sports meeting.⁵¹ That race, however, only drew three entries, indicating a waning rather than growing passion for velocipedes in the southern city. In Auckland, meanwhile, a fictitious “H. W. Henderson” had to be entered in the one mile bicycle race at the Auckland Rowing Club’s Athletic Sports in order “to fill up for the three entries” – the race, in reality, being between only two riders.⁵² In Wellington, a plea to put a bicycle race on the programme of the Caledonian Sports was answered. The result of the race speaks volumes for why the Velocipede had so quickly fallen from fashion:

Bicycle Race, Two Miles. — McLean, 1; Churton, 0; Irvine, 0. In spite of the unfavorable circumstances, three velocipedestrians offered themselves for this race, but it proved a failure. Irvine found his bicycle too heavy, and had to give in at the 11th lap. Churton went on until 70 yards before the finish, when he also succumbed, and McLean came in an easy winner.⁵³

The weather was, admittedly, foul and the sports meeting was abandoned not long after the bicycle race had been run, but the facts were still clear to those who witnessed the race. Velocipedes were slow, heavy and physically demanding to ride. Successful racing – that is, racing which was interesting to spectators – demanded a hard surface rather than the grass turf of the athletics track. Thus far, the invention appeared more trouble than it was worth.

There is evidence of a revival of interest in bicycle riding in Greymouth in 1873,

⁴⁹ Some caution is required when conducting quantitative surveys of velocipede or bicycle racing in the 1870s. The term “bicycle” was coined in 1868 and gradually superseded “velocipede” during the following decade. Nevertheless, reference to both “bicycle” and “velocipede” declined sharply after 1869.

⁵⁰ See, for example: *Marlborough Express*, 11 November 1874, 4.

⁵¹ *Otago Witness*, 6 April 1872, 3.

⁵² *Daily Southern Cross*, 4 December 1871, 3.

⁵³ *Evening Post*, 2 January 1875, 2.

but it is revealing that the *West Coast Times* now described the bicycle as “a toy” ridden by “the grown up children of Greymouth”, whom the paper further stigmatised as lazy “hobbledehoys”.⁵⁴ There had been a hint of ridicule in many press reports of velocipede and bicycle riding, but at the height of the “mania” this had been tempered by a genuine fascination for the new machines. The change in balance, with ridicule now dominant, reflected a slide in the social status of bicycle riders.

But how can the initial enthusiasm for the velocipede be accounted for? The burst of velocipede construction and importation that culminated in the summer races of 1869-1870 had been preceded by press reports of velocipede mania in France, Britain, the United States and the Australian colonies (especially Victoria). Throughout New Zealand, newspaper pieces ranging from small snippets to complete articles were devoted to the new invention. Interested readers learned about a “ladies’ velocipede race” in Amhurst, Victoria, a velocipede mounted picador in Bilbao, Spain, a 15 mile race organised by the Liverpool Velocipede Club, a 50 mile ride in Tasmania and a French water velocipede in Paris. An enterprising London exporter shipped to New Zealand copies of “Mr. A. Davis’s pamphlet, on ‘The Velocipede; its history, and practical hints how to use it’,” to be distributed by an Auckland newspaper in the hope of generating colonial custom.⁵⁵ In Christchurch, meanwhile, the *Press*, carried a long article on the subject of velocipedes, drawing “indiscriminately” from *The Engineer*, *Scientific American*, *London Society*, *The Illustrated News* and “a few other leading journals and magazines.”⁵⁶ Similar articles were repeated in newspapers up and down the colony, and as in America, the abilities of the velocipede were considerably oversold. (see *Appendix 2.1*).

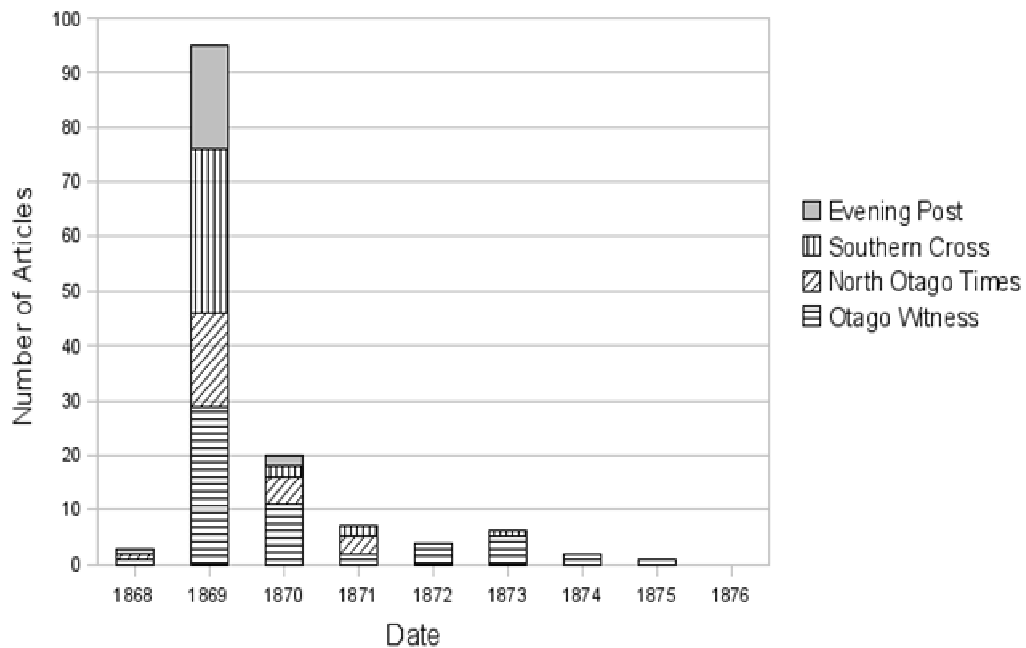
Like the racing that they helped stimulate, the bulk of newspaper articles on velocipedes appeared in 1869. The dramatic waxing and waning of journalistic interest in velocipedes are observable in *Figure 2.2*.

⁵⁴ *West Coast Times*, 1 September 1874, 2.

⁵⁵ *Daily Southern Cross*, 22 June 1869, 4.

⁵⁶ *Press*, 16 August 1869, 2.

Figure 2.2: Mentions of “velocipede” in four New Zealand Newspapers, 1868 to 1876



Although velocipede racing enjoyed the briefest moments of popularity in New Zealand, it is still notable that the phenomenon travelled quickly from Europe to America and Australasia. It provides solid evidence that the print media played a significant role in disseminating information about northern hemisphere trends to colonists in New Zealand. The timing of the peak coincides with the cresting of the velocipede wave in Paris and New York, and it is likely that the dramatic drop in articles in 1870 reflected a similar decline in fresh velocipede stories in the foreign press. Pakeha New Zealanders were looking outwards, or perhaps backwards, to Britain, to Australia and to America for news and entertainment.

Looking backwards from the era of communication satellites, cell phones, 24 hour news channels and the Internet, colonial New Zealand seems almost totally isolated, but its geographic isolation should not be conflated with introversion. New Zealand’s very existence as a colony is indicative of the fact that long distance travel and communication were, in the mid-nineteenth century, better than they had been at any previous time in world history. Pakeha New Zealanders were recent migrants with

friends and family in Britain, Australia and the United States. Some, especially the gold miners, were conscious sojourners and the two-way traffic between Melbourne, San Francisco and ports in New Zealand was considerable. New Zealanders – and particularly gold miners – were a literate population and newspapers enjoyed high levels of readership in goldfield and port towns. In this environment, international novelties such as velocipede races were bound to be followed with considerable, if short lived, interest.

Another factor in the fast spread of velocipedes was the accessibility of the technology used in their manufacture. A velocipede could be built in a workshop that serviced existing transportation modes at town and even village level. The materials and technology employed in velocipede production were essentially those of the artisan trades of coachbuilding and blacksmithing. Pierre Micheux, founder of *Micheux et Compaigne*, for example, was an “obscure blacksmith” engaged in the production of carriage parts before he devoted his energies to velocipede manufacture.⁵⁷ Periodicals such as *The Engineer* and *Scientific American* disseminated technical information and were supplemented by more specific publications such as *Velocipedes, Bicycles, and Tricycles: How to Make and How to Use Them: With a Sketch of Their History, Invention, and Progress*.⁵⁸ A motivated artisan such as Tom Hyde could thus construct a working velocipede from scratch, possibly without having previously seen a complete, working example. For those in coachbuilding and related industries, velocipedes and velocipede racing offered an exciting opportunity for product and market diversification. The involvement of coachbuilders in velocipede racing thus began a distinctive relationship between manufacturer and athlete in the sport of bicycle racing. From the outset, the sport relied on a relatively expensive manufactured artefact for its existence. At the same time, coachbuilders and velocipede manufacturers realized that racing was a powerful way of stimulating demand for their machines. It is notable that coachbuilders’ employees raced in at least two of the velocipede races – Oamaru and Dunedin – and that in a third case, a velocipede was built by an apprentice, Thomas

⁵⁷ Herlihy, *Bicycle*, 76.

⁵⁸ “Velox”, *Velocipedes, Bicycles, and Tricycles : How to Make and How to Use Them: With a Sketch of Their History, Invention, and Progress*, (London: Geo Routledge & Sons, 1869).

Hyde, and raced by his brother. So while velocipedes themselves were expensive, velocipede racing was not necessarily the province of the élite. On the one hand, a talented craftsman could build his own machine; on the other, ownership and riding could be separated, in much the same way as they could (and now, universally, are) in horse racing. The practice of artisan racers riding their employers' machines did not raise any negative comment from the newspapers, nor does it – or the existence of gambling – appear to have impinged on the utilitarian vision of spectator sport as a healthy diversion from vice.

Delivering Rational Recreation in a Colonial Environment

Members of New Zealand's colonial élite saw value in public leisure activities as useful diversions from vices which were perceived as problematic in colonial towns. Canterbury's Superintendent, William Rolleston, was a member of the Popular Amusement Association and also of the Social Evils Committee reporting to the House of Representatives, and was particularly keen to "check the evils incident to prostitution" in Christchurch.⁵⁹ Sport was seen as a positive counter to less socially acceptable recreational activities. When, in 1869, the Popular Amusements Association sought £10 from the Christchurch Municipal Council, the somewhat cash-strapped councillors found themselves in a quandary. Councillor Sawtell, argued that, "although of [the] opinion that the Council could not afford to give £10, [he] thought they might fairly vote a smaller sum, and would move that £5 be presented to the association."⁶⁰ He declared himself "much pleased at the manner in which the sports were carried out last year", and "was satisfied they afforded much innocent amusement, keeping many from perhaps worse pursuits".⁶¹ Councillor Calvert continued in the same vein:

He believed the rational amusement thus provided was not only of benefit to the young, but restrained drinking. On the occasion of the last sports he was particularly struck with the absence of drunken people in the streets.⁶²

⁵⁹ Julia Millen, *Colonial Tears and Sweat: The Working-class in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand*, (Wellington, 1984), 120.

⁶⁰ *Star*, 7 December 1869, 2.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

Sport was thus to perform the utilitarian service of civilising a frontier population. The councillors had not arrived at such a conclusion in a vacuum. The same Popular Amusements Association that organised the rural sports meeting was, for example, responsible also for the “entertainments” that were held in Christchurch’s town hall. At these soirées, a lightly cerebral programme was offered to the city’s populace. “Readings from popular authors (were) interspersed with music, vocal and instrumental, chiefly by amateur performers.”⁶³ Five pounds was offered as a prize “for the best recitation from any standard English author”, and the Dean of Christchurch, who occupied the evening’s Chair, set the tone with an opening speech:

I am also aware that the main object of these meetings is wholesome relaxation and amusement, and not direct instruction. We meet here as friends meet at each others’ houses, to pass a social and pleasant evening, and not to hear lectures and addresses on serious subjects. All I plead for is, that the love of broad humour should not prevail to the exclusion of the lofty, the soul-stirring, the serious, and the pathetic.⁶⁴

More consistently serious entertainment was provided by regular lectures, usually – but not exclusively – delivered by the local clergy. For those unable to attend in person, summaries of the lectures could be read in the city’s dailies.⁶⁵

In praising the “rational amusement” that he observed at the rural sports meeting in Latimer Square, Councillor Calvert thus voiced a belief commonly held amongst the mid-nineteenth century British middle-class. Leisure had to be both respectable and productive in order to validate its existence. Furthermore, the middle-class adopted a proselytising position, attempting to disseminate this utilitarian translation of recreation to the classes above and, particularly, below its own.⁶⁶ How successful it was in selling sport as a panacea to community ills may be judged by the fact that it is still common for social planners in the twenty-first century to see sport “as a way of building character, enhancing self confidence, controlling juvenile crime, and building better

⁶³ *Star*, 15 June 1870, 2.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ See, for example: “Lectures”, *Star*, 13 June 1868, 2.

⁶⁶ Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830 – 1885*, (London; New York: Methuen, 1987), 68-90.

communities”.⁶⁷

In the colonies, a further duty was entrusted to sport, which was to maintain and strengthen imperial ties. Speaking at a banquet in Sydney for the returning Australian cricket team which had just toured England and America, Sir Hercules Robinson, eighth Governor of New Zealand, first reassured a receptive audience that his fears of Australian cricketers being an embarrassment both on and off the oval had been unfounded. He then observed:

This is naturally very gratifying to us, and it affords a practical illustration of the soundness of the view which I have always maintained, that a taste for all the good old English sports and pastimes is not only a material element in the formation of a sound, vigorous, national character, but that it constitutes, also, a very important branch of union between these daughter lands and the mother country.

Robinson continued:

There can be no doubt that in the selection of their out-of-door amusements Australians are more thoroughly English in their tastes than any other of the offshoots from the parent stock.

And concluded (amongst “continued cheering”):

To pursue a similarity in amusement is a guarantee for common sympathies in more important matters, for it testifies to that common nature which is everywhere the best security for national cohesion and good-will.⁶⁸

In the eyes of the colonial administrator, sport, or, to be precise, *English* sport, would both build and prove national character and in so doing, would overcome the geographic isolation to consolidate Antipodean membership of both the British Empire and the English nation. It was, in essence, to be a vehicle for imperial social capital. That the other nationalities which had colonised the Empire could reach a similar

⁶⁷ R. Stewart, “Drugs in Australian Sport: A Brief History”, *Sporting Traditions*, 23, no. 2, (May 2007): 65. Criticism of this convention also exists, and Stewart’s article (as the title suggests) is not an uncritical endorsement of the social and community benefits of sport. A comprehensive critical analysis of the social role and perceived benefits of modern sport can be found in: D. Stanley Eitzen, *Fair and Foul: Beyond the Myths and Paradoxes of Sport*, 4th ed., (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

⁶⁸ *Star*, 20 December 1878, 3.

conclusion is evidenced by the promotion of gatherings and games by Caledonian Societies. The origins of these gatherings lay in the Highland Games, which “experienced an important revival [in Scotland] in 1832”, and which also “provided British athletics with an attractively romantic past”.⁶⁹ Conspicuously ethnic disciplines such as “tossing the caber” highlighted the novelty of the games and, together with such cultural competitions as the “Highland fling”, reinforced the cultural identity (and stereotype) of being Scottish.

A distinction can, however, be made between the use of sports – often, though not universally, identified with a single ethnicity or geographic location – in the construction and maintenance of cultural identity, and the essential Englishness of sport *per se*, as argued by Robinson. When the Englishness of sport was highlighted, cultural meaning was attached to the mode of play as much as it was to the kind of sport that was being played. While individual sports such as cricket or rowing were identified as English, the claimed centrality of sport itself to English cultural identity was equally as important for rational recreation’s promoters. In 1864, a piece titled “Colonial Amusements” was reprinted in the weekly *Otago Witness*, having first appeared in the *Southern Monthly Magazine*. It argued that sport was an English antidote to a moral decline that had manifested itself in a regrettable fondness for billiards, hard liquor and cards amongst New Zealand’s colonial population.⁷⁰ The article offered an astonishingly shallow stereotype of various European and Asian nationalities, as defined by their perceived leisure pursuits, and posed the question of New Zealanders,

Are we maintaining the standard of England’s sports and pastimes? Are we preserving the healthy, invigorating, and elevating enjoyments of the old country, or are we falling into the adoption of a mongrel code of pleasure, made up of continental frivolities and vices, with just sufficient British metal about them to save appearances?⁷¹

The importance of “England’s sports and pastimes” lay in their ability to develop and maintain moral rectitude:

⁶⁹ Allen Guttman, *Sport: The First Five Millennia*, (Amherst; Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 97.

⁷⁰ *Otago Witness*, 5 March 1864, 6.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

In England alone — whose people have always been famed for physical prowess and powers of endurance — do we find anything like a general indulgence in athletic amusements. And the out-door sports of Englishmen are generally of that character which calls into action both physical and moral effort. Whether in the hunting field or the cricket ground, on the river or the moors, the pursuit of relaxation and amusement necessitates the exercise of the moral and physical qualities. Muscular strength and moral courage must go hand in hand, and these cannot be constantly called into action without producing increased development. It would be difficult to find combined in one individual, skill in our out-door amusement and debased morals. There is something exceedingly incongruous in the idea of a man being a first-rate bat, oar, or hand across country, and at the same time a coward a sneak or a scoundrel.⁷²

The Popular Sports were thus to perform an essential function as an agent for social conformity. The panic over “social evils” (prostitution), drunkenness and the frequenting of billiard saloons during business hours was more than just moral. To be English was to be moral and athletic. If young New Zealanders were frequenting billiards saloons, bars and brothels rather than being athletic and moral, they were in immediate danger of becoming “foreign”. This threat was perceived as severe enough in Christchurch for its local authorities, both civic and ecclesiastic, to approve the provision of more “rational” forms of recreation.

The moral rectitude with which sports meetings were to be imbued did have practical limits. The gambling and racing for stakes or other cash prizes that accompanied the Anniversary Day Sports were accepted with equanimity by newspapers, which reported on, rather than moralised against, wagering at race meetings. Nor were other commercial trappings an anathema to the rational recreation agenda. In fact, they were deemed essential to the event’s survival. By the mid 1870s, the Popular Amusements Association had been supplanted by the Popular Sports Committee, which reported to the Christchurch Municipal Council. In 1877, the same local authority that had balked at contributing £10 to the sports meeting’s costs in 1869, now paid directly “£6 15s expended by the Committee as wages, &c, paid by them in connection with the recent sports.”⁷³ The tendering of “privileges” to provide

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ *Star*, 16 January 1877, 3.

hospitality tents and similar business opportunities at the sports meeting was a lucrative way to offset these costs. In 1878, the Committee was paid £85 for privileges, a substantial proportion of the £179-8s balance for the meeting.⁷⁴

The commercialism and cash prizes featured at holiday sports meetings provide a point of difference between it and the public school games and amateur athletics that are usually associated with rational recreation.⁷⁵ Not only did gambling and staking offend the more zealous reformers of older and “lower” sports, but the prospect of mass spectators passively watching a handful of paid professionals and specialists “perform” sports did not achieve the role of racial regeneration desired by administrators and enthusiasts such as Sir Hercules Robinson. But the Popular Sports – for a time, at least – appears to have existed quite outside this debate. At the Sports, and the various other meetings and Caledonian gatherings that took place in New Zealand’s cities, towns, and villages, the amateur/professional distinction was simply not made. Competitors were classified by age, weight, sex, ethnicity, marital status and even occupation, depending on the event, but not by their amateur status. Sport had become “rational” in New Zealand without becoming amateur.

Enclosure

Examination of velocipede racing in colonial New Zealand raises questions about the use of public spaces and the use of enclosed sports fields in settler societies. The racing, for the most part, occurred at the holiday sports meetings and Caledonian games that comprised an important part of the colony’s fledgling sports calendar. These meetings were held in public parks and domains and in privately owned fields. From a performance point of view, these venues were not ideal for velocipede racing – it was more difficult to ride a velocipede on turf than it was on a formed road – but the shift to a racing oval followed a trend of enclosure that was a hallmark of modern sports. The shift to enclosure could have been stimulated by either “push” or “pull” factors, or a combination of both. On the one hand, velocipede racing might have been pushed off

⁷⁴ *Star*, 11 December 1878, 3; 21 December 1878, 3.

⁷⁵ See, for example, Peter Bailey’s chapter on the subject: “Sport and the New Athleticism”. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 133-153.

public roads by conflict with other users or by a simple lack of space. On the other, the enclosed sports field might have offered an advantage to one or all of the stakeholders: promoters, competitors and spectators.

In pre-industrial Britain, mass “sport-like activities”, such as village football, were played in open public spaces that were undefined both geographically and temporally.⁷⁶ Play occurred not only on village greens and commons, but also in streets, roads, squares, markets and fields, and took place while these same public spaces were being used for other activities.⁷⁷ The Industrial Revolution had a profound restricting effect on this spatially and temporally unstructured play that is consistent with “a growing rationalization and geographic confinement, such space-consciousness accompanying a growing time-consciousness among the population, associated with the rise of capitalism.”⁷⁸ Although some vestigial forms of folk football survived into the mid-twentieth century (when they were finally extinguished by a rapid increase in automobile use and subsequent conversion of streets into car space) the majority of folk games had been “forcibly ended” by the middle of the nineteenth century.⁷⁹ In a pithy observation on the situation in England, Thomas S. Hendricks concludes, “In a movement that still continues, the poor were forced out of the fields and streets into the interiors of the city.”⁸⁰

Against this background of restriction, enclosure, rationalisation and exclusion, it is revealing to identify the kinds of sporting and mass recreation events that made use of streets and other “multi-use” public spaces in New Zealand’s settler communities. The issues of restricted public space identified by Hendricks must have been relieved due to the tiny populations of the new villages, towns and cities. But the colonists also brought with them already-formulated concepts of private versus public property, and of work time versus leisure time as easily quantifiable, definable and separable temporal spaces. Like English village football games, races in Oamaru and Christchurch took

⁷⁶ John Bale, *Sport, Space, and the City* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 10-17.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁷⁹ Hendricks, *Disputed Pleasures*, 156.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

place on public thoroughfares, which became occupied not only by the riders, but also by their associated backers and several hundred spectators. Yet it would be misleading to identify this street racing too closely with pre-industrial sporting patterns.

In his “Four Stages Model of the Modern Stadium,” John Bale identifies the first (pre-industrial) stage as having “Permeable Boundaries” and “Weak Rules of Exclusion,” and as being characterised by: no spatial limits, uneven terrain, spatial interaction between “players” and “spectators” and diversification of land use.⁸¹ While village football clearly falls into this model (and probably provides its basis), the Oamaru velocipede race poses problems. Certainly, there were weak rules of exclusion. Being a match race, and reliant on possession of an expensive artefact, rules of exclusions for the racers might appear unnecessary. Also, with a coachmaker’s employee riding one of the machines, it is clear that racing a velocipede was not socially exclusive. It is clear, also, that there was no exclusion applied to those wishing to watch the race, which, being held on a public road, provided unlimited free access to spectators. Distinguishing the Oamaru race from Bale’s first stage was its measured course, clearly stated to be one mile in length. In mass folk games such as village football, fields of play might be loosely identified, but these fields would hold purely local significance, and could not perform a strong role in the recording and comparing of performances.

On the face of it, the Anniversary Day Sports in Christchurch fall into Bale’s second stage of development: “Enclosure”, characterised as having “limits of pitch defined” and “players segregated from spectators”. In preparation for the Sports, a foot racing track was marked out with flags, there was a wired off enclosure for field disciplines and even a small grandstand erected on Latimer Square.⁸² For the velocipede race, however, constraints of enclosure were thrown off. The race ran down the western edge of the square and continued south down Madras Street to the Railway Station gates and back – a more locally significant and less standardised course than the Oamaru mile. The racers were literally followed by spectators who appear to have shadowed

⁸¹ Bale, *Sport*, 12.

⁸² *Star*, 17 December 1869, 2.

them over the entire course and, if George Hyde's letter is correct, there was not even a clearly defined or universally acknowledged finishing line for the race.⁸³

New Zealand's urban streets were thus legitimate venues for public recreation. An incident in Hokitika sheds more light on the situation. In 1870, late on an April evening, "a little boy" was "knocked down" by a velocipede in Revell Street.⁸⁴ The boy was "one of the light infantry that usually skirmish on the skirts of volunteers when accompanied by a band" and had, it transpired, run into the velocipede rather than the other way round.⁸⁵ The accident prompted the local press to vent its ire at the danger presented to the public by the new machine. The *West Coast Times* "trusted" that the police would "take some measures to prevent these erratic machines being propelled in the crowded streets."⁸⁶ The newspaper continued in this vein even after the velocipede rider had been exonerated in court:

Without in the least degree impugning the decision the fact remains that after dark a child is run over by one of the machines, is hurt considerably, his parents are compelled to call in medical assistance, and have after all no remedy at law against the offender.⁸⁷

Quite how this statement did not impugn the magistrate's decision is uncertain, but the example provided by the incident is manifestly clear. In the goldfields era, Hokitika's streets presented a lively spectacle. With a military band parading, children playing and a velocipede rider perambulating, Revell Street was as much a place of public recreation as it was a thoroughfare. It is unlikely then, that move towards enclosure that took place in the colony during the last quarter of the nineteenth century arose expressly from the "forcing" of public playing from the colony's streets.

One major reason for the enclosure of racing was economic expediency. In 1872, representatives from the Christchurch's cricket and boating clubs held an open meeting in order to plan their second "Athletic Sports". The combined clubs had already held

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸⁴ *West Coast Times*, 8 April 1870, 2.

⁸⁵ *West Coast Times*, 3 June 1870, 3.

⁸⁶ *West Coast Times*, 8 April 1870, 2.

⁸⁷ *West Coast Times*, 3 June 1870, 3.

such an event the previous year, but funding the venture remained a significant problem. In 1871, the original plan had been to “raise funds by means of half-crown subscriptions from members of clubs”, but the members had failed to comply and the committee “were compelled to go to the public for assistance.”⁸⁸ It was felt by some that this was untenable, and the alternative of charging the public for admission was mooted:

[As] great demand recently made upon the public for subscriptions, it was necessary that some new method should be adopted. It had been suggested in one of the papers that the sports should be held in the Agricultural Association’s grounds, in order that an admission fee might be charged⁸⁹

The idea was batted about the meeting, and it was noted that in Wellington, £70 had been taken via a 6d admission charge. Some representatives resisted the idea. They did so, however, not for ideological reasons, but because they did not think that it would prove an effective way of raising revenue, and because of worries about the suitability of the venue. Tellingly, Fredrick Digby, a supporter of the admission charge, admitted that Hagley Park provided the best fields, but remained adamant that the show grounds provided the better option because it allowed the provision of an admission fee. Financial considerations were to outweigh the provision of the best conditions for competitors.

Conclusion

The speed with which velocipede racing was adopted, albeit briefly, in New Zealand demonstrates the strong intra-cultural connection between it, Australia, the United States and Britain, and somewhat more inter-cultural links with France and Continental Europe. Velocipedes and velocipede news travelled along these lines from Paris and London to New York, Sydney, Melbourne and on to New Zealand. Even though reports of velocipede mania in New Zealand towns was more indicative of the strength of these cultural links than it was of a profound enthusiasm for velocipede riding, the presence of locally constructed machines does show a recognition of the velocipede’s commercial

⁸⁸ *Star*, 1 February 1872, 2.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

potential by coachmakers and mechanics. It is likely that velocipede builders also saw racing as a way of stimulating interest in their new products, meaning that a commercial interest is found in the earliest bicycle races in New Zealand.

The holiday sports meetings that had evolved through the latter half of the 1860s provided a ready-made venue for velocipede racing. These were inclusive, community-based affairs which fostered cultural identity and social capital. In the case of sports meetings run by friendly societies, they also generated income for welfare projects. The presence of cash prizes was not an anathema to these goals. Art Union lotteries, tendered refreshment tents, gate and grandstand charges, stakes and gambling were all accepted parts of holiday sports meetings. Thus, Velocipede racing's brief popularity fitted into a fledgling system of organised, somewhat commercialised, sport that accepted competition for cash prizes as a norm. While meetings in parks, squares and domains were now customary, there was no particular proscription against recreation on public roads and streets, meaning the impetus towards enclosure should be attributed to other forces.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the environment into which velocipede racing was introduced is that the commercialism, gambling and cash prizes, which were intrinsic components of these sports meetings, did not preclude their inclusion in the pantheon of rational recreation. It is more usual to link rational recreation with public school games and amateur athletics, not cash-prize sports meetings. To understand this problem is to gain a more nuanced view of the role of the middle-classes in the development of modern sport. It has been stated that the greatest middle-class gift to sport was its genius for bureaucratic organisation. Yet, bureaucracy must play second fiddle to an even more essential component of middle-class existence, the art of doing business. Once local politicians, clergy, lodge members and other – sometimes self-appointed – guardians of public morality accepted the belief that sport, properly organised and controlled (by them), could provide an antidote for perceived social ills, they were faced with the problems of funding and supply. Patronage, public subscription and local government subsidy were all legitimate and practical methods of

funding. These did not, however, preclude the application of more mercantile methods of funding recreation – methods that would now be recognised as “user pays”. Enclosure was a symptom of both the rationalisation of recreation and the application of commercial supply practices. It is not claimed here that the sports meetings were fully commercial events; the primary goal of the committees was the provision of rational recreation, not the accrument of profit.

Thus it was that when a new, substantially more useable, version of the bicycle began to be imported into New Zealand in significant numbers, the young, male, middle-class men who constituted its “early adopters” also adopted these commercial accoutrements for their own race meetings. The distinction lay in their adoption of the ideology of amateurism and the model of the English sports club to provide a framework for their activities.

Velocipede riding was placed on a slow burner for much of the 1870s. The patents farce and overselling of the velocipede’s usefulness had extracted their toll in the United States. In Paris, the Franco-Prussian war, siege of Paris and Paris Commune forced light-hearted sport off the city’s collective agenda. In Britain, however, a lower-key interest in improving the velocipede continued. By the beginning of the 1880s, this labour had borne fruit, and young, middle-class men once again developed an enthusiasm for life on two wheels. In doing so, they banded together into clubs and formed amateur rulebooks to govern their own behaviour. An attempt was about to be made to wrest rational recreation from the unchallenged control of the holiday sports committees.

Chapter 3 – THE BID FOR AMATEUR CONTROL

Much discussion and great trouble here over the amateur question, most men seem to think that “amateur” means “novice,” and they forget altogether that an amateur is one who does anything “for the love of it” literally. Things will right themselves presently.¹

Introduction

By the end of the 1870s, a few dedicated engineers had developed the velocipede into the bicycle, recognizable today as the seemingly outlandish “penny farthing” or “Ordinary”.² The Ordinary reached its technical zenith in the mid 1880s, a period when cycling was dominated by young, male, middle-class cyclists who banded together into clubs, declared themselves amateurs, wore official uniforms, paraded, hired clubrooms, built racing ovals, promulgated rules and created a governing body to enforce them.

The first bicycle club formed in New Zealand was the Pioneer Bicycle Club (PBC – later, the Pioneer Amateur Sports Club), the existence of which is memorialised in twenty-first century Christchurch by the Pioneer Leisure Centre in the suburb of Spreydon. A distant descendant of the club also exists as the Pioneer Motorcycle Club, which is now dedicated exclusively to the niche sport of motorcycle trials.³ The foundation of the PBC as an “amateur” cycling club in 1879 represents a minor landmark in New Zealand’s sports history. Although the first amateur athletics clubs to achieve a level of permanency had been founded in Timaru and Wellington in 1871 and 1875 respectively, amateur athletics had failed to gain popularity in Christchurch during the course of the 1870s. While an Amateur Athletics Club was founded in that city in

¹ *Otago Witness*, 13 January 1883, 20.

² The popular name “penny farthing” is traditionally disliked by bicycle collectors, conservators and historians as it is both pejorative and anachronistic, the first record of its use being made in 1927, long after the machine’s heyday had passed. See Douglas Harper, “pennyfarthing,” *Online Etymology Dictionary*; <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pennyfarthing> (accessed: March 05, 2009). The most widely used contemporary name for this machine was simply “bicycle”, but as other forms of bicycle came into use, the term “ordinary bicycle” arose. Today, most specialist works use the term “ordinary” to describe a bicycle with a large, driven, tensioned spoke, front wheel, and this term will be used for the remainder of this thesis.

³ The Pioneer Motorcycle Club, “History,” <http://www.pioneertrials.co.nz/page/History.aspx>, (accessed 20 July, 2009).

1872, it had foundered by 1877. Yet, less than three years after its own formation, the PBC had managed to sponsor, almost single-handedly, the formation of the New Zealand Cyclist's Alliance (NZCA), which was to govern and administer amateur cycling on a colony-wide basis. Moreover, this was achieved five years before the foundation of the New Zealand Amateur Athletics Association in 1877. The PBC had thus orchestrated the successful launch of amateur cycling in New Zealand from a city that had shown a previous disinclination towards attaching importance to amateur status.

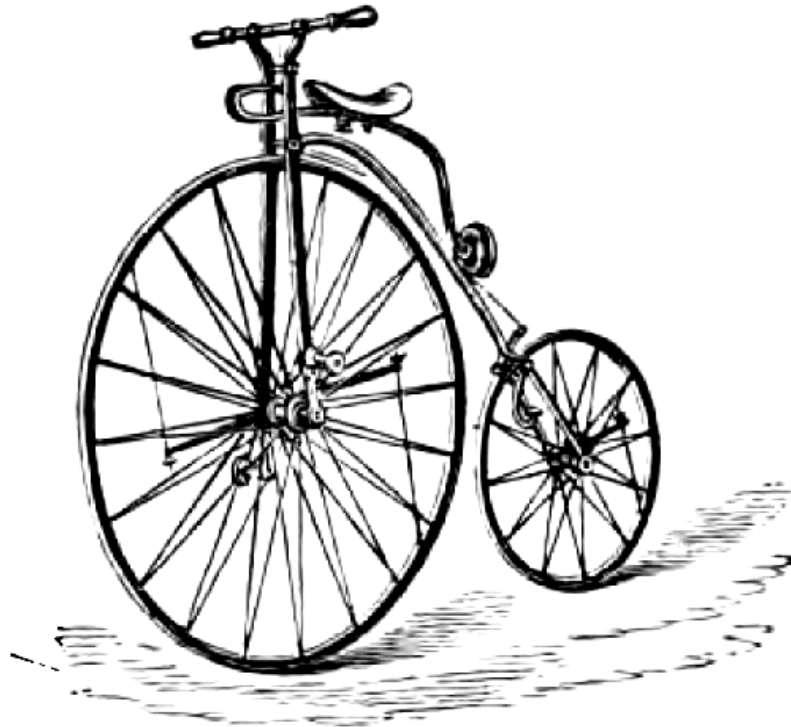
A commonality between amateur bicycle racing and – when it did become established – amateur athletics, was the adoption of commercial features that mirrored those of the older holiday sports movement. Entrance fees for competitors and spectators, tendered concessionaires and *extra sportif* entertainment were adopted *en masse* as normal features of race meetings. To these commercial characteristics, bicycle racing added the distinctive relationship between the athlete and an expensive, competitively-marketed consumer durable. In New Zealand, as in Britain, the United States and Australia, this relationship was to prove problematic to those wishing to maintain “pure” amateurism in bicycle racing.

As well as offering a history of the PBC's development as New Zealand's first amateur bicycle club, this chapter will chart the shifting meanings of “amateur” and “professional” and identify the type of amateurism practised by the PBC and its fellow clubs. It will also offer an historical description of bicycle racing in the amateur clubman era of the 1880s, and in so doing, it will investigate the following questions: Why did cyclists form clubs? Why did they declare themselves amateurs? And why did they increasingly choose track racing as their favourite mode of competition? Before these tasks are tackled, however, a brief description of the ordinary bicycle will be offered. This investigation of material culture is necessary because the structure of the Ordinary itself had a severe limiting effect on those who rode.

The Age of the Ordinary Bicycle

Figure 3.1: The Ariel.

Source: Grew, W. F. The Cycle Industry: Its Origins, History and Latest Developments, Pitman's Common Commodities and Industries, (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, 1921), 5.⁴



While the majority lost interest in the velocipede, a handful of English enthusiasts maintained faith in its potential. Most influential of these was James Starley, a talented, autodidactic, engineer and one of the pioneers of the Coventry-based sewing machine industry. Starley applied his knowledge of high tensile steels and precision bearings to the velocipede, lightening the frame and, most crucially, the wheels to create the “Ariel” “the most celebrated of the early high-wheelers” (see *Figure 3.1*).⁵ His use of steel wire

⁴ Grew attributed the “Ariel” design and name to Haynes and Jeffries “the precursors of the Rudge firm”. Haynes and Jeffries purchased the manufacturing rights to the Ariel from Starley who, along with Hillman had patented the design, 1 August, 1870. See W. Bijker, *Of Bicycles, Bakelite and Bulbs: Towards a Theory of Sociotechnical Change*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995), 35.

⁵ Woodforde, *Story*, 40. Almost every bicycle history charts the significance of James Starley to the development of the bicycle. A concise account, including the biographical detail repeated here, can be

spokes allowed the bicycle wheel to carry its loading in tension rather than compression, considerably lightening the entire structure. This, in turn, allowed the development of an extremely large diameter front wheel, increasing the bicycle's overall speed and comfort (*see Figure 3.2*).

Figure 3.2: The ordinary bicycle at the height of its technical development, circa 1885. Source: Grew, W. F. The Cycle Industry: Its Origins, History and Latest Developments, Pitman's Common Commodities and Industries, (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, 1921), 7.

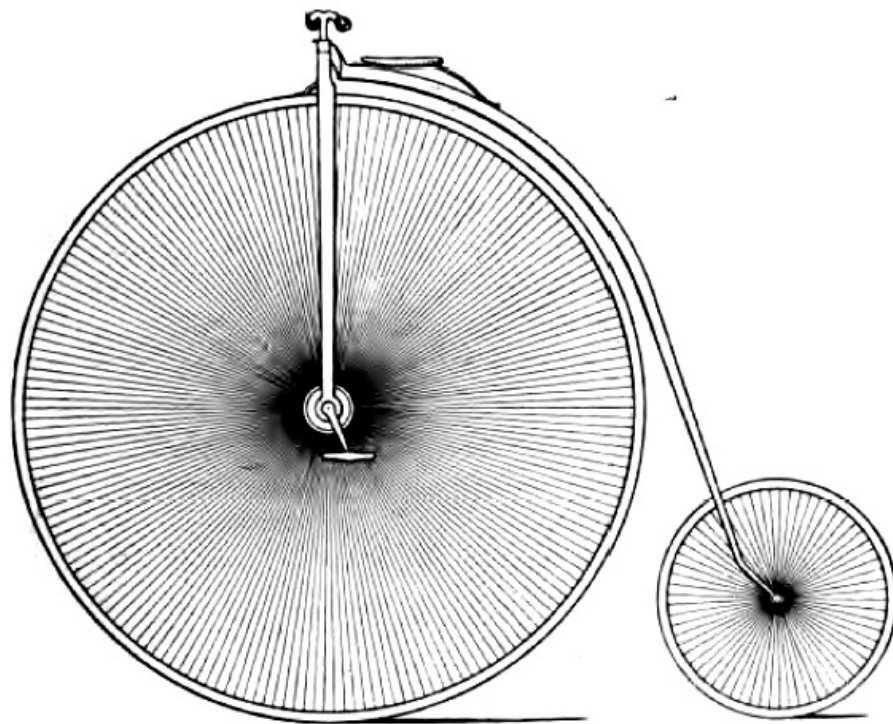


FIG. 4

THE ORDINARY OR HIGH BICYCLE

2—(1486n)

Christened the “high wheeler,” “spider wheel,” “bicycle” and, later, “ordinary”, the new machine made riding over rough late-nineteenth century roads bearable, even enjoyable. Again, the Ordinary, or knowledge of its existence, illustrates the intracultural connection between Britain and its colonies. It did have its drawbacks though. The

found in Wiebe E. Bijker, *Of Bicycles, Bakelites And Bulbs: Towards a Theory of Social Change*, Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press: 1995.

giant front wheel made mounting and riding the Ordinary an athletic feat, and the machine's forwardly biased centre of gravity caused it to be prone to pitching forward. (One explanation for the high survival rate of velocipedes in museum collections is that they remained useful for teaching people to ride before they progressed to the rather intimidating Ordinary). Ordinary riders were young, male, middle-class and athletic, attributes that were dictated by the machine's physical size and cost.⁶ These men were also likely to have been inculcated in the lore of amateurism by schools and popular literature. Thus, the age of the Ordinary – which in New Zealand spanned the 1880s – became also the age of the amateur bicycle club.

Amateurism

Amateur, amateurism, gentleman, gentleman amateur, pure amateur, rank amateur, dilettante, dabbler, amateurish. If a deconstructionist were seeking to show how words are loaded with cultural meanings which constantly shift with time and context, “amateur” would surely be an example *par excellence*. Dictionaries provide multiple definitions for the word, some of which prove quite surprising; the following passage gives an example of usage that reveals the word's Latin root:

When Mrs. T.W. Atkinson remarked in her 1863 *Recollections of the Tartar Steppes and their Inhabitants*, “I am no amateur of these melons,” she used *amateur* in a sense unfamiliar to us. That sense, “a lover, an admirer,” is, however, clearly descended from the senses of the word's ultimate Latin source, *amātor*; “lover, devoted friend, devotee, enthusiastic pursuer of an objective,” and from its Latin-derived French source, *amateur*; with a similar range of meanings. First recorded in English in 1784 with the sense in which Mrs. Atkinson used it, *amateur* is found in 1786 with a meaning more familiar to us, “a person who engages in an art, for example, as a pastime rather than as a profession,” a sense that had already

⁶ In 1897, Philip G. Hubert, Jr. wrote:

At best, the big wheels of a few years ago were fit only for athletic young men; they were out of the question for all other persons, and of course for women.

P. G. Hubert, Jr., “The Wheel of To-Day”, in D. A. Sargent, H. J. Whigham, R. D. Wrenn, P. G. Hubert, M. Merington, J. W. Roosevelt, D. Osborne and E. S. Martin, *Athletic Sports*, The Out of Door Library, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), 179.

Bijker has developed a noteworthy explanation for the development of both the Ordinary and the safety bicycle that succeeded it, which he has summarised as “Social Construction of Technology” (SCOT). He points out that the perceived drawbacks of the seemingly irrational Ordinary – danger and difficulty - in fact recommended it to young, males wishing to demonstrate their athleticism. See Bijker, *Of Bicycles*.

developed in French. Given the limitations of doing something as an amateur, it is not surprising that the word is soon after recorded in the disparaging sense we still use to refer to someone who lacks professional skill or ease in performance.⁷

While “amateur” may, at the end of the eighteenth century, have meant not pursuing a particular sport or art as a profession, amateurs were still able to win money from stakes and wagers. The term was flexible and bore social rather than economic meaning.⁸ Adrian Harvey has found that in the first decades of the nineteenth century, amateur was synonymous with gentleman, and while being a gentleman meant not working for a living, “some, notably Lord Beauclerk, acquired considerable wealth this way, accumulating £700 a year from cricket.”⁹ Beauclerk was not a lone exception. In 1831, when Oxford rowed against Leander, they did so for £200 cash.¹⁰ Despite this, a newspaper report described the race as being between amateur crews.¹¹

If “amateur” was imprecisely defined before 1830, so too was a word now commonly accepted as its antonym. Unlike “amateur”, the term “professional” was included in Johnson’s dictionary, which “defined ‘professional’ as ‘relating to a particular calling or profession’, and ‘profession’ as ‘calling; vocation, known employment’.”¹² But “Professional” and “professor” were also used simply to mean expert, and in this sense, the words did not bear the negative stigma of paid employment.¹³ Before 1830, the terms “amateur” and “professional” or “professor” were not actually mutually exclusive. A skilled gentleman sportsman could be considered both a professional by virtue of his expertise and an amateur due to his social status.¹⁴ While the social status of a blue-blooded sportsman was secure whether or not he played for cash, historians have observed that the widening of sport’s appeal to include members of the middle-classes soon led to a tightening of definitions as they sought to consolidate their own

⁷ *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition, s.v. “Amateur.” Available at: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/amateur>.

⁸ Adrian Harvey, *The Beginning of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793 - 1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing), 2004, 189 & 190.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Wray Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1988, 186.

¹¹ Ibid., 186.

¹² Harvey, *Beginning*, 190.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

social position.¹⁵

Middle-class respectability faced a number of challenges which the new sportsmen and women would attempt to solve with rationalisation and administrative control. Being already tainted by the necessity of earning a living by their own labour, members of the middle-classes needed to separate their sport from any hint that this too would become a money-making venture.¹⁶ Believing that class is mutable, that one is able to climb up or, more ominously, down the social ladder, the middle-classes also needed to exclude the lower orders from their games, thus eliminating associations which could be detrimental to their own social positions. Even when cleansed of the so-called cruel sports of bull baiting, ratting and cock fighting, working-class sports such as prize fighting and pedestrianism were associated with violence, excessive drinking, and gambling, cheating and freakish displays of endurance.¹⁷ Mixing with working-class athletes on the sports field also threatened middle-class dignity in a very practical way. Since working-class bodies were seen to be tempered by manual labour, it was considered unfair for workers and tradesmen to compete against those engaged in occupations that were more sedentary. It was this last objection which was overtly responsible for the notorious “mechanics clause” inserted into the Henley Regatta rules in 1879, which belligerently guarded middle-class oarsmen against working-class incursion, right into the Edwardian era.¹⁸

Rowing already had a tradition of professional regattas between career watermen which predated amateur involvement in the sport.¹⁹ It is not surprising that men who spent their working days rowing would outperform those who rowed only in their leisure time, or that the part-time rowers would wish to avoid racing against those who would inevitably beat them every time.²⁰ Thus, the Metropolitan Rowing Association

¹⁵ Vamplew, *Pay Up*, 183.

¹⁶ Peter Borsay, *A History of Leisure* (Houndsmills; New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 91.

¹⁷ Pedestrian events comprised both staked match races and wagered challenges. They sometimes resembled a cross between modern marathons and the more outlandish entries in the *Guinness Book of Records* as contestants were challenged to hop, push barrows, carry sacks of coal and perform other feats of strength and endurance. See note 24, page 34 in the previous chapter.

¹⁸ John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle-class, 1870-1914* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 159; Vamplew, *Pay Up*, 186-7.

¹⁹ Vamplew, *Pay Up*, 185-6.

²⁰ The other middle-class strategy evident in rowing was to concentrate on aesthetics, adopting a

and the Henley authorities sought to formally define an amateur in their rules, the first time this had been attempted. They did so by applying a negative definition, and the net covering those who could not be amateurs was cast rather wider than the ranks of professional watermen:

[N]o person should be considered an amateur who had ever competed in an open competition for a stake, money or entrance fee; who had competed with or against a professional for any prize; who had ever taught, pursued or assisted in practice of athletic exercises of any kind as a means of gaining a livelihood; who had ever been employed in or about boats for money or wages; who was or ever had been by trade or employment for wages, a mechanic, artisan or labourer.²¹

The social definition of amateur rowers was picked up by other sporting bodies, notably the Amateur Athletics Club, as the middle-classes began to assert control over sport in Great Britain. The Bicycle Union (BU), however, took a more liberal attitude towards its members. From its foundation in 1877, the BU had catered for both professional and amateur riders, accepting both classes as members, and when it defined amateurism in its rule book in 1878, the Union dropped the mechanics clause altogether.²² By doing so, the BU became “the first national sports authority to define amateurism without any reference to social status.”²³

Australasian Variations

As middle-class sporting associations in England attempted to define and categorise different classes of sportsmen, the situation in the Antipodes remained somewhat more flexible. In Australia, the old working-class pursuit of pedestrianism had gained widespread popularity. But rather than trying to develop athletics as a respectable leisure activity by excluding working-class participation, “the upper and middle-classes in Australia promoted amateur athletics as ‘healthy, manly and moral activities’ to an

stylised form of rowing and then elevating its worth above that of the necessarily efficient stroke of the professional waterman. This “refinement” of technique is analogous to the differentiation between “bowling” and “throwing” in cricket.

²¹ Vamplew, *Pay Up*, 186.

²² *Ibid.*, 189.

²³ *Ibid.*

‘easily distracted working class’ whose attention was absorbed by pedestrianism.’²⁴ The initiative was successful. As the nineteenth century progressed, the “gambling, cheating, doping and fouling” associated with pedestrianism resulted in a loss of public favour and a growth in the popularity of amateur athletics as both a spectator and participant sport.²⁵ A degree of social segregation was maintained, nevertheless, with different clubs catering for different social classes. The Adelaide Amateur Athletics Club was established by the “colonial gentry” of South Australia in 1864, while the Port Adelaide Athletic Club, consisting primarily of working-class athletes, was formed in 1870.²⁶ Thus, South Australia’s élite might come face to face with working-class athletes in open competition, but were spared the ignominy of sharing club rooms with them.

In New Zealand, meanwhile, pre-1880 athletic associations, sports committees and newspaper reporters tended to take a pragmatic, flexible and, sometimes, confused approach to defining amateurs and professionals. Pedestrianism had never been as prevalent in New Zealand as it had in Australia, Britain and the United States, and although the pedestrian events that did occur were not overtly corrupt or vilified by the press, neither were they particularly popular with the public, who would turn out to a holiday sports meeting in much greater numbers than they would to a professional pedestrian match.²⁷ With no formal definition of “amateur” or “professional,” there was nothing expressly preventing a pedestrian who had competed in a staked match race from entering races at a holiday sports meeting or Caledonian games. Since these events also featured stakes, gambling and cash prizes, an economic objection could hardly be raised.

Moreover, as late as 1880, definitions of “amateur” and “professional” in New Zealand’s newspapers often conformed to the old meanings of competency. When, in 1880, Dunedin cyclist, W. H. Cutten, dominated the first amateur bicycle races held in

²⁴ Geoffrey Vincent, “Sports and Other Signs of Civilization in Colonial Canterbury, 1850-1890,” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Canterbury, 2002), 144.

²⁵ Ibid; Vincent “‘Impossibly Elitist And Snobbish’: Amateurism in Canterbury; 1850-1880: the Examples of Aquatics and Athletics” *ASSH Bulletin*, 31, (December 1999): 6.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Vincent, “‘Stupid, uninteresting and inhuman’: Pedestrianism in Canterbury, 1860-1885”, *Sporting Traditions*, 2001, 18, 1, 43-56.

Christchurch, a local newspaper was moved to declare: “Cutten is, in fact, so finished a bicyclist that he might fairly claim the rank of professor in the art.”²⁸ Cutten, captain of the (amateur) Dunedin Bicycle Club (DBC) and son of a prominent Otago settler-politician, had, the previous year, been one of “several young amateurs” who “did some graceful bicycle riding” at an indoor race meeting of the Otago Athletic Association.²⁹

Despite this flexibility, there was a broad understanding that professional pedestrians, boxers, jockeys and bicyclists competed for stakes and, in many cases, a portion of the gate receipts from their matches. Thus, in 1884, the *Otago Witness* announced that a series of match races between “O’Donnell and Mackenzie, champions of Scotland and Australia” constituted “the first professional bicycle contests in New Zealand”.³⁰ The status of these athletes as professionals, and even as champions, was usually self-defined. In 1888, “Professor Rollinson” made a tour of the colony’s skating rinks, giving displays of trick bicycle riding. Having put on a show at Christchurch’s Palace Rink, Rollinson “issued a challenge to race anyone for the Professional Bicycle Championship of New Zealand, any distance from one to one hundred miles, for any sum from £10 to £50 a side”.³¹ Although amateur sportsmen distinguished themselves from these showmen cum athletes, they did not treat them as pariahs. When A.A. O’Donnell, who had raced McKenzie in Dunedin, gave a display of trick riding at the Pioneer Hall, the amateur Pioneer Bicycle Club put on a torchlight procession to honour the occasion.³²

In the case of the holiday sports meetings, flexible definitions did not always work to the advantage of a talented athlete. If he won too much or too often, a nebulously-defined “professor” risked becoming a pariah in the eyes of the organising committees. As no governing bodies existed to define who could and could not race, there was no more onus on an organising committee to accept the entrance of a competitor than there was to reject it. Thus, the local star pedestrian William Pentecost,

²⁸ *Star*, 1 March 1880, 3.

²⁹ *Otago Witness*, 26 July 1879, 19.

³⁰ *Otago Witness*, 1 March 1884, 12.

³¹ *Star*, 13 November 1888, 3.

³² *Star*, 28 March 1884, 3.

found himself categorised as a professional and barred from competing with those who had competed (or won) less often.³³ Yet, a number of features distinguish these bans from the bars against professionals in English amateur sports. Firstly, since they relied on the attitudes and decrees of individual committees, bans against entry could never be universal. Secondly, and most significantly, the decision as to whether a pedestrian could or could not compete at a holiday sports meeting was not based on social class or even strictly economic criteria, but on his likelihood of dominating the competition. Disquiet was expressed over the propriety of this *ad hoc* system, which not only raised obvious ethical and even philosophical questions, but also allowed room for unseemly dispute and bad feelings. William Henry Wynn-Williams, lawyer, provincial politician, Popular Sports Committee member and doyen of Canterbury athletics, remained adamant, however, that committees could judge whether or not to allow a pedestrian to compete in their meetings without recourse to precise definitions.³⁴

Despite these assurances, a desire for systematic exclusion in sport was palpable amongst some sectors of Christchurch society by the 1870s. Wynn-Williams himself had been instrumental in organising two amateur athletics meetings in 1871, and was also heavily involved with the unsuccessful attempt to form an amateur athletic club in Christchurch in 1869. A body, the Canterbury Amateur Athletic Association, was actually founded in 1872. From 1873, it became known as the Canterbury Athletic Club. This was “the first successful effort...to create an explicitly amateur athletic organisation in Christchurch”, but throughout the remainder of its existence, the Athletic Club’s meetings paled in comparison to the non-amateur holiday sports meetings.³⁵ Some observers argued that there simply were not enough athletes in Christchurch who qualified as amateurs to make the project sustainable. Their solution was a Tradesman’s Athletic Club that would not debar those who had already competed at the Popular Sports or the plethora of other holiday sports meetings which offered cash prizes. It was noted in a newspaper article that:

To many who remember the difficulty experienced but a short time ago in

³³ Vincent, “Sports and Other Signs,” 149.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Vincent, “Impossibly Elitist,” 10; *Star*, 19 February 1877, 3.

keeping the original athletic club alive, it may seem strange that a second one should have been lately established. The reason is not, however, very difficult to understand. The rule by which the Christchurch club compels every successful competitor at their annual sports to take his prize in plate, and debars any one from entering who has taken money at other sports, necessarily has the effect of making the entries of an exclusive character. Working men, however much interest they may take in athletic sports, cannot afford to lose their time and expend money in training without a prospect of some monetary return, therefore no advantage was derived by them from the operations of the club. They could take no part in the races, and though desiring to compete, had to be content with acting the part of lookers on. Under these circumstances, it is by no means strange that a new club has sprung into existence and seems likely to be attended with a satisfactory amount of success.³⁶

Regardless of these prognostications of success, the Tradesman's Athletic Club survived only two years. One speculates that the club model was not particularly attractive or necessary to those who were already catered for by the various holiday sports meetings. This becomes even more apparent when the involvement of fraternal lodges and friendly societies in the promotion of sports meetings is taken into account. Vincent argues that in Christchurch, the attempts at founding amateur athletics and rowing clubs during the course of the 1870s was not a bid by the city's colonial élite for hegemonic control over sport in the city, but was rather "a mechanism used by a segment of the upper and middle-classes to separate themselves from the wider sporting population."³⁷

This chimes with Lowerson's description of English sports clubs:

Their ostensible purpose was a particular sport. But often far more significant and far less easily reconstructed by historians was their role as instruments of relatively fine social differentiation and arbiters of public custom.³⁸

It would be a mistake to imagine that there was some identifiable line below which this "fine social differentiation" was not felt or applied, or that those of an apparently lower social order might not view themselves as morally or physically better than their social superiors. But avenues for working class, artisan and petit bourgeoisie expressions of differentiation, commonality and self affirmation did already exist. The fraternal lodges

³⁶ *Star*, 25 May 1875, 2.

³⁷ Vincent, "Impossibly Elitist," 11.

³⁸ Lowerson, *Sport*, 98.

and friendly societies were sufficient in number and variety to perform the social differentiation that Lowerson attributes to sports clubs. And, as we have seen, if the “colonial élite” did not attempt to control sport through the foundation of amateur sports clubs, those members of colonial society who held political, social and organisational power – local, provincial and colonial politicians, clergy and lodge men – exerted some level of tenure over sports via the sports meetings which they administered.

That an amateur ideology was not part of the version of rational recreation administered in Christchurch before 1880 was due to two primary reasons. Firstly, the early professional sports such as pugilism and pedestrianism had not penetrated deeply into the local leisure market. In short, the stakes were not sufficient to attract regular matches or fuel systemic corruption. Harvey argues that widespread newspaper coverage of corruption was responsible for a collapse in popularity of commercial sport in Britain during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and that this was a factor in the establishment of games and amateur sport as a purified alternative to the older, perceptibly-corrupt, variations.³⁹ The broad absence of overtly corrupt sports in Christchurch removed an incentive for replacing cash prizes with silver plate.

Secondly, the “colonial élite” which administered the sports meetings included prosperous tradesmen, merchants, newspaper owners and other entrepreneurial members of the middle-classes. Its composition and values bore a closer resemblance to the middle-class of the industrial North of England than to that of London.⁴⁰ In the English context, the North/South social divergence has been identified as the reason behind the Northern split in Rugby. Although the executive members of the Northern Union “were of broadly similar socio-economic status” to those of the Rugby Football Union, they were less likely to have been educated at public schools, and were thus “less integrated into the national ruling élite and hence retained their local ties and

³⁹ Adrian Harvey, *Beginning*, 54-55. He concludes:
Cumulatively, these twin developments, the increased attention on the corruption of competitive sport and the moral justification of alternative ‘gentlemanly’, activities, proved the environment for an increased deprecation of commercial sport and the espousal of new ideas of ‘amateurism’, in which competitive events for stakes were considered morally indefensible.

⁴⁰ Vincent, “Impossibly Elitist”, 11.

identifications.”⁴¹ Nor were they inculcated with the ideology of amateurism from an impressionable age in the same manner as those with public school upbringings.⁴² Perhaps the most significant similarity between the Northern bourgeoisie and settler society in New Zealand was, however, its lack of squeamishness over money. The observations on the values of Northern middle-class society by Kenneth Sheard and Eric Dunning are strikingly reminiscent of criticisms regularly levelled at New Zealand society in the late-nineteenth century:

In conformity with their overall social situation, these approximated more closely to the values of an ‘ideal type’ bourgeoisie than was the case with the public school élite. That is, they were more openly achievement orientated and acquisitive, and showed a greater tendency to place money value on social relations and personal attributes of various kinds.⁴³

Tellingly, this Northern pragmatism found a place in New Zealand politics. Demographically, the North was underrepresented amongst New Zealand’s migrants, but overrepresented in provincial politics:

Northerners made up 32 per cent of the population of England but only 16 per cent of the English-born population of Canterbury. Among a sample of the élite (namely provincial councillors), on the other hand, northerners comprised nearly 35 per cent – by far the largest regional group⁴⁴

James Belich suggests that this political élite were probably genteel before migration, and could, indeed, have been a part of the public school educated, rugby union playing, Anglican, Northern gentry that had largely “missed the bus of local industrialisation”, the unpleasantness of which caused them to flee England for “élitist Canterbury”.⁴⁵ The lack of penetration of the amateur ethos in this supposedly-elitist province, however, indicates that in terms of cash prizes in sport, at least, the politicians of Christchurch bore a striking resemblance to the “urban respectables” who dominated both industry

⁴¹ Kenneth Sheard and Eric Dunning, *Barbarians Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, 2d ed., (Oxford; New York: Routledge, 2005), 173.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, (Auckland: Penguin, 1999), 324.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 323-325.

and “open” sports clubs in the North of England.⁴⁶

When amateurism finally did come to New Zealand in a more-or-less permanent, interprovincial, form, it was not via rugby union, athletics or even rowing, but rather through the new niche sport of bicycle racing. There had been one false start at founding a bicycle club in 1877, before a second, successful, attempt was made in 1879.⁴⁷ Ten years after the rise and fall of the velocipede, the Pioneer Bicycle Club (PBC) came into being. For the next decade it was a powerful, even dominant, force in New Zealand cycling and contributed to Christchurch’s status as the centre of cycle sport in New Zealand. True to its name, the Club was a pioneer in track racing, road racing and “club runs” into the Canterbury countryside. It was also staunchly amateur, its foundation being the first in a series of actions by a group of Christchurch men who tried to make cycling in New Zealand a predominantly amateur sport. In keeping with the experience of athletics and rowing in the 1870s, the PBC’s amateur code was at first enforced with a level of pragmatism rather than dogmatism. But, also in keeping with the constantly shifting definitions of “amateur”, the Club’s line hardened over time. This hardening, however, amounted not to a drive for social exclusivity or even moral purity, but rather bureaucratic refinement.

The Pioneer Bicycle Club

On Tuesday, 19 April 1879, the Christchurch *Press* announced, “A preliminary meeting for the formation of a bicycle club was held at the Commercial Hotel last evening.”⁴⁸ The meeting had “a very good attendance”, and eleven young men committed themselves to the idea that “an amateur bicycle club be formed to be called the Pioneer

⁴⁶ Sheard & Dunning, *Barbarians*, 122.

⁴⁷ The Canterbury Rugby Union was also founded in 1879, and that this was an equally important and ultimately more durable milestone in the introduction of amateur sport to New Zealand. Yet, although rugby union’s history is inexorably bound to hard-line notions of amateurism, it was not, in 1879, bound by expressly amateur rules. Perhaps this can be attributed to the extreme amateur ethos that surrounded the game. Since the rugby ethos eschewed national leagues or tables, it also lacked the national organisation with which to dictate and administer rules of exclusion. Each Union could dictate to its member clubs, but at the end of the day it was the system of challenges and “friendlies” which still dictated who played whom.

⁴⁸ *Press*, 19 April 1879, 4.

Bicycle Club.”⁴⁹ The following Thursday, these eleven men gathered at the Commercial Hotel again, this time to draw up a set of rules for the new club.⁵⁰ High on the list was the clause that stated “the objects of the Club be the encouragement of amateur bicycle riding.”⁵¹

Over the next few months, the Club organised weekly road rides or “runs” as they were known. The most ambitious of these was 40 mile (64 kilometre) return trip from Kaiapoi to Amberley. On 11 October 1879, the PBC held its first official race, a five mile handicap between E. C. Farr, C. E. Dudley, and H. C. Clarke (A Mr England was also scheduled to start, but he suffered a mechanical breakdown on the way to the start line at Racecourse Corner).⁵² Full results were published in the newspapers, including, crucially, the riders’ times. Handicapping was calculated on the basis of wheel size, which turned out to be a faulty system, for Farr on the smallest wheel (50 inches) won in 18 minutes, compared to 20 and 21 minutes for Dudley and Clark respectively.⁵³ Although it rather tactlessly highlighted the small field, the Christchurch *Star* nevertheless favourably compared Farr’s 18 minute ride on rough, open, roads to the English record of 16 minutes “on a well prepared track”.⁵⁴ In so doing, the newspaper tapped New Zealand cycling into what would become a vast international network of sporting records. At the centre of this network stood England, the benchmark against which athletic performance was measured.

On an international level, “record” is an essential feature of modern sport, allowing competitors to check their efforts against one another even when separated by time and space.⁵⁵ In the second half of the nineteenth century, standardised distances became internationally recognised as significant measurements of athletic achievement. In road cycling, the “century” or hundred mile ride quickly became the central goal

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ *Press*, 26 April, 1879, 4.

⁵¹ “Pioneer Bicycle Club Rules,” revised 7 September, 1888. Pioneer Amateur Sports Club, “Minutes, Photographs, Programmes, Scrapbooks, Correspondence and other Papers, 1880-2004”, Aotearoa New Zealand Centre, Christchurch City Libraries (ref. ANZC).

⁵² *Star*, 13 October 1879, 2.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Allen Guttman, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 51-54.

around which record breaking revolved, with one, two, three, five, ten, twenty-five, fifty and a hundred miles becoming standard measurements of athletic prowess. New Zealand riders tested themselves over these distances with enthusiasm. In 1883, for example, the PBC member A. E. Preece became the first New Zealander to ride one hundred miles within 24 hours on a tricycle, several local cyclists having already accomplished the distance on bicycles.⁵⁶ Preece completed his feat of endurance on the roads of North Canterbury, but news of the achievement was carried in newspapers at least as far afield as Palmerston North.⁵⁷ Newspapers published not only the results of the efforts of local athletes, but also those of riders in Australia, the USA, Britain and Continental Europe. By attempting a hundred mile record, a club cyclist joined an international system, the arteries of which were telegraph lines and the cycling and sporting periodicals being carried around the globe by steam-powered ships.

Records also carried quite local significance. In Canterbury, the return ride from Cathedral Square in Christchurch to the small hamlet of Hurunui proved satisfactory on several levels. Firstly, at 112 miles (180 kilometres) return, the Christchurch to Hurunui round-trip broke the “century”, allowing those who achieved it to join an élite group of sportsmen. Secondly, by crossing the Hurunui river bridge, just north of the hamlet, the cyclist entered Nelson province and could thus claim to have ridden out of Canterbury province and back in a day. This purely local goal quickly became the focus of a not altogether gentlemanly contest between the PBC and the Christchurch Bicycle Club (CBC), a club established a year after the PBC. The CBC’s Captain T. W. May, threw down the gauntlet by completing the trip in 17 hours on 31 October 1882. This effort was significant enough to be included in the Wellington *Evening Post*’s telegraphic news.⁵⁸ A month later, the papers reported that Preece, as one of a group of PBC members who attempted the ride together, had lowered the record to thirteen and a half hours.⁵⁹ The following year the CBC regained the title when F. N. Painter won a return race from Christchurch to Hurunui, which had been organised by the PBC. Six

⁵⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 3 December 1883, 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Evening Post*, 31 October 1882, 2.

⁵⁹ *Otago Witness*, 2 December 1882, 21.

competitors took part, including the PBC's crack, Langdown, who retired with sunstroke having earlier cut his hands in a fall.⁶⁰ The race results were widely circulated throughout New Zealand via telegraph.⁶¹

While club runs and road records provided news for the press and activity for members, they made little allowance for physical (as opposed to virtual) spectators. As the racing took place on public roads, there was no way of controlling or charging spectators, leaving club treasurers bereft of any significant income aside from membership subscriptions and donations. Enclosure was an obvious remedy, and in 1880, after almost a decade's hiatus, the New Zealand public were once again treated to the spectacle of bicycles racing in public parks and sports grounds.

The sports committees and Caledonian societies led the way by putting bicycle races on their programmes. As they had in the past, the holiday sports meetings continued to offer cash prizes, which did not prevent the PBC's amateur cyclists from entering the bicycle events. The 1879 Canterbury Anniversary Day had been washed out by a southerly storm, so the sports meeting was postponed to New Year's Day, 1880. The three-mile bicycle handicap was deemed "the event of the day, creating an immense amount of excitement from start to finish."⁶² Of the place-getters, E. C. Farr, who won 40 shillings for taking second place, was captain of the PBC. Two months after the Anniversary Sports, he would again be racing around the Hagley Park circuit, but this time for trophies, at what the newspapers described as the PBC's "first competitive gathering".⁶³

Building on the enthusiasm for bicycle racing expressed by the public at the Anniversary Sports, the PBC offered a one-mile club handicap, a four-mile open handicap, a slow race, a quarter-mile race "without handles", a ten-mile club handicap and a half-mile consolation race.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, the Hagley Park venue gave rise to

⁶⁰ *Otago Witness*, 22 December 1883, 23.

⁶¹ See, for example: *West Coast Times*, 10 December 1883, 2; *North Otago Times*, 10 December 1883, 2; *Grey River Argus*, 11 December 1883, 2; *Bay Of Plenty Times*, 11 December 1883, 2.

⁶² *Lyttelton Times*, 2 January 1880, 5.

⁶³ *Star*, 1 March 1880, 3.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

some of the same problems that had vexed the Popular Sports Committee. The PBC's neophyte race officials neglected to rope off the race circuit, with the result that dogs, small children and other unpredictable obstructions caused several "spills". E. C. Farr, for example, was forced to retire after his machine was wrecked in a crash with "a big idiot" who wandered into his path during a race.⁶⁵ This nuisance was remedied the following year through better enclosure of the course and the presence of mounted police to keep order.

The other major shortcoming of Hagley Park as a racing venue remained. Because it was a public domain, only a donation, not admittance fee, could be collected. In 1882, both crowd control and financial problems were largely solved with a move to the newly opened Lancaster Park, Canterbury's premier cycling venue for the next two decades. As well as gaining revenue from ticket sales and entry fees, the Club sold official programmes, providing a medium for advertising and thus drawing in more revenue. A third income source was the refreshment tent, which was tendered out to local publicans. Against these earnings, expenses for the meetings included rental for Lancaster Park, prizes, and payment for a brass band, which was considered an essential complement to any sports event. Thus, a fairly complex web of commercial activity surrounded bicycle club race meetings right from their inception. The club members had charged themselves with the duty of promoting amateur bicycle racing. To do so, they fell back upon the commercial model that stood as a cornerstone of late-nineteenth century culture. Strong fields, plentiful and thirsty spectators, tuneful brass bands and positive press coverage were welcomed as an assurance that "amateur" cycling had a strong future.

Because disposable leisure time remained limited in the final decades of the nineteenth century, the PBC was chasing spectators in a surprisingly competitive marketplace. The Club's racing competed for spectators' shillings with the various established holiday sports meetings, cricket matches, rowing regattas and the ever-present horse racing. Although the PBC had the advantage of providing a novel sport,

⁶⁵ Ibid.

careful timing of its annual race meeting was required in order to persuade a reasonable crowd to come along and pay to watch. Popular dates for sports meetings and other public events were Anniversary Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, as these holidays fell at the beginning of the southern summer. The Prince of Wales' Birthday was another popular holiday on which to run public events. The PBC initially ran its annual race meeting late in April, before settling on Boxing Day as its ideal spot on Christchurch's sporting calendar. The comparative success of the PBC in drawing spectators serves to highlight the advertising awareness shown by the Club very early in its existence.

The 1880 race had been attended and, indeed, dominated by W. H. Cutten, who had travelled north from Dunedin for the races. As galling as a Dunedin rider's dominance at a Christchurch race meeting may have been to PBC members, the Club's committee was quite ready to capitalise on his presence for advertising. In 1881, Cutten and some fellow Dunedin Bicycle Club (DBC) members again travelled northwards to race at Hagley Park. The PBC billed the meeting as the "interprovincial bicycle races". It had recognised the audience potential in races that pitted local cyclists against the best competitors from other cities.

Why Form a Club?

Why exactly did those 11 young men in Christchurch decide to form the Pioneer Bicycle Club in 1879? Certainly, they were following a model already established in Britain, but this in itself does not provide a satisfying explanation, especially when one considers the failures of the Canterbury Athletic Club (CAC) and the Tradesmen's Athletic Club in the 1870s. Of course, the fact that these clubs were floated in the first place indicates some level of interest in sports clubs in the city, and successful, if purely local, athletics clubs had been founded in Timaru and Wellington. Yet the questions remain, why form a bicycle club? Why make it an amateur club? And why did the concept succeed in a city that already provided open, non-corrupt, bureaucratically organised and rationalised sports meetings which, by placing bicycle races on their programmes, might seem to have catered for the cycling interests of the province?

Vincent's comments on the failure of the CAC are apposite here. Drawing on a conclusion reached in a contemporary newspaper article, he argues that Christchurch's population was simply too small to maintain an amateur club for the purpose of social differentiation.⁶⁶ That is, a group of middle-class professional men who wanted to differentiate themselves from the masses did exist, but they were too small in number to do so effectively through the medium of amateur athletics. Once again, Sheard and Dunning provide the model for this "differentiation" motivation with their study of rugby clubs in the North of England. They postulate that "open" rugby clubs, such as Hull, were run, not by working-class men storming the gates of the public school game, but by members of the Northern bourgeoisie, who tended to have more daily contact with the working classes and who were less likely to eschew their company on the playing field and in the club rooms.⁶⁷ Members of the "socially exclusive" Northern clubs – Manchester and Liverpool – were, on the other hand, more likely to come from families which had passed through this "intervening stage" of class status. They were publicly school educated, but were yet to reach the ranks of the self-assuredly élite – those who had attended the first class public schools of Eton and Harrow. They had thus "not met with complete success in their mobility striving and remained, to that extent, socially marginal."⁶⁸ The exclusivity of their rugby clubs acted as a vehicle for status assurance, distancing them from the working class and emulating the behaviour of the "quality".

Sheard and Dunning are not alone in their observation of the fine gradations of class and the importance of sport as a way of separating, confirming and expressing incremental differences. Lowerson argues that "the prime role (of restrictive land use, exclusive club membership and the amateur-professional debate) was to define boundaries between the broad middle-class and its inferiors, and occasionally superiors, and between different status levels within the middle-classes."⁶⁹ Different sports also

⁶⁶ Vincent, "Impossibly Elitist", 11; *Star*, 19 February 1877, 3. (While Vincent quotes from the *Lyttelton Times*, the Christchurch *Star* – essentially the evening edition of the *Lyttelton Times* – is now electronically archived. As the quoted article appeared in both editions, a reference to the more widely accessible source has been offered here).

⁶⁷ Sheard and Dunning, *Barbarians*, 122-123.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Lowerson, *Sport*, 21.

indicated different levels of status, with association football, athletics and, to some degree, rugby, shared by a broader range of participants, while polo, tennis and yachting denoted varying degrees of higher social status.⁷⁰ Membership of a polo club automatically confirmed one's superior social status, whereas the *right* football or athletics club needed to be joined to achieve the same ends.

To what degree these fine social gradations were imported, with the settlers, to New Zealand is a matter of conjecture. The traditional view of New Zealand as a classless society was eroded, sometimes from direct assault, over the last quarter of the twentieth century. The most extreme revision of "the classless society" model of New Zealand social history argued for the existence of wealthy and powerful landed gentry in the South Island.⁷¹ While this has been widely criticised as an exaggeration, the assertion that New Zealand society was classless must be similarly treated as a myth. Belich admits that social class may have been looser in New Zealand, but insists that it existed nevertheless.⁷² The belief that social classes were permeable in New Zealand – which was the basis of "getting on" or making financial and social progress in the colony – tacitly establishes the historical existence of a class consciousness. There had to be a ladder upon which to climb. Status anxiety was ameliorated in the colony, but it did exist.⁷³ And as it had in England, the sports club proved a useful tool for establishing status within a broader social class. Naturally, other mechanisms for confirming and displaying status existed, including the purchase of expensive consumer items. The bicycle was one such item, the piano another. The bicycle club compounded the attractiveness of the machine as a means of displaying the status of its young, white collar, membership. Riding *en masse*, wearing a smart uniform, meeting in a clubroom, voting for and sitting on a committee, might help to convince a young man that he was no longer a mere "hobbledehoy."

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ See Steven Eldred-Grigg, *A Southern Gentry: New Zealanders Who Inherited the Earth*, (Wellington: Reed, 1980). Counterpoint to Eldred-Grigg's view that a wealthy, aristocratic élite existed in New Zealand (and particularly in the South Island) is Jim McAloon's study of wealthy Canterbury and Otago settlers, which finds them to be more entrepreneurial than aristocratic in their modes of accumulating and protecting wealth. See Jim McAloon, *No Idle Rich: The Wealthy in Canterbury and Otago, 1840-1914*, (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2002).

⁷² Belich, *Making Peoples*, 322.

⁷³ Ibid., 324.

The adoption of the bureaucratic structure of the gentleman's club both established and maintained the status of bicycle clubs and their individual members.⁷⁴ While the high purchase cost of an Ordinary bicycle and, especially, a tricycle, already provided an economic restriction on access to cycling, the self-regulatory club provided a more robust vehicle for status affirmation than did the purchase price of a bicycle alone. Added to this were the material benefits offered by a club – a library, subscriptions to imported periodicals, access to racing facilities and regular race meetings.

Perhaps the most apparent commonality between sports clubs and their progenitors – gentlemen's clubs and Masonic lodges – is their gendered structure. This has led Varda Burstyn to posit a theory that sport, like fraternal lodges, blossomed in the mid-nineteenth century as a hypermasculine antidote to a home environment that had become feminised by the division of labour:

The ritual physical contests of sport answered the need for an arena in which to practise and display unmistakably manly qualities, and for the communal validation (religious worship) of these qualities within the larger culture. Sport provided the kind of rituals of conquest and aggression that men with a weak (because not primal) sense of masculinity needed to symbolize to make physical and palpable the difference between a 'man's man' and a 'mama's boy.'

Sport created an extensive institutionalized network of social surrogate and symbolic fathers and brothers-in-arms in close and arduous physical contact - points of 'libidinal cathexis' (sexual bonding) to use the Freudian phrase - that could provide alternative masculine points of identification against women.⁷⁵

The bicycle club would fulfil the needs of hypermasculinity far more ably than unstructured participation in the sport. The Ordinary bicycle was, as we have seen, the ideal vehicle (both metaphorical and literal) for displaying youthful masculinity. To this base, the clubs added layers of gendered behaviour, with uniforms, massed rides and such militaristic paraphernalia as bugles, cap badges, medals and sashes.

⁷⁴ Lowerson, *Sport*, 95-101.

⁷⁵ Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, & the Culture of Sport*, (Toronto: Toronto Press, 2000). 64.

A set of photographs taken by Albert Preece offers a rare glimpse into New Zealand bicycle club life in the mid 1880s, and shows the extent to which club regalia was worn on outings (*see Figure 3.3*).

Figure 3.3: “A halt on a trip to Akaroa, at Barry’s Bay[1886]”

Source: Preece, A. E. (Alfred Ernest), 1863-1946.

Christchurch City Library, File Reference CCL PhotoCD 1, IMG0065



Uniforms, including caps, are worn by some, but not all of the members. Also evident are cap badges and a bicyclist’s bugle.⁷⁶ Equally striking, though, is the air of informality adopted for the photograph. The bugler, Myhre, has unbuttoned his jacket and turned his cap sideways. To his rear, a posed fight is taking place on the upturned boat. Meanwhile, the pair on the far left (J. Martin and Scott) are studiously appreciating nature and in the background another small group is climbing the steep hill directly above the road. The scene is undeniably masculine, and might easily be read as male “libidinal cathexis,” but it must be noted that the only display of aggression is

⁷⁶ Bicyclists’ bugles were small and extremely light, and were used to warn other road users of a club’s approach. They were also used, in the same manner as a military bugle, to communicate orders to a club’s riders: “mount”, “halt”, “left wheel”, “right wheel”, and so on. The bicyclists’ bugle is a prime example of the paramilitary affectations of cycling clubs.

satirical, and even if this is identified as ritual conquest and aggression, Martin and Scott's fascination with a tree might equally be read as ritualised nature appreciation.

This is not to deny that a desire to seek out, foster and celebrate maleness was a powerful stimulus for forming bicycle clubs. This might, however, have stemmed from a desire to extend the pleasures of school life – sport, horseplay, intellectual pursuit and unfettered maleness – which arguably loomed as large or larger in the lives of late-nineteenth century middle-class male youth as did the feminised home. If this is the case, then Burstyn's theory is not necessarily wrong. It is simply that the hypermasculinising process began at a younger age than she has identified.

A significant divergence between many bicycle clubs and fraternal lodges lies in the acceptance by the former of female participation in club activities, sometimes as associates, sometimes as full members. Generally, bicycle clubs and the cycling press were more open to the notion of female cyclists than were the general public. As early as 1883, A Dunedin columnist using the pseudonym "Pedal Pin" asked his readers "When shall we have the pleasure of seeing the ladies using the tricycle? In England many do so".⁷⁷ The lead from "home" provided legitimacy for women's inclusion in club life and the wonderfully symbolic illustration on the cover of the (British) Bicycle Touring Club *Gazette* featuring male bicyclists meeting female tricyclists at a crossroads was dutifully noted in the *Otago Witness*.⁷⁸

By the middle of 1883, the Dunedin Bicycle Club changed its name to the Dunedin Cycling Club (DCC) in preparation for an influx of tricycles ridden by women or (in the case of sociables) mixed couples. "Pedal Pin" hoped that the Club would "be thrown open to all riders, ladies included."⁷⁹ He reasoned:

If the ladies could only be induced to try tricycling, the Club sec. would have no more lamenting over missing members, no more anathematising of lawn-tennis and all its attractions, the trouble would then be to keep something like order on the road, as everyone would be wanting to escort the ladies. In defence, the Club had better enrol lady

⁷⁷ *Otago Witness*, 7 October 1882, 20.

⁷⁸ *Otago Witness*, 3 February 1883, 20.

⁷⁹ *Otago Witness*, 11 August, 1883, 20.

members as a counter attraction to lawn-tennis.⁸⁰

Towards the end of the 1883-1884 summer, “Pedal Pin” got his wish and reported that “on Saturday a lady member of the DCC was out for a trial trip on a ‘Sociable,’ and kept with the Club for a good distance.”⁸¹ The Sociable placed riders side-by-side, a more “sociable” arrangement than the fore-and-aft arrangement of a tandem (*see Figure 3.4*).

Figure 3.4: A sociable tricycle in use in Dorset, England, in the early 1880s. Steering is controlled via the “spade handle” lever in the man’s right hand.

Source: “Discovering Lost Dorset’s Recreations,” Dorset Life Magazine.



The active recruitment of women into clubs such as the DCC, along with the light-hearted belief that this was a necessary way of drawing male members back from the attractions of the “mixed” sport of tennis, creates problems for the notion that sports (and sports clubs) were universally crucibles of hypermasculinity. Nevertheless, the inclusion of female members on club runs should not be taken to mean that the newly renamed cycling clubs were now bastions of sexual equality. There was little or no opportunity for women to race, and club executives remained universally male, effectively barring women from decision making in club affairs. In the decade following 1883, women’s role in the DCC appears to have been as occasional riders on sociables,

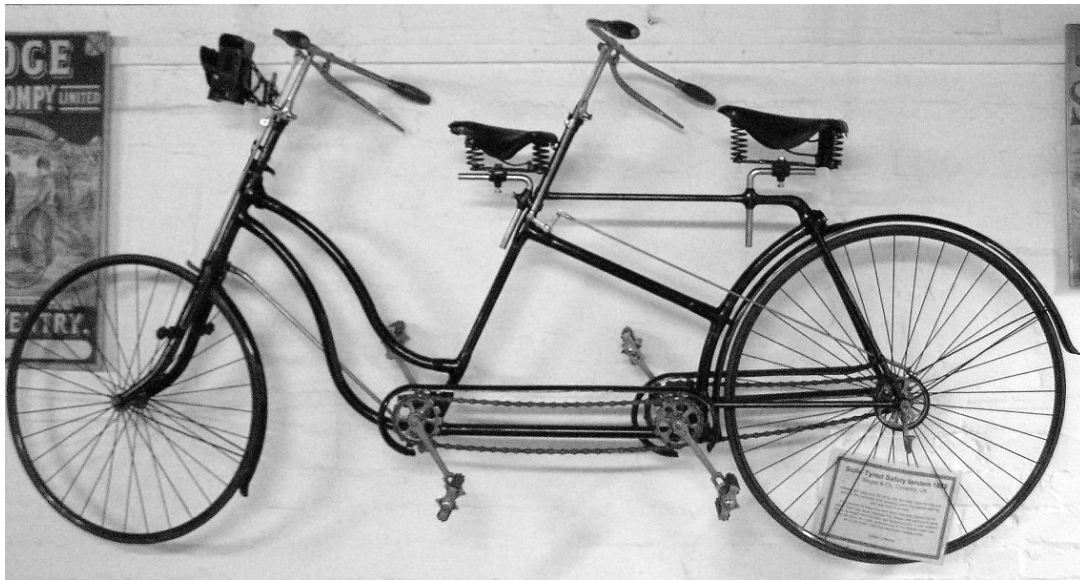
⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ *Otago Witness*, 16 February 1884, 18.

as spectators at race meetings and, in a tradition that would become ubiquitous in New Zealand's sports clubs, as providers of tea and cakes in pavilions and clubrooms. In fact, if one wanted a metaphor for women's positions in cycling clubs, the "lady front" tandem that replaced the sociable serves admirably (*see Figure 3.5*).

Figure 3.5: 1889 Singer solid-tyred safety tandem bicycle.

Source: author's collection (the tandem forms part of the Farren Collection, Melbourne).



The lady front tandem, circa 1890, placed the female rider in the front seat, sparing the male rider the embarrassment of turning his back towards a woman. This opened up the problem of control. A complicated set of linkages connected the rear handlebars to the front wheel, allowing the man to remain in control of steering. In some cases, only the rear handlebars steered, in others, including the Singer pictured in *Figure 3.4*, both sets turned. In either case, the resulting contraption was more difficult to steer than tandems on which the front rider alone had directional control. The problem is further compounded by a weak frame on which the front triangle is cut away to allow for the wearing of an ankle length skirt. The design is not at all intuitive or elegant. It only makes sense when one assumes that women could not or should not have sole responsibility for steering. Thus, the lady front tandem symbolises the social, political and economic reality of Pakeha women in nineteenth century New Zealand, where, as in

Britain, developments even in such mixed sports as tennis, golf and cycling, were, in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, “too limited and too conservative” to substantially influence established gender roles.⁸²

For both women and men, the club provided one other very tangible benefit: safety. Bicycle riding in the Ordinary era was a moderately risky activity. Adding to the danger was inconvenience – bad roads, together with the experimental nature of bicycle technology, conspired to make mechanical breakdown a distinct possibility on any given “run”. Some tricycles ameliorated the danger, but not the breakdowns. In fact, early chain drives and other complications made tricycles less reliable than the Ordinary. Riding in a group provided support in the event of mechanical or medical emergency, literally adhering to the axiom, “safety in numbers”. Not all the dangers were inanimate or mechanical in nature. A common experience for all cyclists, from the pioneering velocipedists on, was conflict with other road users together with antipathy and sometimes ridicule shown by the general public and persecution by the law. In the face of this antagonism, the club offered not only safety in numbers, but also bureaucratic organisation that conferred a level of legitimacy on its members activities – a formal body to petition government and support members’ complaints or defence in court.

The extra dimension of “cyclists’ rights” (as they would become known a century later) helps to explain why the roots of the Pioneer Bicycle Club struck in ground that had proved infertile for the earlier Canterbury Athletic Club. The PBC offered palpable advantages for its members. Timing was also important. Bicycle racing on Ordinaries was new and spectacular. The purchase price of the bicycle and the athleticism required to ride it limited racers by age, income and sex. If Christchurch’s population had been too small in the 1870s for the existence of an amateur athletic club *and* popular open sports meetings, the small number and social cohesiveness of the Ordinary riders actually worked to the Club’s advantage. The men had a vested interest in clubbing together and they possessed a marketable commodity when it came to

⁸² Neil Tranter, *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 91-3.

promoting gate-taking race meetings. The amateur athletes had found it difficult to draw spectators even while the Anniversary Sports meeting attracted audiences of up to 15,000. The Ordinary bicycle was both fast and impressive to watch. It could race successfully on grass and spectacularly on hard clay or asphalt. The PBC would enhance these advantages by adopting the same commercial methods that had been employed by the committees of the holiday sports meetings. It also moved to expand the organisation of amateur bicycle racing beyond the purely local level, creating a governing body that was to assume nominal control of bicycle racing throughout the colony.

Who Joined?

Alongside gentlemen's clubs, sports clubs also "echoed" the arcane rituals (and language) of fraternal lodges.⁸³ Like lodges, they facilitated the construction and maintenance of social and business networks, becoming basic building blocks for economic and social capital. In the case of bicycle clubs, members of the bicycle trade also had a vested interest in their survival – a healthy bicycle club contributed to healthy bicycle sales. Uncovering or reconstructing these social networks remains difficult, but a meeting in the PBC clubrooms in the early 1890s is indicative of the extent to which a bicycle club could intertwine with the different aspects of its members' lives. It also serves as something of a case study, offering an insight into the social makeup of cycling clubs.

A very pleasant gathering was held last evening at the rooms of the Pioneer Bicycle Club, when Mr C. E. Wilson, who is to be married shortly, was presented by the members of the Club with a purse of sovereigns. The Captain (Mr P. G. Withers) made the presentation, and wished Mr and the future Mrs C. E. Wilson long life and happiness, and proposed their healths. The toast was drunk with enthusiasm. After the recipient had responded in feeling terms, saying that he did not intend to leave the racing track, opportunity was taken to bid farewell to Mr J. F. Best, who leaves to-day for Wellington. General regret was expressed at Mr Best's departure, as since he had joined the Club he had been a most enthusiastic road rider, and had become deservedly popular. Before the meeting terminated, some excellent songs were rendered by

⁸³ Lowerson, *Sport*, 22 & 112.

Messrs Cassin, Coe, Cooper, Alexander, Oates, Parker, Thompson and Withers.⁸⁴

The “Oates” who helped provided “excellent songs” was likely to be Nicholas “Nicky” Oates, captain of the Christchurch Bicycle Club and regular handicapper at its race meetings. Oates began a long career in the bicycle and automotive industries when he started manufacturing “Zealandia” bicycles in 1880.⁸⁵ He regularly provided prizes for CBC and PBC meetings, as well as making direct donations to the PBC.⁸⁶ Lowry, meantime, was, as a manager for Hallenstein Bros’ menswear store, well qualified to perform the offices of secretary and treasurer for the PBC.⁸⁷ In 1897, he combined two major strands of his life by joining Oates to form Oates, Lowry and Co., manufacturers of “Zealandia” and “Atalanta” bicycles and importers of the first motorcar to Australasia.⁸⁸ By the time they joined forces in business, the manager and the entrepreneur had known each other for at least 15 years, and the acquaintance was far from casual. As executives of the original two bicycle clubs in Christchurch, they had sat on committees together, liaised over joint race meetings and toasted one another at soirées such as the one cited above. In this, perhaps extreme, example, the bicycle club had been a factor in the financial and social success of both men.

As well as this urban business class, early bicycle clubs attracted young professionals whose community interests extended well beyond the bicycle clubrooms. Matthew Stoddart Brown, was actively involved in the PBC at an executive level. He was also a borough councillor, Masonic Lodge warden and law partner. Stoddart Brown’s entry in *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand* (itself a bought and paid-for symbol of social and economic status) is worth repeating in full as an example of the activities of a respectable, colonially born professional, who was deeply involved in the community affairs of his city.

Councillor Matthew Stoddart Brown was elected a Member of the

⁸⁴ *Star*, 5 September 1891, 3.

⁸⁵ *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand (Canterbury Provincial District)*, (Christchurch, The Cyclopedia Company, Ltd., 1903), 315.

⁸⁶ *Star*, 5 November 1891, 3.

⁸⁷ *Star*, 28 August 1885, 4.

⁸⁸ *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand (Canterbury Provincial District)*, 315.

Linwood Borough Council in 1900. He was born at Port Levy in 1863, and is a son of Mr. Matthew Stoddart Brown, of Lyttelton, who arrived in New Zealand in 1857 from Sunderland, England, where the family name was an honoured one for many generations. Mr. Brown was brought up at Lyttelton, and educated at Ross's Grammar School, and the District School. He was articled to Mr. Nalder, solicitor, and since the 1st of October, 1880, has been associated with Mr. Wynn Williams, in Christchurch. In 1898 he was admitted as a partner in the firm, which has since borne the designation of Wynn Williams and Brown. Mr. Brown was for some time a member of the East Christchurch school committee. He has taken an active part in bicycle racing, has been captain of the Pioneer Bicycle Club, was a member of its committee for several years, and is now one of its trustees. As a Freemason he fills one of the warden's chairs of Lodge Canterbury, in which he was initiated. Mr. Brown married a niece of the late Mr. John Thompson, formerly Mayor of Lyttelton.⁸⁹

Like Oates and Lowry, the connection between Brown and Wynn-Williams encompassed more than just the Law. Both men were involved heavily in sports administration and politics.⁹⁰

Another example offers further insight into the social and occupational background of bicycle club members, and the sometimes-blurred boundaries between professionals and gentry when it came to social status. The meeting to found the North Canterbury Bicycle Club (NCBC) in Rangiora in 1884 was attended by both Charles Edward Torlesse and George "Guy" Mannering (Torlesse had moved and Mannering seconded the new club's name).⁹¹ Charles Edward Torlesse was the son of Elizabeth Torlesse (nee Revell) and the Reverend Henry Torlesse, who together had founded a female refuge in Christchurch in 1864.⁹² C. E. Torlesse was also the nephew of Charles

⁸⁹ *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand (Canterbury Provincial District)*, 386.

⁹⁰ *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand (Canterbury Provincial District)*, 96. Intriguingly, William Henry Wynn-Williams' entry in *The Cyclopaedia* is much briefer than that of Brown. Perhaps the MHR (1882-4) required less status affirmation than the borough councillor. Wynn-Williams was the archetypal story of a young professional finding colonial success. The son of a Welsh Vicar, he emigrated to New Zealand in 1856, penniless but with experience in a law practice. After working on sheep stations for a few years, Wynn-Williams returned to the law, joining an existing practice in Christchurch in 1860. In court, he was reputedly a "fearless advocate" and "friend to the underdog". His political career reflected this. "His popularity (as a member of the provincial council) was based in the local Working Men's Associations and he held regular public meetings in the bars of hotels". Peter Whiteside, "Speech at Cocktail Party On 30 January 2009 on the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary of Wynn Williams & Co.," http://wynnwilliams.co.nz/150th_speech.htm (accessed 27 July, 2009).

⁹¹ *Star*, 5 December 1884, 3.

⁹² Jo-Anne Smith, "Torlesse, Elizabeth Henrietta 1835/1836?-1922," *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/> (accessed 5 July, 2009).

Obins Torlesse, the Canterbury assistant surveyor who, together with his friend and colleague, John C. Boys, had founded the North Canterbury town of Rangiora. His paternal grandmother was Catherine Wakefield, sister of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. If Canterbury truly did have gentry, Charles Edward Torlesse could fairly claim membership. Moreover, his actions in life reinforced this membership via vigorous sporting and martial activities. Educated at Christ's College, Torlesse featured prominently in that school's sports results.⁹³ He "played rugby, cricket and tennis for Rangiora, was to be seen among the top contenders for championship honours on the Recreation Ground bicycle track and, as an officer of the volunteer rifle company, was also prominent on the rifle range."⁹⁴

If Torlesse gained local prominence as a sportsman, Guy Mannering found a level of national fame with his mountaineering exploits. Brought up on Birch Hill Station, about 25 kilometres northwest of Rangiora – the run had originally been one of the several Torlesse holdings – Mannering disliked pastoral life and instead began a lifelong career in banking.⁹⁵ He rose to prominence as a founder of New Zealand's alpine climbing movement and one of its most vocal advocates:

During the 1890s Mannering helped establish a recognisably New Zealand alpineclimbing tradition. In his book *With axe and rope in the New Zealand alps* (1891) and in articles for newspapers and alpine journals, he attempted to foster an interest in the new sport among sceptical New Zealanders.⁹⁶

Torlesse and Mannering exemplify the genteel ludic polymath whose sporting activities conformed to those of the ideal amateur. Bicycle racing was important to them; they invested time and energy into both the activity itself and its bureaucratic organisation in their home town. Nevertheless, the bicycle club was but one of a number of sporting and community enterprises that occupied these men. Although Mannering eventually found an almost vocational affinity for alpinism, one might argue that this intensified rather

⁹³ See, for example: *Star*, 14 October 1881, 3.

⁹⁴ D.N. Hawkins, *Rangiora: The Passing Years and People in a Canterbury Country Town*, (Rangiora: Rangiora Borough Council, 1983), 422.

⁹⁵ Sam Elworthy, "Mannering, George Edward 1862 – 1947," *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/> (accessed 5 July, 2009).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

than diminished his status as an amateur.

In their professional lives, Mannering and Wynne-Williams provide an example of the widening opportunities for professionals to become gentry, and also for gentry to enter professions without loss of status. Traditionally, professions that were acceptable for gentlemen to enter were restricted to the military, church and government.⁹⁷ Public school education and “gentleman’s hours” were mechanisms used by other professionals – doctors, lawyers and bankers – to emulate and, perhaps, gain entry to the gentry.⁹⁸ By the 1880s, Wynn-Williams, the Welsh-born lawyer and “fearless advocate”, was most probably regarded as a gentleman, albeit one with a common touch, by colleagues, members of the various sports clubs that he presided over and by his political constituency. On the flip-side of this coin, New Zealand also offered those members of the minor English and Scots gentry who had descended into genteel poverty the possibility of gaining capital by “getting their hands dirty”, both literally and metaphorically, without a loss of social status. Some returned “home” after profitable colonial sojourns, but for others who stayed in the Colony, the contribution of their own physical labour to their material success became a way of life.⁹⁹ Thus it was that Mannering, potential inheritor of a large station in North Canterbury, found himself facing a life of working with sheep, for which he had no taste. In a country and an era in which self reliance was a virtue, rather than distancing himself from station labour by assuming older modes of genteel behaviour, Mannering joined a bank in the nearby market town, at the bottom, as a “stamp licker”.¹⁰⁰ His subsequent career as a bank manager allowed him the leisure time to ride bicycles, start clubs, climb mountains, write books and a plethora of articles, and generally follow the life and pursuits of a gentleman.

From these examples, a picture of bicycle club membership emerges. It was occupationally mixed and included entrepreneurs, managers and professionals. Taking into account the almost total absence of lords in the colony, the clubs did comprise

⁹⁷ Belich, *Making Peoples*, 323.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ See Jim McAloon, *No Idle Rich*.

¹⁰⁰ Sam Elworthy, “Mannering”.

elements of a colonial élite. Notions of breeding and inherited gentility aside, lawyers, bankers, politicians, clergy, manufacturers and soldiers collectively held economic, social, political and military power in the colony. Much of this power was actively accrued, and this made their activities and impulses resemble those of the English middle-classes who sought to develop and cement their status with minor public schools, suburban or country houses, gentlemen's clubs, fraternal lodges, material possessions and displays of leisure. Various attitudes were held within this group as to the importance of economic amateurism. For the moment, those who did see its worth sought to counter the somewhat anarchic or, at least, *ad hoc* delivery of spectator sports in New Zealand with a governing body that was to control amateur bicycle racing in the colony.

The New Zealand Cyclists' Alliance

While the PBC organised its annual amateur races for silver plate, the Anniversary Sports and Caledonian Sports both offered opportunities for racing cyclists to win cash prizes. Between 1880 and 1883, these open races continued to draw entries from the ranks of the PBC. Such a situation is not altogether surprising, given that although its rules stated that the PBC should promote amateurism, they did not actually provide a working definition of an amateur. The need for definition, together with a more systematic approach to amateur bicycle racing, was keenly felt within the club. In mid-1882, preliminary moves were made to establish a governing body for bicycle sport in New Zealand. "Pedal Pin" wrote approvingly of this initiative:

The Pioneer Bicycle Club, Christchurch, as the oldest club in New Zealand, are [*sic*] taking the initiative in forming a Bicycle Union for New Zealand. The Dunedin Club, and, I hope, all other clubs in New Zealand, will give their cordial help in this matter. It is far better to form a Union at once, even though 'cyclists are few in numbers, as, if left till later years, difficulties may spring up which now, owing to the smallness of our numbers, will not occur. A Union is wanted, too, as last season we had clubs holding at their race meetings interprovincial and New Zealand championship races, which clubs, solely as clubs, have no right to do. The championship races should be under the control of, and managed solely by, a Union of all the clubs of New Zealand. Then the Union should not be a mere racing club, but should give its attention to all matters affecting the interests of 'Cycling in

general. Amateur status, touring, road guide, maps, should all, I think, come under the notice of the Union, — in fact the New Zealand 'Cyclists Union should be the ruling power of 'Cycling in New Zealand.¹⁰¹

At the end of October 1882, the New Zealand Cyclists' Alliance (NZCA) was founded in a meeting held, once again, at the Commercial Hotel in Christchurch.¹⁰² The meeting comprised 15 cyclists, most of whom were members of the PBC. They were:

Mr Farr (in the chair), Messers Norris, Pavitt, Preece, Kesteven, Lowry, Langdown, Mountfort, Douglas, Searell, (P.B.C.), Oakey, Dinnell, Oates (C.B.C.), and C. H. Williams (unattached).¹⁰³

These attendees were young, male, and white collar or middle-class. Their occupations included architect (Edward Farr and Thomas Searell Junior), bicycle manufacturer (Nicholas Oates), photographer (Albert Edward Preece), lawyers' stationer (Norris), and retail manager (Alexander Lowry).¹⁰⁴ Most had been racing bicycles for a few years at meetings organised by the PBC and the CBC and also at the various Anniversary and Caledonian sports meetings. They announced that:

It was intended to make the club a colonial one as regards New Zealand, and to provide for its members a fair representation, frame rules for the governing of bicycle racing &c.¹⁰⁵

The ever-industrious W. H. Wynn-Williams was chosen as president, "the office of vice-president to be filled from some other part of New Zealand."¹⁰⁶ Joseph Foxley Norris was elected, *pro-tem.*, secretary, and "the meeting then proceeded to the consideration of rather voluminous rules, and shortly after adjourned."¹⁰⁷ Norris was perhaps the most experienced member of the new committee, being a founding member of the Bicycle Touring Club in England and a member of the famous Pickwick Bicycle Club,

¹⁰¹ *Otago Witness*, 23 September 1882, 20.

¹⁰² The Commercial Hotel underwent several name evolutions over its life. Now commonly known simply as "Warner's", the hotel still stands on Cathedral Square in Christchurch, having been rebuilt circa 1901 after the original building was destroyed by fire. In the nineteenth century, the Commercial Hotel was the city's primary venue for committee and general meetings.

¹⁰³ *Press*, 31 October 1882, 4.

¹⁰⁴ George Ranold MacDonald, *The G. R. MacDonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies* (Canterbury Museum, 1964), 173, 338 & 501.

¹⁰⁵ *Press*, 31 October 1882, 4.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Lyttelton Times.*, 31 October 1882, 4.

London.¹⁰⁸

The “rather voluminous” rules drawn up at those first meetings of the NZCA included a definition of amateurism that owed much to that used by the English BU:

By the rules of the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance, which are the rules regarding amateurs recognised by bicycle riders in Dunedin, Christchurch and elsewhere in New Zealand, any cyclist who competes in a race for a money prize or against a professional, since the formation of the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance (1882) is deemed a professional.¹⁰⁹

Despite this seemingly clear definition, members of the amateur clubs and even of the Alliance executive itself appear to have raced for cash over the 1882-1883 season. On Anniversary Day in 1882, a handful of club cyclists spread themselves between the two competing race meetings: the Popular Sports held in Hagley Park and the Caledonian Sports held in Lancaster Park.¹¹⁰ The organising committees of both events appear to have acknowledged the existence of the Alliance and its desire that amateur bicycle racing be for trophies only. The Popular Sports put up trophies for first and second in its three-mile bicycle race while the Caledonian meeting offered £5 and £3 cups for first and second in the three-mile handicap together with £10 and £3 cups for first and second in the ten-mile “Caledonian Society’s Grand Handicap.”¹¹¹ Not all the prizes, however, met the satisfaction of the place getters. When the committee of the Popular Amusement Association met on 22 December 1882, they read an indignant letter from the winner of their three mile bicycle race, none other than the PBC’s membership secretary and treasurer, F. R. Dunsford:

¹⁰⁸ Founded in 1870, the Pickwick Bicycle Club is the oldest cycle club still in existence. It was not, however, the first to be formed, several clubs predated it, the first of which was the Liverpool Velocipede Club, founded in 1867. The National Library holds a collection of photographs taken by Norris in the “Foxley Norris album [1870s-1880s]” (reference number: PA1-q-094). Norris was no armchair cyclist. Though his racing success was limited, he undertook some notable pioneering tours. In April, 1882, he rode from Christchurch to Dunedin (“A BICYCLE TRIP”, *West Coast Times*, 8 April 1882, 3) and later that year, was a part of the P.B.C. team that broke the record for Christchurch to Hurunui return. Foxley Norris made the return trip in 14 hours. (*Otago Witness*, 2 December 1882, 21). It is significant that both Foxley Norris and Preece were photographers, the latter making photography his career. Photographs, like bicycles, are powerful symbols of nineteenth century modernity.

¹⁰⁹ Letter to the Editor written under the pseudonym “Cyclist”, dated 13 December, 1883. Preece’s Scrapbook, 32.

¹¹⁰ *Lyttelton Times*, 18 December, 1882, 5-6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

A letter was read from Mr F. R. Dunsford, the winner of the three-mile bicycle race, returning the cup which had been presented to him, and stating that he would rather have the money, as the trophy was not worth £3. If the mistake was not rectified he would give the cup as a second prize for boys under six.

After some discussion it was decided to pay Mr Dunsford £3 and present the cup to the winner of the second prize, the committee expressing their displeasure at the tone of Mr Dunsford's letter.¹¹²

Perhaps Dunsford's dislike of the Popular Sports Committee's taste in prizes was generally held amongst his fellow cyclists. When Anniversary Day came around in 1883, "the only item[s] not appearing to offer sufficient inducement...[were] the bicycle races, in which there were no competitors."¹¹³ Over at Lancaster Park, meanwhile, the Caledonian Sports included in its programme a "One Mile Amateur Bicycle Handicap," which offered the Lancaster Park Company's Cup together with £5 cash for first place and £2 for second.¹¹⁴ The cash prize did not prevent the event from being billed as an amateur race, nor did it stop prominent PBC and NZCA members from taking part. Dunsford, Lowry and H. J. Jenkins all competed in the race, which was won by yet another PBC member, W. H. Langdown, who was in the process of becoming the country's dominant racing cyclist. Dunsford and Lowry were both executive members of the PBC. Lowry and Langdown were, furthermore, present at the foundation meeting of the NZCA.

Despite the initial tolerance with which the "amateur rule" was applied by the PBC and NZCA, the Popular Sports Committee and the Caledonian Society became more inclined to divide their bicycle races into two separate categories from 1884 onwards. Amateur races were for trophies only and open races for cash or cash and trophies. Despite the definition of "amateur" becoming tighter, strictures against commercial taint were not particularly austere. In the case of both amateur and open events, the trophies were often donated by commercial interests, as well as by individuals and local politicians. In 1885, for example, those racing in the five mile amateur bicycle handicap at the Popular Sports did so for the chance of winning the

¹¹² *Press*, 23 December, 1882, 3.

¹¹³ *Star*, 18 December, 1883, 4.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Crown Brewery Company's Cup. Moreover, even when the bicycle races on the programmes of the big sports meetings were purely amateur (using the Alliance's economic definition of amateurism), they took place alongside a variety of competitions offering cash prizes. New Zealand amateurism, in bicycle racing at least, initially exhibited a level of pragmatism which placed the sport's growth before notions of amateur purity or fear of commercial taint. There was, however, an obvious desire amongst those involved in the sport for amateur bicycle racing to stand on its own two wheels. Towards this end, trends that had become evident by the middle of the 1880s showed positive, if not absolute, proof that this could become possible.

By 1885, each of the major venues for racing had developed its own distinctive characteristics. The Popular Sports (as the Anniversary Day Sports was now known) was a major social occasion, run for the benefit of the wider community by a committee comprising community leaders, bureaucrats and members of local government. As the 1880s progressed and the Long Depression took hold, this social role accumulated further significance. New events such as the Unemployed Men's Race now offered a load of coal as first prize. In 1886, this social relief was extended still further by the attachment of an Unemployed Picnic to the Popular Sports.¹¹⁵ Unfortunately, income from donations on the day showed a corresponding decrease, and throughout the 1880s the Popular Sports suffered a parlous existence, reprieved several times from extinction just prior to Anniversary Day by the whirlwind efforts of committee members once again persuaded to step into the organisational breach.¹¹⁶

It is thus not surprising that the Popular Sports suffered declining popularity with racing cyclists, who attended the event in small numbers. In many ways, riders of the Ordinary bicycle can be likened to twenty-first century boy racers. They were young, male, urban, and had significant disposable incomes. The Ordinary was a visually spectacular machine, placing the rider well above the crowd and producing a graceful, floating effect as its large wheel effectively smoothed the rider's travel over

¹¹⁵ *Lyttelton Times.*, 17 December 1886, 5.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

rough roads.¹¹⁷ It was also moderately dangerous, its forward bias and exaggerated front wheel making the likelihood of a “header” or forward fall over the handlebars an ever-present danger. Rather than being a disincentive to young male purchasers, this danger was, along with the athleticism required to mount and ride an Ordinary, the core of its marketing appeal.¹¹⁸ Riding an Ordinary was flamboyant, luxurious (requiring time and money), elegant, athletic and dangerous: the perfect tool for a young man wishing to advertise his financial worth and youthful courage. The Popular Sports, now a cash-strapped social occasion, increasingly became an act of benevolence towards the unemployed Christchurch working class and not the ideal venue at which to exhibit these virtues.

In contrast to the Popular Sports, the “Caledonian Gathering” that occupied the same spot on the calendar relied on a strong cultural identity together with a rich prize list and a history of providing a wide variety of spectacles to keep audiences at the gates. In 1883, the Gathering attracted 7000 paying spectators. In years following, it continued to attract crowds of “several” to “four or five thousand” spectators, despite being held on a day commemorating the foundation of a “Sassenach” colony. But if the Gathering was very popular with spectators, it was only moderately so with cyclists. In 1886, only four cyclists contested the “Five Mile Bicycle Handicap Race” for a first prize that included a cup and “£5...of Society’s prizes.”¹¹⁹ A further six cyclists tried for the Mason Struthers and Company’s Cup and £3 cash offered for first place in the “Two-Mile Amateur Bicycle Race Handicap.”¹²⁰ Just over a month later, the PBC’s annual Boxing Day Interprovincial Bicycle Races featured a programme of 18 races (including heats, a “Juvenile Tricycle Race” and the consolation race), with an average

¹¹⁷ When the Ordinary began to lose popularity to the rear wheel drive safety bicycle around 1890, one wit commented:

The rear-driver is making its way. Soon the tall ordinary will give place, and the ladies will cease to admire cycling (not cyclists). You do occasionally hear a remark when some of our masher [*sic*] riders pass down street, “Oh, how nicely Mr — well, So-and-so— rides,” or “How well he looks on his bicycle,” or “What a pretty bicycle.”

(*Otago Witness*, 31 August 1888, 27).

¹¹⁸ Bijker notes: “the high-wheeled ordinary was at once a dangerous machine, prone to failure in the marketplace, *and* a well-working machine that allowed highly skilled physical exercise, resulting in commercial success” [emphasis in original]. (Bijker, *Of Bicycles*, 270).

¹¹⁹ *Lyttelton Times.*, 17 December 1886, 6.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

of nine entries per race and 162 entries overall.¹²¹ “Pure” amateurism (as amateurism conforming to economic prescripts had become known) was now the most popular class of racing with New Zealand cyclists. As a spectator event, it failed to reach the popularity of the Caledonian Gathering, though a healthy crowd of 2000 visitors did turn up to watch the racing.

Other pure amateur events were less commercially successful. When the CBC decided to try a meeting late in 1885, the event was judged to be successful from a sporting point of view.¹²² Unfortunately, “owing to the very hot weather, there was not so large an attendance of the public considering the half holiday.”¹²³ While hot, gusty, December weather may have contributed to the lack of visitors at the CBC meeting, it was the forward planning and flair for publicity that ensured PBC meetings had a relative level of commercial success.

A major *raison d'être* for the NZCA was the rationalisation and control of bicycle championships in New Zealand. By establishing primacy over the championship system, the Alliance, and by extension, the PBC which had established it and dominated its executive, were able to imbue their races with a new level of prestige not achieved by purely local holiday sports meetings. The PBC did not, however, monopolise the holding of championships completely, as each of the championship races (one mile, three miles, five miles and ten miles) were held in a different city. In 1886, for example, “it was decided to have five championship races during the season, to be held by the following clubs:— North Canterbury, one mile; Pioneer, three miles; Christchurch, five miles; Waitemata, 10 miles; Invercargill, 25 miles; the clubs to have permission to exchange races if necessary.”¹²⁴

The southern bias in the Alliance’s distribution of venues is due to more than simply its own location in Christchurch. The “Vogel Railways” had, by 1880, linked Christchurch with Timaru, Oamaru and Dunedin, and a host of smaller provincial

¹²¹ *Lyttelton Times*, 28 December 1886, 5.

¹²² *The Weekly Press*, 19 December 1885, 5.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Evening Post*, 5 October 1886, 2.

communities.¹²⁵ Rail systems in the northern South Island and the North Island remained far more fractured even after 1914, providing a positive explanation for why amateur bicycle racing developed not only in the geographically friendly province of Canterbury, but also in Central Otago and Southland, before it did in northern centres. Not only were Cutten and his fellow DBC members able to travel up from Dunedin to race in Oamaru, Timaru and Christchurch, but Langdown and other Christchurch riders could return the favour. In 1883, Langdown dominated racing in Dunedin. But in 1884, it was F. Cutten (brother of W.H. Cutten) who won the 10 mile Championships held at the combined sports meeting of the Dunedin Cycling Club (DCC) and Otago Bicycle Club (OBC).¹²⁶ The pace was too fast for all but Cutten and Langdown, turning the race into a default Otago versus Canterbury match race.

The Dunedin championship race of 1884 is noticeable not only for those who raced, but also for those who were barred from doing so. A. A. O'Donnell, a "trick cyclist" from Australia, had entered the championship, but was disqualified from starting by the race committee. Unfortunately for O'Donnell:

A transgression of the amateur rule, no matter where it takes place, makes a man a professional all over the world. Consequently, as O'Donnell performed for money in Australia, he is a professional, and must remain so, and therefore Mr Cutten cannot race with him for money or prize and remain an amateur.¹²⁷

The application of this negative definition of amateurism to the O'Donnell case indicates a hardening of the boundaries between amateur and professional cyclists. The implication, however, that Alliance cyclists would automatically lose their amateur status by racing against those who had taken cash was not strictly true. The Alliance had always reserved the right to sanction races between amateurs and professionals.

From 1884 to 1892, the PBC vigorously exploited this right by importing several overseas stars to race at its Boxing Day meeting. The most famous of these was Fred

¹²⁵ Albert Noel Palmer, "Railways," in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, vol. 3, ed. A. H. McLintock, (Wellington: R. E. Owen, Government Printer, 1966), 32 – 33.

¹²⁶ *Otago Witness*, 24 March 1883, 19; 2 February 1884, 24.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

Wood, from Leicester, England who, since becoming a professional in 1880, had won numerous professional world championships over a variety of distances.¹²⁸ In 1886, Wood undertook a 22-month tour of the United States, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the South Island of New Zealand.¹²⁹ On 15 December 1887, Wood and a London amateur, William Brown, arrived in Lyttelton. The two cyclists raced at the PBC's Boxing Day meeting, which the Club could now advertise as an "International Bicycle Race".¹³⁰ The Club had, in October, written to the Alliance "requesting that permission should be granted to the amateurs of New Zealand to compete with Fred Wood, the English professional champion".¹³¹ The Alliance swiftly granted this permission "on condition that the amateurs took trophies for their winnings, and that they raced only under the management of a recognised Club".¹³²

Figure 3.6: Advertisement, *Star*, 24 December 1887, 2.



Three "test races" had been arranged between Wood and "the Best Amateurs of New Zealand" over distances of one, five and ten miles, all of which were won by the visiting professional (see Figure 3.6). For his trouble, Wood "received £50 in addition to a presentation of some silver plate."¹³³ Just over a month after the Lancaster Park race, Wood travelled south to Dunedin for the next instalment of the Alliance's Championship

¹²⁸ *Otago Witness*, 29 June 1888, 27.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Star*, 24 December 1887, 2.

¹³¹ *Star*, 4 October 1887, 2.

¹³² *Ibid.* It is notable that the Alliance meeting took place in the PBC clubrooms in Christchurch.

¹³³ *Otago Witness* 29 June 1888, 27.

series. Again, he received top billing, and this time, won a pony as reward for his “flying visit” south.¹³⁴

The generosity towards this wandering professional cyclist extended beyond prize money and livestock. In Christchurch, Wood was presented with a silver card tray, and in an interview with an English sporting magazine, he recalled that “a member who had won nearly £200 at the Pioneer B. C. meeting handed me a purse containing £26.” The DCC displayed a similar gratitude. When giving Wood and Brown a send off: “Mr J. Howlison, secretary to the club, presented Wood with a silver cigarette case, inscribed as follows;— ‘Presented to Fred Wood with prize for test races, Dunedin Cycling Club, 4th February 1888.’”¹³⁵ Both clubs could afford to be generous. The Boxing Day meeting had drawn a crowd of “close to 6000” spectators, making it by far the PBC’s most successful meeting thus far. The Carisbrook meeting in Dunedin also drew an “exceptionally good” audience of 2000 spectators.

After the success of Wood as a star attraction at their 1887 to 1888 season, the PBC fell back on local talent and a variety of non-competitive entertainment for their 1888 “Interprovincial” meeting. Elaborate newspaper advertisements helped ensure that a crowd of 3000 spectators paid a shilling each to witness “20 exciting events”, including the Mile Championship of New Zealand, and a “Maori Race by the Flyers of Woodend”. Also on the bill were “Mr W. Thompson”, “Baby Atkinson and Master Lily who gave “an exhibition of fancy riding”.¹³⁶

In 1889, the Club expanded its ambitions once again by planning an “Intercolonial” event running over the three days after Christmas.¹³⁷ The races offered £300 in prizes, £40 of which was reserved as a cash prize for the “Grand Open Handicap.”¹³⁸ For financial success, the meeting needed to draw 8,000 to 10,000 visitors, which the Club was “sanguine of obtaining.”¹³⁹ To achieve its target, the PBC

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ *Otago Witness* 2 March 1888, 26.

¹³⁶ This and previous quotes, *Star*, 24 December 1888, 2.

¹³⁷ *The Weekly Press* 15 February 1889, 17.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

built on the strategies it had already employed in past seasons. By February 1889, Lowry, the “chief mover in the matter” had begun negotiations with “several of the principal riders in Australia with the object of ascertaining if a team of (say) three of the representative riders of Australia can be induced to visit and compete in the meeting.”¹⁴⁰ By December, the Club had “strained every nerve to work the meeting up,” publishing “a small gazette of wheel news.”¹⁴¹ This was “circulated all over the colonies, and as a consequence of the widespread advertising, riders from South Australia, Victoria, and from all parts of New Zealand from Auckland to the Bluff” came to race at Lancaster Park.¹⁴² Once again, it was the imported riders who caused the most stir:

Special interest attaches to Messrs Fenlon and Mayes, who have come from Victoria with a good record to back up their English performance. F. Mill, who represents South Australia, is said to be a very fast rider, so that our local men will have to do their best to hold their own.¹⁴³

To make sure that all Christchurch was aware of the upcoming festivities, a “Monster Bicycle Procession, the largest procession of cyclists ever seen in the colony,” was held a few days before Christmas. Parades had been a regular part of sports meetings since the 1860s, but generally they took place on the day of the event. The PBC’s muster of 148 ordinaries, 32 rovers, three extraordinaries, one tandem and one tricycle a week before racing began, was an extension of the parade’s advertising role.¹⁴⁴

The Club’s hard sell paid dividends. “Humber” of the *Weekly Press* enthused that the three days’ racing “was, without a doubt the most successful meeting of its kind that has ever been held in New Zealand.”¹⁴⁵ Audience sizes broke even the Club’s projections: between eight and nine thousand on the first day, 2,000 on the second and 5,000 on the third.¹⁴⁶ As well as the two Australians, local representatives of the PBC, the North Canterbury Bicycle Club (Rangiora), the Ashburton Bicycle Club, the Dunedin Cycle Club, the Wellington Bicycle Club, the Nelson Bicycle Club, the

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ *Otago Witness*, 19 December 1889, 31.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ *Weekly Press*, 19 December 1889, 22.

¹⁴⁵ *Weekly Press*, 3 January 1890, 16.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

Bicycle Touring Club (Christchurch), the Timaru Cycling Club, the South Canterbury Cycling Club, the Oamaru Cycling Club, the Zealandia Cycling Club (Nelson) and the Invercargill Cycling Club, raced at the meeting. Again, it is interesting to note that seven of the ten visiting clubs were able to reach Christchurch by direct rail links.

As successful as the meeting was, it, and more particularly its Australian imports, did not come without problems. One of the visitors was a South Australian professional, and his presence in New Zealand did not meet with the approval of his Australian companions:

There is likely to be some trouble in regards to F. Mills riding at the Pioneers' race meeting. It appears that as he was not engaged by Fenlon, the latter objects to the Australian riding; but surely after coming all this way, the Christchurch people will not let Mills return home without having a race for his trouble.

Mills has now taken a sickly sort of revenge by issuing a challenge to race Fenlon, but as he is a professional, and Fenlon an amateur, I don't see how the two can meet.¹⁴⁷

Ultimately, Frank Mills did not race at the Intercolonial meeting. Indeed his presence in Christchurch may have caused the PBC some regret, as it appears to have been a contributing factor in the journey towards professionalism by a talented member of the Club, C. R. "Chris" Wilson. In December 1889, Wilson announced that he intended to join Mills as a touring professional.¹⁴⁸ Reporters in Christchurch and Dunedin showed their disapproval by regretting "Wilson's secession from the amateur ranks," and hoping that the PBC might "find means to induce him to reconsider his decision."¹⁴⁹ Unfortunately for these hopes, the Alliance seemed more determined to alienate Wilson than keep him when it refused to accept a record he set at Lancaster Park.

The recording of sporting achievements is a crucial role of governing bodies and a core component of modern sport. Allen Guttman defines "record" as "the marvelous abstraction that permits competition not only among those gathered together on the field

¹⁴⁷ *Weekly Press*, 13 December 1889, 18.

¹⁴⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 14 December 1889, 3.

¹⁴⁹ *Otago Witness*, 5 December 1889, 30.

of sport but also among them and others distant in time and space.”¹⁵⁰ But in order for this competition to be possible, standard and trustworthy systems of measurement need to be set in place. Athletes, and perhaps more significantly, newspapers, were not inclined to take matters purely on trust. In 1889, “Demon”, the *Otago Witness*’ cycling columnist, reprinted a pithy comment clipped from an English cycling magazine:

Bicycling News of October 5, in a short article on Australian records, said:— “An Australian paper wonders why English journals ignore Australian records. The reasons are obvious. There is practically no scrutiny at all; and there is no cycling paper to ferret out discrepancies. There is, so far as we know, no Records Committee; and we are not told of any special efforts to investigate the claimed performances; while the fact that English riders over there do as well or better than the colonials — or at any rate run them very close— causes us to be somewhat sceptical.”¹⁵¹

In New Zealand, the Alliance acted to make sure a similar accusation could not be aimed at the records it ratified. When both C. R. Wilson and A. H. Soanes asked to have their times for the mile, set on the Lancaster Park track, accepted as records, the Alliance first had the track surveyed. They found that it came up short, deciding, therefore, that Wilson had ridden ten yards less than a full mile.¹⁵² Given that the Lancaster Park track had been in use for the best part of the 1880s, and that the Alliance had set its rules for how tracks should be measured 12 months earlier, it is not surprising that some chagrin was felt at the official measurement being ordered after the event.¹⁵³

Great dissatisfaction has been expressed at the records lately made by Soanes and Wilson on Lancaster Park having to be disallowed, but as the measurement was incorrect nothing else could be done. The surprising thing is that a track so much used as the Lancaster Park track is [*sic*] for racing of all kinds has not been accurately measured before. In fact every track which has not an inner edge or curb of some kind which cannot be altered as the usual turf edge can, ought to be measured on the occasion of every important race.¹⁵⁴

The incident sheds light on how the growing bureaucracy surrounding sport was

¹⁵⁰ Allen Guttmann, *From Ritual to Record*, 52.

¹⁵¹ *Otago Witness*, 5 December 1889, 30.

¹⁵² *The Weekly Press*, 13 December 1889, 18.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Otago Witness*, 19 December 1889, 31.

stimulated by the concept of record. For a record to be meaningful, conditions of competition needed to be equal.¹⁵⁵ Ensuring this equality required increasing numbers of personnel extra to the athletes themselves. As the regrettable incident at Lancaster Park showed, these personnel needed to be engaged *pre facto* in order to avoid further embarrassment. Equality of condition was also a driving force for the shift of racing and record breaking from the road to the track. As well as providing better control over spectators, racing tracks offered a more controlled environment for record breaking.

The Alliance was now enforcing its amateur rule with much more vigilance than it had in 1882. Riders who raced for cash or against professionals (without NZCA dispensation to do so), or who sold their trophies, were struck off as amateurs. These bans were not permanent, however. If the offending rider declined to race for a stand-down period, his amateur status could be reinstated by the Alliance. By 1889, reinstatements were a regular order of business at NZCA meetings. In December 1889, for example, “Messrs Hood, Richards, McQueen, of Oamaru; Oliver of Timaru; and Cusack of Christchurch, were reinstated as amateurs” by the Alliance.¹⁵⁶ A round of reinstatements at the Alliance’s 1890 General Meeting sheds much light on how the process worked:

An application from a former rider, who on leaving the colony some time ago, sold his trophy, thereby becoming a professional, to be reinstated as an amateur, was received.

After hearing particulars of the case, it was unanimously agreed to comply with the application.¹⁵⁷

The Alliance was not always in so forgiving a mood.

The secretary of the Invercargill Cycling Club wrote requesting that two former professional athletes, who had resolved to give up professionalism, be admitted as amateurs.

A committee was appointed to confer with the Amateur Athletics

¹⁵⁵ Guttman, *Ritual*, 26.

¹⁵⁶ *The Weekly Press*, 13 December, 1889, 18.

¹⁵⁷ *Weekly Press*, 10 October, 1890, 18.

Association in regard to the re-instatement.¹⁵⁸

And even when it did forgive, the Alliance did not necessarily forget past transgressions. It kept a master list not only of those who it deemed professionals or disqualified riders, but also of those who had been reinstated as amateurs.¹⁵⁹

By 1890, the Alliance was using much more polarised definitions of “amateur” and “Professional.” One was either an amateur or a professional; it was no longer acceptable to mix the two terms when describing an individual cyclist. This does not, however, mean that either term was immutable. In fact the exact opposite is true. By taking a cash prize, selling a trophy, racing against a professional, racing at an unsanctioned meeting or even competing in an unsanctioned tug-of-war, a rider could lose his amateur status and, in the polarised view of the Alliance, automatically become a professional.

On the other hand, if a professional applied to the Alliance, and met with its conditions, he could be reinstated as an amateur. Note that in the language of the governing bodies, athletes were “reinstated” as amateurs, not just “instated” as amateurs. Clearly, amateur was the natural state. Also, as was the case with the Wood visit, amateurs could race professionals under certain conditions dictated by the Alliance without automatically becoming professionals.

Finally, as in the case of Fenlon and Mayes, visiting amateurs could be awarded the profits of a race meeting and maintain their amateur status. This was achieved via the tradition of the ‘benefit’, a special race or race meeting run as a financial “thank you” to visiting racers. On 16 February 1890, a benefit was held for Fenlon and Mayes, and although the meeting was in itself insignificant as a sporting event, it achieved the desired result, if only in a small way:

The Bicycle Meeting held last Saturday afternoon cannot be regarded as a success. In the first place the fields were small and the racing far from interesting, and in the second place the attendance was far from satisfactory. Owing to the smallness of the expenses, however, a

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ *Weekly Press*, 13 December, 1899, 18.

considerable sum should be handed over to Fenlon and Mayes, whose undeniable talent deserved to be more substantially recognised.¹⁶⁰

Thus, by 1890, the form of amateurism administered by the NZCA was no longer socially *or* economically defined. Its definition was, instead, bureaucratic, relying on the existence of a series of interlocking (and sometimes competing) associations, unions, alliances and committees. An athlete did not endanger his amateur status by taking money, but by doing so without the approval of a committee. Amateur bicycle racing was not conducted only for the love of the race, but also to define exactly the ability of each athlete in terms of miles, yards, feet, inches, hours, minutes, seconds, pounds, shillings and pence (for at every amateur meeting, the value of each trophy was carefully recorded and announced).

While the urge to quantify, organise and rationalise were peculiarly middle-class gifts to sport, the link between bureaucratic amateurism and middle-class ideology runs even deeper. That amateur status could be conferred by a committee and thus, could be achieved or maintained by adherence to a prescribed set of behaviours, conformed to the middle-class concept that social position is mutable. In fact, the pursuit of leisure activities by the middle-classes in the second half of the nineteenth century, which seems such an anathema to traditional bourgeois values of “hard work, thrift, capital accumulation, saving, moral rectitude, sobriety, respectability, and religious commitment,” is attributable, in part, to “the pursuit of social position.”¹⁶¹ If, as Thorstein Veblen argued, leisure was a convenient way for the upper classes to display and confirm wealth and social position, then indulging in a recreational pursuit such as cycling could confer social prestige upon its participants.¹⁶² This argument rests upon the assumption that social position is conferrable via a codified set of behaviours. Whereas the aristocratic amateurs of the late eighteenth and early-nineteenth century such as Lord Beuclerk or the Oxbridge rowers were amateurs by reason of birth, and would remain so for life, regardless of their own propensity to compete for cash, NZCA cyclists were amateurs by reason of behaviour. For the middle-classes, amateur status

¹⁶⁰ *Weekly Press*, 21 February, 1890, 18.

¹⁶¹ Borsay, *History*, 90.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 91.

was – like social status – mutable, conferrable and quantifiable.

Conclusion

If one were to look for a halcyon era when amateurs dominated cycling in New Zealand, the 1880s stand ahead of any other decade. As has been shown, Christchurch wore a general ambivalence towards amateurism throughout the 1870s, and while notions that sport provided rational recreation were apparent amongst New Zealand's bourgeoisie and colonial administrators, they did not identify amateurism as crucial to this purpose. Yet, by 1882 the PBC had successfully gained control of New Zealand bicycle racing through its foundation of the NZCA, the first amateur sports body in the colony and New Zealand cycling's only governing body throughout the decade. Racing had developed from a handful of PBC members racing on the roads in 1879, to the 1889 Intercolonial meeting that extended over three days and drew 15,000 spectators, thereby equalling the Popular Sports and the Caledonian Gathering in both scope and popularity. By forming the Alliance early in the sport's development in New Zealand, the PBC bought into a rapidly expanding bureaucratic system of measurement and control. It exploited this system in order to bring foreign riders to its meetings in a successful attempt to attract paying spectators.

While Christchurch's cycle-friendly geography remained a potent factor in the PBC's success, technological innovations played an equally important role. Steamships and telegraphs provided conduits for inter and intra colonial news to travel faster than ever before. Newspaper readers could follow bicycle races throughout New Zealand, and throughout the world. Without this improvement, it is doubtful whether the abstract concept of the "record" would have gained the importance that it did. In the case of physical, rather than abstract, competition, rail links allowed visiting cyclists to travel relatively quickly and cheaply to the interprovincial and intercolonial meetings promoted by the Club. This played an important role in the rapid growth of Alliance affiliated clubs throughout the bottom half of the South Island

The Alliance's amateurism was not, however, as 'pure' as it proclaimed to be. In

the first few years of the existence of the PBC and even of the Alliance, prominent members of both organisations continued to race for cash at holiday sports meetings. Even after the rules hardened, the Alliance's reservation of the right to sanction test races between its members and visiting professionals meant that amateurism was now a bureaucratic rather than social or even purely economic concept. And when prizes were supposedly restricted to purely decorative trophies, the monetary value of each piece of silver plate was carefully recorded and announced in the newspapers. This approach to sport is consistent with the "achievement orientated and acquisitive" nature of the "ideal type' bourgeoisie" that Sheard and Dunning have recognised in the middle-class of North England, and which is also identifiable in New Zealand's settler society.

There is also evidence that the Alliance's control over bicycle racing in New Zealand was far from complete. As popular as were the giant meetings of the PBC, the NCBC and the DCC, together with more modest meetings in Auckland, Timaru, Invercargill and other towns where Alliance clubs operated, the existence of reinstatement committees suggests that plenty of holiday sports meetings still offered non-sanctioned, open bicycle races on their programmes. Indeed, there had always been an undercurrent of support for the idea of organised cash racing in the colony. In 1890, the Melbourne Bicycle Club, in many ways the PBC's Victorian equivalent, let the genie out of the bottle by offering 160 sovereigns as first prize for its famous "Austral Wheel Race". Within two years, the practice had spread throughout Australasia, and "Cash Amateurism" was born. The following chapter will chart the development of cash amateurism and offer a preliminary explanation for its arrival in New Zealand.

Chapter 4 – CASH AMATEURS

*German and Dutch cyclists are agitating for cash prizes. In support, one rider wants to know what he is to do with forty-one cuckoo clocks he has won.*¹

Introduction

By 1890, The Pioneer Bicycle Club (PBC) had managed to achieve not only a level of permanency in Christchurch, but, by founding the New Zealand Cyclists' Alliance (NZCA), had engineered an expansion of amateurism in bicycle racing throughout the colony. In one sense, it had achieved this in a vacuum. Apart from the brief flare of velocipede mania in 1869, bicycle racing had been all but nonexistent until the Club's formation. The Alliance clubs did, however, face competition for the hearts, minds and entrance fees of cyclists throughout New Zealand, as a host of holiday sports continued to be held in its cities, towns and villages. Some sought permission from the Alliance to place amateur bicycle races on their programmes; others, judging by the number of amateur reinstatements conducted by the Alliance, were governed by no authority other than their own committees, and persisted in setting cash and open races on their programmes.

Internationally, cracks had begun to show in amateurism's control of bicycle racing. The strain was felt in Britain, Europe, the United States and Australasia, and the local sporting press was full of news snippets charting the discontent. French bicycle race promoters had already adopted a pragmatic approach which put them offside with English amateur bodies, but which would also help transform French cycling into a national sport. In 1891, an audacious 1200 kilometre road race, the Paris-Brest-Paris, was held for the first time, and its promoters offered the winners the choice of cash "or anything else...in the shape of trophies or medals."² The race was thus open to both

¹ *New Zealand Referee*, 27 August 1891, 28.

² *New Zealand Referee*, 6 August 1891, 29. The Paris-Brest-Paris exists in the twenty-first

professionals and amateurs, the professionals racing for money, while the amateurs took trophies home.³ In the eyes of French cycling clubs, the amateurs incurred no “taint” from competing with the professionals, but doing so was an anathema to English amateur bodies who forbade any competition between amateurs and professionals. In Australasia, cash amateur bicycle racing was offered as the solution. Cash amateurism was, to some, a contradiction in terms, but it soon became the dominant “system” controlling bicycle racing in Australasia.

This chapter will examine the development of cash amateurism and in so doing will answer the question posed in the introduction to this thesis, what was cash amateurism? It will show how cash amateurism was a response to a core contradiction in the assumptions that underpinned late-nineteenth century sport and highlight the ramifications of this contradiction on amateurism as an ideology.

The Melbourne Bicycle Club and the Austral Wheel Race

In 1887, the Melbourne Bicycle Club (MBC) began one of the most significant traditions in Australasian cycling when it held the first Austral Wheel Race (AWR). The Wheel Race was a track handicap run over three miles (shortened to two miles from 1888) for an unprecedented first prize trophy, “consisting of walnut cabinet, containing 152 pieces silver and cutlery, E.P. revolving dish, spirit stand, set of entree dishes, walnut case dessert combination, venison dish, and E.P. tea urn” valued at £200.⁴ In 1889, the first prize trophy became an “open order” of £200. The winner, J.J. Mullins, “anticipated wedded life” and so “made good use of that order, buying from a well-known ironmongery firm a miscellaneous assortment of goods and chattels.”⁵ Finally, in 1890, the MBC dropped all pretence of trophies and instead ran the AWR for cash

century, but not as a professional event, and not, officially, as a race. Since 1931 it has been held (usually, once every four years) as a *randonnée*, a nominally non-competitive sporting event in which entrants test themselves by riding long distances within certain time limits. *Randonnées* are organised by the Audax Club of France and are closed to professional cyclists. The Audax Club was, however, founded 1904 by Henri Desgrange, newspaper editor and creator of the professional Grand Tour, the Tour de France. ‘Audax’ comes from the Latin root of audacious, or daring.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Otago Witness*, 2 December 1887, 24. “E.P.” referred to electroplating. The revolving dish and tea urn were silver plated.

⁵ *Otago Witness*, 17 December 1896, 30.

prizes only. First prize was 120 sovereigns, and the club gave away a total of £500 in cash prizes.⁶

The shift to cash rewards did not detrimentally affect the AWR's growing popularity with spectators, including members of Melbourne's social élite. The 1890 Wheel Race attracted between twenty and twenty-five thousand spectators, including "ladies" who "were present in large numbers and tastefully dressed."⁷ This last observation was a coded message signalling that the AWR was respectable, despite the presence of cash prizes. In a retrospective of the race's first 10 years, it was noted:

When the M.B.C. announced cash prizes it was said that respectable people would not go to see the races. The fallacy of the statement was proved on the first day, when one of the most fashionable attendances that had ever graced the M.C.C. ground attended.⁸

The AWR's continuing popularity proved financially beneficial to the MBC. Offsetting £500 prize money offered in the 1890 meeting, the Club took £900 at the gate.⁹ As for the racing itself, first prize in the AWR was won by a local cyclist, Tom Busst, who rode himself into the record book by being the second of only a handful of cyclists to have won the AWR from scratch.¹⁰

On learning of the MBC's intention to hold races for cash prizes, the Victorian Cyclists' Union (VCU) immediately suspended the rebel Club. Letters were sent out to other governing bodies throughout Australasia, including the NZCA, warning them of the decision. In the eyes of cycling's amateur governing bodies and clubs, Busst and his fellow competitors in the AWR were now professionals. To the MBC, however, Busst was a cash amateur, a new designation that the Club applied to those who raced for cash prizes, but who did not make a living from the sport. As has been shown, this position was not completely novel in the Antipodes. Eight years earlier, a Dunedin writer, while applauding the amateurism adopted by the NZCA, also approved of its lenience when it

⁶ Ibid.; *North Otago Times*, 25 November 1890, 2.

⁷ *Weekly Press*, 5 December 1890, 17.

⁸ *Otago Witness*, 17 December 1896, 30.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

came to those who had already raced for cash at sports meetings predating the NZCA's foundation, and its decision "to consider all men amateurs who do not transgress the rules of the Alliance after this present time".

It would be very unfair to come to any other decision, as 'cycling [*sic*] is but in its infancy in New Zealand and many men are taking to it who have been in the habit of entering at the numerous sports held all over the Colony where none but money prizes are given. The men who enter for these sports ought not to be classed as professionals, as they do not make a living out of their sport. In most cases they enter from pure love of sport, not really caring much about the money, which in many cases is not worth the trouble of entering.¹¹

But in the New Zealand case, cyclists had raced for cash in the absence of a governing body. In Victoria, the MBC was now rejecting the existing definition of amateur and professional, as used by the VCU. In doing so, the Club acknowledged the fact that few, if any, in Australia could earn a living from bicycle racing, even if they won extensively. Busst himself, though one of the most successful riders of the season, remained an employee of the Victorian Railways even after winning the AWR.

The VCU's rejection of cash amateurism proved fatal to the erstwhile governing body. Bereft of the support of the MBC – then the oldest and largest club in Victoria – the VCU "terminated a lingering existence" in mid 1891.¹² A new governing body, the Victorian Cyclists' Association, was hastily formed "to promote the welfare of cycling and look after the interests of racing men."¹³ The Association was novel in that it "closed its doors against any but riders who...competed for cash prizes, non-racing men being excluded."¹⁴ Unfortunately, the MBC once again proved obstreperous, deciding that "it constituted itself, by its lately formed rules, the sole arbiter of any cases that may arise at their [*sic*] meetings" thus declining "to acknowledge any superior body."¹⁵ In doing so, it rejected the growing international bureaucracy of governing bodies. The success of the AWR had shown the MBC that Victoria's cyclists were willing to forgo the record books for the chance of cash prizes and local fame. Thus, the immediate need

¹¹ *Otago Witness*, 20 January 1883, 24.

¹² *New Zealand Referee*, 3 July 1891, 27.

¹³ *New Zealand Referee*, 27 August 1891, 28.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

for a governing body, amateur or professional, was reduced.

Despite the state of turmoil that it had provoked in Victorian cycling, cash amateurism proved an attractive proposition to other sports promoters. On 5 October 1891, “the first meeting for cash prizes in South Australia came off...under the auspices of the Cricketing Association and was a great success.”¹⁶ Across the Tasman, the Otago Cycling Club (OCC) was rumoured to have written to the MBC, “for rules and regulations with the object of running a cash-prize meeting in New Zealand.”¹⁷ Nothing concrete came of the story, but it is clear that the question of cash-amateur racing had arisen in New Zealand as well as Victoria and South Australia.

Trans-Tasman Reaction

For the two years following the MBC’s introduction of cash amateurism across the Tasman, the Alliance and its member clubs struggled to find a compromise between “pure” amateurism and the new innovation. In December 1890, A. F. Cooper tackled the problem of cash rewards by suggesting that a figurative trophy be offered for each race.¹⁸ Racing expenses could be deducted from this figure, and an actual trophy be bought with the balance.¹⁹ The scheme was never adopted. A year later the issue was raised again by Alex Lowry, then the PBC’s captain and delegate to the Alliance. Lowry circulated a letter to members of the NZCA, the replies to which “proved unmistakably that the present system of trophy prizes is not only unsatisfactory, but a direct hardship on the racing men.”²⁰ Lowry forwarded a motion asking for a sub-committee to consider whether a portion of a prize could be paid in cash to cover travelling expenses, with the remainder to be given in “open orders” that would be redeemable from “the selection of such trophies as...defined by the rules of the Alliance.”²¹ These rules would be modified to allow racing bicycles to fall within the definition of trophies.²² An

¹⁶ *Otago Witness*, 12 October 1891, 31.

¹⁷ *Otago Witness*, 12 February 1891, 26.

¹⁸ *Weekly Press*, 17 December 1890, 16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Alex Lowry, “The Cash Prize Question”, *New Zealand Referee*, 10 September 1891, 29.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

attempt was made to block the resolution from being heard at the Alliance's annual meeting, prompting Lowry to send both it and a letter to the *New Zealand Referee*, which published the letter and resolution in full (*see Appendix 4.1*).

Complicating matters further, W. B. Eyre, the DCC's delegate to the Alliance, proposed his own, rather elaborate prize scheme. With an impressive array of tables, schedules and sample letters, Eyre's scheme differed from Lowry's on two significant points. Firstly, no cash would ever be handled by the winning cyclist or even the club that promoted the race meeting. Instead, the club would send a cheque covering all of the prize money offered at a meeting to the Alliance, together with a table outlining what had been won by whom. The Alliance would thus act as a bank for its member cyclists, collecting and holding their winnings over the course of a season. A winning cyclist could then collect a "trophy" (which might be repairs on racing bicycle) and send the account, together with a covering letter to the Alliance, which would pay the shop or repairer directly from the cyclist's winnings account. The second major difference was that only expenses related directly to the purchase and maintenance of racing bicycles or other approved (and more conventional) trophies would be paid for by the scheme. Travelling or hotel expenses were specifically excluded from the list of legitimate trophies.

With resolution and counter-resolution on the table, discussion at the NZCA annual meeting was bound to be "long and heated."²³ Several clubs had been scared off Eyre's scheme by its apparent complication, and Lowry's resolution was adopted, with an important amendment motioned by Eyre that "it be an instruction to the sub committee that no travelling or hotel expenses should be allowed out of prize money" and that "under no circumstances should cyclists be allowed to handle cash won as prizes."²⁴

Eyre's removal of travel costs from Lowry's proposal did not meet the demands of a faction of the Alliance's membership. Even as the *New Zealand Referee* declared

²³ *New Zealand Referee*, 29 October 1992, 28.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

the issue settled, R. P. “Dick” Clarkson, the Bicycle Touring Club (BTC) delegate to the Alliance, again proposed “that racing men should be allowed to appropriate through the medium of the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance a portion of their winnings, to pay travelling expenses for rail, coach or steamboat, for any sum not less than 10s.”²⁵ Clarkson argued that such a system would encourage riders to visit “outside towns,” “thereby increasing interest in the racing and fostering the sport.”²⁶ Not only were these innovations rejected, but the members who suggested “that more liberality should be shown by the governing body” were “practically expelled from the Alliance.”²⁷ It is unsurprising, therefore, that a breakaway faction began to form. Members of the B.T.C., which had begun life circa 1888 as the Linwood Bicycle Touring Club, were prime movers in this faction, though it also contained PBC committee members. By November 1892, matters had come to a head and Cash Amateur Cycling formally arrived in New Zealand.

The Drive for Cash and Amateurism’s Internal Conflict

Those arguing for some kind of cash reward or payment of expenses for amateur bicycle racers reasoned that cycle racing involved considerably more expenses than athletics. With hindsight, the argument has merit, and explains why the debate grew so strong at the beginning of the 1890s. There had been a continual process of innovation and experimentation as designers and inventors sought improvements to existing machines. As a result, racing cyclists seeking a performance edge over their rivals needed to update their machinery on a regular basis. From 1887, this need was increased even further by John Boyd Dunlop’s application of pneumatics to the bicycle tyre. The pneumatic tyre made the Rover pattern safety bicycle the most practical, efficient and hence, fastest bicycle of the era.²⁸ From 1887 to 1892, the pneumatic tyred safety vied with other systems, mainly the cushion tyre, the spring frame, the front-driving safety

²⁵ *Otago Witness*, 3 December 1891, 31.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ “Old Times in Cash Cycling: Mr W. E. Thompson Relates Incidents”, *New Zealand Cyclist*, 15 July 1899, 11.

²⁸ Designed two years earlier by J.K. Starley (James Starley's Nephew), the Rover formed the basis of the modern diamond frame bicycle with two equally sized wheels, the rear wheel being driven via a sprocket and chain transmission.

and the previously dominant Ordinary, for supremacy.²⁹ This experimentation proved a considerable extra cost over and above the normal operating expenses of a racing bicycle.

By 1892, a relatively well conducted trial proved the pneumatic tyre to be twenty percent faster than the cushion tyre.³⁰ Those racing on anything but a safety bicycle with pneumatic tyres and a chain driven rear wheel were now doing so with the knowledge that the machine was hindering their performance. This advantage was quickly reflected in the marketplace. A solid tyre safety was already twice as expensive as an ordinary bicycle, and a pneumatic tyre safety could cost five times as much. When Nicholas Oates began importing pneumatic tyres in 1881, his Zealandia Cycle Works could retail solid tyre safeties from £10, and ordinary bicycles from £5, while a “Humber pattern” Star Light Roadster fitted with Dunlop pneumatic tyres cost £25 cash or £26 terms from rival Christchurch firm, Adams Curties and Company.³¹ It is also significant that the first two pneumatic equipped safeties in New Zealand were built by Oates for Langdown and Wilson, New Zealand’s best riders of the era.³²

It is thus understandable why cyclists felt themselves the victims of economic pressures not suffered by other athletes, and that some thought it fair for them to have some of their expenses covered by prizes without endangering their amateur status. In Oamaru, a correspondent using the pseudonym “Cash Amateur” laid out the case:

My opinion is that ere long the majority of bicycle racing men will be found to be members of cash amateur clubs, as they are tired of the never ending “butter cooler” and “cruetstand” business, which is poor recompense for the enormous outlay which one who goes in for racing in a proper manner incurs. Of course it is all well for a cyclist who does not race to advocate amateurism, (no doubt we are all amateurs under the same conditions), but let him try racing for a year or two, when he will find that in order to keep pace with the times in this age of improvements he has to invest in new machine at a cost of say £25. This, in addition to the value of the bicycle he has on hand, worth say £15, brings the total outlay to £40.

²⁹ The cushion tyre consists of a thick rubber tube with a hollow core. Its advantage of puncture resistance compared to the pneumatic tyre was outweighed by increased weight and rolling resistance, and a rougher ride.

³⁰ *New Zealand Referee*, 10 November 1892, 44.

³¹ *New Zealand Referee*, 24 November 1892, 26.

³² *New Zealand Referee*, 29 October 1891, 28.

Can anyone, in the face of these facts, reasonably blame a cyclist for wishing to recover part of this expenditure by his winnings?³³

In Wellington, when A. de B. Brandon, President of the newly-formed Wellington Cycle Club, suggested “that the amount given in prizes to amateurs should be kept down, so that the amateur should only compete for pure sport, and not for gain,” “Messrs. Muir and Lucy took exception to Mr. Brandon’s remarks as to prizes for bicycle events, as cyclists were put to far more expenditure — providing racing machines — than men competing in running events.”³⁴ This reasoning explains Eyre’s distinction between expenses attributed directly to the purchase and maintenance of a racing bicycle and travel costs, which were incurred by any peripatetic athlete, not just cyclists.

But was cycling really so expensive? And even if it was, did this excuse deviance from the path of “pure” amateurism? While racing was undoubtedly expensive for the serious competitor, a survey of middle-class sports such as angling, yachting, golf, lawn tennis, boating and mountaineering reveals them to cost at least as much as cycling. Many, indeed, cost much more on a per annum basis.³⁵ Of course, the cost of racing was, as “Cash Amateur” argued, more than that incurred by being an ordinary club member, but the first hurdles – time to play, purchase price of equipment and acceptance into a club – were shared by many middle-class sports. For the middle-class practitioner wishing to establish social status, playing a number of expensive sports (in terms of both time and money) reinforced such status.³⁶ While this phenomenon was rooted in English class consciousness, there is evidence of its existence in New Zealand too. In Oamaru, a “new chum” seeking to establish a golf club, claimed to “have played football, cricket, tennis, bowls and billiards,” and to “have done a little with rod, line and rifle.”³⁷ This kind of self-confessed dilettante represented the ideal British amateur, dedicated to the enjoyment of a range of sports rather than the single-minded pursuit of one.³⁸ In the course of his sporting career, the would-be colonial golfer must have

³³ *North Otago Times*, 5 November 1892, 3.

³⁴ *Evening Post*, 12 September 1896, 4.

³⁵ John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle-classes, 1870 – 1914*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 14.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 14 & 15.

³⁷ *North Otago Times*, 22 July, 1892, 3.

³⁸ Richard Holt, *Sport and the British*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University

bought a considerable amount of expensive paraphernalia. The inability to afford these expensive accoutrements together with a lack of leisure time in which to use them, precluded members of the working class (both white and blue collar) or even many of the petit-bourgeoisie, from following such a wide range of sporting interests. But for those who could afford it, “playing for fun expressed the individualization and relative independence of the public school élite, the fact that they could use their leisure principally for themselves.”³⁹ There was not, then, a universal movement to drive down the cost of competing in all sporting activities. In fact, the opposite is true: expense conferred upon sport the function of maintaining social division. By listing a broad range of sporting participation, the Oamaru “new chum” was effectively advising the community of his social position.

The discussion over compensation for racing indicates a divergence between the amateurism even of such conservative Alliance members as Eyre, and that of the idealised amateur as represented by the newly-arrived Oamaru would-be golfer. In comparison to that sporting dilettante, a racing cyclist who trained hard and bought the latest equipment in order to gain a competitive edge over his rivals was a specialist who broke the amateur convention of “fair play.” This convention bluntly dictated that a true amateur would seek no unfair advantage over his opposition, a stricture that would surely be transgressed if a cyclist were to knowingly race a competitor who was mounted on a slower machine.⁴⁰ Admittedly, the NZCA did attempt to provide competitions for those unwilling or unable to invest in specialised equipment. Roadster races were contested on machines governed by restrictions on minimum weight and, as pneumatics became universal, tyre design. This ensured that ordinary clubmen could compete in track races on their regular, road going bicycles. To be competitive in championship events, however, required substantial investment in equipment. Moreover, as the case of Oates’ pneumatic tyres shows, the best (and newest) equipment was likely to fall into the hands of racers who had already demonstrated talent. One

Press, 1989), 99-100.

³⁹ Kenneth Sheard and Eric Dunning, *Barbarians Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, 2d ed., (Oxford; New York: Routledge, 2005), 128.

⁴⁰ Holt, *Sport*, 98 – 100.

might imagine that this was a problematic situation for an amateur body, and yet the NZCA solution centred upon providing compensation for winning racers rather than on limiting their access to technological advantages.

As with the technology race, the necessity of training was also at odds with the idealised image of the amateur sportsman who, at best, sometimes practised but never trained.⁴¹ Even in New Zealand cycling's amateur heyday of the 1880s, newspaper reports preceding major race meetings included comments on form and training. Training for racing was believed to be both right and necessary, leading one to speculate that notions of natural ability and the evils of specific training were more narrowly held in the nineteenth century than is sometimes accepted. The problem is one of definition. At the same time that the image of the naturally able, anti-training amateur was espoused, athletically inclined public schoolboys and university undergraduates were expending large amounts of time on sport.⁴² Daily intra- and inter-house rugby, rowing, cricket and athletics competitions kept schoolboy athletes physically occupied between class, prep and bed, providing a steady diet of exercise between more significant competitions.⁴³ Thus, the difference between training and playing is a case of differing explanations for the same behaviour. Since post-curriculum lives did not offer the same opportunity for constant competition, late-nineteenth century middle-class men who wished to extend their ludic careers beyond school and university walls were forced to train for the game rather than to simply play it.

It is difficult to judge the degree to which bicycle racing constituted an “exceptional case” in which the “amateur question” and the cost of competition were openly debated. On one hand, the “Northern Split” between the English Rugby Union and the Northern League is analogous to the split between amateur and cash amateur bicycle racers.⁴⁴ On the other, convenient solutions such as open orders, benefit meetings and payment of expenses provided alternative, often covert, methods of subsidising sports participation. Nevertheless, if racing cyclists were not alone in

⁴¹ Holt, *Sport and the British*, 100.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 81-84.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ See Sheard and Dunning, *Barbarians Gentlemen and Players*.

debating the amateur question, the circumstances which gave rise to cash amateurism should be clearly outlined. These circumstances were youth, cost, popularity and spectatorship.

Bicycle racers were primarily young. In this, they were not exceptional but it does differentiate them from participants in more expensive middle-class sports such as golf, angling and boating, which appealed to a broader age group. Moreover, bicycle racing did incur greater and more constant material outlay when compared to other sports such as athletics, swimming, football and even cricket and rowing, which, like cycling, experienced popularity among young men at the end of the nineteenth century. Yet, on one level, cycling was highly visible and accessible to town dwellers, needing no access to large parcels of open land or water. A would-be cyclist could start riding for the single outlay of a bicycle; the added costs would then apply if he began racing. The fourth and crucial factor in bicycle racing's move towards cash prizes was the early development of large, semi-commercialised, mass-spectator race meetings. Paying audiences placed a premium on performance, necessitating an outlay of time and capital which threatened to extend beyond the means of bicycle racing's young participants. Other sports which had also achieved mass spectator appeal by the 1890s, rugby and football, for example, experienced similar shifts towards subsidised performance (professionalisation in the case of football and rugby league). In the case of Australasian bicycle racing, many of the pragmatic, entrepreneurial, middle-class men who controlled bicycle racing saw in cash prizes a practical method of subsidising bicycle racing and thereby maintaining a high standard of performance.

The New Zealand Cash Amateur Bicycle Club

On 10 October 1892, the Press Association circulated a telegraph throughout New Zealand.

At a large meeting of cyclists held last night, it was decided to form a Cash Amateur Bicycle Club, to invite a team of the best riders in Melbourne over to Christchurch, and to hold a race meeting on 16th December. Great enthusiasm was shown, as the formation of the Club means that the Bicycle Touring Club, the largest Club in Christchurch,

severs its connection with the New Zealand Cyclists' Alliance and joins the Cash Amateur Club. Some of the Pioneer Bicycle Club's members joined, and 30 of the principal men in Christchurch intend doing likewise.⁴⁵

In fact, the BTC did not immediately sever its connection with the Alliance. R. P. Clarkson, the Club's captain, tried to hold on as its representative on the Alliance, being the last of the "progressive section" to do so.⁴⁶ Although the Bicycle Touring Club and the New Zealand Cash Amateur Bicycle Club (NZCABC) shared an all but identical membership, neither Clarkson nor the BTC as a club had "signed the cash cyclists' circular."⁴⁷ From the Alliance's perspective, however, their situation was untenable. Soon, Clarkson quit his position as delegate to the NZCA, and the BTC officially left the NZCA.⁴⁸

Reaction from the NZCA, and its affiliated clubs was immediate. The PBC immediately expelled those of its members who supported the cash amateur movement. These included Chris Wilson, who then became the first captain of the Cash Amateur Club. Wilson is, perhaps, the most representative example of the kind of competent racer for whom a cash amateur "system" proved attractive. Having been caught up in the Alliance's track measuring debacle, he made an attempt at the New Zealand 50 mile road record in 1891. When the *New Zealand Referee* announced that he had been successful, a swift correction came from a correspondent with the unambiguous pseudonym of "Amateur":

Without a doubt Mr C.R. Wilson's performance was an excellent one but it cannot rank as an amateur record as Mr Wilson at present time is not eligible to compete as an amateur under the New Zealand Cyclists Alliance rules.⁴⁹

Wilson's record could, in the opinion of "Amateur," stand "only as the professional record," an argument that overlooked the fact that the Alliance did not recognise

⁴⁵ *Evening Post*, 11 October 1892, 2.

⁴⁶ "Old Times in Cash Cycling: Mr W. E. Thompson Relates Incidents", *New Zealand Cyclist*, 15 July 1899, 11.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *New Zealand Referee*, 10 November 1892, 43.

⁴⁹ *New Zealand Referee*, 29 May 1891, 26.

professional cyclists and could not, therefore, ratify any professional record.⁵⁰ If the Cash Amateur Club could combine the crowd-pleasing racing and attractive prizes of the AWR with the genius for organisation and record keeping which the middle-classes had brought to amateur racing, they would have a greater chance of success. In the case of the first objective, the new club lost no time in promoting a meeting, complete with imported Victorian riders. In the case of the second, they would require other clubs to join them in rebellion against the Alliance and “pure” amateurism.

While Cash amateurism was rejected out-of-hand by the PBC, the Dunedin clubs, the North Canterbury Cycling Club, the Timaru Tourists and the most active North Island club, the Napier Wanderers, it did make an impact in Oamaru and Ashburton. The North Otago Cycling Club (NOCC) was the first to join the Bicycle Touring Club in resigning from the Alliance.⁵¹ In response, a new amateur club, the Oamaru Rovers Cycling Club, was hastily formed and accepted into the NZCA.⁵² At the same meeting of the Alliance that accepted the resignation of the NOCC and the BTC, the NZCA supported the expulsion by the Ashburton Cycling Club (ACC) of two members involved in the foundation and promotion of cash amateurism.⁵³ Within two weeks of the meeting, a new cash amateur club, the Ashburton Ariel Bicycle Club, had formed.⁵⁴ In Rangiora, the North Canterbury Bicycle Club’s star rider, A.C. Wilmott, together with three other members, handed in his resignation, which the Club deferred accepting for a week. Given that Wilmott was to be one of the star attractions at the PBC’s Boxing Day Meeting, we can speculate that considerable effort was spent on persuading him to remain an amateur. Whatever the case, the NCBC riders, including Wilmott, withdrew their resignations and remained members of both the North Canterbury Club and the Alliance. In Wellington, a growing interest in cash amateur racing was actively resisted by clubs representing “several sports.”⁵⁵ The newly formed

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *New Zealand Referee*, 24 November 1892, 26.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *New Zealand Referee*, 1 December 1892, 26. An intriguing naming practice was followed by many clubs. “Ariel” and “Rover” were both bicycle brands (Rover cars and Ariel motorcycles were twentieth century descendants of the Rover and Ariel bicycles). The practice of naming clubs after popular brands of bicycles was quite common in the 1880s & 1890s.

⁵⁵ *New Zealand Referee*, 24 November 1892, 27.

Wellington Cycling Club hedged its bets, declining to join the Alliance, but also refusing to throw its lot in with the Cash Amateur movement. This placed its members in a difficult position, as membership of the club did not confer the right to race at any of the upcoming meetings.⁵⁶ The NZCABC, meanwhile, received six letters from clubs pledging support not only for its 16 December race meeting, but also for the formation of a Cycling Union to govern cash amateur racing in the colony.⁵⁷

The NZCABC achieved its goal of establishing the New Zealand Cyclists' Union (NZCU) on 23 November, 1892, barely six weeks after its own foundation.⁵⁸ As well as the Cash Amateur Club, the Bicycle Touring Club (which still existed on paper as a separate entity, despite reports of its dissolution), the North Otago Bicycle Club, the Dunsandel Bicycle Club, Porowhita Club (Christchurch) and the Ashburton Bicycle Club were also represented at the meeting.⁵⁹ The new body quickly swung into action, assuming the same role of governance over cash racing as the Alliance did over amateur cycling. Permission to hold meetings was awarded to affiliated clubs and unaffiliated sports committees on a case by case basis.

In Oamaru, now served by a Union and an Alliance club, a somewhat bemused Caledonian Society found itself under pressure from both governing bodies to run races under their respective rules. Both clubs wrote to the Society but it was the cash amateurs who really made their presence felt, as a "large number of cash amateurs intimated their intention of competing if cash prizes were offered. These included cyclists in Christchurch, Ashburton, and elsewhere." Discussion of the problem at a Caledonian Society meeting mirrored the wider debate between trophies and cash. Using the Alliance definition of "professional", that is, one who races for cash prizes, a Society member motioned "that the sports be open only to professional competitors," arguing:

⁵⁶ *North Otago Times*, 12 November 1892, 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵⁸ *New Zealand Referee*, 1 December 1892, 26.

⁵⁹ The *New Zealand Referee*, report of the meeting (1 December 1892, 26) lists the North Otago Bicycle Club as the Oamaru Bicycle Club. The North Otago name was, however, used in other newspaper reports. See, for example: *North Otago Times*, Volume 11 November 1892, 2.

there were coming into existence so many different bodies of competitors that soon they would not know what to do to meet their requirements. There should not be these distinctions, where one man hardly dare speak to another. Whether they gave cash prizes or trophies they should all run together, and do with the money as they liked.

In seconding the motion, another member noted:

the trophy itself was worth very little to the competitor, and he could not see why there should be any distinction between one class and the other. Many a young man had not sufficient money to buy a bicycle, and he could not do so without recouping himself with cash. The expense was so great that many would be shut out from learning to ride.

Countering this:

Mr Milne moved an amendment, that the programme as drawn up be adopted. He did not see why the Society should be at the beck and call of every new body that came into existence. The Society would serve as good a purpose by encouraging amateurism as by encouraging anything else. The programmes of other places showed that amateur events were encouraged by trophies being given. Some years ago a stand was taken against the professionalism that then existed, and they were now called upon to change this without any reason whatever. The Society existed for the encouragement of athleticism, and not of a class of athletics.

Milne withdrew his somewhat confused amendment on the request of the meeting and a final amendment “that the programme be drawn up the same as last year — with cash and amateur events,” was successfully moved before the programme was finally adopted. In moving the amendment, a Mr Waddell observed:

cash amateurs had been defined as something different from professionals. The Society existed for the purpose of encouraging athletics in all, and not for a single class. In Dunedin the Society there found that the amateur races were a great success. The professional element was dying out, while the other was growing. They should therefore take advantage of the opportunity in encouraging all.

While supporting Waddell’s amendment, another member voiced what might have been the commonly-held sentiment of many at the meeting.

They were, he thought, losing sight of the fact that they were neglecting a very important section of competitors — these who belonged to neither body. There should be no distinction, but their games should be

open to all, who could take their prizes in whatever form they liked.

In reply to this “Mr Waddell explained that they must make the distinction because the two clubs could not come together.”⁶⁰

The quandary faced by the Oamaru Caledonian Society highlights the role of governing bodies in dictating who had access to participatory sport. The foundation of the Union had stemmed from an argument over definition, not the need or legitimacy of a controlling body *per se*. The Caledonian Societies, holiday sports committees and Friendly Societies, which had dominated sports promotion in the colony, had not required membership or licenses for participation. Programmes varied between different towns, organisations and years, but races specifically catering for boys, girls, women and ethnic minorities were a regular feature of many. The emphasis was on participation rather than integration, as the classification of races based on sex and ethnicity suggest. “Auld Wives Races”, “Maoris’ races” and “Chinamen’s races” might have been added as dubious amusement for spectators, but they did offer prizes, and racist or sexist motivations on the part of the organisers did not necessarily translate to a lack of seriousness amongst the competitors. Boundaries between “serious” and “casual” events were often weak, and accurate identification is problematic. It can, however, be stated that compared to sports (such as cycling) that were controlled by governing bodies, the “open” Caledonian games and holiday sports meetings offered wider opportunities for participation, not only for women and ethnic minorities, but also for those without the time, money or inclination to join bicycle clubs. As the member of the Oamaru Caledonian Society pointed out, the move towards sanctioning bicycle races at open sports meetings, regardless of whether by the League or the Alliance, alienated these potential participants. This alienation will be explored in more detail in Chapter Five.

In Christchurch, the NZCABC’s first race meeting met with mixed success. Following the practice established by the PBC, the Cash Amateur Club had sent to Australia for some talent, and five Victorian riders subsequently raced at its two-day

⁶⁰ This and previous seven quotes: *North Otago Times*, 26 November 1892, 3.

meeting, which commenced on Canterbury Anniversary Day 1892.⁶¹ The tactic was only partially successful. The meeting needed to attract approximately 3000 patrons per day in order to achieve a surplus.⁶² The target was met on the first day of racing, but on the Saturday, only 700 to 800 spectators paid to witness the event.⁶³ “Velox”, the *New Zealand Referee’s* cycling columnist, who was generally critical of cash amateurism, suggested that the low attendance on the second day was directly attributable to the poor performance by the Victorian visitors on the previous day – of the five, the only one to win a race was L. B. Scharp, who won the five mile championship.⁶⁴ A caveat should be added that a strong nor-wester was blowing on the second day of racing and it was suggested by another *Referee* reporter that this also contributed to the low spectator attendance.⁶⁵ The comments by “Velox” are, nevertheless, interesting as they contrast sharply with Vamplew’s findings that spectator crowds at English football matches were usually bigger if the home team were on a winning streak.⁶⁶ If “Velox” was correct in his reasoning, then Christchurch’s sports fans of the early 1890s were attracted to bicycle races for different reasons than the audiences of English football matches. In the case of the latter, partisanship and the chance of seeing the home team prevail was an important factor in the marketing success of a football match.⁶⁷ In the case of the former, the chance of seeing a spectacle, that is, some really fast racing, outweighed the desire to see a local victory.

With such a significant shortfall in spectators, the 1892 meeting put New Zealand cash amateur cycling in a precarious position. £80 had been guaranteed against loss by members and other supporters of the NZCABC. After the disastrous Saturday gate, “Velox” cheerfully announced that this promise was being called in, with a call of 10 shillings on each of the guarantors.⁶⁸ Recalling the event some seven years later,

⁶¹ *New Zealand Referee*, 22 December 1892, 30.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* The race reports in the *New Zealand Referee* often put a quite different complexion on events than did the “Cycling Chimes” column by “Velox”. In the case of the NZCABC’s first meeting, the actual race report is much more positive than comments made about the racing by the patently anti-cash “Velox”.

⁶⁶ Vamplew, *Pay up*, 174-180.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *New Zealand Referee*, 12 January 1893, 26.

however, W.P. Thompson, one of the Linwood Club's founding members and a leading light of the cash amateur movement, insisted "that the guarantors were never called upon to redeem their promise."⁶⁹ The NZCABC had, instead, "struggled on under this load for many years."⁷⁰ Significantly, the club and its guarantors were helped out of immediate financial difficulty by the generosity of "Jack" Boyd. At just 19, Boyd had proved the sensation of the meeting. His superb sprint, or "spurt" in the parlance of nineteenth century newspapers, had earned him £40 prize money (which Thompson recalled as "£50 or £60") that he allowed "to stand over for an indefinite period."⁷¹ Boyd was, in fact, the son of a local bicycle manufacturer, so perhaps his decision to contribute financially to the survival of the Cash Amateur Club can be read as a canny investment in market growth, but the fact remains that the action of Boyd, and of the NZCABC itself, reveal that cash amateur racing was more than a cynical, short term money making exercise.⁷² Evidence has shown that investment in sports clubs and stadia in nineteenth century Britain was a case of hearts ruling heads, with returns generally falling below market rates. The case of the NZCABC and its first race meeting reveals this to also be the case in New Zealand bicycle racing. In the words of Thompson,

From time to time there appeared notices in the papers of Union meetings, but I can tell you it was some months before we had enough business to justify the Union's existence. However, we kept the movement well before the public, knowing that in the long run we were bound to succeed.⁷³

The expenditure in time and effort, plus the financial support of members, supporters and even a prize winner suggests a level of ideological zeal in the establishment of cash amateur racing.

⁶⁹ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 15 July 1899, 11-12.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*; *New Zealand Referee*, 22 December 1892, 30.

⁷² *New Zealand Referee*, 22 December 1892, 30.

⁷³ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 15 July 1899, 11-12.

Conclusion

Given that organised cash racing had a tradition in New Zealand predating the foundation of amateur cycling, it is tempting to look upon the subsequent establishment of cash amateurism as inevitable. Indeed, cash amateurism might be characterised not as a new innovation, but as the rejection of one. In the sport of bicycle racing, the innovation of “pure” amateurism held major flaws, making it unsuitable for widespread and long term popularity. A schoolboy or university undergraduate might be able to indulge obsessively in sport, and would, in some cases, even be forced to do so, but competing in a relatively expensive, time intensive, sport like bicycle racing whilst holding down a profession or white collar job, was more difficult. The expensive quest for higher performance was given at the time as a reason why bicycle racing should offer cash prizes. Cash prizes would be a haphazard way of subsidising racing costs, uneven distribution between competitors being the core concept behind prizes in the first place; this was, however, mitigated by the handicap system which was entrenched in bicycle racing. This reasoning suggests amateurism’s problems went deeper than the question of cash prizes. In particular, the need to train to win and purchase special, ever evolving, equipment suggests the notion that a true amateur would not specialise in his training or seek unfair advantage over his competition, was insufficient to stave off the dominant nineteenth century ideologies of capitalism, competition and progress. Even the NZCA and PBC, organisations dedicated to the amateur cause, believed large meetings featuring imported professional stars were crucial to the sport’s growth. The concept of “growing the sport” – that cycling needed to grow in order to survive or even have relevance – reflects contemporary capitalist ideology. Against this background of commercial rather than grass roots cycling events, it is hardly surprising that a significant faction within cycling should see nothing wrong with racing for cash prizes.

Despite (or, perhaps, because of) the fact that both governing bodies saw the value of financial reward for bicycle racers in the form of cash prizes or “open orders”, the roles of the Alliance and League in controlling bicycle racing in New Zealand was articulated in competitive rather than complementary or symbiotic terms. Contemporary

commentators argued that one “system” – amateur or “professional” (proponents of amateurism were disinclined to use the term “cash amateur”) – would prevail, and the other would sink into obscurity. This process was couched in terms of armed conflict or even Darwinian survival, particularly by the supporters of amateur bicycle racing, which was quickly losing popularity with spectators and racers alike. The following chapter will examine the conflict, with particular attention paid to the conditions which drove it.

Chapter 5 – THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF BICYCLE RACING IN NEW ZEALAND

*Everyone cycles, both sexes, all ages, all ranks.*¹

Introduction

In 1896, the rising popularity of the Rover pattern safety bicycle culminated in such an increase in bicycle sales that the phenomenon became known simply as “the bicycle boom” in Britain, Europe, North America and Australasia. In February that year, the *Poverty Bay Herald* published an article detailing the social and economic impact of the boom in America.² A year later, newspapers reported that similar social and economic trends were manifesting in New Zealand. In the final three months of 1896, 3390 bicycles were imported along with £20,641 of material for bicycle manufacture.³ A syndicated report on national trade figures speculated on the meaning of this sales success in the midst of the New Zealand long depression.

Probably most of the machines are sold on the time payment principle, but the moral to be drawn from the figures is that when the community spends at the rate of £400,000 a year on bikes, money is either not so scarce as is generally reported or the prevailing epidemic has influenced people to spend less on beer, tobacco and clothes.⁴

The bicycle, along with its indoor companion, the piano, was even blamed for New Zealand’s low fertility rate. In 1898, Beatrice Webb – the well-bred Fabian socialist who was touring New Zealand with her husband – noted of New Zealanders in her diary: “Their birth-rate is among the lowest of the Anglo Saxon world; ‘bicycles and pianos are cheaper and more attractive than babies,’ remarked a medical man.”⁵

The future for both the bicycle industry and bicycle racing looked brighter than

¹ Ernest F. Hoben, “The Wheel in Maoriland,” *Canterbury Times*, 7 January 1897, 25.

² “The Bicycle Boom”, *Poverty Bay Herald*, 7 February 1896, 4.

³ “Memos from the Metropolis,” *Southland Times*, 25 February 1897, 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Beatrice and Sidney Webb, *Visit to New Zealand*, (Wellington: Price Millburn, 1959), 54.

ever as a greater cross-section of society took to the road by bicycle in ever increasing numbers. This period of spectacular growth in bicycle ownership coincided with an increase in bicycle club formation and membership. There was also an increase in bicycle race-track building over the last years of the nineteenth century, but the interest in racing was not as spectacular as the increase in bicycle ownership and usage. Moreover, bicycle racing continued to be troubled by struggles for control between two governing bodies, struggles that finally erupted into open confrontation in 1897. This chapter will explain the origins of the bicycle boom, examine some of its features, and chart the progress of the battle for control of bicycle racing in New Zealand. It will also examine the social makeup of cash amateurism and attempt to explain the conundrum that this poses social historians.

The Bicycle Boom

The bicycle boom is of sufficient importance to have merited academic attention. In a study of late-nineteenth century Canadian cycling, Glen Norcliffe locates the activity firmly in the realm of modernity, identifying the boom as the culmination of a thirty year *carrier wave* of technology. It was a period when “bicycles arguably became the western world’s number one consumer luxury.”⁶ Contemporary evidence supports this claim. Just as there was a suspicion that New Zealanders were denying themselves tobacco and alcohol in order to afford bicycles, it was alleged that in the United States, the innovation of time payment was causing hardship amongst retailers of rival consumer goods.

The bicycle boom in America is seriously disorganising trade in other directions. Every shop girl on four or five dollars a week, every office boy, and all the young counter skippers, must own a “bike” apiece, and they buy them on the instalment plan, paying ten dollars down and from two to five dollars a week until they are paid for, with interest. The result is that millions and millions of dollars are being withdrawn from the normal course of trade, and diverted into this one branch, and other people find it extremely difficult to get money to live on.⁷

⁶ Glen Norcliffe, *The Ride to Modernity: The Bicycle in Canada from 1869-1900*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 31.

⁷ *New Zealand Tablet*, 25 June 1897, 19.

The introduction of time payment offers a partial explanation for the downward diffusion of cycling and its rapid expansion in popularity. Put simply, riding had become more affordable. One might also cite Thorstein Veblen on emulation to explain why shop clerks should want to purchase bicycles. As Guttman points out, “culturally dominated groups have often had sports imposed upon them; they have also – perhaps just as often – forced their unwelcome way into sports from which the dominant group desired to exclude them”.⁸ The bicycle, as has been shown, offered the opportunity for particularly conspicuous consumption, although the qualification must be added that its success was also due to its increasing practicality as an affordable means of personal transportation. This practicality was driven by technological innovation and was a significant factor in the massive diffusion of bicycle usage in the late-nineteenth century.

The immediate origins of this diffusion lay the development of the pneumatic safety bicycle, which broadened bicycle riding’s appeal to a larger market.⁹ The instability of the Ordinary has sometimes been exaggerated; in fact its giant front wheel provided plenty of stabilising rotational inertia and its large diameter also allowed it to travel comparatively smoothly over rough roads. It is true, nevertheless, that the Ordinary’s centre of gravity is both high and forward biased, making the machine prone to pitching forward and throwing the rider head first to the ground. Given that the ground is usually some two and a half metres below the head of a rider seated on an Ordinary, such an event could have disastrous, even fatal consequences. This danger, together with the agility needed to mount and dismount an Ordinary, largely limited its appeal to men under thirty years of age. Learning to mount, ride, dismount and especially fall off one was too detrimental to the dignity of mature middle-class businessmen to be hazarded. Women were debarred from riding Ordinaries by the clothing and mores of the era. At a time when the display of feminine ankles was considered risqué, the thought of women sitting astride a one-and-a-half metre wheel was not to be countenanced. As Bijker succinctly concludes, “the whole weight of Victorian prudery set itself against women

⁸ Allen Guttman, *Games and Empires: Modern Sport and Cultural Imperialism*, (New York: Columbia, 1994), 179.

⁹ *Canterbury Times*, 24 September 1896, 21.

taking such a masculine and, on the high wheeler, revealing posture.”¹⁰ An effort was made at designing a high wheeler on which female riders could perch side-saddle, but the resulting machine suffered too many complications and compromises to ever achieve regular production.

The inaccessibility of the Ordinary to women and mature men did not prevent these groups from riding. From the early 1880s, tricycles offered an alternative way to access the pleasures of cycling. In fact, the use of the terms “cycle” and “cyclist” dates from circa 1883, when the tricycle gained significant levels of popularity. In Britain, the Bicycle Touring Club became the Cycle Touring Club (CTC), the Bicycle Union the National Cycle Union (NCU), bicyclists or bicyclers became cyclists and bicycling became cycling.¹¹ In New Zealand, as was shown in Chapter 3, the Dunedin Bicycle Club took an early lead from its English counterparts, becoming the Dunedin Cycling Club (DCC) in 1883.¹²

Although necessarily heavier than a bicycle, well designed tricycles gave up little in terms of outright speed to their two wheeled brethren. Tandem tricycles could be very fast, as the power of the extra rider improved the vehicle’s power-to-aerodynamic drag-ratio above that of a bicycle. The tricycle did, however, have some serious drawbacks. Being much more complicated to manufacture than a bicycle, it was even more expensive to purchase and maintain than the two-wheeler. It was also difficult to store, taking up much more room than the bicycle, which could be leaned against a wall or stored flat in a basement or attic.¹³ Because tricycles were used by women and mature men, there was some resistance to them amongst young males, who preferred their elegant, fast and moderately dangerous Ordinaries. This resistance should not, however, be overstated as there is sufficient evidence – photographs, race programmes and newspaper reports – to suggest the tricycle was used vigorously by some young

¹⁰ Wiebe E. Bijker, *Of Bicycles, Bakelites And Bulbs: Towards a Theory of Social Change*, Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press: 1995, 43.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 214. Interestingly, “cycling” has become proper usage in Britain, Australia and New Zealand, while the term “bicycling” is still commonly used in the USA.

¹² *Otago Witness*, 3 February 1883, 20.

¹³ Bijker., 208. This also explains the relatively low survival rate of tricycles in museums and private collections. An unused bicycle is not difficult to store, whereas an unused tricycle takes up valuable space.

male cyclists.¹⁴ On the whole, however, the tricycle and the bicycle reached for slightly different markets. Where the bicycle was exciting, the tricycle was respectable. The cost, maintenance and space requirements of the latter restricted its use to wealthier members of the middle-classes and also the élite, who took to the tricycle with enthusiasm after Queen Victoria ordered a pair for royal use.¹⁵ The Ordinary bicycle remained the province of young men, often in professions or business, but also including clerks, shop clerks and other white collar workers. Just as the Ordinary's danger might have proved an attraction to this young band of enthusiasts, the tricycle's expense and complication made it more rather than less attractive to wealthier, more respectable, owners.

The pneumatic tyred Safety was the first machine to capture the whole cycling market. It satisfied racers and scorchers (as those who rode excessively fast on city streets were known) because it was faster than an Ordinary. It was also attractive to women and older men because it could be ridden with comparative comfort, safety and dignity. Safeties with open or "ladies'" frames that allowed cycling in full skirts were quickly designed and marketed, and pictorial advertisements for these began appearing in Christchurch newspapers in 1893.¹⁶ The resulting growth in bicycle production and importation was as spectacular in New Zealand, as it was in Britain, Europe, Australia and the United States. Despite carrying an import duty of 20 percent, the number of bicycles brought into New Zealand more than quadrupled in value between 1892 and 1895. In 1892, 342 bicycles were imported at a cost of £4525. By 1895, annual bicycle imports had grown by a factor of five, with 1770 machines valued at £20,000 brought into the country. These imports supplemented the production of a thriving local bicycle manufacturing industry which centred on Christchurch as its base.¹⁷

With women and older men now buying bicycles, bicycle riding as an activity

¹⁴ In Christchurch, for example, a very young Albert Preece rode 100 miles on a tricycle in 1880.

¹⁵ Bijker, 212.

¹⁶ *New Zealand Referee*, 12 January, 1893, 28.

¹⁷ During the ordinary and early-safety era, Christchurch had the largest bicycle manufacturing industry in Australasia. Although the city's topographic suitability for cycling is an obvious contributing factor, why the Christchurch bicycle manufacturing base should be bigger than that of Melbourne or Sydney in the 1880s and 1890s has not yet been fully examined or explained.

diffused upwards as members of the upper middle-class and ruling élite, who had shown previous interest in tricycles, began devising various novel social events based around the bicycle. Two competing weeklies – the *Canterbury Times* and the *Weekly Press*, which encompassed the *New Zealand Referee and Sporting Record* – expanded their cycling news into multi-page sections. Cycling as an activity had expanded beyond the borders of racing ovals and youthful clubs, as the *Canterbury Times* loudly told potential advertisers:

It is not the racing man that keeps the makers going, but the unattached cyclist. The “Canterbury Times” circulates everywhere, and is therefore the best advertising medium.¹⁸

As a side note, the contrast between the “racing man” and the “unattached cyclist” employed by the *Canterbury Times* advertisement suggests the completeness with which cycling clubs had established themselves as the controllers of bicycle racing. Racing was no longer something one did without first joining an affiliated club.

Women were now included in the expanding market which the *Canterbury Times* claimed to reach. A regular feature of the paper’s “Wheeling” section, “devoted to the interest of cycling,” was the “Ladies on Wheels” column by “Altiora”. The column was free of racing news, devoting itself instead to practical hints on cycling and cycle clothing, often with an eye for decorum and modesty as much as practicality, and also to what might be termed “society” news. It provides useful insight to the spread of cycling amongst different social classes and also shows what type of use was suggested for the bicycle by and for women. An issue from the end of January 1897 is representative. “Altiora” told her readers that cycling had “become immensely popular amongst leading members of the theatrical profession in England,” and while the “young queen of Holland prefers horse riding to cycling,” at “Hawarden Castle the whole family cycles save Mr and Mrs Gladstone.”¹⁹ Bicycle dancing had been tried by six women from suburban London, while the “young Duchess of Marlborough “started a new fad for cyclists” by playing “hockey on wheels.”²⁰ Others saw more utilitarian purpose in

¹⁸ *Canterbury Times*, 28 January 1897, 22.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

bicycle riding. “Altiora” herself noted that to “women teachers particularly the bicycle has come as a most valuable friend, as is shown by the large proportion who have already betaken themselves to the wheel.”²¹ Meanwhile, “Lady Henry Somerset, Miss Francis Willard, Miss Anna Gordon and two lady stenographers, Miss Murrell and Miss Powderly” made a two week cycle tour of Normandy, riding on the “wide, flat and perfect” roads from Paris to Caen.²² This rational use of the bicycle would have met the approval of a “woman writing for a small club paper in London” who warned that riding for riding’s sake soon lost its charm and that this could lead to “scorching” if boredom was allowed to set in.²³ As an antidote, she proposed that the bicycle should be “accorded its proper place as a means to an end, similar to the position occupied by the pony and dog carts, the light carriage and buggy.”²⁴ Thus, the bicycle would become “a useful tool to those who can sketch, and photograph, to the amateur geologist, botanist and zoologist,” and would afford “an excellent opportunity for small parties to make excursions into surrounding countryside country and enjoy a pleasant outing.”²⁵ While the writer of this manifesto for rational recreation carefully framed bicycle use within limits already defined by other modes of personal transport available to wealthy young women, the message to teachers, “lady stenographers” and other young, single women on modest incomes was clear: the bicycle offered hitherto unparalleled levels of freedom in terms of physical mobility.²⁶

Young middle-class women were not alone in using the bicycle to facilitate greater physical freedom. “Rover”, another *Canterbury Times* cycling columnist, voiced a commonly held opinion when he remarked that the “wheel takes into the country men who otherwise never learn the joys of nature face to face.”²⁷ And, with more women taking to the wheel, touring, which had always been a feature of cycling club life, now

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid. “Scorching”, or deriving pleasure from riding at high speed on public roads, was generally identified as disreputable behaviour, especially if indulged in by women.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See Clare Simpson, “A Social History of Women and Cycling in Late-Nineteenth Century New Zealand,” (Ph.D. thesis, Lincoln University, 1998), 39-44, for an examination of women, class, mobility and vehicle ownership in nineteenth century New Zealand.

²⁷ *Canterbury Times*, 29 October 1896, 21.

offered exciting social opportunities:

Touring parties comprising both ladies and gentlemen, promise to become very popular in Canterbury this season. The other day, a party, numbering ten, rode to Little River and back, and spent an enjoyable day.²⁸

But even as urbanites of both sexes made use of the bicycle to gain greater access to fresh air and uplifting sights, the safety bicycle was also finding a ready market amongst those who required reliable and cost-effective frontier transport. Apart from Jim Fitzpatrick's ground breaking work on frontier bicycle use in Australia, which was first published in 1980, little has been written about the bicycle's role in the life of rural workers. Fitzpatrick found that the bicycle was an important tool used in the Australian outback by explorers, prospectors, miners, bushmen, shearers and clergy. In Western Australia's eastern goldfields, it played a particularly important role as the fastest and most reliable means of communication, and a number of competing bicycle message services (some even issuing stamps) carried mail and telegraphs over long distances using teams of relay riders.²⁹ The bicycle, developed initially as a recreational tool, had become a practical mode of transportation.

In New Zealand, an extensive survey of the bicycle's use by the rural workforce has yet to be initiated. Anecdotal evidence, however, suggests that the bicycle was being used for transport by rural workers at the end of the nineteenth century. When the impending subdivision of Starboro Station (later to become the township of Seddon) on the south bank of the Awatere was announced in 1898, T. S. Mannering, a farmer in Greta Valley, North Canterbury, advised a young farm labourer who was doing "a few days stacking" for him to head north and try for a balloted section.³⁰ Taking this advice, T. E. L. "Tom" Roberts, one of 12 siblings and a first generation New Zealander, paid £10 for "a brand new bicycle" and spent 2 days cycling from Waikari to Blenheim in order to face the Land Board examination and take a section.³¹ His new farm on

²⁸ *Canterbury Times*, 1 October 1896, 22.

²⁹ Jim Fitzpatrick, *The Bicycle and the Bush: Man and Machine in Rural Australia*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980; Carlsile, W.A.: Hesperian Press 2002), 156-173.

³⁰ T.E.L. Roberts, *Beyond the Hills of the Hunderlee* (Sumner, T. E. L. Roberts, ca1950), 22.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

Starboro was ideal for sheep grazing, and, happily for the young farmer, 1899 and 1900 saw high wool prices after a long slump. After the first season's shearing, Roberts and George Armstrong, another new Starboro farmer, took a horse and gig to Nelson to buy stock at the regional sheep sales. The first sale was further north at Takaka, which was inaccessible by gig.³² With the coastal steamer already fully booked, the intrepid pair hired bicycles and spent two days riding over the daunting Takaka hill to attend the sales. Though they failed to make any purchases in Takaka, Roberts and Armstrong did eventually buy a thousand sheep in the Nelson region, which they drove down the Wairau River to Blenheim, arriving just in time for the sheep sale. The stock was hastily drafted and sold at a profit "plus the venture."³³

The bicycle had played a short but important role in Tom Roberts' financial success. He eventually became wealthy enough to retire to the seaside suburb of Sumner, where he busily self-published books of memoirs, local history and doggerel poetry. It is interesting that this colonial boy, born and raised in rural Canterbury and with no formal schooling beyond six months at a rural primary school, displayed a profound interest in his physical surroundings. As well as poetry, his memoirs are filled with anecdotes and observations on the South Island countryside. Roberts' comments suggest that his thirst for "venture" and love of nature were almost as strong motivations for his trips as was material reward. It was not only urban men and women who enjoyed the chance to "learn the joys of nature face to face," though in the case of Tom Roberts, a young rural worker with an eye to the future, that joy was wrapped up with the necessity of obtaining a farm and capital. Rational recreation indeed.

The Boom's Effect on Racing

Against this background of the bicycle's widening popularity for both recreational and utilitarian purposes, the Alliance and the Union continued to vie for the interest of both cyclists and spectators with varying degrees of success. The amateur Pioneer Bicycle Club had made a major strategic error in 1893 when it failed to

³² Ibid., 69.

³³ Ibid., 70.

capitalise on a proposed visit by New South Welsh amateurs. The ramifications were not only a cooling of relations between the Alliance and Sydney, but also a loss of status for the Boxing Day Meeting, which, lacking the presence of any trans-Tasman racers, could no longer claim to be an intercolonial meeting. In 1894 the meeting was attended by 2500 spectators and returned £25.³⁴ The following year, perfect conditions and a new asphalt surface on the track contributed to a much better gate of 3679 spectators.³⁵ By 1896, however, amateur cycling had lost ground with the public. The crowd of 2000 which showed up at Lancaster Park for the Interprovincial Bicycle Races was now considered a good sized audience.³⁶

In the cash amateur camp, the New Zealand Cash Amateur Bicycle Club, which renamed itself as the Christchurch Cycling Club (CCC) for the 1893 season, drew similar sized audiences to most of its major meetings. In 1893, fine weather helped to persuade 2800 spectators to attend the newly named Club's Anniversary Day race meeting.³⁷ In 1896, this same early-summer event only managed to draw about 2000 spectators. ten months earlier, however, the Club had organised its most ambitious meeting yet, an "International Race Meeting" which rivalled the best efforts of the PBC in terms of ambition and spectacle. The CCC and the New Zealand Cyclists' Union (NZCU) had worked hard at obtaining stars for the event, even going so far as making overtures to the already-legendary American, Arthur Zimmerman, who was World Champion and the most renowned cyclist of the era. While these queries proved ultimately fruitless, the race committee did induce a team of highly regarded riders over from Australia, including the reliably charismatic William "Plugger Bill" Martin, English Champion, A.W. Harris, popular Italian rider, Porta and H. J. "Bert" Pither, an ex-PBC member who had moved to Melbourne to become a cash rider and who had actually beaten Zimmerman in a mile scratch race there.

As well as international stars, the CCC introduced a new event, tandem racing, never before seen in New Zealand. The racing was watched by New Zealand's Premier,

³⁴ *Star*, 27 December 1894, 3; *Otago Witness*, 18 January 1894, 33.

³⁵ *Star*, 28 December 1895, 8.

³⁶ *Star*, 28 December 1886, 3.

³⁷ *Evening Post*, 19 December 1893, 2.

Richard Seddon, along with a reasonable crowd of over 3000 spectators at the first day's racing and 2500 at the second. Yet, despite all the novelties on offer and the Premier's patronage, the audiences still did not match the size of the crowds who had watched the PBC's first Intercolonial Race Meeting back in 1890. Although there were now more race meetings on the sporting calendar, the increase in bicycle ownership had not immediately translated into bigger audiences at bicycle races, indicating, perhaps, that the majority of the new cycling public was more interested in doing than it was in watching.

Newspaper Involvement

Like the Alliance before it, the Union had settled on Christchurch as its headquarters. It received the support of the *Canterbury Times*, which, of the two weekly newspapers published in the city, was the most ready to exploit the bicycle boom with its "Wheeling" section. The editor of the *Canterbury Times*, W. G. Attack, was heavily involved with sports administration, including cash amateur cycling. It is not surprising, therefore, that in January 1897, his paper published "an illustrated cycling number" in addition to its regular, one-and-a-half page, "Wheeling" section. The eight-page supplement was lavishly illustrated with portraits of industry leaders, club presidents and racing stars both local and international. Six local manufacturers and importers were profiled, including the newly opened Christchurch branch of the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Company.³⁸ In an article titled "The Wheel in Maoriland", one writer effused, "there is no country in the world which presents within the same space, and with such easy accessibility, such an infinite variety of attractions as New Zealand."³⁹ Still greater hyperbole was saved for Christchurch itself:

The cradle of New Zealand cycling is Christchurch. In the midst of the rich Canterbury Plains, with level roads reaching out everywhere, Christchurch has long been the cycling capital of New Zealand. It has over 4000 cyclists in a population of 51,000, the first cycling journal in Australasia, the oldest cycling club in the colonies, the greatest number of cycle factories, and the few surviving riders of the high cycle.

³⁸ *Canterbury Times*, 7 January 1897, 23-30.

³⁹ Ernest F. Hoben, "The Wheel in Maoriland", *Canterbury Times*, 7 January 1897, 25.

Everyone cycles, both sexes, all ages, all ranks.⁴⁰

Whereas the *New Zealand Referee* section of the *Weekly Press* showed a palpable anti-cash bias, “Wheeling” took a pro-cash and anti-Alliance stance, which is, again, unsurprising given Atack’s involvement in the NZCU. In Britain, amateur cycling had sometimes been attacked by the press over matters of social class: honest working-class cash riders versus effete, middle- and upper-class amateurs.⁴¹ In Christchurch, these attacks were reprinted in the *Canterbury Times* but not emulated by it. Instead, it was the purity of the Alliance’s amateurism that was placed in doubt, with the primary complaint aimed at the amateur body’s adoption of open orders for prizes. “Rover”, who wrote the “Wheel Talk” column, opined:

While I believe that cash racing will supersede trophy competition in New Zealand, as it has done in Australia, I should much regret the extinction of the amateur racing cyclist, though I must say that I doubt if at the present time there is such a thing in this colony as an amateur. The article which poses as such is something of a monstrosity, neither amateur, cash rider, nor professional. The Cyclists’ Alliance has reared this strange breed, and as an example of pretending to be what it isn’t, the Alliance is not to be beaten. Its avowed object is to regulate amateur sport; instead of which, its rules have brought into existence a class that not so very long ago had being in England and was known as the shamateur. The Alliance amateur in most cases is a sham, just as the Alliance itself, as an amateur body is a sham. Honest men abhor shams, therefore honest men will not lament if the Alliance, as at present constituted, is wiped out of existence.⁴²

“Rover” also printed a short manifesto, pointing out what he saw as the way forward for cycle racing in New Zealand:

The *Canterbury Times* believes in:-

- The bringing of cycling under the control of one governing body.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ In January, 1896, the *Canterbury Times* reprinted a piece clipped from the English weekly, *Cycling*, which complained that the best riders were not sent abroad to represent Britain:

Because the true blue blooded amateur, who is so hampered and hedged around with restrictions that he is incapable of attaining the highest form, must be given a chance of winning prizes and occupying the proud position of champion, even though there are hundreds of riders, in this country and abroad, disqualified by the ruling body, who have proved themselves of beating him easily.

Intriguingly, the writer thought this situation “obviously childish” in a “Free Trade country”, which can be read as an acknowledgement of the tension between amateurism and free market capitalism. *Canterbury Times*, 16 January 1896, 19.

⁴² *Canterbury Times*, 24 September 1896, 21.

- The registration and licensing of all racing men.
- The abolition of the existing amateur definitions, and the institution of laws which will allow competitors to take either cash or trophy as prizes; men to be registered according to their class.
- The formation of a professional definition.
- Many other things arising out of the foregoing beliefs.⁴³

The “one governing body” referred to was the New Zealand League of Wheelmen (LNZW), as the NZCU was now known, for by the end of January, the weekly newspaper had been “appointed the official organ of the League of New Zealand Wheelmen.”⁴⁴

The third clause on the list of beliefs was, in effect, another attempt at criticizing the open orders that could be awarded as prizes under the NZCA’s rules. “Rover” also felt confident that cycling could be “run on its own” and that “on no account should alliances with other sports be countenanced.”⁴⁵ This was a jibe at the collaboration of the NZCA with the New Zealand Athletics Association (NZAAA) not only in running joint meetings, but also in the interpretation of the amateur rule and definition of trophies. The NZAAA had, on the other hand, rejected an NZCU request “that members of clubs affiliated to that Union should be eligible to become members of any athletic club.”⁴⁶

The renaming of the Union as the LNZW was designed to ensure that “the designation of these bodies might be similar throughout Australasia.”⁴⁷ It was an attempt at strengthening cash cycling by developing a consistency between governing bodies and a systematic approach to rules, championships and record ratification. The desire for closer trans-Tasman cooperation and standardisation had already been expressed by the League of Victorian Wheelmen when, in September, 1896, it requested that the NZCU send a delegation to an Australasian conference of cycling leagues.⁴⁸

⁴³ *Canterbury Times*, 7 January 1897, 20.

⁴⁴ *Canterbury Times*, 28 January 1897, 21.

⁴⁵ *Canterbury Times*, 7 January 1897, 20.

⁴⁶ *Evening Post*, 4 November 1896, 5.

⁴⁷ *Star*, 9 January 1897, 7.

⁴⁸ *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 17 September 1896, 2.

Taken in combination with “Rover’s” list of improvements, a picture emerges of another attempt at hegemony over cycling, this time by the Australasian cash amateur leagues. It also required or promoted further levels of bureaucratised administrative control to effect the trans-Tasman standardisation of behaviour definition.

While the leagues were looking for opportunities to establish sole control over all cycle racing, amateur cycling continued to struggle and decline in importance. Collaboration between amateur cycling and athletics was a symptom of the difficulty which both sports were experiencing in filling stadium seats. A March race meeting run by the PBC managed to draw only 500 spectators and even then was marred by controversy. The debarment of H. Thompson from racing on account of his having received pacing from professional cyclists in previous races, received more nationwide coverage than the actual programme.⁴⁹ Even pro-Alliance “Velox” failed to describe the racing in detail, preferring instead to expostulate on the PBC’s demise as the most important club in New Zealand cycling. “Velox” had always professed neutrality over the cash versus trophy issue, arguing that it was the New Zealand public who would decide which system would survive. Now, however, he cried foul, citing managerial incompetence in one camp and ruthless tactics in the other:

The attendance of the Pioneer Club’s Meeting on Thursday was far below the number usually seen at bicycle races. And a great falling off from the Pioneers Club’s “olden days” fixtures. It may have been that interest in cycling is waning, but I fancy the old club is not engineered in the way it once was. The war being waged against it by the “cash” or professional men seems to be telling a tale – not that I altogether approve of the way some of the leaders of the former body go to work. As I said at the outset, when the “cash amateur” made his appearance on the scene, it would be simply “survival of the fittest,” so to speak. So far as Christchurch is concerned bad management and a governing body that has become weak is doing more than anything else for the downfall of amateurism. But professionalism can only last a certain time. However, I have no space to go into the question just now.⁵⁰

This interpretation of the amateur debate pitted the two classes of racing in a Darwinian

⁴⁹ See, for example, telegraph reports in *Evening Post*, 26 March 1897, 6; *North Otago Times*, 26 March 1897, 2; *Taranaki Herald*, 27 March 1897, 2.

⁵⁰ *New Zealand Referee*, 31 March 1897, 32.

struggle rather than a peaceful coexistence; one had to prevail over the other. “Velox” even employed the phrase “survival of the fittest” to describe the administration of a sport. It is also salient to note that both “Rover” and “Velox” employ the same tactics of innuendo and open ended criticism. “Rover” believed “many other things” while “Velox” had “no space” in which to elucidate exactly why cash amateurism was destined to failure. This was very much the *modus operandi* of editorial comment in Victorian and Edwardian newspapers. Furthermore, editorialising was more seamlessly integrated with reportage than was to become fashionable in the twentieth century.

In the meantime, the newly renamed League continued to grow in numerical and financial strength. It had ended the 1896 year £10 9 shillings in credit, with £17 of assets and no liabilities on the books.⁵¹ A steady stream of clubs was joining its ranks, so that by 28 January 1898, the LNZW boasted 25 affiliated clubs throughout New Zealand.

Attempted Amalgamation

In the middle of 1896, NZCA delegates acknowledged that amateur cycling was in trouble. They held an “informal meeting” at the beginning of July, proposing a number of radical solutions to “revitalise” the Alliance. The controversial nature of this meeting might be judged by the evidence that no names of members present were printed in newspaper reports of the meeting. In fact, those reports and the circular that was sent to affiliated clubs at the meeting’s conclusion amounted to a call for open rebellion that was stronger even than the actions that prompted the original expulsion of the cash amateurs from the NZCA in 1892:

For some time past many of the affiliated clubs to the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance have been very dissatisfied with its management decisions, and with it as a whole organisation. As a body it has not taken sufficient action regarding obnoxious council by-laws, or the many other matters affecting cycling generally; in fact, it has rather hindered than fostered the sport, and if this alliance is to maintain its authority and be what it represents to be – viz., the governing body – a complete reorganisation is necessary, and the time is now ripe for

⁵¹ *Evening Post*, 29 October 1896, 2.

action.⁵²

The core of the solution proposed by the dissatisfied members was to divide the Alliance's membership into two classes – essentially, amateur and cash amateur.⁵³ Class A (amateurs) would be able to race for trophies only. Class B (cash), would be able to ride for cash or trophies, except where the latter were “special prizes”.⁵⁴ As usual, these classes were defined as much by who could not race as by who could. Class A would be closed to those who had engaged in, assisted in or taught “any athletic exercise for money or other remuneration,” who had sold a prize for cash or who had “accepted directly or indirectly any remuneration, compensation, or expenses whatsoever” from the cycle trade for racing.⁵⁵ The restrictions on Class B were only marginally more liberal, and it was closed to those who had “engaged in cycle racing, or training or coaching any person therein as a means of obtaining a livelihood.”⁵⁶ Otherwise, the restrictions were identical to those of class A. Both classes were able to receive travelling and hotel expenses from their clubs when visiting other clubs as representatives.⁵⁷ There would be a one-way door between classes: once a rider had raced under the Class B rules, he could never be reinstated as a Class A rider.⁵⁸ Separate records would not be held for each class, however, and “the best man would hold the highest position” regardless of being a Class A or Class B rider.⁵⁹

By implementing such radical changes, their advocates hoped to strengthen the Alliance and allow it to regain its position as sole governing body in New Zealand cycling. Once that occurred, “race meetings [would]...be more popular with the public; consequently larger attendance and gate money.”⁶⁰ This, in turn, would allow “larger prizes...as in Melbourne,” which would draw renowned riders from England and

⁵² *Otago Witness*, 8 July 1897, 37.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

America, who have visited Australia.”⁶¹

Unfortunately for the promoters of this scheme, who anticipated that they would “gain control over all the cycling races in New Zealand,” there were two major flaws to their plan.⁶² Firstly, while it was the senior governing body in chronological terms, the Alliance was, by 1897, in a weaker position than the League. Thus, a war of attrition for the control of cash cycling would be difficult, and being the stronger of the two bodies, the League was unlikely to willingly subjugate itself and its clubs to a reorganised Alliance. Secondly, the League had now linked itself to an Australasian network of cycling governing bodies. The Alliance, on the other hand, had worked increasingly in cooperation with the controlling bodies of other amateur sports, and particularly with the NZAAA. It is likely that the feelings of dissatisfaction expressed in the rebel circular actually stemmed from the fact that the Alliance seemed more concerned with promoting amateur sport as a whole rather than cycling in particular. Unfortunately, by embracing cash amateurism, the Alliance would instantaneously alienate the only network within which it had existed. Immediately after news of the “informal meeting” reached Wellington, where the NZAAA now resided, the capital city’s *Evening Post* announced: “the other amateur bodies here are strongly indignant at the contemplated action of the Alliance.”⁶³

Some within the Alliance were equally indignant at the proposed innovations. The Napier Wanderers used the opportunity of the NZCA’s July meeting to “vote against the proposal for the re-organisation of the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance.”⁶⁴ Impatience with the Alliance was, however, widespread, and “a motion for a vote of censure on the delegates who had signed the circular to the affiliated clubs in reference to reorganisation was lost by one vote.”⁶⁵ Instead, the meeting chose to unanimously support a two-part motion that sought amalgamation between the NZCA and the LNZW:

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² *Evening Post*, 6 July 1897, 5.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ *Evening Post*, 15 July 1897, 5.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Mr. Thomas Kerr, delegate for the Dunedin Cycling Club, moved—

1. “That this meeting appoint a deputation to confer with a deputation from the League of New Zealand Wheelmen for the purpose of coming to an understanding regarding the future government of cycle racing;”
2. “That this meeting favours the formation of one body to control all cycle racing, such body to recognise amateur and cash racing men and cater for such in a distinct manner.”

The mover pointed out that it was impracticable for both classes to compete in the same races, taking his precedent from the English and American organisations. The motion was carried unanimously.⁶⁶

The League reacted promptly to the Alliance’s overtures; so promptly, in fact, that of the deputation of three Alliance delegates charged with meeting the League, only one, F. R. Dunsford, could attend its special meeting called on 5 August 1897.⁶⁷ (Tellingly, this was the same F. R. Dunsford who had written to the Christchurch Caledonian Society some 15 years earlier to demand £3 cash to replace the shoddy trophy which he had won in the Society’s Three Mile Bicycle Race).

The meeting was generally supportive of amalgamation, offering Dunsford a “hearty vote of thanks” for his presentation of the cause and appointing three delegates – W. E. Thompson, V. T. Pannell, and A. R. Kirk – to meet with the Alliance. Support for amalgamation was not, however, unanimous. W. G. Atack added a caveat “that the Cyclists’ Alliance had not yet consulted their respective clubs, and the vote might be against the proposed amalgamation.” Thompson could not see amateurs giving up their records and champion status; Lethaby agreed, adding that if the current trend continues, the Alliance would be “defunct” within a year anyway, with the bulk of its clubs defecting to the League.

It was probably Atack’s journalistic experience that rendered his warning of resistance from Alliance clubs prescient. On 15 September, both governing bodies held separate meetings to decide the matter, and while the LNZW voted twenty to four for amalgamation, the NZCA voted eleven to seven against it.⁶⁸ Objection by Alliance clubs against amalgamation tended to focus on the stricter definition of amateur trophies

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ *Weekly Press*, 17 September 1891, 27.

⁶⁸ *Evening Post*, 16 September 1897, 5.

contained within the new rules. In instructing their delegates to vote against amalgamation, the PBC had decided “that the amateur definition of the proposed constitution was so constructed as to make amateurism so difficult that all riders would join the cash division.”⁶⁹ Similar objections came from the Wellington Cycling Club:

Mr. P. B. Muir proposed that the delegates of the club to the Alliance be notified to vote against the proposed amalgamation. He took exception to the proposed definition of an amateur, and thought that the rules drawn up were all in favour of the cash riders. Mr. T. M. Lucy seconded the motion, and said that very few amateur riders could afford to buy a new machine annually, as is required if a rider wishes to be successful, without the aid of his winnings. The motion was carried unanimously.⁷⁰

These objections are startling because they insist that the conversion of prizes into cash was essential to the survival of amateur cycling. Thus, the ideological defence of amateurism was removed from the debate. Both cash and amateur clubs recognised that prizes needed to have more than symbolic value.

Although objections from League clubs were less numerous than those from Alliance clubs, it is interesting that the oldest and most influential club in the League, the CCC, voted against amalgamation. The evening before the amalgamation meetings, the CCC had met and discussed the matter:

On the motion of Mr. T. Clarkson, it was decided that it be a recommendation to the League that in the event of amalgamation not being carried that body should approach the amateur clubs of the colony, expressing its willingness to take immediate steps to cater for amateur sport according to a strict amateur definition. Under this proposal the League would govern both classes of sport, guaranteeing that pure amateurism should be carried out in a proper manner. It was stated that a large number of Alliance clubs were greatly dissatisfied with the manner in which amateurism is at present carried out, and the members thought the League should take the matter in hand.⁷¹

By claiming the moral high ground, the CCC signalled its desire to initiate what might be termed a hostile takeover of Alliance territory. That this desire was accommodated by the LNZW as a body at its amalgamation meeting is indicated by the exact wording of

⁶⁹ *Evening Post*, 9 September 1897, 5. See also, *Weekly Press*, 15 September 1897, 33.

⁷⁰ *Evening Post*, 11 September 1897, 2.

⁷¹ *Evening Post*, 15 September 1897, 5.

an *Evening Post* report of the vote:

The League at its meeting decided in favour of amalgamation by 20 votes to 4. The delegates took the view that *the League should cater for amateur cycling*, and a motion was carried giving the Executive power to take what steps it deemed advisable *in the League's interest*.⁷² (Emphases added).

When the NZCA rejected the call for amalgamation that had arisen originally from its own members, the League launched its bid to take control of amateur cycling in New Zealand. On 16 September, only one day after the attempt at amalgamation had foundered, the LNZNW “stated that arrangements have already been made for the interviewing by a delegate of all the cycling clubs in the colony, special attention being paid to the Southern clubs.”⁷³ The Alliance had traditionally maintained a hold on clubs in Dunedin, Gore, Alexander, Lawrence and Clyde. Now the League not only sent its president out to woo the southern clubs, but contemplated running its own championship meeting in Dunedin.⁷⁴ Even before the delegate arrived in Dunedin, there were indications that his mission would be fruitful. “Demon” of the *Otago Witness* noted that the “tend [*sic*] of thought is that cash must rule sooner or later, and that the sport will be well governed under the league rules and management.”⁷⁵ Further south, the Alexandra Cycling Club decided to affiliate with the League, and the Invercargill Cycling Club requested that the LNZNW president “visit Invercargill and address the club on the advantages of joining the league,” despite the presence already of a cash club in the town.⁷⁶

As well as making their case to the DCC and the Otago Cycling Club (OCC), W. E. Thompson, President of the LNZNW, and C. H. Cotton, a member of its executive, paid a visit to the offices of the *Otago Witness*, which obligingly dedicated eight hundred words to the cause.⁷⁷ The piece began by pointing out the shortcomings of the Alliance:

⁷² *Evening Post*, 16 September 1897, 5.

⁷³ *Evening Post*, 17 September 1897, 6.

⁷⁴ *Evening Post*, 28 September 1897, 5.

⁷⁵ *Otago Witness*, 14 October 1897, 37.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Otago Witness*, 21 October 1897, 37.

For some years past the Central Committee of the alliance have really been conducting the business, but they have done so in such a manner that gave anything but satisfaction to the clubs affiliated with it.⁷⁸

Thompson and Cotton also alleged that in making an attempt to take over the administration of all bicycle racing in New Zealand, it was acting on the wishes of dissatisfied Alliance clubs:

A number of the clubs affiliated to the Alliance, however, objected to the matter being dropped, and, thus encouraged, the League decided to go ahead and assume, without the assistance of the Alliance, the management of New Zealand cycling. It was resolved to adopt the same definition of amateur and cash cyclist as was agreed upon in the proposed amalgamation.⁷⁹

The advantages of joining the League were then expounded, beginning with a statement that it was in a stronger position than the Alliance. Its recent affiliation with the Australian leagues was cited:

It is affiliated with the Australian leagues — Victorian, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australian leagues — and that means that all visiting Australian cyclists can only compete under the auspices of the New Zealand League.⁸⁰

The explanation of its foray into amateurism took the moral high ground while simultaneously tapping the authority of British cycle racing's governing body:

the league intends catering for both classes of wheelmen — the trophy and the cash rider — and the amateur definition is the same as that adopted by the National Cyclists' Union of England, thus dispensing with what is known as the "open-order amateur."⁸¹

The NCU was also admired for its registration scheme, which the League sought to emulate in its drive to administer cycle racing in an organised, rational manner:

To show the up-to-date methods in which the business of the League is transacted, the whole of the racing men are licensed under the system adopted in England. Provision is made for the registration of colours, official timekeepers in each centre for the purpose of certifying records,

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

official handicapper and consuls in each centre for the purpose of conveying information to visiting cyclists regarding the district.⁸²

Another imported innovation was insurance for racing cyclists. Immediately prior to launching its bid for authority, the League had negotiated with the New Zealand Accident Insurance Company with the object of providing insurance for its racing members.⁸³ Thompson and Cotton announced the results of these negotiations to the *Otago Witness*.⁸⁴ To make sure that things ran smoothly, an efficient executive and administration were promised:

The League's executive board meet every week for the purpose of transacting business, thus ensuring despatch in matters under discussion with affiliated clubs. There is a registered office where cycling journals are filed, a paid secretary, to whom urgent correspondence can be addressed, while there is also an official organ — "The New Zealand Cyclist."⁸⁵

The Dunedin championships were offered as a demonstration of the League's strengths, with specific mention of its fleet of pacing machines and its trans-Tasman links:

In order to give the Dunedin public an idea of the manner in which the League conducts its race gatherings it has been decided to hold the League's championship meeting in Dunedin in March next. The magnificent pacing facilities afforded by the league will be shown, while an idea of what the League's champions are like will be gained. With regard to the pacing, no less than 16 multi-cycles will be placed on the track, comprising quads, triplets, and tandems. While the League is thus provided with pacing equipment the alliance, it is alleged, have only one quad, which they cannot effectively man. The amateur definition of the League, further, is so formed as to admit of amateurs being paced by cash riders. It is the intention of the League, if the support of the Dunedin clubs is obtained, to at once enter into the intercolonial championship agreement, wherein it is stipulated that the Australian championships are run alternately in the different colonies, each, league binding itself to send a representative. The sports grounds in Dunedin will also be open to eminent Australian riders in the event of local clubs becoming affiliated with the League, which is at present impossible under the existing state of things.⁸⁶

⁸² Ibid.

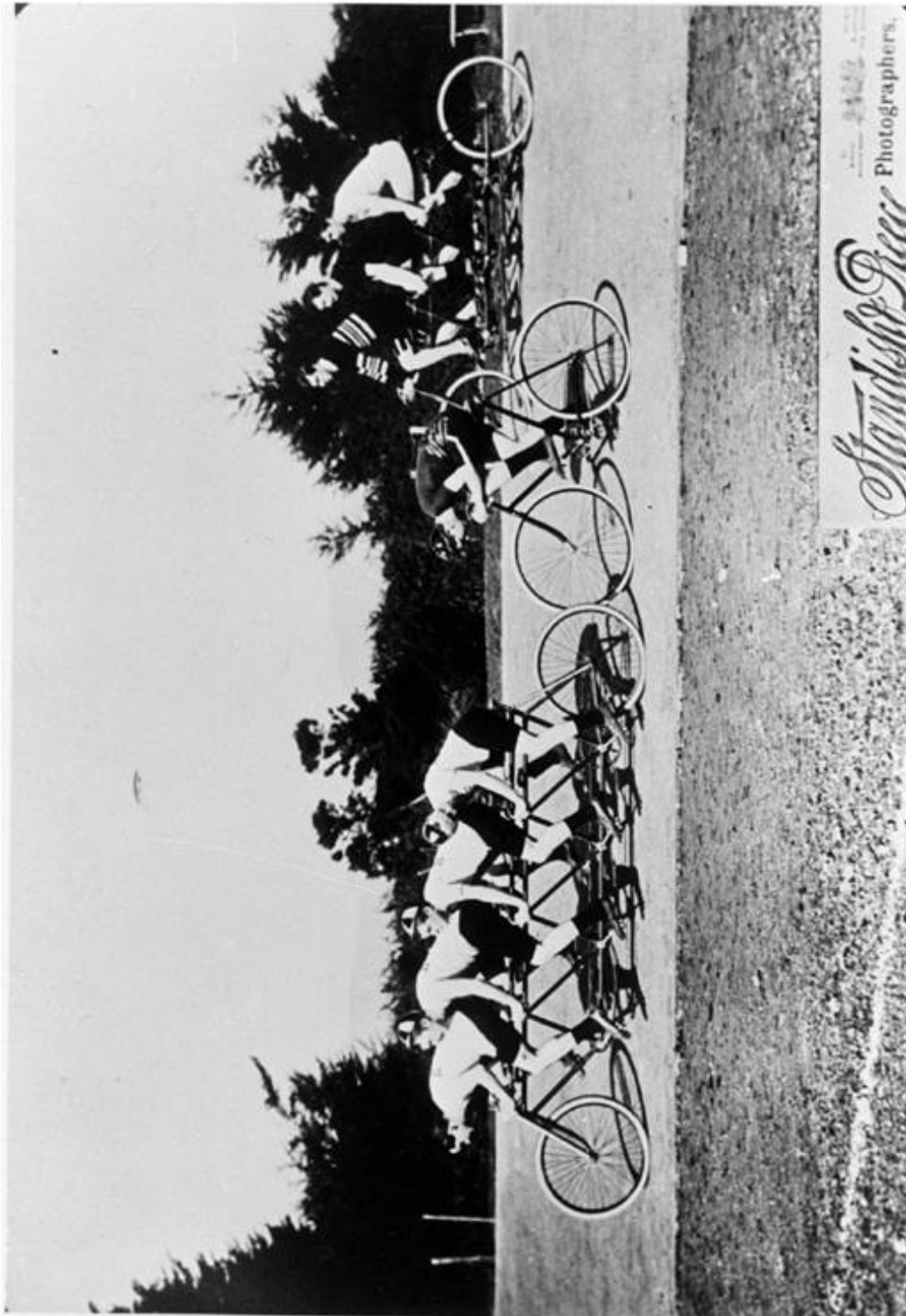
⁸³ *Evening Post*, 28 September 1897, 5.

⁸⁴ *Otago Witness*, 21 October 1897, 37.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

*Figure 5.1: A Quad and a triplet pacing a cyclist at Lancaster Park.
Source: Christchurch City Library, file reference: CCL PhotoCD 1, IMG0073.*



Pacing had been a bone of contention between the Alliance and its members since the very beginning of its existence. Pacing by professionals (that is, non Alliance members) had always been banned under its amateur rules, and riders had been disqualified from competition for using non-Alliance pacers in their record attempts.

The pacing issue was so important to bicycle racing because of the profound effect of air or wind resistance on a cyclist's performance. Wind resistance increases by the square of the velocity, so that the faster a cyclist moves, the more wind resistance he or she encounters. The effect is dramatic: a ten percent speed increase requires a thirty-three percent increase in power, and a twenty-five percent increase in speed requires almost a hundred percent increase in power.⁸⁷ Pacing, that is, using another vehicle to shield the competitor from the wind, is the simplest way of reducing wind resistance. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when cycling was dominated by the quest for records, paced record attempts became an integral part of cycle sport. (*see Figure 5.1*).⁸⁸

The first pacers were cyclists mounted on the same type of bicycle as the competitor. They would be replaced at regular intervals, allowing the "stayer," the cyclist making the record attempt, to travel at the top speed of his pacers. Even greater speed was realised by substituting solo pacers with multi-cycles – tandems, triplets, quads and even quints – especially designed for the purpose of track pacing. Until the introduction of the motorcycle, itself initially developed as a pacing machine, the pacing

⁸⁷ Q. May, "Cycling Speed Math and Ruminations," http://www.mayq.com/Best_european_trips/Cycling_speed_math.htm (accessed 22 April 2008).

⁸⁸ The Christchurch City Library caption for this photograph reads:

Clement Goodwin Jones (1875?-1908) being paced by a quad team of cyclists at Lancaster Park [ca 1890] Standish & Preece

It was a common practice at the time for track trialists to be paced by strong tandem and quad teams who provided a draught. Jones was a well-known cyclist in Christchurch. At one time, he was manager of the Star Cycle Company establishment in Colombo Street and was later employed by Best and Towne, cycle makers and repairers, in Manchester Street. He was killed practising at Lancaster Park for a five-mile motor cycle race which was to take place between him and S.F. Napper. The front wheel of his bike collapsed when he was travelling at about 25 mph. He lost control of the bike and crashed into a picket fence and was killed. See Lyttelton Times, 24 December 1908, p. 8.

The dating is slightly out, pacing multicycles were not used in 1890. Circa 1898 would be a more accurate date for the photograph. The pacers on the "quad" in the above photo were probably "professionals" in the eyes of the NZCA. The advertising logos on the backs of their jerseys can just be seen, indicating that they were a part of a "trade" team, and paid to pace in races and record attempts.

multi-cycle was bested only by the railway locomotive for the position of fastest vehicle in the world. As well as record attempts, multi-cycles were used in fast and often dangerous match races between two or more stayers, which, as the emphasis placed by the LNZW's Dunedin delegation on its access to multi-cycles suggests, were considered draw-card cycling events in the last half of the 1890s.

Because pacers were dedicating their efforts to someone else's success, there was an obvious danger of a "master" and "servant" relationship developing between stayer and pacer. Perhaps the Alliance's absolute allergy to paid pacers can be traced to a desire to avoid a situation such as that which existed in cricket, where bowling, the cricketing task requiring the highest degree of physical training, was the province of "players" (paid professional cricketers), allowing "gentlemen" (ostensibly amateur cricketers) to concentrate their more limited time on batting.⁸⁹ There was no doubt, however, that a long, paced record attempt or a paced match race required a large number of skilled and well-trained multi-cycle riders to be successful. The League was certainly not the first to recognise this fact, and by 1897, the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Company, which ran the most extensive network of pacing teams, had a presence in New Zealand track racing. By promising plenty of pacing machines at its proposed Dunedin meeting and also by allowing the use of non-amateur pacers in its amateur definition, the LNZW displayed a belief in the pacing multicycle as an essential ingredient in the success of bicycle racing as a spectator sport.

The League's envoy to Dunedin proved an unqualified success. The Invercargill Cycling Club seceded from the Union and joined the League on 6 November 1897, followed by the DBC on Monday, 8 November 1897.⁹⁰ By 15 November, another ex-alliance club, the Lawrence Cycling Club, had also been accepted into the League, along with a new club, the Reliance Cycling Club.⁹¹ The southern coup was more or less complete when the OCC elected C.H. Cotton as its delegate on the League a week

⁸⁹ Wray Vamplew, *Pay up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 184.

⁹⁰ *Evening Post*, 6 November 1897, 5; *Otago Witness*, 11 November 1897, 41.

⁹¹ *Otago Witness*, 18 November 1897, 41.

later.⁹² The defection was not, however, one hundred percent unanimous: the Gore Cycling Club decided to stay in the Alliance by an emphatic nine votes to two against secession.⁹³

With the DCC and the OCC now members of the LNZW, Dunedin became the testing ground of the NZAAA's resolve to cooperate only with the NZCA and not the LNZW. The Dunedin Amateur Athletic Club (DAAC) had been organising a meeting at the Caledonian Ground which coincided with the defections. According to a report in the *Otago Witness*:

The club had been informed that the association recognised the League members as amateurs, and, going on this assurance, the D.A.A.C. accepted entries for events that had been placed upon the programme before the disruption between the Alliance and its adherent clubs. After the entries had closed the Athletic Club were informed that the association would not allow cycle races unless run under the Alliance rules.⁹⁴

The NZAAA were fighting a rearguard action on behalf of the Alliance. Faced with a difficult decision, the DAAC hit on a compromise which, if not ideal, at least allowed it to keep its obligations to those cyclists who were already entered in its races. It split the meeting in two, running athletics competitions on the Wednesday and bicycle races on the Saturday under LNZW rules.⁹⁵ While this decision might not have sat well with the NZAAA, "Demon" thought it prudent:

The Athletic Club is simply a victim of circumstances, and it is unfortunate that the club is placed in such a position over the races. However, of the two courses open to them I think they have chosen the wiser one, for although the bicycle races that were run on Saturday were not of much interest, the sports themselves would have been less interesting had the cycle events been thrown out.

He also saw the situation of the NZAAA not supporting the LNZW, now the only viable body governing cycling in Dunedin, as problematic:

⁹² *Otago Witness*, 25 November 1897, 37.

⁹³ *Otago Witness*, 9 December 1897, 37.

⁹⁴ *Otago Witness*, 16 December 1897, 57.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Again, it strongly opens up the question of the League and its position with regard to athletes generally, and I have sufficient faith in the gentlemen connected with the League management to say that if properly handled the matter of recognition will come to a termination alike satisfactory to all parties.⁹⁶

Unfortunately, “Demon’s” faith was prematurely placed. The NZAAA maintained an attitude of belligerence towards the League, which it continued to view with suspicion. The most damning accusation was that the League wanted control of amateur cycling merely to extinguish it, allowing cash cycling a clean field in which to promote its meetings. But at least one Dunedin club, the OCC, began its career in the League by staunchly denying that it was going over to cash racing.

There has been considerable comment in Southern Athletic circles upon the action of the Otago Cycling Club in seceding from the Cyclists Alliance (the amateur governing body) and joining the N.Z. League of Wheelmen. In a letter to the Otago Daily Times the Hon. Secretary of the club warmly refutes the impression that the club, by its action, has declared for cash. He says:— The O.C.C. (in conjunction with the other two leading cycling clubs in Otago and Southland) have certainly joined the League of New Zealand Wheelmen, and in doing so have placed themselves in the position of doing what they could not do under the Cyclists’ Alliance — viz., cater for amateur cyclists at their race meetings. I do not look upon the Alliance racing man as being an amateur at all, as he is allowed by the rules which govern that body to take cash for his prizes (under their open order system). Of course he must do it quietly, otherwise he might get disqualified. I know for a fact that most of our so-called amateurs got cash for their wins last season. The Alliance know it too, and yet they try to persuade the public that theirs is the only pure form of amateurism.⁹⁷

Despite these assurances, racing at the New Year Caledonian Gathering did not bode well for amateurism in Dunedin. Only two of the seven entrants actually started the Two Mile Amateur Bicycle Handicap, and the three mile event was scratched altogether.⁹⁸ By contrast, the One-mile Bicycle Handicap (a cash race) was deemed “remarkably good... and the Three-mile Bicycle Handicap was the event of the day.”⁹⁹ Thus, the *Otago Witness* was able to declare that the cash amateur racing “far more than

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ *Evening Post*, 31 December 1897, 3.

⁹⁸ *Otago Witness*, 6 January 1898, 23.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

compensated” for the poor quality of the amateur events.¹⁰⁰ The League, however, did stay true to its word, continuing to promote a handful of amateur races at each event held under its rules.

The League’s entry into amateur racing together with its successful bid for the southern clubs left the Alliance in an even more parlous state. The NZAAA continued to support it, with the two bodies holding their fifth combined National Championships in Wanganui in February 1898. The two day event was well advertised, with a consequently profitable gate. Three thousand spectators watched the first day’s racing (Thursday, 10 February 1898), with total receipts from ticket sales, programmes and the grandstand totalling £250.¹⁰¹ As the break-even point for the meeting was £220, the £200 taken on the second day (Friday, 11 February) added to an impressive surplus of £230 for the meeting.¹⁰² As financially rewarding as the Championships were, they also exemplify the orphaned state of Alliance cyclists. No cyclists were mentioned by name on the advertising, and the cycling events did not contribute to the aggregate for the Championship Banner, which was awarded to the club with the most points won over the course of the meeting.¹⁰³ In the cycling community, the Championships competed for interest with the Dunedin Cycling Club’s Interprovincial Sports Meeting, held on 12 February, 1898. In the 17 February issue of the *Otago Witness*, the Wanganui meeting was extensively covered in the “Athletics” column, but ignored by “Demon” in “Cycling Notes,” which instead carried detailed news of the DCC meeting that had been watched by nearly 6000 spectators.¹⁰⁴

More detailed analysis of the Wanganui and Dunedin meetings reveals the relative support offered the Alliance and the League by New Zealand’s cyclists. Wanganui offered three cycling events on its programme: the New Zealand One Mile, Ten Mile and Twenty-five Mile Championships, all of which were scratch races.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ *Wanganui Herald*, 11 February 1898, 2.

¹⁰² *Wanganui Herald*, 12 February 1898, 2.

¹⁰³ *Wanganui Herald*, 11 February 1898, 2.

¹⁰⁴ *Otago Witness*, 17 January 1898, 37.

¹⁰⁵ *Wanganui Herald*, 11 February 1898, 2; *Wanganui Herald*, 12 February 1898, 2.

These drew 13, 14 and 11 starters respectively.¹⁰⁶ In Dunedin, the DCC placed five cash races, two amateur races and three amateur running races on its programme. The cash races drew a total of 144 starters, while the two amateur cycling events drew eleven starters each. Thus, the NZCA/NZAAA meeting in Wanganui drew a total of 38 starters, averaging 13 starters per event. The DCC's League amateur races drew a total of 22 starters, averaging 11 per event, while its 144 cash starters averaged 29 starters per event. (It should be noted that the bulk of the Dunedin races were split into heats, with six to twelve riders on the track at any given time.)

In March, the LNZW, the DCC and the OCC co-promoted the promised League Championships in Dunedin. Run over two days, this was the LNZW's first full championship meeting. Previously it had allowed each of the different events to be hosted at individual cycling and sports meetings around the country. With glorious weather on the first day followed by a driving sou-west storm on the second, the meeting drew a variable audience. Seven thousand spectators attended the first day's racing (Thursday, 24 March 1898) and while the crowd on the second day (Saturday, 26 March) was deemed "fairly large," receipts indicate that it was likely to have been about a quarter of that enjoyed on Thursday.¹⁰⁷ The combined receipts, nevertheless, netted a profit, which was divided between the clubs and the League, 25 percent each going to the DCC and the OCC, with the remaining 50 percent taken by the LNZW.¹⁰⁸ From the programme, the League appeared committed to maintaining amateur racing: of the 16 races presented, 7 were amateur events. If teams in the cash multicycle race are counted as a single entry, then the seven amateur races drew 51 starters – an average of seven per race – and the nine cash races drew 132 starters, or an average of 15 per race. It is interesting to note that with Otago riders winning 10 – rather than just 7 – of the 16 races, the declaration of the OCC secretary that the Club would remain predominantly amateur after joining the League was not necessarily supported by its racing members.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ *Otago Witness*, 31 March 1898, 41. Receipts were £228 for Thursday and £62 for Saturday.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ *Otago Witness*, 31 March 1898, 41.

The League Championships were followed quickly by the CCC's now-regular Good Friday meeting in Christchurch. New Zealand's original cash amateur club did not place any amateur races on its programme, but this was not detrimental to the gate, with 6000 spectators netting the League "about £150."¹¹⁰ The League also maintained a racing presence in cities where club cycling remained amateur. In Wellington, the Wellington Cycling and Athletic Club held the NZCA Five Mile Interprovincial Championship at its annual sports meeting on 26 March 1898. Unfortunately, the meeting was battered by a driving sou-westerly storm that kept all but 200 hardy spectators away, and it is difficult to gauge how successful the meeting would have been had the weather been more kind.¹¹¹ Two weeks later, however, the Druids' Gala included League bicycle races on its programme. The gala was blessed with good weather and was described as "a record" for the Basin Reserve, with over 6000 spectators visiting the grounds.¹¹² By endorsing cash prizes, the League was able to work with unaffiliated bodies such as the Druids and the Caledonian Societies, which had never been overly bound to notions of economic or bureaucratic amateurism.

The League also allowed individual cyclists to join its ranks without necessarily joining an affiliated club. Thus the League could tap into a highly successful meeting like the Druid's Gala run in an "Alliance" town. Sanctioning races promoted by unaffiliated bodies worked for all parties. A Wellington cyclist could join the League and race at the Gala. If he proved talented, he could race at other League events, knowing that the Gala was a sanctioned event and had not rendered him ineligible. From the Druid's perspective, being sanctioned by the League meant the chance of drawing stars from outside the city. As the case of the Oamaru Caledonian society showed, the Alliance had also been interested in this type of arrangement. The extra dimension of amateurism, however, stood as an obstacle for event organisers and erstwhile bicycle racers. The League was philosophically closer to the Druids and other sports committees which had always offered cash prizes, and could, as it had done in Dunedin, offer tangible rewards for accepting its sanction. As well as providing pacing

¹¹⁰ *Otago Witness*, 14 April 1898, 37.

¹¹¹ *Evening Post*, 28 March 1898, 2.

¹¹² *Otago Witness*, Issue 2302, 14 April 1898, Page 37; *Evening Post*, 11 April 1898, 6.

multicycles, the League could promise the Druids and the Wellington public a good show of talent. Many of the same “cracks” or stars who had raced in Dunedin and Christchurch travelled north for the Gala, including Edward “Ted” Reynolds, the ex-amateur champion from Auckland and George Sutherland from Christchurch, who was rapidly becoming the most exciting, dominant, rider in the colony. The contrast between the Druid’s advertisement for its Wellington Gala and that posted by the Wanganui Amateur Athletics and Cycling Club (WAA & CC) for its New Zealand Championships is revealing (*see Appendices 5.1 and 5.2*). While the former gives cycling top billing and offers a detailed list of “cracks” and champions racing at the meeting, the latter mentions only that cycling champions from around the colony would be racing from scratch; it offered no greater detail of who these “champions” were. Unfortunately for the Alliance and its Wanganui club, few of its racers other than the PBC’s John William “Scorcher” Jones, were now well known enough to warrant mention, especially following the departure of Reynolds to the cash ranks. It was dealt a further blow when the WAA & CC, which had hosted the Combined Championships in Wanganui only a month earlier, announced its defection to the LNZN at the end of March 1898.¹¹³

By the middle of 1898 the Alliance’s position was dire. An attempt to reverse its fortunes by either counter-attacking the League and assuming governance of cash racing or by once again attempting amalgamation with it had been rejected by its affiliated clubs.¹¹⁴ But the painful truth was that the NZCA had haemorrhaged clubs ever since the failed amalgamation attempt of 1897. The most unsettling defection came in July 1898, when E. E. Daniels, Captain of the PBC, “moved that the club secede from the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance and apply for affiliation with the League of New Zealand Wheelmen.”¹¹⁵ Thus, on 18 July, the Pioneer Bicycle Club, the oldest cycling club in the colony, the power behind the formation of the Alliance and definitive opponent of amalgamation, abandoned the Alliance.¹¹⁶ With other clubs promising to follow the senior club’s move, a special meeting of Alliance delegates held at the

¹¹³ *Evening Post*, 31 March 1898, 4.

¹¹⁴ *Evening Post*, 23 March 1898, 4.

¹¹⁵ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 16 July 1898, 12-13.

¹¹⁶ *Evening Post*, 19 July 1898, 2.

Empire Hotel in Christchurch to discuss the troubled body's future was bound to be fraught.¹¹⁷ As there were no longer any amateur cycling clubs in Christchurch, it was decided to move the NZCA headquarters to Wellington.¹¹⁸ The move was not universally supported, with fairly obvious reason. Hampered by topographical and climatic strictures, the "Empire City" had two cycling tracks of equally dubious quality. Basin Reserve had a "bumpy, flat grass track" which was dangerous to race on, while Athletic Park was considered even worse, being hard and fast, but also narrow, with steep banking and poorly designed corners that conspired to make hard falls inevitable.¹¹⁹ Moreover, the capital had never been able to maintain a stable and well supported cycling club. As the site for the Alliance's new home, Wellington had the advantage of geographic centrality, but not much else.

No matter where the headquarters were to be, the Alliance's situation was desperate. With only 10 clubs affiliated throughout New Zealand (and some of them threatening to leave) and a bank balance of £52, against which the secretary's salary of £15 was owed, its ability to stay viable was questionable. Yet some delegates faced the challenge with admirable optimism couched in the now-familiar language of amateur pluck:

Mr J. F. Grierson considered that it would be a mistake to throw up [*sic*] the sponge, simply because the Pioneer Club had decided to join the League. The Alliance might only have a few clubs affiliated at the present time, but in a few years this craze for professional cycling would be over, and the clubs would be anxious to get back to the Alliance.¹²⁰

Aside from overlooking the fact that the League now catered for amateur and cash riders, Grierson's comment is revealing in that it continues to promote the idea that amateurism was somehow the cyclist's default state, with cash prizes the anomaly: once the "craze" had passed, amateur cycling would once again re-assume its rightfully dominant position.

¹¹⁷ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 27 August 1898, 9.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* 9.

The shift to Wellington was entirely premature, for at a meeting held on 12 September, the members of the Wellington AA & CC chose to “abandon the Cyclists’ Alliance and throw in their lot with the League of New Zealand Wheelmen.”¹²¹ Perhaps as a way of taking the sting away from the Club’s rapid back-flip from Alliance to League, it was suggested at the meeting that “nine tenths of the riders in the colony will stick to the amateur class” under control of the League.¹²² The switch in allegiance was not all plain sailing. As the League informed the Club, a Wellington Cycling Club (a cash club) was already affiliated with it, and thus the defector would have to change its name if it wished to join the LNZW.¹²³

With only four clubs, situated in Auckland, Gisborne, Timaru and Oamaru, left in the Alliance, the choice of cities in which to place its headquarters was drastically limited.¹²⁴ At its briefly-occupied Wellington headquarters, the NZCA heard bids from both Auckland and Timaru to be the next headquarter, with Timaru briefly winning the battle six votes to four.¹²⁵ More significant, however, was the NZAAA’s final acceptance of the League’s amateur rules.

A special meeting of the Council of the Amateur Athletic Association was held to consider the applications from the Canterbury, Dunedin, Wellington, and Amateur Athletic Clubs to include league wheelmen (cash or amateur) cycling events on their programmes for the forthcoming meetings. The following resolution was carried by 8 to 6:— “That this association signify their approval of placing cycling events for amateurs on athletic programmes under the amateur definition of the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance and New Zealand League of Wheelmen.”¹²⁶

The NZAAA’s capitulation is understandable. While there was a rapid dwindling of Alliance cyclists, cycle racing was still popular with the public. The athletics clubs risked financial loss by staying loyal to the Alliance until the bitter end. Although the Association did not go so far as to sanction cash cycle racing at athletics meetings, the

¹²¹ *Evening Post*, 13 September 1898, 4.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Evening Post*, 30 September 1898, 6.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Otago Witness*, 6 October 1898, 41.

¹²⁶ *Otago Witness*, 6 October 1898, 43.

Auckland Amateur Athletic and Cycle Club (AAA & CC) still took particular umbrage at the decision, protesting that it was “a breach of faith to the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance in general, and especially to the Auckland Amateur Athletic Club.”¹²⁷ In Christchurch, the Canterbury Athletics Club’s autocratic Dr Jennings

made a spirited appeal to members to preserve amateurism in sport, so far as athletics were concerned. It would be a standing disgrace if the club were the first to hold out the hand of welcome to cash cycling, which had throttled amateur cycling in all parts. A resolution was passed striking out all cycling events at the spring meeting.”¹²⁸

Meanwhile, “Amateur” – the *Otago Witness*’ athletics reporter – chose to celebrate the fact that the NZAAA had refused to sanction cash bicycle races, and made no mention of its acceptance of the League’s amateur rules.¹²⁹ It is pertinent to point out, however, that “Amateur” reported the Alliance-rules bicycle races at the Wellington Football Club’s annual athletic sports meeting to be “very tame.”¹³⁰

The end of the Alliance was neither quick nor painless. The first attempt at winding-up came on 2 December 1898:

A meeting of delegates of the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance was held on Friday evening, when after a good deal of discussion it was decided that the alliance should disband, and that the funds in hand be divided pro rata among the remaining affiliated clubs. The clubs still under the alliance are at Auckland, Waikato, Christchurch, Ashburton, Timaru, and Waimate. The decision come to now practically means that the New Zealand League of Wheelmen are [*sic*] the governing body of both amateur and cash cycling in New Zealand.¹³¹

The AAA & CC refused to let the matter rest quite so easily, and within a month had reformed the NZCA in Auckland.¹³² Continuity was established by obtaining the funds and records of the old body.¹³³ While it is tempting to write off this last version of the Alliance as the result of ideological zeal on behalf of a club more interested in

¹²⁷ *Evening Post*, 12 October 1898, 6.

¹²⁸ *Otago Witness*, 13 October 1898, 36.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Otago Witness*, 8 December 1898, 37.

¹³² *Evening Post*, 21 January 1899, 5.

¹³³ *Evening Post*, 23 February 1899, 5.

amateurism than cycling, a refreshing level of pragmatism was exhibited by the AAA & CC (under the guise of the NZCA) when sanctioning races. Two Auckland representatives were given permission “to compete against league amateurs in cycle races to be held under the auspices of the Alliance at the Canterbury Athletic Club’s autumn meeting.”¹³⁴

Even as Auckland offered the Alliance one final reprieve, members of the PBC were beginning to rumble against their club’s membership of the League, and by the end of May had “decided by 30 votes to 21 to secede from the League and reenter the Alliance.”¹³⁵ By the time its annual meeting came around in September, 1899, the slightly resuscitated NZCA looked forward to “regaining, with due energy and patience in its future control, its former influence and proper position.”¹³⁶ As a means of attempting this, the NZCA’s new executive once again sought trans-Tasman alliances, applying “to the New South Wales Cyclists’ Union and the Queensland Cyclists’ Union for recognition as the governing body of amateur cycling in New Zealand. It also sought to obtain their views on the question of forming an association, to comprise the New South Wales Cyclists’ Union, the Queensland Cyclists’ Union, and the New Zealand Cycling Alliance under one head body.”¹³⁷ The overtures were well received by the New South Wales Union, which recognised the Alliance as the governing body of amateur cycling in New Zealand, and also promised to send over B. Goodson, Amateur Champion of Australia, together with another “prominent cyclist” to race at the AAA & CC’s carnival cum Alliance championships.¹³⁸

But no matter how hard the AAA & CC worked, the Alliance had been long outstripped by the League in terms of membership and talent. While the Alliance languished in the midst of the bicycle boom, the League flourished on the back of it. With 52 affiliated clubs, 22 of which had joined during the 1897-1898 season, the LNZN was now in the position to proclaim itself “the largest, most progressive sports

¹³⁴ *Otago Witness*, 20 April 1899, 41.

¹³⁵ *Evening Post*, 20 May 1899, 5.

¹³⁶ *Otago Witness*, 5 October 1899, 41.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *West Coast Times*, 26 October 1899, 4; *Evening Post*, 25 October 1899, 2.

association in the colony.”¹³⁹ Yet, starting bicycle clubs and promoting race meetings was still a speculative exercise which required commitment, hard work and not a little risk taking on the behalf of committees and executives. A positive newspaper article on the quietly successful Amberley Cycling Club in rural North Canterbury is revealing, not only for showing how active and financially comfortable a small-town cycling club could be, but also for the implication that some larger and older League clubs were still struggling.

The Amberley Cycling Club, though not making so big a splash in the outside world as some other League clubs, is in reality a very lively institution. Whilst many larger clubs are wondering what to do to keep members together, the Amberley Club is holding fortnightly races for small prizes subscribed by the club. Though comparatively young, the club has a bank balance of £70.¹⁴⁰

One of the “larger clubs” which periodically faced difficulties was the venerable OCC. Despite running a successful race meeting, the Club ended its 1897-1898 season with a debt of £28 6s 5d, which had been personally guaranteed by the Club’s vice-president.¹⁴¹ The situation was reversed over the course of the 1898-1899 season, “through members paying up their subscriptions, and the sports meeting being such a success,” the balance sheet now showing “a credit-balance of £15s 10d, assets to the extent of £232 and liabilities nil.”¹⁴²

A substantial source of risk facing all large clubs attempting to promote sports meetings, whether League or Alliance affiliated, was the cost involved in hiring suitable grounds. In Dunedin, the DCC had enjoyed greater financial fortunes than the OCC in the 1897-1898 season, but the cost of grounds was still a concern. Despite the club feeling sanguine enough about its financial strength to commit to a five-year, £100 per annum lease on custom-built club rooms, the mood of largess did not extend to the rental it had to pay for use of a cycling track.

Mr Hewlett drew attention to the sum of £51 which was charged as rent

¹³⁹ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 15 January 1898, 10.

¹⁴⁰ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 13 August 1898, 15.

¹⁴¹ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 12 August 1899, 15.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

for the Caledonian Ground. He thought that sum was a scandalous overcharge. Something should be done to get another track. Fifty pounds would represent the interest on a good sum.¹⁴³

Once again, in smaller communities the relationship between club and ground owner could be more cooperative than combative. The small mid-Canterbury centre of Leeston not only served as a popular day-trip destination for Christchurch cycling clubs, but also fostered a strong local cycling scene of its own. Spotting the opportunity to reinforce his establishment's reputation as "one of the most popular of cycling hostelries in the Canterbury district," W. Spring, licensee of the Leeston Hotel, decided that, since "the young fellows of the place have so long been crying out for one," he would build a cycling track on ground next to the hotel.¹⁴⁴ The result was no mere clay path, but one of the best tracks in Australasia, seven metres wide, surfaced in asphalt with two metre high banking.¹⁴⁵ By the Easter of 1899, the new track had been well broken-in, allowing the Ellesmere Cycling Club to run a "very successfully carried out" meeting with 14 races on the programme, including the amateur and cash half-mile Canterbury Championships as well as novice, spectators' and officials' handicaps.¹⁴⁶ The meeting had been well timed, dovetailing with the CCC's Good Friday Meeting at Lancaster Park. With Leeston connected to Christchurch by rail, cyclists visiting the region could race at both meetings. Thus, through cooperation between a publican, cycling clubs and the League, the modest village of Leeston was able to host "first class racing", as opposed to the "tame" events that had become the Alliance hallmark.¹⁴⁷

With claims that it was in any way a representative governing body now untenable, the final exit of the New Zealand Cyclists' Alliance was relatively graceful. By the beginning of the new century, thoughts had once again turned to amalgamation with the League.¹⁴⁸ The Pioneer Amateur Athletic and Cycling Club – the result of an amalgamation between the PBC and CAAC – ran a final, desultory series of Alliance Championship races at its autumn meeting, which was poorly attended despite enjoying

¹⁴³ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 27 August 1898, 7.

¹⁴⁴ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 22 January 1898, 18-19.

¹⁴⁵ *Otago Witness*, 16 June 1898, 41.

¹⁴⁶ *Star*, 4 April 1899, 4.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Otago Witness*, 25 January 1900, 45.

perfect weather conditions.¹⁴⁹ In Auckland, the AAA & CC finally gave up its struggle against the League, instructing “the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance to vote for an amalgamation with the New Zealand League of Wheelmen on the terms submitted by the sub-committee of the New Zealand Amateur Athletic Association last year, with the exception of clause 6, which allows of [*sic*] the control of the amateur section [to] be exercised from Auckland for the time being.”¹⁵⁰ The LNZW accepted the Alliance’s offer of affiliation at its eighth annual meeting, and also confirmed its affiliation to the *Union Cycliste Internationale* (UCI), which continued to control international cycling throughout the twentieth century.¹⁵¹ The affiliation was facilitated by George Sutherland, who had represented New Zealand and the League at the UCI World Championships in Paris. The League of New Zealand Wheelmen had won the battle for recognition as the governing body of cycle racing in New Zealand. The only job left for the Alliance was to dispose of its assets.

Who Founded the League? The Conundrum of Cash Amateurism

On the surface, the conflict between the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance and the League of New Zealand Wheelmen is a simple power struggle for hegemony over New Zealand bicycle racing. Problems emerge when one tries to identify the root of the division. Ostensibly, this was amateurism versus cash amateurism, but, as we have seen, this argument was rendered almost spurious by the Alliance’s liberal policy on “trophies” and “open orders”. That some in the Alliance claimed that the League was trying to kill amateur cycling by enforcing a strict definition of trophies and barring open orders appears paradoxical to amateurism as an ideology. Open orders (essentially, promissory notes awarded as prizes) were a “flag of convenience” that allowed amateurs to race for materially useful rewards, and there were even accusations of open orders being converted into cash. Yet, there remained those such as “Velox” who defined the debate in terms of Darwinian struggle, and who could not conceive that amateur and cash amateur cycling might coexist.

¹⁴⁹ *Star*, 31 March 1900, 5.

¹⁵⁰ *Wanganui Herald*, 24 September 1900, 2.

¹⁵¹ *Otago Witness*, 31 October 1900, 50.

If the Alliance and League's definition of suitable prizes were separated by technical niceties rather than profound ideological differences, one is left to look towards other reasons for the bitterness of the debate over cash amateurism. Perhaps the two camps represented different sectors of society, and this was the true reason behind the conflict. In terms of ethnicity and sex, both groups were Pakeha and male, and both had passively excluded women and Maori from full participation as equals in bicycle racing. The most likely reason for the division remains social class, and it is tempting to conceive of the Alliance as representing middle-class hypocrisy and of the League as made up of a more straightforward, working class, membership that had little problem with racing honestly and openly for cash prizes. Unfortunately, historical actors rarely conform to fondly held stereotypes, and the conundrum of the cash amateur debate is made more profound when one investigates the social class and the activities of the men who founded and administered cash amateurism in New Zealand. The following examples offer biographic details of some of the key actors in the LNZW. They show clearly that those actors were socially and economically indistinguishable from their counterparts in the NZCA.

Walter G. Attack was one of the most influential sports administrators in New Zealand during the 1890s and early 1900s. He is sometimes confused with his older brother, William H. Attack, "inventor" of the referee's whistle and first manager of the United Press Association in Wellington.¹⁵² Walter Attack was, like William, educated at Christ's College and employed in the newspaper business. Also like William, he started his career at the *Lyttelton Times* before becoming editor of the *Canterbury Times* and founding editor of *The New Zealand Cyclist*. Walter Attack's second vocation was sports administration, and he was extensively involved in various clubs and committees on a local and colonial level. When, in 1903, Walter Attack travelled to Sydney as manager of New Zealand's amateur boxing team, the *New Zealand Observer* described him as "one

¹⁵² Untangling the lives of W. H. and W. G. Attack has proved complicated, and it is unsurprising that they have sometimes been confused given the similarity of their newspaper and sporting careers. A brief biography of William Attack, and especially his use of the referee's whistle and United Press Association career can be found at NZedge.com, <http://www.nzedge.com/heroes/attack.html> (accessed 10 June 2009). William Attack was the first editor of the *Christchurch Star* (essentially the *Lyttelton Times* evening edition) and a sub-editor of the *Lyttelton Times Star*, 12 January 1901, 9.

of the best-known sports in the colony”, and noted that he had, “from his youth up, been identified with either the theoretical or practical side of almost every branch of sport and pastime in the colony of which he is a native.”¹⁵³ Walter Attack’s entry in the *New Zealand Cyclopaedia* also emphasised his commitment to sports administration:

Since 1880 he has been a member and a strong supporter of the Union Rowing Club, and has filled various offices for the past fifteen years. He was also associated with the East Christchurch Football Club, and for two years was chairman of the League of New Zealand Wheelmen. At the present time (1902) he is a member of the Council of the New Zealand Amateur Athletic Association, and of the New Zealand Amateur Swimming Association, as well as a member of the Executive of the Christchurch Regatta Club, and for years has taken a leading part in all the progressive movements in athletic governing bodies.¹⁵⁴

Amongst the amateur bodies which Attack served, one of the oldest was the Union Rowing Club, the origins of which dated back to 1866.¹⁵⁵ In April 1896, some thirty members of the Club gathered at the Clarendon Hotel “for the purpose of making a present to their deputy-captain, Mr Walter G. Attack, on the eve of his marriage.”¹⁵⁶ The Club’s captain, Francis D. Kesteven, “in a very appropriate speech...said that the members thoroughly appreciated the services rendered to the club by Mr Attack”, before presenting him “with a very handsome marble clock, which bore the following inscription on a silver plate: — ‘Walter G. Attack. From the members of the Union Rowing Club. April 22, 1896.’”¹⁵⁷ Kesteven was, like Attack, one of a family of Christ’s College old boys with deep roots in New Zealand’s sporting establishment. He and his elder brother (by 10 years), Shepley Cother Kesteven, had belonged to the Union Club

¹⁵³ *The New Zealand Observer and Freelance*, 10 October 1903, 16.

¹⁵⁴ *New Zealand Cyclopaedia (Canterbury Provincial District)*, 238.

¹⁵⁵ *Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, 121.

¹⁵⁶ *Star*, 22 April 1896, 2. Attack married a daughter of Harry Atkinson an early settler and Christchurch furniture retailer (in the patriarchal tradition, Mrs Attack’s first name is not given in the *Cyclopaedia*, she is only recognised by her father’s identity and position). Atkinson conformed to the tradition of “getting on” in New Zealand, having started in the colony by working on a sheep station before working in a grocery store, which he left to try for gold on the Otago diggings. Eventually he returned to Christchurch, where he grew prosperous and respectable enough to warrant an obituary in the *Star*. Atkinson was only lightly involved with politics (he had been a vocal supporter of Wynn-Williams on one occasion) but it is interesting to note that he had sat on the Popular Sports Committee in the early 1880s. Once again, the social connections of the sports community are palpable. *Star*, 20 November 1880, 3; “Obituary”, *Star*, 9 October 1897, 5.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

since adolescence.¹⁵⁸ Francis Kesteven was also heavily involved in administrating cash amateur cycling. Professionally, he was a “land, commission and estate agent” who operated out of Chancery Lane off Cathedral Square in Christchurch.¹⁵⁹

Kesteven was a model respectable city professional – after his Christ’s College education he spent 12 years with a custom-house and shipping agency before striking out on his own.¹⁶⁰ Notably, he acted as agent for the Hyman Marks’ Trust, a wealthy charitable endowment that funded a ward in the Christchurch hospital.¹⁶¹ Kesteven was as active as Atack on sports committees, being “secretary of the Canterbury Cricket and Sports Ground Company, Limited, New Zealand League of Wheelmen”, and holding “important positions in several other athletic institutions”. Like the Atacks and C. E. Torlesse, Kesteven featured in the sports results of Christ’s College, and this athletic career continued beyond his school years, with his name featuring regularly in rugby, rowing and amateur athletics results throughout the 1880s.¹⁶²

Thus far, Francis Kesteven’s scholastic, professional and ludic careers mark him as the ideal amateur – educated, engaged in quasi-gentlemanly business and practising a number of sports in his leisure time. He also, however, earned money from sport, but not by playing it. At the 1896 annual meeting of the Christchurch Cycling Club, it was decided that “owing to the large amount of work which the office of secretary entailed, it was considered advisable to appoint a paid secretary”; Kesteven was voted into this position at the same meeting, despite being “without any experience in cycling”.¹⁶³ Aside from his experience as agent for the Hyman Marks’ Trust, Kesteven was qualified for the post via his work on other sports committees, including auditor of the East Christchurch Swimming Club and committee member of the Christchurch Sailing Club and the Union Rowing Club.¹⁶⁴ Almost immediately after being accepted as paid

¹⁵⁸ In 1886, for example, “the two Kestevens” rowed in the same Union four. *Star*, 11 December 1886, 3.

¹⁵⁹ *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand (Canterbury Provincial District)*, (Christchurch: The Cyclopedia Company, Limited, 1903), 282.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹⁶² See, for example, *Star*, 4 February 1878, 3; 27 June 1881, 4; 8 October 1881, 3; 19 October 1888, 3;

¹⁶³ *Star*, 14 October 1896, 3; *Taranaki Herald*, 13 April 1897, 2.

¹⁶⁴ *Star*, 16 September 1892, 4; 1 September 1893, 1.

secretary for the CCC, Kesteven was unanimously voted on as paid secretary and honorary treasurer to the NZCU, positions he kept when the Union became the LNZW.¹⁶⁵ He was also selected as secretary to the Lancaster Park Company from “a large number of applicants”, and the Company’s board soon noted that “customers...could rely upon courteous consideration being given to their representation by the able and energetic secretary, Mr Kesteven”.¹⁶⁶

Francis Kesteven thus came very close to being a professional sports administrator, but his career was not always a smooth one. When he attended a general meeting of the New Zealand Amateur Swimming Association as delegate for Geraldine (W.G. Attack also attended, as delegate for Napier), Kesteven’s presence was not appreciated by all:

The amateur status of delegates from Geraldine and Wellington was challenged, and referred to the executive to report, but by thirteen votes to eleven they were allowed to vote at the meeting.¹⁶⁷

Why Kesteven’s amateur status was questioned is not recorded. Presumably it was not because of his role on the NZLW, since Attack’s representation of Napier was not protested, and he was as deeply involved with cash amateur cycling as Kesteven was. In the event, Kesteven turned out not to be a professional dog in the Swimming Association’s amateur manger. He voted with the “ayes” when a motion was moved to recommend to the “Rules Revision Committee” that the Association’s amateur rule should read:

An amateur swimmer is one who has not, since 1890, swum for a money prize, declared wager, or stake bet, who has not taught, pursued or assisted in the practice of swimming as a means of pecuniary gain, who has not, since the date aforesaid, knowingly and without protest, taken part in any swimming competition with anyone who is not an amateur swimmer.¹⁶⁸

This was not a particularly stringent amateur definition – it applied only to swimming,

¹⁶⁵ *Star*, 29 October 1896, 4.

¹⁶⁶ *Star*, 25 November 1897, 3; 28 June 1898, 4.

¹⁶⁷ *Star*, 30 March 1897, 3.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

so presumably a person who had run or ridden for money could still be an amateur swimmer – but neither was it contriving to break down the walls of amateurism.

The controversy over the two delegates' amateur status appears to have been quietly dropped rather than resolved. Shortly afterwards, Kesteven became a prime mover behind the foundation of the Lancaster Park Swimming Club.¹⁶⁹ Intriguingly, this club immediately joined the Association (with Kesteven as delegate) and offered its facilities for the Association championships. The Club's rider (which was accepted) was that it received 30 percent of the gate.¹⁷⁰ One suspects a great deal was said and done which did not get recorded in official minutes, and Kesteven's ubiquity on all the committees involved is notable. He appears to have been not only courteous and energetic, but somewhat canny too.

While Kesteven continued to use his bicycle as a means of transportation in the 1890s, his career as an active athlete appears to have been over by the time he became secretary of the NZCA and various other sports organisations. Another early name in the establishment of cash amateur cycling did, however, combine a champion cycling career with a role in administrating the sport. Richard "Dick" Clarkson was a high school teacher and headmaster, a cricketer, and one of the architects of cash amateur cycling in New Zealand. Before settling at Normanby in Taranaki, Clarkson had been auditor and honorary secretary for the NZCA and captain of the Bicycle Tourists Club before and during its split from amateurism and the Alliance.¹⁷¹ Clarkson differed from Kesteven and Attack insofar as he was at the peak of his racing career while serving on the executives of the club and governing bodies. At the time of the split, he would have been approximately 21 years old and teaching as an "assistant master" in Christchurch. He was educated at West Christchurch School and Christchurch Boys' High School before matriculating to Canterbury College (now the University of Canterbury).¹⁷² Clarkson

¹⁶⁹ *Star*, 10 December 1897, 1.

¹⁷⁰ *Star*, 6 January 1898, 1.

¹⁷¹ *Star*, 24 November 1891, 4;

¹⁷² *Cyclopedia of New Zealand (Taranaki, Hawke's Bay & Wellington Provincial Districts)*, (The Cyclopedia Company, Limited, 1908, Christchurch), 222; *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 7 April 1909, 5. Clarkson won a scholarship to "the High School" (later, Christchurch Boy's High School), which was founded as a feeder for Canterbury College.

had also converted to Catholicism, which perhaps placed him in a lower social stratum than the likes of Kesteven and Torlesse. But as a college graduate and a headmaster (he was to become the director of the Napier Technical College) with “a considerable interest in horticulture”, a history as a cricketer and cyclist, memberships in a number of “different local clubs” and an intense interest in technical education, Clarkson appears to have been solidly middle-class in both his career and leisure interests.¹⁷³

Figure 5.2: R. P. “Dick” Clarkson.

Source: Cyclopedia of New Zealand (Taranaki, Hawke’s Bay & Wellington Provincial Districts), 222.



MR. R. CLARKSON.

As a successful athlete “Dick” Clarkson stands as something of a poster boy for “cash amateur” as a legitimate concept. Sport was a dominant force in his life and death. His portrait in the *Cyclopedia* shows him posed on a racing bicycle rather than sitting in the formal attire which as was more normal for a headmaster’s portrait (*see Figure 5.2*).

In 1909, Clarkson, already a widower and father of five, was drowned whilst swimming at the “men’s beach” in Napier. The Press Association telegraphed news of the tragedy around the country, and obituaries appeared in several newspapers. These concentrated on Clarkson’s scholastic, career and community achievements whilst also

¹⁷³ Ibid.

mentioning his success at cycling and cricket. In Christchurch, the Catholic community mourned the loss of Clarkson, a converted Catholic, who “was formerly a vice-president and one of the most useful members of the old Catholic Literary Society, (since merged into the present Catholic Young Men's Club) during the presidency of Sir Westby B. Perceval.”¹⁷⁴ He was eulogised in Christchurch as “one of the most manly of men, a sincere friend, a helpful worker, and one who never forgot the true attributes of a gentleman”.¹⁷⁵ Clarkson’s decision to race for cash prizes appears to have had little detrimental affect on his career or community standing, or upon his image as a representative of idealised, respectable and genteel masculinity.

Small entrepreneurs also contributed time and energy to the League. In 1903, the Manawatu Centre of the League was “fortunate in its securing of Mr T. W. Lovejoy as secretary.”¹⁷⁶ Thomas Lovejoy had served as a machinist in a joinery factory for about 10 years before joining the ranks of semi-independent low white-collar workers when he became an insurance agent for the Ocean Accident Insurance Company.¹⁷⁷ By 1903, Lovejoy had established a barber and tobacconist’s shop in Palmerston North, to which he added a billiard saloon in 1905.¹⁷⁸ Like the other executive members and League delegates, Lovejoy followed a number of wider community interests. As well as being a “member of other local organisations”, he was a long-standing volunteer fireman, being foreman of the Palmerston North Volunteer Fire Brigade’s Terrace End section.¹⁷⁹

Lovejoy conforms most closely to the image of an administrator of a socially open sports club. That is, he was a tradesman who had joined the petit bourgeoisie via white-collar employment and ownership of a small retail business. Qualifying this observation, it is noted that Lovejoy was not an early member of the Union or League – he was not one of the original defectors from the Alliance, but joined the Manawatu Centre in the early-twentieth century. This timing is significant because the bicycle boom had resulted in a massive diffusion of cycling as an activity, and as a sport, cycling

¹⁷⁴ “Diocese of Christchurch”, *New Zealand Tablet*, 15 April 1909, 575.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Star*, 21 November 1903, 6.

¹⁷⁷ *Cyclopedia (Taranaki, Hawke’s Bay & Wellington Provincial Districts)*, 680.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

was now attracting working-class participation. The original split had, however, occurred before this diffusion had reached its full effect, and the original authors of cash amateurism in New Zealand were more likely to be professional or more substantial entrepreneurs than they were members of the lower middle-class.

In the cases of the three men who had served in various League positions in Christchurch, all were of a similar social class to their opposite members in the NZCA. They were deeply involved in other, amateur, sports – making explanation of the cash versus amateur debate in cycling more difficult. Kesteven and Atack, in particular, were demonstrably involved in amateur sports administration at the highest levels. Kesteven, possibly the most controversial of the three, being a semi-professional sports administrator, came from a solidly upper middle-class English background of merchants, minor gentry and lawyers.¹⁸⁰ Clarkson was easily the most talented cyclist of the trio. Given that he truly was a driving force for cash amateurism, Clarkson's winning ability dictated – in the argument of cash amateurism's opponents – that he should have been lured to the life of the professional cyclist. Instead, Clarkson remained a pedagogue, following his career calling to Normanby where, as a headmaster and college director, he occupied a community position which had become central to the promotion of sport as rational recreation. Clarkson appears to epitomise the cash amateur, conforming to the life and career choices of the idealised amateur except for the one exception that in cycling, he raced for monetary prizes. In the eyes of the Alliance he was, nevertheless, a professional, not because he made a living from the sport, but because he had raced for cash.

The example of “Dick” Clarkson offers a timely reminder about the importance

¹⁸⁰ Shepley Cother Kesteven's idiosyncratic name provides the key to the Kesteven family's social class in England. An electronic search of the National Archives, Kew, uncovered details of a mid-nineteenth century trust that owned property in Shropshire. The trust included:

Shepley Kesteven of 72 Coleman Street, London, merchant; Dunbar John Cother of the Inner Temple, esq., barrister at law; William Cother the elder of Abbots Lode Hill, Sandhurst, Gloucestershire, esq. and William Cother the younger of Lincolns Inn and Gloucester, esq., barrister at law and Louisa Sarah Kesteven, wife of Thomas Kesteven of St. Johns, Holloway, Middlesex, esq.

The latter couple landed in Lyttelton in 1854 and were parents to S. C. and F. D. Kesteven.

“The National Archives” <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/A2A/records.aspx?cat=166-1787&cid=-1#-1> (accessed: 5 June, 2009).

Feilding Star, 8 October 1898, 2.

of “amateur” in “cash amateur”. The founders of the New Zealand Cash Amateur Bicycle Club were not rebelling against the ideology of amateurism *per se*, but against the strict (and relatively recent) economic requirements that amateurs should not win prize money. The New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance, along with a host of other amateur sports bodies, had circumvented this problem by the system of open orders and by subsidising the travel costs of representative teams. Limits on participation were still in place – the League, for its part, still barred the payment of appearance money, though a blurred line existed between appearance money and travel costs. As has been shown, other conventions, especially the “benefit” held for visiting or otherwise-needy athletes, threw a charitable spin on the appearance money problem. Moreover, the League and the Alliance continued to woo imported stars to race at their meetings. A specific Alliance goal of the attempted amalgamation was to build bigger crowds, afford bigger prizes and, thus, attract bigger international stars. For an amateur body, these were very commercial goals.

The conundrum of why a group of middle-class bicycle racers and administrators, who remained deeply involved with other amateur sports, hived off from amateur cycling to found cash amateur cycling therefore turns out to be something of a red herring, created largely by the shrillness of the name-calling by both camps, which itself served to obscure the true state of amateur cycling in New Zealand. The weakening of economic amateurism over the 1890s occurred across the board – overtly in the case of the League and less so in the case of the Alliance. Even when this conundrum is resolved, two further questions remain: why was economic amateurism untenable? And why was it so important to be defined as an amateur? The following section will examine the importance of the amateur ethos for differentiating between “self” and “other” in the British Empire, and further examine the forces which destabilised efforts to bolster the application of economic amateurism in the late-nineteenth century.

Amateurism, Sportsmanism or Athleticism? The Modern Gentleman-Knight Versus Foreign Interlopers, Lazy Natives and the Inexorable March of Progress

In the cultural life of the late-nineteenth century British Empire, the image of the idealised amateur stretched far beyond the playing field. Diane Simmons sees it as no coincidence that one of the era's most popular literary creations was an *amateur* detective.¹⁸¹ She argues that as the ultimate "gentleman dilettante," Sherlock Holmes, fulfilled the role of a "modern gentleman-knight" "who could deal quickly and efficiently with the disorder brought about by imperial contact."¹⁸² This role was crucial because British society was suffering a collective crisis of confidence that was driven by a schism between the popular self-image of Britons as high-minded, civilizing and globally-necessary imperialists and the secret knowledge that the Empire's wealth and power were built upon colonial exploitation.¹⁸³ Amateurism became central to the maintenance of the British self-image as civilising imperialists. The amateur could be both the antidote for the ills brought by imperial conquests, and proof of Britain's moral right to those conquests.

Amateurism was not the only arrow in the quiver of imperial self-justification. A misreading of Darwin's theory of evolution as "survival of the fittest" and its subsequent misapplication to explain human development, argued that some "races" of humans were fitter for survival than others. This "social" Darwinism was also used to justify the existence and nature of an élite social class which was genetically predestined to rule. Thus, middle-class British Anglo Saxons saw themselves as both morally and physically suited to running an empire. Moreover, they were modern, and their possession of technology conferred a moral right assumed in the name of progress.

It has been argued that British amateurism dictated that once the field of play was entered, the athlete should play to win:

¹⁸¹ Diane Simmons, "The Curse of Empire: Grandiosity and Guilt in the Stories of Arthur Conan Doyle," *Psychoanalytic Review* 89, no. 4 (August 2002): 553.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 552.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 553-556.

British amateurs were never taught that, once you were on the field or the water, that it did not matter whether you won or not because victory (in the right spirit and using legitimate methods) was a demonstration of character.¹⁸⁴

The advantage of amateurism, however, was that while winning was an important way to prove character, it was not vital to this purpose. The notions of fair play, style and, above all, “pluck”, allowed victory in loss. Moreover, the definition of what constituted amateur behaviour had always been something of a movable feast, which different social groups interpreted to their own advantage; the definition of “legitimate methods” was thus open to interpretation. Stephen Wagg argues, for example, that since the amateurism of the socially élite membership of the Amateur Rowing Association “was pre-defined by their social position, these values (of fair play) were only amateur when *expressed by them*” (emphasis in original).¹⁸⁵

For some colonial Pakeha, the maintenance of a sense of moral, physical, intellectual and technological superiority over “foreigners” and “natives” was equally as important as it was to those Britons living at the centre of the Empire. This is starkly highlighted by a newspaper account of the “Maori Race” at the PBC’s 1889 Interprovincial Bicycle Race held at Lancaster Park. The Maori Race was a four way event, easily won by Henare Uru, talented Ngai Tahu sportsman, farmer, native agent, and politician.¹⁸⁶ Being the most experienced bicycle rider of the field, “Uru won as he liked, picking up his handicap easily and finishing in tremendous style with a spurt.”¹⁸⁷ A commentator in the *New Zealand Referee* nevertheless chose not to highlight Uru’s athletic ability, but rather used the bicycle race to illustrate racial theory, while simultaneously employing the rational recreation argument to explain the marshal significance of sport:

One also saw the difference between the Anglo-Saxon and the Maori – that

¹⁸⁴ Lincoln Allison, “Review of *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters Not Who Won or Lost?*,” eds. D. Porter and S. Wagg, (review no.678)” <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/porterwagg.html> (accessed: 28 May 2009).

¹⁸⁵ Stephen Wagg, “‘Base Mechanic Arms’? British Rowing, Some Ducks and the Shifting Politics of Amateurism,” *Sport in History* 26, no. 3 (December, 2006): 534.

¹⁸⁶ *Otago Witness*, 2 January 1890, 30; Christine Elizabeth Locke, “Uru, John Hopere Wharewiti 1868 – 1921,” *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007, <http://www.dnz.govt.nz/>

¹⁸⁷ *Otago Witness*, 2 January 1890, 30.

indomitable pluck which prevents the Saxon knowing when he is beaten, and which sometimes gives him the victory. In the Maori race, when there were only four competitors, two of them gave in before the race was half completed; whilst even in the big races many of the Pakehas, though apparently hopelessly beaten, held grimly on to the end of the race. If bicycle racing or any other racing develops this trait in New Zealanders, it will win them victory in more serious contests, and Lancaster Park and the meetings of the Athletic Club will have served a higher purpose than giving our young men a good physical training, and the public a healthy form of amusement.¹⁸⁸

It is unsurprising to discover that this observation was not particularly accurate. There is no doubt that many individual bicycle racers did show considerable determination even against hopeless odds, but claims that “pluck” and “fair play” were universal qualities of “Anglo Saxon” amateurs do not bear historical scrutiny. At a Dunedin race meeting, for example, a pair of talented riders showed little inclination for tiring themselves over a lost cause when there were bigger rewards on offer. In the One-mile Handicap, “Steadman and Langdown did not persevere”, probably due to overzealous handicapping and because more important races were yet to be run.¹⁸⁹ In the Five-mile Championship, Steadman rode a “plucky race” that was nevertheless won by Langdown who “had evidently been saving himself for this event.”¹⁹⁰ The Cantabrian’s calculating racing style did not win him any accolades from the Dunedin newspapers but neither was he condemned outright. The local rider, Steadman, on the other hand, was praised several times throughout the *Otago Witness* race report for his pluck at the meeting, despite having given up trying in at least one race.¹⁹¹ Behaviour which drew ethnocentric scorn when exhibited by Maori was actively tolerated in Pakeha amateur racers.

The modification of economic amateurism to allow cash prizes on the one hand or open orders on the other falls into the same socio-ethnic slight-of-hand as that performed by the Amateur Rowing Association in England and the observers of “Anglo-Saxon pluck” in Pakeha bicycle racers. At the heart of the debate over compensation lay a noticeable tension between the espoused amateur ideals of pluck, fair play and playing

¹⁸⁸ *Referee*, 2 January, 1890.

¹⁸⁹ *Otago Witness*, 21 February 1889, 27.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

games for their own sake and the concepts of progress, records and increasing human potential which, ironically enough, are best summarised by the Olympic motto *Citius, Altius, Fortius*. In his ongoing argument for the amateur cause, Lincoln Allison defines this tension as “sportsmanism” versus athleticism.¹⁹² He writes:

...the slogan of the Olympic movement became “Citius, Altius, Fortius” – “faster, higher, stronger”. In itself, this is an expression of what John Hoberman calls “the performance principle”, that there is value in physical performance as such. There is no doubt that Thomas Arnold detested such athleticism, especially athleticism attached to egoism and although De Courbetin was far from as obsessed by the idea of amateurism as some of the Anglophone sports administrators such as his successor, Avery Brundage, there seems little doubt that he would have been troubled by the sort of Olympic competition which took place between Ekkart Arbeit’s East German creations and their Russian rivals.¹⁹³

Allison’s sportsmanism is the antithesis of Guttmann’s description of modern sport, and particularly the importance of “record”.¹⁹⁴ In sportsmanism, performance itself does not have intrinsic value: “participation is the superior activity”; drama is valued over performance. Moreover, while athleticism promotes specialisation, the “true sportsman favours many sports.”¹⁹⁵

If sportsmanism appears almost identical to mid-nineteenth century versions of amateurism, the similarity is not accidental. One suspects that the coining of a new term results from Allison’s awareness of the history of the term “amateur” and its shifting cultural meanings. Far from being a universal principle, amateurism was a flexible tool used by Anglo-Saxons to describe their own perceived attributes and behaviours. It was thus useful for “othering” those not belonging to one’s own group. This was equally the case at Lancaster Park as it was at Henley.

In cycling, this process turned inward and became particularly destructive. If, as Vincent claims, early efforts at building amateur sport in Christchurch were an attempt

¹⁹² Lincoln Allison “Citius, Altius, Fortius ad Absurdum: Biology, Performance and Sportsmanship in the Twenty-first Century,” in *Genetic Technology and Sport: Ethical Questions*, ed. Claudio Marcello Tamburrini, New York: Routledge, 2005, 147-157.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Allen Guttmann, *From Ritual to Record*, 52.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

at self-definition by middle-class residents, the debate of the 1890s fractured that unifying process. Both (socially and economically indistinguishable) parties to the amateur versus cash amateur debate argued that racing cyclists needed financial compensation for racing. Although they saw the cost of racing as the primary reason for this need, the overarching cause was the centrality of the record to their activities. Although Allison uses an example from the Cold War era Olympics to illustrate athleticism, the truth is, it had been a central component of amateur sport from the outset. Quantifying and recording athletic performance was core business for sports administration from the club level up. Moreover, with *The Cricketers' Almanac* (later, *Wisden*) first published as in 1864, an early fascination with statistics and records is demonstrable in games as well as sports. Tries scored, batsmen bowled and yards gained became the stock and trade of sports journalism from an early era. This genius for quantification, along with the need to win, lay at the heart of increased training and specialisation. Pinpointing when this “corruption” of sport began is impossible – it pre-existed the development of amateurism and was as much an integral part of amateur sport as it was of horse racing or pedestrianism.

Despite the fact that both amateurs and cash amateurs argued the need for financial compensation in bicycle racing, each one accused the other of corrupting the sport. To the Alliance, the League was “professional”. To the League, the Alliance was “shamateur”. There seems no explanation for this infighting more profound than petty jealousy, rampantly pedantic egos and a failure to understand the wider issues. Neither side emerges from the conflict particularly honourably. True, the League had banned the charging of appearance money. This might be interpreted as a limitation on the effect of cash, thus stymieing the development of a professional circuit that would be detrimental to participation by ordinary clubmen. But both the League and the Alliance saw the imported “crack” rider as a core component of a “successful” meeting. The banning of appearance money, therefore, looks more like an effort to control the behaviour and economic power of athletes than it does an attempt to ring fence “grass roots” racing. Meanwhile, the Alliance’s penchant for banning riders who had raced at unsanctioned meetings for being “professionals”, while allowing open orders at its own races, seems

plainly hypocritical.

Races for “Ladies” and “Natives”: Inclusiveness or Spectacle?

The social group which had sought control of bicycle racing, whether under the guise of the amateur NZCA or the cash amateur LNZW, was Pakeha, middle class and male. As was suggested in Chapter 3, this attempt at hegemony affected the access of women and ethnic minorities, particularly Maori, to participation in bicycle racing.

In the case of women’s racing, some clubs experimented with the concept of “ladies races”, eliciting a mixed response from the cycling press.¹⁹⁶ When the Tapanui Cycling Club announced a ladies’ race on its 1895 Boxing Day Sports, “Demon” reacted with vehement disapproval in the *Otago Witness*.

I sincerely trust that the committee of the club will at once see about striking out this last item from the programme, for were there the remotest possibility of an entry for this race, the sight of seeing women perspiring round a track at racing speed could not appeal to the taste of the onlookers or add dignity to which we are pleased to look upon and call with some pride “the weaker sex.” When a woman starts to race on a bicycle she loses that “sweet femininity” that adds a charm to her sex, and for this reason and others that must appeal to them, I hope the committee of the club will strike out the Ladies’ Bicycle Race.¹⁹⁷

This polemic against female athleticism aptly illustrates the limits imposed on women’s cycling by notions of femininity and respectability, notions which were largely reinforced rather than challenged by the modern sport of bicycle racing.

In a sports arena where, regardless of lip service paid to the amateur ideal, performance was everything, women’s bicycle racing was marginalised as a matter of course. The specific behaviours criticised by “Demon” – perspiring and riding at speed – were defined as masculine by late-nineteenth century cultural mores, and women who embraced them were seen to embody the ideology of the “New Woman”, that is, they

¹⁹⁶ Simpson, “Women and Cycling,” 62.

¹⁹⁷ *Otago Witness*, 5 December 1895, 34.

“wanted to act and behave like men, and to have the same entitlements.”¹⁹⁸

Some women were, however, able to race without criticism specifically because their ethnicity predetermined their social status and placed them beyond the bounds of respectability and idealised (Anglo-Saxon) femininity. The announcement that two “fascinating Maori belles” would compete in the Ladies’ Race at the Napier Amateur Athletic Club’s Sports in 1896, displayed titillation at an exotic spectacle rather than censure of a disreputable display.¹⁹⁹ A year later, when “T. Parata beat the pakeha [*sic*] competitors in the bicycle race, and his sister, Miss Cissie Parata, in bloomers, distanced her opponents in the ladies’ bicycle race”, the *Feilding Star* reported: “So delighted were the natives that they indulged in shrieks of laughter and a few spasmodic ‘hakas’ [*sic*] to vent their feelings of joy”.²⁰⁰ The adoption of a condescending tone reinforces the impression that the spectacle of a Maori woman racing in bloomers could be safely watched because it confirmed the moral superiority of Pakeha, as did the “shrieks of laughter” and “spasmodic” haka of the Maori spectators. The unfettered behaviour attributed to the “natives” conformed to stereotypes and provided a benchmark against which colonisers could measure their own superiority and thus justify their own economic, cultural and political dominance.

Women’s races were more likely to appear on the programmes of holiday sports, Caledonian gatherings, Druids’ fêtes and cycling gymkhanas than they were on the programmes of bicycle club sports meetings. These events provided opportunity for participation by cyclists not catered for by the large, “athleticised” race meetings. Occasionally, women’s races fitted within a wider political agenda. When the Eight Hours Federated Union extended the scope of its Eight Hours Demonstration Day, “chief items on the programme” included a shearing demonstration, a Five Mile Cash Amateur Bicycle Handicap, a Two Mile Walking Race and a “Ladies’ Bicycle Race, 1 mile, trophies valued at £5 and £2”.²⁰¹ In other cases, the races appeared as a normal part of the race programme, and were reported with a complete absence of

¹⁹⁸ Simpson, “Women and Cycling,” 104-108.

¹⁹⁹ *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 25 April 1896, 3.

²⁰⁰ *Feilding Star*, 20 March 1897, 3.

²⁰¹ *Evening Post*, 19 August 1896, 5.

metaphorically raised eyebrows from the press.

This equanimity became more likely after the rapid expansion of cycling in 1896-1897. In 1896, someone within the Matura Athletic Society floated the idea that a ladies' race be included at the Society's annual sports. Those present at the Annual Meeting "did not seem to favour it, and the matter was allowed to drop".²⁰² But in 1899, the half mile "Ladies' Bicycle Race Handicap" in Gisborne was "looked forward to with considerable interest, a good contest being expected". The race itself received a brief, straightforward description that did not sensationalise the race, despite the leader (J. Thompson, riding off limit) falling just before the finish line and being passed by D. O'Connor (scratch). The prosaic but engaged reporting of the race might be read as an effort on the part of the newspaper to normalise women's bicycle racing. The fact that the race was handicapped also indicates a certain "business as usual" attitude by the race organisers, and also that the women's relative abilities were identified, making it likely that they were known in the town's athletic circles.

Clare Simpson has found that "when women did race, their competitions were not taken seriously but were, instead, regarded as a great spectacle for public entertainment".²⁰³ There were many instances when this was the case; when "Maori belles" on bicycles were seen as a "fascinating" diversion and a "burlesque ladies' bicycle race...provided a good deal of amusement" rather than "serious" athletic competition.²⁰⁴ Certainly, this remains the dominant telling of cycling history in New Zealand, where women were unable to hold racing licenses or compete as equals at national championships or even the majority of bicycle club race meetings. The extent to which women fell outside the bicycle racing "system" that was controlled by clubs and governing bodies is indicated by The Wanderers' Bicycle Club Gymkhana, organised expressly "to depart for the nonce from the ordinary racing for cyclists, and providing a programme which, while being decidedly novel, gave the ladies an opportunity of showing their skill on the wheel".²⁰⁵ Races, (speed, strength and sweat)

²⁰² *Matura Ensign*, 31 October 1896, 2.

²⁰³ Simpson, "Women and Cycling," 105.

²⁰⁴ *Timaru Herald*, 22 January 1897, 3.

²⁰⁵ *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 6 November 1899, 4.

were for men; gymkhanas (grace, balance and poise) were for women (though not exclusively so, as men also competed in gymkhanas). The ½-mile “Ladies’ Races” included on the programmes of athletic sports meetings, fêtes and, in some cases, bicycle race meetings cannot, however, all be characterised as trivialised spectacle. Nor were they, like the gymkhana, clumsy and short-lived innovations created to provide bicycle competition within imposed boundaries of feminine respectability. Rather, they were a continuation of female participation in community-based sports meetings that dated at least as far back as the mid-1860s.²⁰⁶

It is not argued here that women’s bicycle and running races at community sports events represented equal access to competitive sport; in most cases, women’s cycle racing was restricted to a single ½-mile, “Ladies’ Race” per meeting.²⁰⁷ It is suggested, however, that these races were not always emplaced on race programmes to provide titillating spectacle. Rather, they existed as part of a desire on the part of organising committees to provide broad-based participatory events rather than purely passive entertainment. In this context, women’s racing was broadly accepted by the general press. Ironically, it was the specialised cycling press and the governing bodies of bicycle racing in New Zealand which lagged behind in the redefinition of female respectability.

For women who wanted to race bicycles, resistance and apathy came from within bicycle clubs. Although some clubs had thrown themselves open to female membership, and others had been founded by women themselves, both of cycling’s

²⁰⁶ In 1866, the *Daily Southern Cross* mused on the relative propriety of “young girls” and “elderly ladies over forty” competing in running races at the Howick Sports. While the argument was, perhaps, tongue-in-cheek, it nevertheless provides insight into the contextual nature of respectability:

Whether it is desirable to encourage young girls of fifteen to run a race on an open course over 440 yards, for “a magnificent crinoline” or “a Girl’s Own Book,” may be open to question; but the same objection will not hold good against another event in the programme, namely, the “elderly ladies’ race, any age over forty years, distance 100 yards: 1st, a beautiful dress; 2nd, a flannel petticoat.” Certainly, the “elderly ladies over forty” have come to years of discretion, and are the best judges of how they ought to act on the occasion.

Daily Southern Cross, 24 December 1866, 4.

²⁰⁷ In the twenty-first century, women’s bicycle races are still run over shorter distances than are men’s races, despite the fact that in athletics, women have been competing in full-length marathons since the early-1970s.

governing bodies were still “exclusively male preserves”.²⁰⁸ When, in 1892, Alice Burn decided to compete in an Oamaru road race (she was eventually forced to abandon the plan due to injury) she was both censured and supported by members of cycling clubs, including the women’s Atalanta Cycling Club in Christchurch.²⁰⁹ Simpson has observed that Burn was a suffragist, and that the controversy, which played out in the letters column of the *Wheelman*, can be read as a political struggle between conservative and liberal elements within the women’s cycling club.²¹⁰ Amongst male club members and bicycle race spectators, the prospect of women’s racing reversed the pattern of approval that accompanied women’s cycling in general. When, in March 1896, a Ladies’ Cycling Carnival was held at Lancaster Park, the *Wheelman* reported “that in general, women’s cycle racing was received unfavourably by everyone except the non-cycling spectators, who enjoyed the exhibition, and the racers themselves, who enjoyed the competition.”²¹¹ The condescending tone adopted by the *Wheelman* towards women’s racing and those who enjoyed it was not shared by the conservative Christchurch *Press*, which reported the racing in a straightforward manner, nor by the *Star*, which offered an approving assessment of the racing and the racers:

The first event for ladies, a race over two laps of the course, nearly three-quarters of a mile, was the second on the programme. Four of the half-dozen young ladies who competed wore black knickerbocker suits, with white vests and sailor hats — a not unbecoming, but very “boylike” costume. The other two rode in skirts — and finished last. The riding of the ladies was very creditable, and, though they made fairly good time, it could not be said that there was anything “fast” in their demeanour or appearance; nor, indeed, any taint of vulgarity in the proceedings.²¹²

The straight reportage and positive affirmation of the races in Christchurch was not a singular occurrence. A few years later, a *Southland Times* report on the Southland Axemen’s Carnival delivered the results of the Half-mile Ladies’ Cycle Race in an un-sensational and straightforward manner:

²⁰⁸ Simpson, “Women and Cycling,” 62.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 62-3.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 63.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 63,

²¹² *Star*, 23 March 1896, 2.

Half Mile Ladies' Cycle Race— Trophies value £2, £1, and 10s. Miss Adamson 1, Miss Polley 2, Miss Shearer 3. The only starters in a very popular event. Miss Polley went away with the lead and looked like winning, but Miss Adamson stuck to her, and, amid an ovation, won on the post by a length.²¹³

It will be noted that although the *Southland Times* report of the Ladies Cycle Race followed the standard format for publishing race results, it failed to mention Adamson's winning time for the race. The responsibility for women's exclusion from regular, systematic, bureaucratically-organised and officially-recorded bicycle racing lies squarely with the bicycle clubs and governing bodies whose self-appointed task it was to facilitate and maintain the licensing of bicycle racers and the keeping of athletic records.

Women's cycling was at the frontline of the debate "between conservative and progressive ideas about what constituted middle-class femininity".²¹⁴ It propelled women into public spaces and increased opportunities for un-chaperoned social encounters between sexes and classes. As Simpson concludes, however, "from the mid-1890s to the early-1900s, condonation of women's cycling was conditional only, despite its widespread acceptance and approval".²¹⁵ Given that New Zealand's newspapers were self-appointed arbiters of taste and moral education, the approval of both women's bicycle racing and the rational dress worn by female racers was an important endorsement. Yet within the specialised cycling press, including columns authored by female writers, women's racing was "considered indecorous and immodest, as well as potentially bad for women's health".²¹⁶ This disapproval fits into a pattern of conscious conservatism designed to negotiate the shifting landscape of female respectability. By denouncing "mannish" bicycle racing amongst women, cycling's proponents created a point of reference against which the newly-respectable activity of mixed-sex social cycling could be favourably measured.

The relationship between women, bicycle racing and the race committees of the

²¹³ *Southland Times*, 5 April 1904, 4.

²¹⁴ Simpson, "Women and Cycling," 108.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 112.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

NZCA and LNZW is relatively straightforward. Women did not hold bicycle racing licenses; when they raced their efforts fell outside the bureaucratised system of championships and records which was administered by and for Pakeha men. In the case of ethnic minorities, especially Maori, the issue was more complicated. Like “ladies races”, “Maori races” and other ethnically classified athletic contests had been a feature of holiday sports meetings predating the introduction of organised bicycle racing in New Zealand. In the context of “ladies’ races”, “boys’ races” and “married men’s races”, a desire for inclusiveness might be cited to counter the argument that “Maori races” were *only* put on programmes to provide exotic spectacles that confirmed the ethnocentric proclivities of the colonists. Nevertheless, the survival of separate “Maori races” on the programmes of NZCA and NZLW race meetings in the 1890s and beyond suggests that Maori were perceived as “others” who, like women, continued to fall almost completely outside the rapidly emerging structure of bureaucratised bicycle racing.

Complication is added to the above observation by the knowledge that Maori did, in some cases, compete alongside Pakeha in open competition. Henare Uru has been mentioned above. Another commonly cited example is Te Rangi Hiroa (Sir Peter Buck): doctor, soldier, Member of Parliament, pioneering anthropologist and also a noted sportsman (Te Rangi Hiroa was the New Zealand amateur long-jump champion, 1900 and 1904).²¹⁷ It is also unlikely that many, if any, cycling clubs included a “colour bar” in their constitutions, but effective control on membership was maintained via “blackballing” and similar mechanisms for controlling membership.²¹⁸ Such mechanisms could be used to bar Maori, other ethnic minorities or people from the “wrong” class from joining a socially and ethnically exclusive cycling club. While

²¹⁷ Ernest Beaglehole, “Buck, Sir Peter Henry (Te Rangihiroa),” in *The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, vol. 1, ed. A. H. McLintock, (Wellington: R. E. Owen, Government Printer, 1966), 265.

²¹⁸ Blackballing refers to a negative vote in a traditional secret ballot popular with gentleman’s clubs, fraternal societies and other socially exclusive organisations. Voters cast their ballots with black or white balls. A white ball signified an affirmative vote and a black ball signified a negative vote. The system, popular as a means of deciding applications for admission of membership to an organisation, could be arranged so that any number of black balls cast in the ballot, rather than a majority, could result in a negative decision. By requiring unanimous or near-unanimous endorsement of new members, clubs ensured continuity and social exclusivity. The system was thus effective at maintaining secret colour and class bars in clubs and societies.

Maori and other ethnic minorities could and did, therefore, compete with Pakeha in open sporting competition, the gatekeepers of this participation remained Pakeha, male and middle class.

One highly visible marker of this power and of the self-perceived superiority of Anglo Saxon culture was the way in which Pakeha and Maori competitors were announced in race results. Pakeha were referred to formally, by family name only, or family name and initials. Maori competitors were announced by both family and given names, or, by given name only. The impression of condescension is palpable. Overwhelmingly, the larger cycling clubs conformed to this pattern of condescension. “Maori Races” were to provide exotic and patronising spectacle, as amply demonstrated by a PBC 1890 advertisement which exhorted patrons to watch the “Maori Bicycle Race” at the Boxing Day race meeting “for a good laugh” (see *Figure 5.3*).

Figure 5.3: Advertisement, Star, 23 December 1890, 2.

P. B. C.

WANTED, everyone to see the Novelty Race at Lancaster Park, Saturday, Dec 27th.

WANTED Known—For a good laugh, go and see the Maori Bicycle Race on Boxing Day.

WANTED the Public to know the Cushion-tired Bicycle will compete on Boxing Day.

SECAR BICYCIB to be seen at Lancaster Park on Boxing Day. Very exciting. 81

Conclusion

Once the racket created by the stoush between the New Zealand Cyclist’s Alliance and the League of New Zealand Wheelmen quietened, a clearer picture of bicycle racing in the 1890s emerged. The rapid expansion of cycling as a participatory activity in the mid 1890s was reflected in a growth in club cycling. Opportunities to participate in or watch

bicycle races also expanded, but, perhaps because of this increased opportunity, attendance at individual race meetings did not grow quite so spectacularly. The concept of “record” was central to these race meetings. In the language of Allison, cycling fell very much into the camp of athleticism. The drive for *citius*, together with the expense of the racing machine itself, led cycling’s participants and administrators to forgo strict rules of economic amateurism.

It was important that amateurism be modified rather than abandoned because of the crucial role it played in the maintenance of British identity. The Empire had been justified, in part, by the moral, physical and intellectual superiority of the British over “natives” and “foreigners”. Amateurism at once proved and maintained this superiority.

Groups who subscribed to amateurism were quick to recognise their own behaviour as amateur while failing to see it in “others”. In New Zealand, a wider variety of social classes fell under the amateur umbrella, but the ethnic barriers remained intact. Maori, being the definitive “other” in New Zealand, were excluded from being amateurs or having their behaviour recognised as such.

Women fell outside the system almost completely. Although many took to the bicycle with enthusiasm, and were accepted as cyclists by clubmen more readily than by the wider community, they did not, for the most part, race. This highlights the gendered nature of amateurism in sport. For the middle-class men who controlled competitive sport, economic activity was male activity. Women fell outside their perceived system altogether. Before the introduction of amateurism to Christchurch, women had run at the Anniversary Sports, and although there were fewer races for women than men, the status of the races and racers was nominally equal. Once women’s bicycles gave them opportunity to ride, one might expect that they could have raced also. By systematically defining legitimate modes of racing and employing bureaucratic control over who could or could not race, athleticism and amateurism had actually rendered sport less inclusive.

The internecine argument over amateurs, “shamateurs” and cash-amateurs which split the Alliance arose from a desire by the administrators to control the behaviour of

athletes and to thus maintain hegemony over bicycle racing in New Zealand. The sport was semi-commercial throughout this era. The clubs themselves were still run by largely voluntary committees, except for the secretaries who, in the larger clubs and governing bodies, received stipends. These clubs were, nevertheless, run on “businesslike” lines, especially when it came to race meetings. These were gate-taking events, the successes of which were measured in economic as well as sporting terms. With provincial, interprovincial and intercolonial races and championships now being held, cyclists needed to travel to race. Financial support was provided by clubs, through subscription or from race-meeting profits. This ensured the “best” rather than the wealthiest athletes represented their clubs, provinces and colony.

It might thus be argued that the governing bodies of cycling in New Zealand, both amateur and cash amateur, had engineered a situation where the “best” cyclists – as defined by carefully quantified races and record attempts – were Pakeha, male and (cash) amateur, with the first two characteristics being the *real* prerequisite for the third. These clubs were not, however, the only entities with a vested interest in promoting bicycle racing or financing talented racing cyclists. Two groups in particular were beginning to have a deeply felt influence on the sport. These were “the trade”, that is, bicycle manufacturers and importers, and the bookmakers who inhabited bicycle racing venues. By 1897, newspapers had begun thundering against both groups, and predicting the downfall of bicycle racing under their influence. The following chapter will analyse the rapid decline which did eventuate in the first decade of the twentieth century and determine whether “bookies” and “the trade” really were to blame.

Chapter 6 – CASH, CORRUPTION AND THE DECLINE OF TRACK RACING

*Present day cycle racing is gradually failing in its power of attraction for the public.*¹

Introduction

At the dawn of the twentieth century, both the League of New Zealand Wheelmen (LNZW) and the sport of bicycle racing appeared, on the face of it, in rude good health. The League was now in nominal control of track racing in New Zealand (road records and road racing were left to their own devices) and the sport appeared popular with the general public. Cycling itself had become a phenomenally successful participatory activity and the bicycle was now a practical tool, providing affordable transport for white and, increasingly, blue collar workers. As a symbol of modernity, cycling appealed to the élite and middle-classes. It was fast, modern and allowed unprecedented independence for middle-class women.

The quantification and recording of athletic performance which had accompanied the development of modern sport emphasised progress and unlimited human potential. The bicycle was well-adapted to these ends. The bicycle allowed humans to travel under their own power faster than ever before, providing a physical and personal expression of these feelings of modernity and human improvement.² In America, Charles “Mile-A-Minute” Murphy first beat a thoroughbred horse in a match race (a relatively commonly-attempted feat of athletic speed and endurance) before earning his sobriquet by riding a mile in 57 seconds, tucked in behind a special fairing fitted to the back of a railway train (*see Figure 6.1*). Murphy’s record-breaking ride was the ultimate development of “pacing” (*demi-fond* in France), which had been introduced to blue riband events at many bicycle race meetings. The giant “multicycle” pacing machines began to be replaced by massive, rudimentary, motorcycles, often ridden by

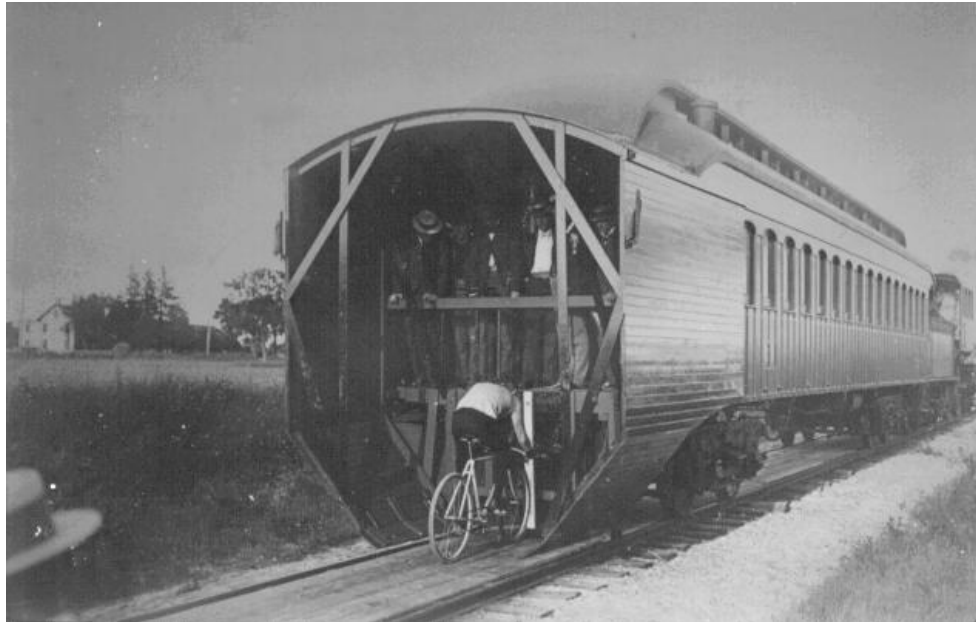
¹ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 29 January, 1898, 28.

² David B. Perry *Bike Cult: the Ultimate Guide to Human Powered Vehicles*, (New York; London: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1995), 357.

two riders, which provided even more noise and action at the bicycle race tracks.

Figure 6.1: Charles M. Murphy and the specially adapted train behind which he pedalled one mile in less than one minute in 1899.

Source: "Arrt's [sic] Arrchives," <http://arrts-arrchives.com/mmm.html>, (accessed 17 August 2009).



Amongst all this noise, excitement and modernity, fractures were beginning to appear in the structure of track racing. Bicycle manufacturers and importers, wishing to promote their products via racing success, had been “keeping” or sponsoring teams of riders who nevertheless raced as amateurs. The practice drew negative press attention, as did increasing presence of bookmakers, who hung rather unsubtly around the riders’ enclosure at race tracks. Allegations of cheating and “cronk” riding swirled around cycling for much of the 1890s; these allegations grew more strident as the decade proceeded and then, in the first decade of the twentieth century, track racing suffered an almost total collapse in New Zealand’s major towns and cities. By 1913, Christchurch, New Zealand’s undisputed bicycle capital, did not even possess a usable cycle racing track. This failure echoed those in Australia, Britain, the United States and even France, already the spiritual home of bicycle racing.

The rapid decline of bicycle racing in New Zealand is pertinent to this thesis

because it was accompanied by a salvo of accusations and a chorus of “I told you so” from the sporting press. It was alleged that the sponsorship of riders by the bicycle industry and the activities of bookmakers at bicycle racing tracks had led to widespread corruption, and that these “problems” were directly connected to cash amateurism itself. The purpose of this chapter is to verify the link between corruption, cash amateurism and bicycle racing’s failure in New Zealand. It will show that while corruption was not solely responsible for the decline of bicycle racing’s popularity, it did contribute to cycling’s inability to move towards developing stable partisanship rather than relying on spectacle to attract audiences. In doing so, it will be necessary to investigate other perceived practices which may have precipitated the collapse, including “loafing” (riding at less than full speed in a race) and paced racing, which had, as indicated above, become a widespread discipline in the last years of the nineteenth century.

Decline

Even as the LNZW gained control of bicycle racing in New Zealand, there were signs that the sport’s popularity had already peaked. The League’s 1901 annual report was upbeat about many of the year’s successes, but concerns about declines in both spectator numbers and club membership were also evident.³ The “lack of public interest” in the League’s Championships (which, for the first time, had been promoted and controlled by the LNZW itself rather than by an affiliated club) was attributed to a lack of star appeal, with only two New South Welsh amateurs heeding an invitation for Australian riders to cross the Tasman and race at the meeting. More worrying trends included a drop in affiliated clubs from a peak of 61 in 1899, to 50 in 1900.⁴ This was matched by a “marked decline” in applications for racing licenses and race meeting permits, indicating that “both the public and riders” had “lost some of their enthusiasm” for bicycle racing.⁵ So, while the report argued that the League was “by comparison with other sporting bodies, in the most healthy (financial) position,” it added the caveat that a

³ “LNZW Annual Report”, *Otago Witness*, 2 October 1901, 51.

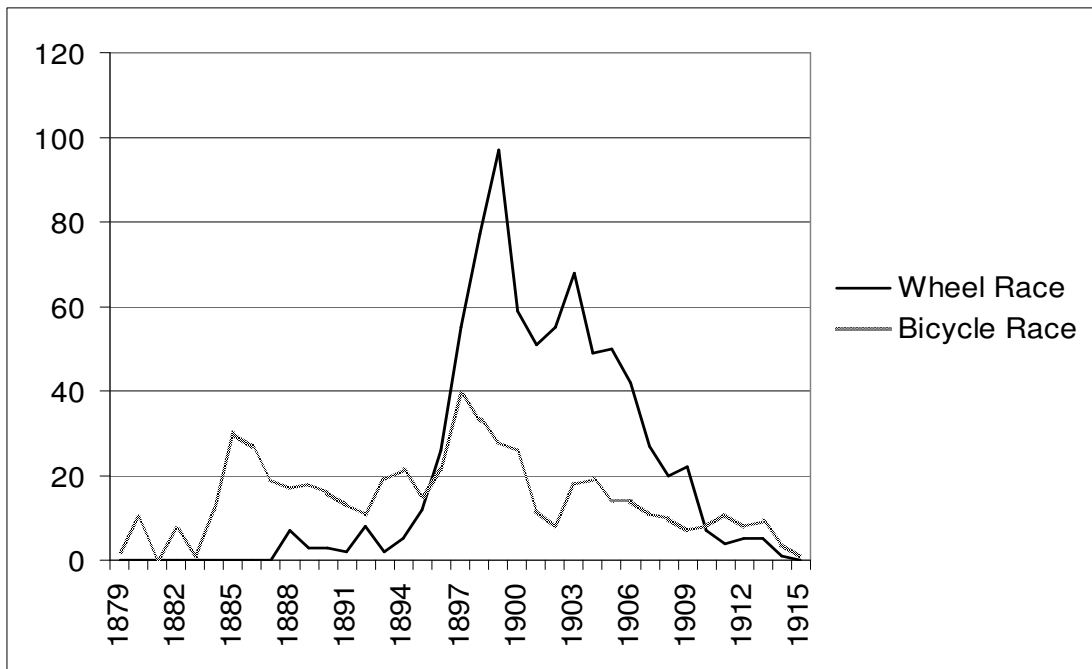
⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

“strict policy of economy must be enforced” if this was to remain the case.⁶

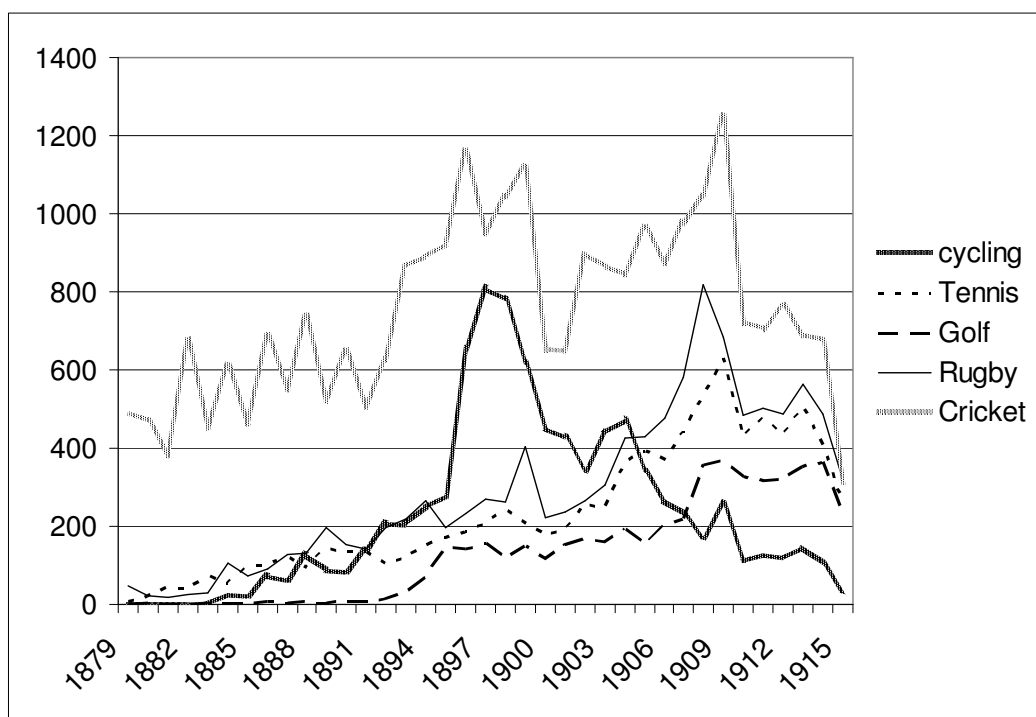
Over the next decade, the League and its member clubs did score some successes. The year 1903 was a good for track racing. A visit to New Zealand by Marshall “Major” Taylor, the Afro-American cycle racing phenomenon, drew large crowds to bicycle racing venues. In 1905, cycle racing experienced another good year. The Christchurch Wheel Race was attended by huge crowds, which included New Zealand’s Premier, Richard Seddon. But taken overall, track racing’s decline was as spectacular as its rise. The nature of the decline can be seen in the dramatic rise and fall of coverage of cycling in New Zealand’s newspapers (*see Figures 6.2 & 6.3*).

Figure 6.2: Mentions of the phrases: “Wheel Race” and “Bicycle Race” in the Wellington Evening Post and the Christchurch Star, 1879-1915



⁶ Ibid.

Figure 6.3: Comparison of mentions of five sports in the Wellington Evening Post and Christchurch Star, 1879-1915



The industrial and commercial bicycle boom was echoed by a spectacular spike in reportage of bicycle races coinciding with the end of the nineteenth century. There is a small but significant divergence between mentions of “cycling” and mentions of “wheel race” (the most popular form of bicycle racing in 1890s Australasia). Mentions of “cycling” peaked in 1897, while those of “wheel race” did so in 1900. The minor peak in 1903 and 1904 was likely caused directly by Major Taylor’s visit to Australasia. Taylor enjoyed widespread popularity in Europe and Australasia; his ability to briefly reverse the decline in cycle racing’s popularity will be examined later in this chapter.

Aside from the quantitative evidence supplied above, the starkest proof of bicycle racing’s decline in the first decade of the twentieth century is supplied by the 1908 annual meeting of the Otago centre of the LNZW. The centre and the New Zealand Cash Athletic Society had cooperated in organising two evening sports meetings that had “proved very enjoyable both to competitors and the public,” but taken

overall, track racing had reached a dire state in Otago.⁷ Only 24 licenses were issued during the year, 15 less than the previous year, and only five permits to hold bicycle races had been issued to unaffiliated promoters.⁸ This falloff was attributed “to the lack of young riders taking up cycling as a sport”, although the centre’s executive did hope “that the incoming year will see a large increase in the rank of league riders”. The projected increase was hampered by a lack of clubs to promote cycling. The Otago Cycling Club had collapsed altogether, while the DCC had been forced to reinvent itself as the Dunedin Sports Club.⁹ One member at the Otago Centre meeting,

Questioned the advisableness of the centre continuing as the representative body of cycling in Otago, and was of the opinion that, seeing their sphere of usefulness was now largely circumscribed by the small number of cyclists who went in for track racing and also by the lack of sports meetings in Dunedin where cycle racing found a place on the programme, it would perhaps be as well to ask the Caledonian Society to take over the work of the centre.¹⁰

This suggestion drew a rather bleak response: “Mr Moore said he hardly thought the Caledonian Society would be prepared to take over the duties of the centre.” The responsibility for promoting track races had become something of a poisoned chalice, and the collapse of club bicycle racing was as real as the rapid drop in newspaper coverage suggests.

The collapse of bicycle racing in New Zealand mirrored that experienced in Europe, Britain, Australia and the United States. It occurred even while bicycle use amongst the general population continued to grow: the public had had enough of bicycle clubs and track races, but not the bicycle itself. Popular theories for the causes of this collapse concentrated on professionalism, gambling and corruption. The *Referee* had always been the most pessimistic of the weeklies when it came to the sustainability of bicycle racing’s popularity, and continued to reprint stories of corruption and decline from Australia, the United States and Britain.

⁷ *Otago Witness*, 11 November 1908, 60.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

As far as the sport itself goes, cycle racing in England is almost completely played out, for the public there are getting to know rather too much of the way in which these things are prearranged.¹¹

Implicated in the perception that the results of bicycle races were “prearranged” was the bicycle industry or “trade” which sponsored individual racers in the form of cash (expenses) or technical support. These riders were described with conscious irony, as “makers’ amateurs” and were seen by their critics as inherently corrupt. In some cases the makers established “stables” or teams of riders which were prototypes for the large professional teams which dominated European bicycle racing in the twentieth century.

Names on Jerseys: Makers’ Amateurs

As was indicated in Chapter 2, as early as 1869, velocipede manufacturers realised the value of racing for stimulating demand. So began a distinctive relationship between bicycle manufacturing, racing and sponsorship which would exercise the minds and pens of amateurs seeking to keep sport “pure” from “commercial taint”. During the course of the 1880s, manufacturers of bicycles sponsored riders by providing them with equipment and “expenses”, that is, paying them to race. The onset of the bicycle boom only intensified this system of sponsorship. Over-investment in the bicycle industry created a surplus of capital which found its way onto the race track in the form of support by bicycle, tyre and chain manufacturers, newspapers and the brewers of various health tonics, tinctures and cure-alls. The ensuing system, ironically coined as “makers’ amateurism”, was a remarkable prototype for the extreme commercialisation and hefty sponsorship deals which characterised major sports in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The problem of “makers’ riders” or “makers’ amateurs” as they were commonly known in Britain and the United States, was a widely discussed theme in the late-nineteenth century cycling press. George Lacy Hillier, doyen of English cycling, precisely summarised the driving force behind the development:

To build a machine good enough to win a championship race is the best

¹¹ *Referee*, 5 July, 1899, 34.

form of advertisement that could possibly occur to a maker, and he would adopt any honourable means of achieving that distinction. This is only reasonable, and indeed praiseworthy; but it came to pass in process of time that a line of conduct was adopted which, though not discreditable to the makers, who might naturally be supposed to do the best they could for their own interests, was not quite so worthy of praise when practised by racing cyclists.¹²

The “line of conduct” decried by Lacy Hillier was the acceptance from manufacturers of bicycles, parts, services and even, it was suggested, cash, by cyclists who continued to race in amateur events.¹³ In the United States, the practice was at least partially sanctioned by the American Cycle Union (ACU).¹⁴ American manufacturers, some of whom were considerable showmen in their own right, bragged about their open sponsorship of riders, perhaps confirming the worst fears of amateurism’s idealists. In 1886, the *Otago Witness* carried the following article clipped from an English sporting periodical, which itself reported news from the American *Land and Water*:

Land and Water writes of the Springfield meeting as a big business meeting of professionals, whereat “world’s records” will be made in the interests of the various bicycling firms who employ the crack riders of the day. Mr Over, of the Overman Wheel Company, of the U.S.A., says he has four men in training to meet the men kept by the Pope Company and other manufacturers and agents, and he says he does not care what the men call themselves so long as he gets what he pays for — viz., records for his machines.¹⁵

The article, however, went on to criticise English commentators who cried foul over English amateurs competing (either in person or via the “wonderful abstraction” of the athletic record) against American makers’ amateurs:

The amusing feature of the matter is that some of the cycling and athletic papers this side of the Atlantic have waxed quite virtuous on this point, and talked a lot of twaddle about “our amateurs” being called on to meet the employees of American makers, as the enterprise of the American makers was not quite as closely followed up in England. It is a matter of common knowledge that a considerable proportion of our “amateurs” (?) are so kept by makers. That they have their expenses found, with trainers

¹² William Couitts Keppel Albemarle, Lord of, and George Lacy Hillier, *Cycling*, 5th eds., (London; Bombay: Longmans, Greene & Co., 1896), 43.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Otago Witness*, 8 February 1894, 33.

¹⁵ *Otago Witness*, 29 October 1886, 27.

and attendants to look after them.¹⁶

Thus, as early as 1886, bicycle racers in both England and the United States were receiving support from manufacturers whilst racing as amateurs.

The problems arising from makers' amateurism were obvious to newspaper reporters and cycling authorities. Primarily, it was deemed "very unfair to the real amateurs who raced for a love of the sport, and for honour and glory only."¹⁷ Lacy Hillier argued that non-supported amateurs "were at a great disadvantage; occupied during the day in business pursuits of various kinds, they were unable to give the same exclusive attention to training as those who devoted their time to it professionally."¹⁸ The argument is noteworthy in that it confirms the middle-class nature of late-nineteenth century amateurism. Amateurs were not gentlemen of independent means but were instead faced with the necessity of earning a living.

It is difficult to gauge exactly how influential makers' amateurs were on bicycle racing in New Zealand. Writing in the *New Zealand Referee*, "Velox" had consistently predicted the fall of cash racing, and now conflated cash amateurism with makers' amateurs. The League's 1900 Championships in Wellington had not proven popular with the public, and while the capital's citizens had always tended to wax and wane in their support of bicycle racing, "Velox" preferred to see the latest downturn as a public rejection of cash racing and, significantly, as an abandonment by bicycle manufacturers of racing as a marketing tool.

The fact is, as remarked in a previous issue, present day cycle racing is gradually failing in its power of attraction for the public. And this was the fate prognosticated for it when cash professional cycling became the rage amongst young men. It was the craze in New Zealand, as elsewhere, for a time, but the withdrawal of racing teams by the manufacturers and importers has been a great smack for the promoters of professional meetings. The system has not been found to be worth the money it costs the people who have been "paying the piper."¹⁹

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Coutts Keppel Albemarle and Lacy Hillier, *Cycling*, 44.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ *Referee*, 7 February, 1900, 41.

“Velox” had always claimed neutrality over the amateur debate, yet he also refused to accept the definition that the cash amateurs had applied to themselves. His use of the term “cash professional” is a pointed play on, and direct criticism of, “cash amateur”. According to the New Zealand Cyclists’ Alliance (NZCA), LNZW riders were all professionals because they raced for cash prizes. The redundancy “cash professional” was employed specifically to refute the existence of cash amateurs and to reinforce the connection between cash and professional sport. The irony (which “Velox” would have been aware of) is that NZLW rules specifically proscribed rider sponsorship or subsidy by the bicycle trade. Moreover, as the term “makers’ amateur” suggests, in Britain, the practice of rider sponsorship had been prevalent in amateur cycling.

For its part, the League attempted to limit “trade” involvement in racing. Early in 1898, for example, W. A. Shields, New Zealand Manager of the Massey Harris Company, which had been marketing its Canadian-made bicycles aggressively on the New Zealand market, wrote to the LNZW, telling them “that the firm had entered Messrs Forbes, Reynolds and Hunt for the Dunedin Club’s meeting, and had them elected members of the Otago and Dunedin Clubs and now applied for cash racing licenses and colour licenses for the men.”²⁰ The three riders had recently been racing in Australia, and were definitely considered star attractions at a race meeting. For the League, however, this level of trade involvement in racing went a step too far.

The chairman said this appeared to him to be the beginning of a class that they may term makers’ riders, and the question arose as to whether in the future they would not have to cater for this class. Mr Attack said that Reynolds was in a different position from Forbes and Hunt, who, there is no doubt, had during the past few months been making their living by racing. He did not think they had any riders in New Zealand who went so far as that.²¹

It was “finally decided to inform the Massey Harris Company that the men must make their own entries and send in their own applications for licenses.”²² In practice, the League was making distinction between those who it still regarded as cash amateurs and

²⁰ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 29 January 1898, 28.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

those who received guaranteed retainers for racing and who were, in its eyes, a separate “class” from cash amateurs. It is noteworthy that according to Atack (who, as a weekly newspaper and cycling magazine editor, was a reliable source in the context of a committee meeting) there were, in 1898, no fully professional riders in New Zealand (here defining a professional as a cyclist relying solely on the sport for his income).

Atacks’ view contrasts with that of a disenchanted member of the Gore Cycling Club which, after some dithering, had seceded from the Alliance and joined the League. Writing to the *Mataura Ensign*, “A Poor Widow” complained, “it is a well-known fact that nearly all the crack cash riders in the colony are hirelings of bicycle makers and agents, and race solely in the interests of the firms which pay them”.²³ Reconciling this opinion with that of Atack is evidentially difficult, but a somewhat satirical observation by “Demon” in the *Otago Witness* serves to undermine the observations of “A Poor Widow”. “Demon” cheerfully published a “list of the disparaging criticisms upon the record-breaker by those who are jealous of his superior prowess”:

In the first place, he is invariably accused of getting his machine for nothing. If his opinion is asked about a machine it is viewed with evident suspicion. Whether he says it is good or bad he must have a motive. Then when he wins a race he becomes the victim of the advertisers. “Try Snooks’ Invigorator, as used by So-and-so in the great 24 hours’ road ride,” meets the eye in every cycling paper, possibly with a picture of himself designed to indicate the invigorator’s effect in abnormally developing his muscles. Or he may become a pacemaker, whereupon he is told that he has forfeited his claim to be considered an amateur, for it is a matter of common knowledge that the competitor whom he assists gives him 10s a day and his beer. The conclusion is that the happiest man is he who rides not in order to beat records but for his own gratification — a conclusion in which a good many who have never felt the inconveniences of notoriety will probably be inclined to agree.

The accusation that “tall poppy syndrome” was at the heart of accusations of closet professionalism carries some credence, but it is also clear that a number of “cracks”, both amateur and cash amateur, were gaining at least a partial sponsorship from bicycle importers and manufacturers. In 1898, an advertisement (though sometimes not identified as such) appeared in the cycling columns of newspapers throughout New

²³ *Mataura Ensign*, 13 January 1898, 2.

Zealand:

The enterprising Anglo N.Z. Cycle Co. have just completed arrangements with George Sutherland, the champion cyclist of New Zealand, and W. A. Thompson, of Wellington, who holds some valuable records, to travel for them in New Zealand for the sale of their Osmond, Anglo Special and other cycles. Sutherland will race at all principal meetings and will be mounted on either of the Company's cycles. Mr J. W. Jones, of Christchurch, the amateur champion, will also straddle an Osmond during the approaching season, and many other prominent racing men have also booked orders for Osmond racers.²⁴

Sutherland and Thompson were cash riders, and Sutherland in particular came under scrutiny for pushing the boundaries of the League's anti-professional rule. In *Figure 6.4* (overleaf), he can be seen posing with his Sterling bicycle, dressed in his Sterling Jersey. That organising committees also benefited from sponsorship is illustrated by the overbearing Royal Enfield Cup, sponsored by the local importer of the English-built Royal Enfield bicycles. But the inclusion of J. W. "Scorcher" Jones amongst the riders on Osmond bicycles for the 1898 season suggests that the "enterprising" practices of the Anglo NZ Cycle Co. included sponsorship of champion riders from the Alliance as well as the League.

As "Demon" had pointed out, marketers of a whole range of products could claim endorsement by a sports star, and that this, itself, was not proof of the athlete's complicity in the advertising scheme. When it came to marketing bicycles and bicycle tyres, however, rider involvement became direct and irrefutable when the racers wore jerseys emblazoned with brand names (*see Figure 6.4*).²⁵ The innovation caused widespread dissatisfaction amongst club committees and race officials.²⁶ In August 1899, a special meeting of the LNZW executive was called in Christchurch. High on the agenda were issues of trade involvement in racing:

At a special general meeting of delegates to the League of Wheelmen for the purpose of dealing with the revised rules the principal rules passed were to the following effect: — To prohibit any person connected with the cycle trade from holding a position as a delegate or as an official at a

²⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 6 July 1898, 3.

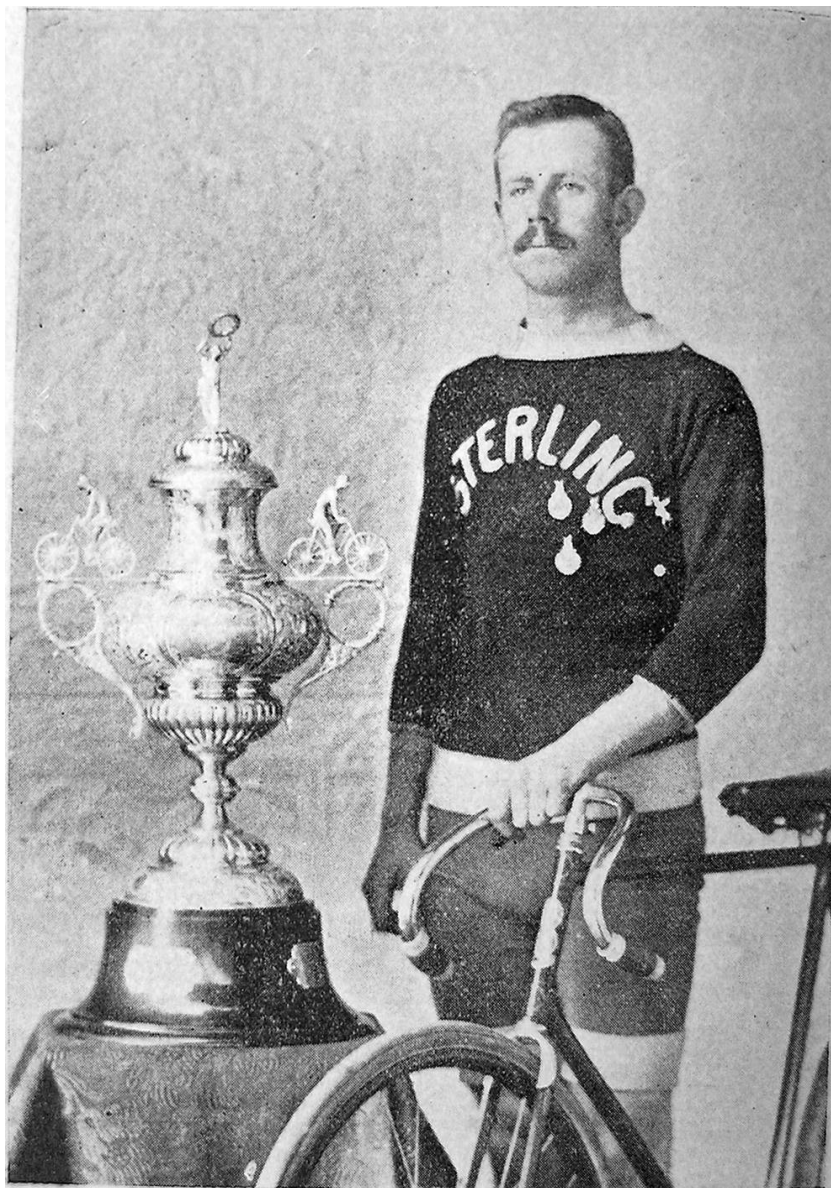
²⁵ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 29 January 1898, 28.

²⁶ *Star*, 23 August 1898, 1.

race meeting; to prohibit any League rider from appearing on the track with the name of his machine on his jersey; to allow the League to take up touring as a portion of its constitution; to allow one delegate to represent two clubs. The rules under which clubs should conduct race meetings were specified in detail, and a colour registration scheme was adopted. At the conclusion of the business a vote of confidence in the Executive was unanimously carried.²⁷

Figure 6.4: George Sutherland with three examples of industry involvement in bicycle racing – his bicycle, the Royal Enfield Cup and his racing jersey, emblazoned with a bicycle brand-name.

Source: New Zealand Cyclist, 9 April 1898.



²⁷ *Evening Post*, 23 August 1898, 5.

In Melbourne, meanwhile, a novel scheme for combating the effect of sponsorship on race outcomes was suggested:

As the result of one firm offering £100 to The rider of their make of machine should he win the Austral wheel race on it, a movement is on foot to get the trade to combine to put up £150 to be given to the winner of the Austral provided he does not ride on the bicycle specified by the first-mentioned firm.²⁸

Figure 6.5: North Canterbury Bicycle Club Race, Rangiora Recreation Grounds, 1899. Source: http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/gallery2/main.php?g2_itemId=92



Somewhat less contentious than the Victorian plan, the LNZW's measures against trade dominance of racing appear to have had some effect. The success of the colour registration scheme might be judged from a photo taken in 1899 of a Rangiora bicycle race. The entire field is dressed in official racing colours (*see Figure 6.5*).

Criticism of Industry Support

In moving to limit trade teams, advertising and sponsorship, the LNZW adhered to a line of reasoning which had been prominent in the cycling press. The support of riders by manufacturers and importers, whether in cash or equipment, was seen by its

²⁸ *Otago Witness*, 25 August 1898, 41.

critics to be detrimental to bicycle racing. This was driven, in part, by the ideological argument against any association between cash and sport. Implicit in Lacy Hillier's description of makers' amateurs was a divergence of duty between the businessman and the athlete. He was careful not to criticize the "makers" for offering support to racing cyclists, and instead implied that it was the acceptance of this support which was not "honourable".²⁹ On one level, this rather contradictory position might be read as a writer not biting the hand that fed him. But the dichotomy is so strong in Lacy Hillier's statement that it hints at amateur sport being an antidote for the necessary ruthlessness of business. It was the good capitalist's duty to try and infiltrate sport and it was the good athlete's duty to resist that infiltration.

More explicit criticisms of makers' amateurs argued that a social division existed between "pure" amateurs and those receiving industry support, and also that the practice, being dishonest, would lead to further corruption.³⁰ Essential to this view was the notion that it was not just cash which corrupted, but the working class' need for cash. It was thought that less talented riders who were scrabbling to make a living from the sport would "throw" races or employ team tactics in return for payment by a stronger, better supported racer.

Another constant argument against sponsorship (open or covert) was that it would lure young clerks and shop assistants away from their desks and counters.

That they (makers' amateurs) feed on the best of everything, spend weeks in healthy places, and receive a weekly wage and a handsome *douceur* in the event of success; and is it to be wondered at that this life of high training, with every possible comfort and a great amount of leisure, is a sore temptation to the thoughtless boys who slave for long hours at the desk in a stuffy office. We cannot blame them, doubtful as is the morality of the proceedings, for choosing the enjoyable advantages of a makers' amateur as compared with the dismal of a city office³¹

This prospect was worrying because it damaged the sport's rational recreation qualities and in so doing, undermined the symbolism of athletic performance. In "A Philosophy

²⁹ Coutts Keppel Albemarle and Lacy Hillier, *Cycling*, 43.

³⁰ Coutts Keppel Albemarle and Lacy Hillier, *Cycling*, 44-5.

³¹ *Otago Witness*, 29 October 1886, 27.

of Sport” (first published in 1900), Henry Graves noted that in “sports of individual competition” such as cycling:

Though sport be followed purely as a recreation, one man has more leisure than another to devote to perfecting his skill and bodily condition, or has greater resources from which to furnish himself with necessary equipment. In running and the like, the matter of equipment resolves itself into nothing but shoes and garments, but in other sports, such as cycling, the cost of machines and their upkeep involves a relatively heavy outlay³²

What this observation fails to make clear, however, is that inequality of access allowed amateur sport to serve as a delineator of social status. Furthermore, if participation in amateur sport allowed middle-class professional men to emulate the leisure proclivities of the gentry – keeping “gentleman’s hours” at their offices or surgeries – athletic excellence was essential to these ends. As Allison has noted, “victory (in the right spirit and using legitimate methods) was a demonstration of character”, but it was also a demonstration of the possession of sufficient leisure time in which to practice.³³

Although the notion that gentleman amateurs eschewed training and practice has become somewhat axiomatic, newspaper evidence shows that this was not a universal sentiment in the nineteenth century.³⁴ In a mid-nineteenth century article recommending cricket as a remedy to Britain’s physical decline, a writer plainly announced that “Cricketing, like all other exercises of skill and agility, requires training.”³⁵ This was not an isolated opinion. Noting that rowing crews had been training on Wellington Harbour for the upcoming Wellington Anniversary Day Regatta, one observer reported happily:

We are glad that this is the case. A gig race, whether the crews be professionals or amateurs, is but a sorry affair unless the men have been

³² Henry Graves, “A Philosophy of Sport,” *The Contemporary Review* 78 (December 1900): 882.

³³ Lincoln Allison, review of *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters Not Who Won or Lost?*, eds. D. Porter and S. Wagg (review no.678) URL: <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/porterwagg.html> Date accessed: 28 May 2009.

³⁴ A standard analysis of the amateur ideal can be found in the claim that:

The chivalrous gentleman followed a code which required him to be an honorable opponent and a good loser who played games for the pleasure of playing, not to win. He also had a conspicuous lack of interest in money, and regarded practising with disdain.

Robert J. Paddick, “Amateurism: An Idea of the Past or a Necessity for the Future?” *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 3 (1994): 5.

³⁵ *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 5 February 1859, 3.

in training, and just in the degree that the previous practice has been persevered in will their performance be good or bad. Without training — whether in the prize ring, wrestling, on the cricket ground, or in a regatta— no display of power and skill can be made.³⁶

A long article, which worried over New Zealander's penchant for billiard halls and excessive consumption of liquor, proposed as an antidote that "no public school should be considered complete without the provision for training and practising the pupils in athletic exercises and sports". Training was thus seen to raise the quality of performance and increase the rational benefits of sport, yet it also remained a tool of social division for the obvious reason that amateurs who could afford more leisure time could spend more time training.

A winning performance on the cycling or athletic track showed, therefore, that an athlete was wealthy enough to own leisure time, a quality which had previously been associated with the gentry. But it also showed that he had spent that leisure time productively and rationally; that he was, indeed, English and had not spent too much time in "foreign" dens of vice – billiard saloons, bars and brothels. Makers' amateurism threatened to skew this message of social and moral superiority. On one hand, as the list of accusations of cheating levelled at record breakers suggested, it cast doubt on the morality of a winning performance. If a racing cyclist was being paid to train, he could "throw in" his job, train hard, and still enjoy "a great amount of leisure" in which to indulge various vices. Moreover, he was now earning money from muscular effort, traditionally a hallmark of the lower classes.

Most dangerously, makers' amateurism threatened to upset the middle-class occupational hierarchy. One could no longer equate athletic performance with social status or workplace seniority. It is telling that the group singled out as most likely to succumb to the illicit lure of makers' amateurism was composed of the clerks, office boys and shop assistants who stood on the bottom rung of the white-collar ladder. In New Zealand, as in Australia and Britain, implementation of the "Saturday half-holiday" for retail workers lagged behind the eight hour day, six and a half day

³⁶ *Wellington Independent*, 21 January 1865, 3.

working week for tradesmen and labourers.³⁷ “While New Zealand was the first country in the world to adopt the eight-hour day, the custom was confined to tradesmen and labourers and lacked legislative sanction”.³⁸ Moreover, as New Zealand’s long depression bit, conditions across many employment sectors were eroded.³⁹ During the 1880s and 1890s, large segments of the working population were working longer hours for less pay.⁴⁰

The incoming Liberal government of 1891, elected partially on the back of moral consternation over sweated labour in New Zealand, moved to enact better wages and conditions for factory workers, but clerks and shop assistants continued to work long or inconvenient hours. Even when weekly half holidays were enacted for retail workers in 1892, the situation remained chaotic, with different industry sectors having holidays on different days. Whilst labourers and tradesmen increasingly (though not universally) took their half holiday on Saturdays, retailers usually took advantage of this, and opened for extended hours before the Sunday “day of rest”. When restricted Saturday hours were finally applied to adult males by the Shops and Offices Act 1904, early closing still meant 6:00pm, not 1:00pm.⁴¹ Many shop assistants were still forced to take their half holiday mid-week.

That employees in the retail sector wished to extend their leisure hours in order

³⁷ The history of the Saturday half-holiday movement is an under-researched field in New Zealand labour history, perhaps because members of the petit bourgeoisie were active members of the movement alongside retail workers, and the the half-holiday movement did not feature such clearly identifiable hallmarks of labour movements as strikes and other industrial action. One exception to the scholarly neglect is Evan Roberts, “Gender in Store: Salespeople’s Working Hours and Union Organisation in New Zealand and the United States, 1930-60”, *Labour History* Vol. 83 (November, 2002). In Australia, where the Victorian Factories and Shops Act, 1886 was the first in the world to enact limited hours for retail workers, some interesting research has been provided in: Michael Quinlan, Margaret Gardner and Peter Akers, “A Failure of Voluntarism: Shop Assistants and the Struggle to Restrict Trading Hours in The Colony of Victoria, 1850-85.” *Labour History* 88 (May 2005): 165-182. In both countries, the well-documented failure of voluntary early closing (agreements were invariably broken by one ore more signatories) appears a remarkably clear-cut example of “The Tragedy of the Commons” in action. See Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, No. 3859 (December 13, 1968): 1243-1248.

³⁸ Herbert Otto Roth, “Eight-Hour-Day Movement,” in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, vol. 1, ed. A. H. McLintock (Wellington, R. E. Owen, Government Printer, 1966), 567.

³⁹ Raewyn Dalziel, “Railways and Relief Centres,” in *The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand*, paperback ed., ed. Keith Sinclair (Auckland; Oxford; New York; Melbourne, 1993), 117.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ See, Roberts, “Gender in Store”.

to play sport is suggested by the complaint of a draper from Wanganui, who announced loudly that a “storekeeper assistant’s lot, like the policeman’s, ‘is not a happy one.’” He argued that the assistant’s life and intellect was:

Varied by no recreations such as cricket, boating, football, tennis, etc., we cannot join a single outdoor club, or participate in an open air amusement like other mortals. The hours are not too long, we are not overworked, far from it, but the hours are sufficiently awkward to debar us from joining in any of the above pastimes. It is seven o’clock before we can possibly be ready of an evening, which is too late even in the height of summer, and is too much to take early morning exercises, considering we have to stand all day. The law provides no Saturday half holiday for us, instead of which we put in four extra hours to any other ordinary working day.⁴²

The young Wanganui drapers’ assistant skilfully drew on the canons of rational recreation and Sunday observance to reinforce his point.

Sunday is the only day we can possibly have any recreation, and we are told it is wicked even to go to the Heads...[y]et we have no other time to play, and we need, and are as capable of enjoying sport as any other young men. In fact we must have some amusement to relieve the monotony, and if we cannot get in day time we must at night, hence assistants often become experts at cards and billiards.⁴³

Perhaps the most telling accusation in the draper’s complaint is, however, that which accused society in general and women in particular, of treating shop assistants as members of a low caste.

These are called ladies, but manners were not included in their education. They look contemptuously upon us as though we were dirt, and are positively rude. These are wont to smile upon a certain class of clerks, who also look down upon us.⁴⁴

While clerks of “a certain class” may have felt socially superior to drapers’ assistants, the lot of many was, in terms of leisure time, often no better. In Wellington, another eloquent letter condemned the employment conditions of bank clerks, directly comparing them to those of more senior businessmen:

⁴² *Wanganui Herald*, 21 December 1888, 2.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Bank hours ten till three, true; but Bank clerks' hours, 10am till 11pm. No such thing at a Saturday half holiday is known to them, even their meal times are curtailed. Any business man can have his lunch, and a sufficient time given him for it, but the butterfly must flit to it and flit back again immediately— a few of them get half an hour, many of them no time at all.

Because young, male, shop assistants and clerks, a group who had already been identified as ready to hire-purchase bicycles on credit, suffered the greatest shortage of leisure time in which to train, superior athletic performance indicated that one had passed beyond the lowest caste of white collar employment. The letters from the Wanganui drapers' assistant and the Wellington bank clerk suggest that the poor conditions experienced by these men were part of a pattern of keenly-felt class consciousness. They also suggested the existence of a severe internal hierarchy within workplaces, a hierarchy in which rank had its privilege. This pattern of hierarchy and privilege was directly threatened by the prospect of clerks and "counter jumpers" being paid to race bicycles.

Appearance Money

If the bicycle industry recognised the advantages of recruiting and paying talented riders, so too did race promoters seeking to add star appeal to their events. In Europe and the United States, the payment of appearance money was an accepted way for promoters to secure a "crack" or star rider for their race meetings. This appearance money became a crucial component of the successful professional cyclist's income. In 1897, the *Evening Post* reported that:

A professional racing champion's life is nowadays an enviable one, at least from a purely financial point of view. Tom Cooper, who is, perhaps, the speediest sprinter in America, earned during the past season £1336. This was made up as follows:— Winnings, £356; salary, £600; tire retainer, £240; appearance money, £100; and chain retainer, £40. Previously he was a clerk in a merchandise store. Last year the three French cracks, Bourillon, Jacquelin, and Morin, made £3000 each.⁴⁵

There is also a suggestion that for some professionals, appearance money was not only

⁴⁵ *Evening Post*, 17 July 1897, 3.

financially important, but was also vital as a measure of status within the sport.

Paul Bourrillon, the French rider and champion sprinter of the world, can draw more “appearance money” than any other rider in the world. On no account whatever does he mount in a race without previously being guaranteed £80 appearance money. It does not matter how important the race may be or what the prize is. In two or three cases during the past season he has had £100 “appearance money.” Six months ago he refused to enter in a contest, the prize for which was £400, simply because he could not obtain his usual appearance fee, and not withstanding the fact that he could have easily won the event.⁴⁶

Bourrillon’s insistence on appearance money implies that the French star placed considerable value on his own worth as an attraction for audiences. A similar sense of self-worth and, indeed, of self-definition was shown by the trans-Atlantic professional, Ralph Temple, who travelled from England to America to race in the early 1890s.

Ralph Temple, one of the most famous racing men of the day, in a letter to the *English Cyclist* says – ‘The advent of the English Professionals in America this summer will give professionalism the burst it need. The fast Amateurs will be only too glad to race for cash. Amateurs are they? Not by a darned sight, I tell you. I feel above them in a real amateur sense. The Professional gives the people more for their money than the amateur. When a man is an amateur, he receives a social standing in the eyes of the world, even though he be uneducated, uncouth, one of the lower five.’⁴⁷

Temple’s message was clear: the best racers were professionals, and it was the best racers whom audiences paid to see.

In previous chapters it has been shown how the Alliance, the League, major clubs such as the Pioneer Bicycle Club (PBC) and Christchurch Cycle Club (CCC) and Dunedin Cycling Club (DCC) had, together with athletics clubs and the various sports and Caledonian committees, recognised the drawing power of champion riders. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that the League specifically proscribed the payment of appearance money, whether as an up-front fee or as a percentage of the gate, to its own cyclists. Mechanisms did exist according to which visiting “cracks” could receive some reward for their presence at a meeting via “benefits” (special races, the profits of which

⁴⁶ *Otago Witness*, 23 February 1899, 41.

⁴⁷ *New Zealand Referee*, 21 January 1892, 27.

were donated to a nominated rider) or direct gifts. For local riders, however, the most common way of becoming professional cyclists who earned a living directly from racing was to export themselves to Australia or the United States. George Sutherland had done so by racing in Australia, but he also risked the League's ire by demanding appearance money when back in New Zealand.

George Sutherland was a New Zealand-born rider whose racing career started circa 1896 on the West Coast of the South Island.⁴⁸ Over the next decade he dominated New Zealand cycling, won the prestigious Sydney Thousand track race (named for its £1000 prize pool), and raced at the World Championships in France whilst simultaneously facilitating New Zealand's affiliation to the *Union Cycliste Internationale* (UCI). It would be misleading to claim that Sutherland was New Zealand's first cycling star – others had received considerable newspaper coverage before him – but a biographer's assessment that Sutherland's "name on handbills was a draw of the first magnitude" is an indication of his importance as a celebrity bicycle racer at the end of the nineteenth century.⁴⁹

The beginning of the twentieth century found Sutherland across the Tasman, attempting to earn a living from bicycle racing in Australia. He soon decided to return to his homeland to race for the chance to represent New Zealand at the World Championships in Paris.⁵⁰ On 13 April, five thousand spectators paid to watch the test races in Christchurch, which were won by Sutherland over E. "Ted" Reynolds. Reynolds' club, the Auckland Cycling Club, however, showed continuing confidence in their star rider and began a subscription to send both Reynolds and Sutherland to Paris, and itself contributed £5 to the fund.⁵¹ *The New Zealand Wheelman* extended the theme still further by floating the idea that Chalmers, the Wellington representative at the test races, should also go to Paris. Perhaps the problems of the week following the Christchurch test race might have been due, in part, to this parochial favouritism, for the

⁴⁸ B. W. Hempseed, *George Sutherland and "The Suds": Canterbury's Cycling Family*, (Christchurch: Acorn Press, 2008) 11-12.

⁴⁹ Hempseed, *Sutherland*, 12-13.

⁵⁰ *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 24 February 1900, 4.

⁵¹ *Wanganui Herald*, 27 April 1900, 2.

road to the world championships was not a smooth one. Even as the Auckland Cycling Club was raising funds for Reynolds and Sutherland, both men were caught in a web of allegations of cheating and professionalism. There were allegations of “stiff” riding (not exerting full effort at the finish of a race) at a race meeting in Leeston and also that both Reynolds and Sutherland had demanded appearance money. In the case of Sutherland, a letter was produced by the Wellington Centre of the LNZW which showed that he had asked the Wellington Druids’ Sports Committee for appearance money.⁵² In Christchurch, the League Council unanimously voted to suspend Sutherland for the rest of the year, effectively barring him from the Worlds in Paris and curtailing his racing in Australia. Significantly, Sutherland was not present at the meeting, and was unable to defend himself against the allegations.⁵³ The suspension prompted a predictable uproar in the newspapers. In its report on the matter (bannered: “SUSPENSION OF A LEADING CYCLIST, THE MAN WHO WAS TO HAVE GONE TO PARIS”) the Wellington *Evening Post* blandly observed:

He was...chosen as the representative of the colony, but his present disqualification presumably robs him of the trip, and Reynolds will probably now be chosen. Chalmers, the Wellington rider, who also competed for the honour, may now be given a chance of accompanying Reynolds, as it is hoped to raise a sufficient sum to send at least two men.⁵⁴

The CCC and the North Canterbury Centre of the League both protested the legality of the suspension. The CCC, in particular, showed its displeasure and threatened to withdraw its £10 subscription to the Paris fund.⁵⁵ Its “members unanimously protested against the decision of the Council, which they contended had exceeded its jurisdiction in dealing with the case”.⁵⁶ The centres were expected to make their own rulings, with the Council overseeing and adjudicating when necessary. The CCC, therefore, “considered that the Council should first have compelled the Wellington Centre to give

⁵² *Evening Post*, 1 May 1900, 5.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Star*, 1 May 1900, 3.

⁵⁶ *Star*, 2 May 1900, 4.

a decision, and then if necessary should have acted as an Appeal Council”.⁵⁷

If the constitutional legality of the Council’s action was debatable, a more urgent crisis was precipitated by Reynolds falling foul of the same rule as Sutherland. Reynolds and the Canterbury Athletic and Cycling Club (CACC) were jointly charged “on the ground that when the Club had in November last paid Reynolds his boat fare to come from Auckland and represent the North Island in a paced match against Wall, the same rule [proscribing the payment of appearance money] had been broken”.⁵⁸ It was now clear that there was a fine line between payment of expenses and payment of appearance money. The Council was faced with an unenviable decision between backing down on its ruling against Sutherland or barring New Zealand’s two best riders from representing it at the World Championships. Its solution conformed to the established pattern of pragmatism which had governed both League and Alliance over almost two decades:

It was considered that if Sutherland was suspended several other riders and clubs would have to be similarly dealt with, and the result would be a deadlock in the sport. If the Canterbury club were suspended, four or five members of the Council would be prevented from acting. Ultimately the allowing resolution was carried — “That as there has been a general misconception as to the effect of the rules guiding “appearance money” and the payment of expenses, all breaches of these rules up to May 10 be condoned.” Both Sutherland and Reynolds will now go to Paris.

This swift closing of the case raised metaphorical eyebrows amongst the colony’s journalists – “Peculiar Proceedings” and “The Canterbury Cycling Muddle” were two of the more memorable headings highlighting the debacle.⁵⁹ The initial suspension had prompted at least one of the now-predictable editorial diatribes against the undefined evils of professionalism in bicycle racing. The *Southland Times* managed to avoid directly calling Sutherland dishonest – claiming: “It is not to be inferred that Sutherland has been guilty of any dishonesty” – while simultaneously inferring that he had been tainted by his contact with the professional, and thus corrupt, cyclists in Australia:

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Wanganui Herald, 11 May 1900, 2.

⁵⁹ *North Otago Times*, 11 May 1900, 3; *Evening Post*, 11 May 1900, 2.

Sutherland has only recently returned from Australia, where he achieved very distinguished success on the track, and he seems to have been slightly affected by the prevailing atmosphere. It is very probable that some of the Australian champions can command very high prices simply for appearing at cycling meeting, and a rider in the front rank may derive a tempting income from this source. But such a state of things is extremely undesirable, and where it exists other and worse practices are sure to be found.⁶⁰

While the article made a direct, cause and effect, connection between appearance money, professionalism and corruption, it shied from explicit accusations or specific descriptions of the abuses that it contends were inevitable if appearance money were paid. The professional sportsman was, in the eyes of the *Southland Times*, synonymous with dishonesty and the antithesis of respectability, conforming to the lack of respect for professional cyclists that Ralph Temple had complained of. The most serious allegations were that professionals would, out of greed or economic necessity, resort to corruption in order to earn money.

“Bookies”, Cash and Corruption

In his assessment of the decline in popularity of bicycle racing in 1900, “Velox” laid direct blame at the feet of corruption, arguing that “‘Winning by Arrangement’ at the professional meetings has also told its tale (in the decline of bicycle racing), as it did in other places”.⁶¹ Occasionally, professional cyclists would also publicly describe corruption as common and fundamentally detrimental to the sport. When leaving Australasia, the visiting American World Champion, Major Taylor, spoke of the situation he had found in Victoria and New South Wales:

I’ll tell you, that if racing as I have seen is allowed to go on, a couple of years will see the end. Teaming or combining call it what you like, is rampant here. I wonder how many of your riders go out to win. What do they do? Systematically arrange to pull one man and share the prize money. What chance of winning has an honest rider?⁶²

“Winning by arrangement,” sometimes known as “cronk” or “crooked” riding, was the

⁶⁰ *Southland Times*, 4 May 1900, 2.

⁶¹ *New Zealand Cyclist*, 29 January 1898, 28.

⁶² Marshall “Major” Taylor, original source unknown, quoted in Theo van Kalleveen, *Australians and Legends: A Century of Track Cycling*, (Bentleigh, Vic.: Theo Van Kalleveen, 2002), 29.

perennial subject of editorial comment throughout the 1890s, and onwards, into the twentieth century.⁶³ It was often associated with gambling, and the act of betting against oneself before “throwing” a race. But cycling offered a variety of opportunities for cronk riding, the most obvious being making pace for another rider with whom one would share the winnings (this was the nub of Taylor’s complaint). This was most usefully achieved in a handicap, when a strong midfield rider would ride deliberately slowly until caught by the scratch men. He would then “pace” a scratch rider up to the front of the race, putting in a great effort at the expense of his own ability to sprint. The scratch rider would thus reach the front bunch more easily than was envisioned by the handicapper, and would have “fresher legs” for the final sprint. Motivation for this behaviour was provided by a share of the “chop” or “joke”, as the division of first prize between a syndicate of two or more riders became known. Again, betting against oneself or taking payment from a bookmaker provided further incentive to “run dead”. This was the essence of the complaints against a group of riders, including Sutherland, in 1900.

An important question in the cash amateur debate was whether cash prizes would serve to increase or decrease the prevalence of cronk riding. Enthusiasts for cash prizes suggested that if talented cyclists could race for cash, they would not bother with the abuses that were occurring in amateur races.⁶⁴ Critics of cash argued that in any racing system there had to be losers, and that these would be just as tempted to supplement their living by cheating in the cash system as they were when racing as amateurs. Cheating did exist in all classes of racing. Whilst still amateurs, Tom and Jim Busst made themselves unwelcome in Adelaide due to their “suspicious” riding. The professional, Ralph Temple, who so strongly defended his honour in 1892, had been heavily implicated in race fixing in 1888.⁶⁵ Towards the end of the 1890s, hints and allegations of cronk riding were relatively common. In newspaper articles, cronk riding

⁶³ “Cronk”, a derivative of the Yiddish “krank” was commonly used in Australia and New Zealand to mean *sick*, feeble, spurious, inferior, counterfeit or bad. Elizabeth and Harry Orsman, *The New Zealand Dictionary*, second edition (Auckland: New House, 2004), 66.

⁶⁴ *New Zealand Referee*, 29 April 1892, 28.

⁶⁵ *New York Times*, 16 October 1888,

<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=980CE4D61F38E033A25755C1A9669D94699FD7CF>, (accessed, 10 May 2008).

was inexorably tied to gambling and the presence of bookmakers at race meetings. In 1897, the *Hawera & Normanby Star* ran a long and favourable account of the Hawera Cycling Sports, which it deemed “one of the most enjoyable athletic meetings yet held in Hawera.”⁶⁶ The newspaper, nevertheless, noted that a “word of advice might be offered to the Club that the absence of ‘bookies’ would tend to further popularise the sports in the future.”⁶⁷ This small comment was seized upon by the *New Zealand Cyclist*, which had begun to take a crusading tone against bookmakers at race meetings, and this in turn, prompted further comment in the *Hawera & Normanby Star*.

The *New Zealand Cyclist*, referring to our remark that bookmakers were prominent at the Hawera Club’s sports on March 19, says clubs holding race meetings should leave nothing undone in the effort to check the growth of this excrescence, which, when unchecked, usually brings in its train cronk riding, unsportsmanlike action, and many other undesirable things. One might as well attempt to stop the sea from rolling as to expect to suppress betting, for it is in man’s blood to bet; but it can be kept within reasonable bounds.⁶⁸

This qualification of the newspaper’s earlier position illustrates one of the problems when analysing the effect of gambling on bicycle racing. Gambling had become a perceived problem at the end of the nineteenth century, with individual clubs, governing bodies and newspapers all discussing the subject freely. This resulted in the banning of bookmakers from tracks in and around 1900. But the centre of the problem does not appear to have been the gambling itself, which, as the above quote suggests, was accepted as normal facet of male behaviour. Rather it was the “bookies” and particularly their unsubtle behaviour which caused offence. As early as 1888, the presence of bookmakers at an MBC meeting in Melbourne was railed against on both sides of the Tasman. The *Otago Witness* complained that:

One of the unpleasant features of the meeting was the presence of bookmakers, who offered to bet on every event, notwithstanding the prohibitive notice posted in front of the stand. Betting men are daily becoming a greater pest to society, and the nuisance is not likely to be abated until the totalisator is recognised by law. It is to be regretted, however, that the gambling element is being incorporated with sports. If

⁶⁶ *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 20 March 1897, 2.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 7 April 1897, 2.

the book-maker is encouraged to enter the gates of a cricket, football, or bicycle match then it is time for the true lover or patron of these sports to beat a retreat over the fence to avoid contamination. Many sweeps were also organised, but the vast majority of spectators endeavoured to follow more rational methods of enjoying the sports, and looked askance at bookmakers and sweep promoters alike.⁶⁹

The message is clear. Mass consumption of sport by spectators could fall within the realm of rational recreation, but was threatened by the presence of unrestrained gambling promoted by unregulated bookmakers. Were the “bookies” to be replaced by a totalisator, gambling would be regulated and would thus become rational and reputable. The language of the complaint also reveals a perception common in complaints of disreputable behaviour, that is, that its manifestation was a recent phenomenon. Gambling had been an integral feature of the earliest bicycle races in New Zealand, yet the *Otago Witness* implied that it was an innovation, only recently “incorporated with sports” in 1896.

Not all commentators bridled with indignation at the presence of vice at sports meetings, nor were newspapers always consistent in their criticism. In 1895, the *Otago Witness* argued against the presence of bookmakers at the DCCs race meeting.

One other remark remains to be made, and that is that the bookmakers plied their vocation without let or hindrance during the afternoon. If amateurism is to be kept pure it is essential that steps should be taken to prevent open betting at sports gatherings.

Five years later, a report on the OCCs annual race meeting appeared much more sanguine on the subject, displaying the same, somewhat jocular tolerance of gambling, drinking and “bookies” which newspapers had adopted in 1869.

Games of chance were more numerous than usual, and quite a thriving business was done on apparently ruinous terms to the proprietors, who, however, manage to live on their losses and pursue their calling with the same disinterested persistence as other professional philanthropists. A booth at which other than strictly blue ribbon beverages could be obtained was open for the convenience of the public, and, without the assistance of the licensed gambling machine, every facility was offered by means of private enterprise to gratify the desires of those who had

⁶⁹ *Otago Witness*, 10 December 1896, 26.

inward yearnings for the totalisator, and in one or two events the “bookies” must have lost heavily.⁷⁰

Moreover, the paper refused to link any decline in public patronage with the activity of bookmakers, choosing instead to focus upon the effect of external influence in determining audience size.

The attendance was not as good as formerly, the falling off being no doubt due to the number of patriotic sports which the public have been invited to patronise, but about 2000 persons must have been present, and the sports were excellent⁷¹

The “patriotic sports” were flag-waving affairs aimed at raising funds for the Boer War. The war and more particularly the pageantry which surrounded the departure of New Zealand soldiers to it, was an example of the kind of counter-spectacle that competed with track racing for audiences. These events had the marketing advantage of a higher moral purpose, and spectators watching a “patriotic sports” or a parade of departing infantry could do so safe in the knowledge that they were not only enjoying an entertaining spectacle, but were discharging their patriotic duty in the process. The recognition in the *Otago Witness* of the effect of these counter attractions on cycle racing audiences contrasts markedly with the position of “Velox” that the downturn resulted from public and industry disenchantment with “cash professional cycling.”

⁷⁰ *Otago Witness*, 1 February 1900, 45. The reference to “blue ribbon beverages” arises from the temperance movement’s “blue ribbon army”, chapters of which were established in New Zealand towns during the 1880s. Responding to an obvious market opening, a host of entrepreneurs advertised non-alcoholic drinks as “blue ribbon beverage”. In 1897, a damning account of an Imperial Commission report appeared in the *Timaru Herald*:

A “Blue Book” has been issued as the result of the enquiries of the Imperial Commission appointed to investigate the liquor licensing laws of Great Britain. It contains, among other things, some interesting particulars on temperance drinks. According to the evidence of Mr Bannister, of the Inland Revenue branch of the Government laboratory, these drinks have been found to contain a larger proportion of alcohol than some so-called spirits which are sold in the United Kingdom. Ginger beer, which is a favourite teetotallers’ beverage, was found to contain from 5 to 8 per cent of proof spirit. Medical porter, 7 per cent; orangeade, 6 to 8 per cent; botanic beer, dandelion stout and parsnip beer from 8 to 14 per cent of proof spirit. Bicycling tonic, temperance beer and horehound beer all carry a similar percentage of spirit, whilst even a drink specially marked as a blue ribbon beverage, was found to contain not less than 3 per cent. The British Government Analyst goes further and says that the drinks referred to in the report are unwholesome and injurious owing to improper fermentation.

Timaru Herald, 14 June 1897, 3.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Moral panic over bookmaking and corruption did continue, nevertheless, and this concern extended beyond the columns of the daily and weekly newspapers. In 1891, the Auckland Amateur Athletic and Cycling Club (AAA & CC) had enlisted the help of the police to eject bookmakers from its spring meeting.⁷² And in 1897, when the secretary of the Wanganui Cash Cycling Club circulated a letter “to all the Athletic Clubs in the North Island with the view to forming an athletic league,” he did so with the intention that the new organisation’s “primary function...would be to guard against the many objectionable practices that frequently obtain at athletic sports meetings in the form of ‘ringing in’ etc.” The Secretary was in “no doubt that some means should be devised whereby a stop can be put to crooked running at athletic gatherings, or otherwise public interest in them will drop completely in the near future.” This suggests concern over corruption in sport extended beyond the perceived problems with cash cycling.

In 1901, however, it was the antics of bookmakers and racing cyclists which threatened to get out of hand. The League’s Council heard from one of its members how he had “seen racing cyclists and trainers betting with” some of the “33 bookmakers and undesirable characters” that he had counted “in one portion of the grounds” at a recent CCC meeting at Lancaster Park.⁷³ The councillor concluded his report with the commonly expressed opinion that if “this kind of thing were allowed to continue it would kill the sport.”⁷⁴ The driving concern was that if trainers and racers were seen to be betting on races in which they competed, the chance of a fair result was practically nil.

Despite the concern expressed by newspaper reporters and club executives, reports of actual cheating in local bicycle races never reached epidemic proportions. Corruption in cycling was, nevertheless, kept in the front of the public via reports of cheating from Australia and further abroad. As early as 1888, the race fixing scandal that had implicated Ralph Temple and William Rowe in Boston was reported in the

⁷² *Otago Witness*, 26 November 1891, 30.

⁷³ *Otago Witness*, 16 January 1901, 53.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

Otago Witness; by the beginning of the twentieth century, stories of cheating which had been clipped from Australian, English and American newspapers appeared regularly in the local weeklies.⁷⁵ The Austral Wheel Race proved a particularly rich source of stories, as the race became mired in corruption and controversy, but even minor races could provide cause for brief but pithy comments:

Bookmakers were much in evidence at the Walne Benefit meeting, and a writer says that it is somewhat significant that the odds-on men generally won.⁷⁶

There are parallels between this situation and that which existed in England at the end of the French Wars, when elements of the fledgling sporting press used the existence of corruption as an excuse that disguised their inability to cover competitive sport.⁷⁷ In that case, the increased attention on corruption contributed significantly to the creation of an “environment for an increased depreciation of commercial sport,” and the subsequent establishment of the amateur ideal as a method of purification.⁷⁸ If one were to accept that corruption could have a negative effect on a sport’s mass appeal, the willingness with which newspapers printed stories of corruption in cycling, even when most of these stories originated outside of New Zealand, would have contributed to this effect.

Why did the activities of bookmakers, in particular, receive widespread negative attention at the end of the nineteenth century? Without doubt, the activities of the bookmakers themselves did not help the cause of unregulated gambling; by inhabiting the riders’ enclosure and openly accepting bets from riders and trainers, bookmakers created an obvious thorn in the side of race committees seeking to promote demonstrably honest bicycle racing. That committees sought to ban rather than regulate gambling suggests, however, a general aversion to more than just specific cases of “bookies” behaving badly. This aversion is consistent with a desire to redraw the blurred lines which “separated gambling from legitimate financial risk” that has been identified in Britain during the last years of the Victorian era.⁷⁹ David Itzkwitz notes, “Drawing

⁷⁵ *Otago Witness*, 7 December 1888, 27.

⁷⁶ *Otago Witness*, 21 October 1903, 51.

⁷⁷ See, Adrian Harvey, *The Beginnings of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793-1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 31-55.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁷⁹ David C. Itzkwitz, “Fair Enterprise or Extravagant Speculation: Investment, Speculation and

the line between gambling and other forms of financial risk had particular urgency during the Victorian period”.⁸⁰ He also argues, “Speculative trading would only be accepted once it was purged of an association with gambling”.⁸¹ Belich has picked up on this theme, adding, “Gambling became disreputable, speculation became respectable, even to the point where it was transmuted into investment”.⁸² Unregulated gambling was uncontrolled and “irrational”, it was the antithesis of modernity, and posed a threat to sport’s social recreating mission.

Was corruption responsible for the decline in track racing’s popularity? Alternatively, to challenge cash cycling’s critics directly, does cash and corruption “kill” sport? If one is seeking to determine necessary and sufficient condition, the answer must be no. To substantiate this, three examples are cited. Firstly, horse racing in New Zealand, as in England, received regular accusations of corruption. Yet it remained the most popular mass spectator sport in New Zealand during the nineteenth century.

The second example is, perhaps, outlandish but illustrative nevertheless. Professional wrestling, which achieved a large following in the last quarter of the twentieth century, was equal parts vaudeville, morality play and exhibition sport. To wrestling’s many critics, the “heels” and “faces”, set pieces and predetermined outcomes which characterised the spectacle beggared belief. Yet none of this deterred the sports legions of fans, suggesting that the symbolism observed by Crawford in New Zealand rugby, especially the “violence and individual machismo”, was, in the case of “pro” wrestling, more important than the fidelity of the contest itself.⁸³

The third example is closer to professional wrestling than is perhaps noticeable to the casual observer. Since the beginning of the 1990s, professional cycling has been wracked by a number of drug scandals. Adjacent to these, several memoirs have been written by soigners (masseur cum personal assistants to professional cyclists) and by

Gambling in Victorian England,” *Victorian Studies* 45, (2002): 139.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 121.

⁸¹ Ibid., 122.

⁸² James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo Saxon World, 1739-1939*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 204.

⁸³ Crawford, “A History”, 298.

retired racers.⁸⁴ Aside from “doping”, forms of “cheating” endemic in modern professional cycling included “the chop” (divided prize money between nominal competitors) and prearranged race outcomes. Despite the drug scandals and secret negotiations, the Tour de France remained one of the most popular annual spectator events in sports history. Like professional wrestling fans, European cycling fans seem attracted by the pageantry, symbolism and drama of Le Tour, and are prepared to overlook or accept its contradictions.

In addition to this covert activity, professional cycle racing had become a team sport with clearly defined roles for members within each team. Lowly ranked riders with little chance of individual success became *domestiques*, the so-called “water carriers”, who now worked in the service of the team leader rather than “racing to win” themselves. Other positions included lieutenants and “lead-out men”, who blocked the wind and provided optimal positioning for sprinters at the end of a race. Commonly, prize money from an individual’s win was shared amongst an entire squad of *domestiques*, lieutenants and lead-out riders.

Further complicating perceptions of correct sporting behaviour, even if no financial deal was made, nominal competitors would, from necessity, work together to “escape” the *peleton*, doing so in order to raise each individual escapee’s chances of winning.⁸⁵ Behaviours characterised as cheating by nineteenth century journalists and sports administrators had become an integral part of the sport, appreciated rather than reviled by its fans. The following section will further investigate the disjunction between the behaviour of bicycle racers and the expectations of how they should race at the end of the nineteenth century.

⁸⁴ See, for example: Paul Kimmage, *A Rough Ride: An Insight Into Pro Cycling*, 2nd ed., (London: Stanley Paul, 1990); Jonathon Kennett, *Tino Tabak: Dreams and Demons of a New Zealand Cycling Legend*, (Wellington: Kennett Brothers, 2009).

⁸⁵ See Edward Albert, “Constructing the Order of Finish in the Sport of Bicycle Racing,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 23, no. 4 (1990): 145-153; “Riding the Line: Competition and Cooperation in the Sport of Bicycle Racing,” *Sociology of Sport Journal* 8 (1991): 341-361.

Loafing

The problems of “tactics” or “head work” and especially of “loafing” were interrelated with cheating and arose as the result of particular conditions that occur in bicycle races. As a perceived problem, loafing occupied promoters, governing bodies and newspapers throughout the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Promoters and governing bodies constantly searched for methods with which to combat loafing and stimulate “exciting” racing. In part, these methods succeeded, and various modern bicycle races, the pursuit and time trial for example, have developed specifically to neutralise the importance of pacing. Time trialling, in particular, became known as “the race of truth” because of its ability to measure a purely athletic effort. In other cases, including track sprinting, the hugely popular European road races and the “Madisons” (six day races) that remained popular in North America and Europe during the first third of the twentieth century, tactics became an integral and appreciated part of the sport. At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, tactics and loafing were heavily implicated in the public’s waning interest in bicycle racing.

Loafing was the term used to describe the practice of riding below race pace in order to save oneself for the final “spurt,” or sprint for the finish line. The practice arose from the dramatic effect of aerodynamic drag or “wind resistance” on a cyclist’s speed. At 16 km/h the aerodynamic drag of a 75 kg cyclist is 2.62 Newtons, requiring 11.75 Watts of power to maintain a constant velocity.⁸⁶ At 32 km/h, drag increases to 10.51 Newtons, requiring 94.01 Watts. At 48 km/h, drag increases to 23.65 Newtons, requiring 317.29 Watts. At 72 km/h, the speed often reached in the final sprint of a bicycle race, aerodynamic drag reaches 53.23 Newtons, requiring 1070.87 Watts of power from the cyclist, or over 91 times that required to maintain a steady, 16 km/h pace. The simplest way of reducing aerodynamic drag is to ride behind something, a vehicle or another cyclist. Riding behind, another cyclist (“drafting” or being paced) gives the paced rider a significant aerodynamic advantage over the pacer. In the very early velocipede races,

⁸⁶ All calculations were made using a calculator sourced from a science education website: “Aerodynamics,” The Exploratorium's Science of Cycling, <http://www.exploratorium.edu/cycling/aerodynamics1.html> (accessed May 19, 2008).

this advantage was minimal, but once improvements in racing surfaces and in bicycles themselves allowed speeds to climb above 16 km/h, aerodynamic drag and drafting became a significant factor in the outcome of bicycle races. It became difficult to win a scratch race of only a mile between evenly matched and experienced riders by simply riding to the front and trying to outdistance the opposition. Recognising this, riders would “loaf” as they attempted to force each other to take the lead or “make pace”. Moreover, as outlined in the previous section, in the handicap racing which was so popular in Australasia a midfield rider might also loaf in order to wait for scratch and, in reward for making pace, receive a share of the chop. This was the core of the accusation of “stiff” riding made against George Southerland at the Leeston meeting (see page 208).

Newspaper reporters were often critical of head work, tactics and loafing. This criticism is unsurprising, as the practice appeared to defy the tradition of “pluck” that was intrinsic to the amateur ethos. Those who eschewed tactics and relied on sheer physical superiority to win races were warmly endorsed for their racing style. In 1892, the *New Zealand Referee* celebrated the return of New South Welsh amateur, “Wally” Kerr to race at the PBC’s upcoming race meeting, noting that that the Sydney Bicycle Club rider’s “pluck, determination and racing abilities, generally, made such a favourable impression on New Zealanders last season”.⁸⁷

As with gambling and cheating, stories of loafing in overseas races would be reprinted in local newspapers. An early example, taken from the United States, highlights a method used by race promoters to discourage slow racing. In an 1889 race meeting in East Hartford, Connecticut, a time limit of 3 minutes 14 seconds was placed on the first-class mile race.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, not only did the race winner’s time of 3 minutes 47 seconds fall outside this limit, it was 15 seconds slower than the winning time for the novice’s mile.⁸⁹ In this case, the “loafers” refused the referee’s order to re-run the race, but regardless of this minor revolt, time limits would become an accepted,

⁸⁷ *New Zealand Referee*, 22 December 1892, 29.

⁸⁸ *Otago Witness*, 17 October 1889, 27.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

if not always-successful antidote to loafing.⁹⁰ Another innovation which débuted in the United States and which became incorporated into both track and road racing culture was the offer of *primes* or prizes for the leader of each lap.⁹¹ It was intended that this would spur the cyclists into trying hard to be at the front throughout the race.

Despite these innovations, loafing remained a prominent feature of the scratch mile and kilometre races, where it was raised to an art form, with riders often balancing on the spot, attempting to force each other to take the lead.⁹² At the 1897 International Mile Championship held in Glasgow, 30,000 spectators “howled their disapproval” at the loafing which dominated each heat of the scratch mile.⁹³ In Australasia, bicycle racers would try to reserve their strength for the final sprint but they had not raised the tactic of loafing to the art form that it resembled in Europe. When he raced in Paris in 1900, Sutherland found that he was out of his depth in the shorter scratch races, and that he lacked the tactical skill to compete equally with French riders. He noted:

The style of cycle racing on the Continent is so utterly different from anything which I have seen in the colonies that I was at a hopeless disadvantage from the first. You see, in New Zealand and Australia, when we start in a race we go for all we are worth from the very first. But that is not so at all in France. There they have so many clever tricks and dodges that one is continually being put in a hole for want of practice in their ways. The competitors only really race over the last two hundred yards or so of a course. Previous to that they just wait on one another, watching for any chance of securing a passing advantage and carefully studying their rivals' weak points, and then, all of a sudden, they make a tremendous spurt and come in ahead before the stranger is aware what is happening. And you cannot alter your style to theirs all of a sudden; this requires long practice and training, and you need to be very quick and alert to detect what is being done by your opponent.⁹⁴

Although Sutherland found that the European tactics gave “a stranger no chance at all against them”, he was at pains to point out that the racing remained honest.

⁹⁰ In 1900, for example, the referee at the LNZZ championships imposed time limits after detecting “loafing tactics” on the first day of racing. *Otago Witness*, 8 February 1900, 46.

⁹¹ *Otago Witness*, 9 November 1904, 55.

⁹² The practice became so ingrained, that balancing a bicycle on one spot became known as a “track stand”.

⁹³ *Otago Witness*, 7 October 1897, 37. A scratch race was one where the riders all start on an even footing, with no handicaps awarded.

⁹⁴ *Otago Witness*, 7 November 1900, 51.

Only you must not think that I wish to imply anything underhand on their part. Not at all. There was nothing unfair about it, only their way is quite different from ours, and it is a very cunning and clever way too. Apart from that, all the Continental men are very fast indeed, and wonderfully smart.⁹⁵

Finally, Sutherland provided a small qualification to salvage Anglo pride, claiming: “Probably if a race were run all the way at full speed the English or colonial competitor might sometimes win, but not under the present system.”⁹⁶

Different styles of racing were thus tied to national identity. In France, where cycling had reached the status of a national sport by the early-twentieth century, tactics had become an integral part of bicycle racing, appreciated by legions of dedicated cycling fans. Across the Channel, it was thought that “the British temperament” would “never allow that state to be reached.”⁹⁷ English newspapers declared that the French style of sprinting was “not sport at all,” and while the more informed cycling columnists understood why the riders themselves appreciated “the real necessity of loafing” they still fretted that it would be “the nail in the coffin of cycle racing” and proposed various schemes to ensure its eradication.⁹⁸ In New Zealand, journalists usually followed the British lead in dismissing loafing as effete or corrupt. There was, nevertheless, room for debate. In Christchurch, “Rover”, who wrote the “Wheel Talk” column for the *Star*, hankered to see some European style sprinting.

When will our clubs have the courage to tackle the style of racing which has developed the world's best sprinters and takes the eye of the public in France and America more than anything else? I refer to the short-distance sprint scratch races, of about half a mile, in which only two or three riders compete at a time. Tactics then play as important a part as speed, and are wonderfully interesting to watch.⁹⁹

Generally, however, the cosmopolitan appreciation of sprinting was drowned in a sea of ethnocentric condemnation.

⁹⁵ *Otago Witness*, 7 November 1900, 51.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Otago Witness*, 20 March 1907, 59.

⁹⁸ *Otago Witness*, 9 November 1904, 55.

⁹⁹ *Star*, 10 January 1903, 6.

Even more than in the case of cheating, the press is implicated in the link between loafing and cycling's loss of popularity with the public. In cases when spectators jeered loafing, their expectations of what constituted a bicycle race no longer matched the riders' knowledge of how to win a race. While conceding the necessity of loafing to win, even knowledgeable cycling columnists saw the practice as un-British, a synonym for unsportsmanlike and breaking the conventions of fair play. Cycle racing, they insisted, needed modification to eliminate loafing. Yet, as Sutherland's observations in Paris indicated, the accusation that loafing somehow contravened notions of fair play is questionable.

The root of the problem lay in the difficulty of winning a scratch bicycle race from the front, making it unsuitable for measuring the overtly simple, easily discernable skill of who could cover a set distance in the shortest possible time. Because of aerodynamic resistance, the job of identifying the fastest cyclist over a measured distance is more easily fulfilled by the pursuit or the solo time trial, each of which is arguably less spectacular than a race which put several riders on the track at once. The riders, whose goal was to win the race rather than cover the distance in the shortest time, thus transformed the short-distance scratch race into a contest which measured a more complex set of skills. As has been demonstrated by the century old tradition of the sprint (which grew out of the mile and kilometre scratch races), winning a "loafing race" involves considerable experience, nerve, skill and physical talent. It has since developed as a premier event at Cycling World Championships and the Olympic Games, with powerfully built sprinters contesting highly physical, exciting, races.¹⁰⁰

Unable or unwilling to identify these skills, the spectating public in New Zealand voiced their dissatisfaction with the racers' deviation from expected behaviour, that is, leading a race from the front to win. By siding with the public and recommending amending the rules of the mile race to avoid loafing, the sporting press was not defending fair play, but was instead advocating altering the rules of the race in order to satisfy public taste. It is pertinent to point out that the earliest amateur cycling

¹⁰⁰ Even the half-mile (approximately 800 metres) distance referred to by "Rover" was quickly reduced to 200 metres, further heightening the explosive nature of track sprinting.

meetings featured competitions that tested a range of skills, including slow races, where the last cyclist across the line won. These events disappeared in favour of faster, more spectacular races that satisfied public demand for spectacle. Alterations to rules to limit loafing followed this pattern of altering events not to make the races fairer, but to provide ever-greater spectacle for the spectating public.

Pacing

Pacing was a way of both combating loafing and providing spectacle for the paying public. At the same Glasgow International Championships where loafing so disgusted the spectators, the paced events had the exact opposite effect:

The most important, and certainly the most popular, race during the meeting was the one which decided the long-distance championship of the world. The distance was 100 kilometres (62 miles), and the three competitors who came to the scratch – Chase, Stocks, and Armstrong – were all well known Englishmen. This was a real race; and although it lasted for two hours and 10 minutes, the interest never flagged for a moment. Each of the competitors was led by a team of pacers, and when all the pacers were whirling their men along at the rate of one mile in two minutes, the scene on the track was exceedingly picturesque and exciting.¹⁰¹

Aside from the jingoistic pleasure expressed over the presence of English stars in the race (the mile professional and amateur races had been won by a German and a Dane respectively), the above quote is notable for its characterisation of motor pacing (by 1907 the pacing multicycles had been replaced by equally ungainly pacing motorcycles) as a “real race.” Pacers and stayers circling an oval track at 48 km/h were “picturesque and exciting” whereas “the shuffling, wobbling, snail-pacing business” of the mile race was not.¹⁰² Not all commentators were so enthusiastic for pacing. In July, 1899, by which time pacing had been well established in New Zealand, “Velox” reprinted a passage from an unacknowledged English source that cast a wide and caustic net in its critique of the state of English *professional* cycle racing.

Each year therefore, requires the exploiters of professional racing to find

¹⁰¹ *Otago Witness*, 7 October 1897, 37.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

some novelty that will draw the crowds.

This year it is motor-pacing. It is a matter of opinion how far it can be called genuine riding when a man is sucked along in the vacuum created by a machine driven by mechanical power. There can be no two opinions, however, as to its extreme danger, and it is probably this that will attract the public.¹⁰³

While one feels some sympathy for race promoters who, it seemed, could never completely appease their critics in the press, the anonymous detractor of English professional cycling does provide another piece in the puzzle of why cycle racing collapsed at the beginning of the twentieth century. Administrators and promoters of both professional and amateur track racing had instinctively relied on spectacle as their prime means of drawing spectators to their events. This concentration on providing spectacle – which was as evident in the importation by the amateur PBC of the English professional, Fred Wood, in 1887, as it was in the high-speed heroics of doughty stayers chasing motorised pacers in 1907 – came at the expense of more sustainable methods of maintaining cycle racing’s popularity.

Spectacle versus Partisanship

In contrast to the descendents of village football which achieved global popularity during the course of the twentieth century, bicycle racing in New Zealand failed to develop partisanship (support by loyal fans) as a means of attaining mass appeal, relying instead on spectacle and star appeal to attract audiences of spectators. This is not to argue that individual cyclists did not gain loyal following of fans, or that partisan behaviour patterns did not apply to cycling’s spectators. Partisan support of regional champions by their clubs and League Centres was probably responsible, at least in part, for the debacle surrounding Sutherland’s temporary ban in 1900. Yet, public affection and loyalty towards stars such as “Plugger Bill” Martin, “Teddy” Reynolds and George Sutherland are distinct from partisan support accorded local or national sports teams. Martin was usually identified as an American cyclist and was the epitome of the peripatetic athlete (even after the end of his racing career Martin never truly settled

¹⁰³ *New Zealand Referee*, 5 July 1899, 34.

down, living in various locations in Australasia until his death in 1944). Adulation for him and his fellow stars seems to have been separated from patriotism, nationalism or local loyalties. When such international cyclists visited New Zealand, local loyalty was often expressed in a roundabout manner, via reprinted reports from Australian or English newspapers in which returning champions spoke in complimentary, if sometimes condescending, terms of the competition they met on their travels. They were brought over in order to test local cyclists against the best, but also to allow the (paying) public a chance to see the fastest and most spectacular racers available. Rather than exhibiting jingoistic pride over the defeat of a foreign rider, newspapers often expressed genuine remorse when an imported star failed to win – as was often the case in the 1880s and early 1890s when long sea voyages impacted heavily on athletic form. This spirit of internationalism might be explained as the result of British identity being stronger than colonial identity and that even in the case of Americans like Martin, Celtic ethnicity contributed to the bond between cyclist and audience. Busst, Wood Fenlon and Martin were not foreign, they were English, British or Celtic, and thus shared an ethnic identity with colonial New Zealanders.

In other cases, acceptance of imported stars is less easily explicable in terms of national or ethnic identity. Newspapers on both sides of the Tasman described Porta and Boidi, two Italian cyclists who raced extensively in Australia in the 1890s and 1900s, in complimentary terms. They were both complimented for a straightforward racing style and lack of guile. It was argued that “Boidi, the little Italian...might have made a big name in Australia, had he trained and looked after himself as carefully as Bilmartin [*sic*] does”. Porta’s relative lack of wins was even more explicitly attributed to his willingness to “do all the ‘donkey work’” in a race, thus letting Australian riders spurt past him for the win.¹⁰⁴ Rather than taking the opportunity to analyze the Italians’ lack of success in racial terms, the sporting press identified in them the qualities that one might expect to be reserved for “plucky” British amateurs: a sporadic attitude towards training and a lead-from-the-front racing style. These passages provides a refreshing alternative to the racial, jingoistic and, at best, ethnocentric tendencies of *fin de siècle*

¹⁰⁴*New Zealand Cyclist*, 3 April 1897, 3; *New Zealand Referee*, 9 May 1896, 32.

newspapers.¹⁰⁵ The possibility emerges that a significant portion of sports enthusiasts were interpreting sporting results in other than racial terms, thus providing evidence that racial and ethnic identity was perhaps more complex in New Zealand sport during this crucial, growth era, than is sometimes portrayed.

Unfortunately for cycling, however, spectacle and star appeal, while admirably cosmopolitan, proved ultimately less durable as a source of guaranteed gate sales than did partisanship on a local, national or regional level. Moreover, the concentration on spectacle combined with the failure to divorce the sport from allegations of cheating and corruption to hinder the development of a partisan audience. Cycle racing grew through the staging of large meetings, not regular, club level competition. The Alliance, the League and their affiliated clubs did send representatives to race meetings in other cities or even countries, but they did not organize the kind of weekly, inter-club competition that had become the staple of team sports such as rugby and cricket. But some historians argue that it was more than regularity which boosted Rugby Union in New Zealand. In offering evidence to support a “rugby-as-ritual” premise to explain the stature of New Zealand’s “national game”, Scott Crawford has argued:

What made political and social appeals on the analogy of rugby so instinctively appropriate to those who voiced them was the material fact that the organisation of rugby itself... replicated the sort of regional and occupational class structure in which they believed they existed.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ For the purpose of this thesis, race and ethnicity are distinguished by mutability. Racial characteristics were thought to be physical, inherent and immutable, while ethnic characteristics were thought to be nurtured as much as nature, with persons of the same ethnicity sharing culture and lifestyle. Thus, a racist believed in the absolute and immutable physical, intellectual and cultural superiority of one racially distinguishable group over another, whereas an ethnocentrist believed in the cultural and social superiority of one group over another. In the case of the latter, the superior ethnic group is able to expand by proselytising its culture and lifestyle. In the case of the former, expansion can only be achieved by procreation within the superior racial group – racial traits cannot be taught. Hard-line racist dogma also insists that “miscegenation” (inter-racial procreation) results in an offspring that is racially inferior to either parent. Expansion of one race must, therefore, occur at the expense of another.

¹⁰⁶ Scott A. G. M. Crawford, “A History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Colonial Otago,” (P.h.D. thesis, University of Queensland, 1984), 298.

Figure 6.6: Advertisement, *Star*, 11 June 1892, 4.

KENT'S JUBILEE BICYCLES.



PIONEER CYCLE AND ENGINEERING WORKS.

OUR Machines have proved themselves the fastest for Racing or Road Riding.
Ridden by J. A. Pithor, the fastest road rider in New Zealand, having beaten all previous records, Lowering the 50-Mile Record to 2hrs 59½min.
Also, by many of the Best Riders in New Zealand.
We are now taking orders for next racing season.
Our Jubilee Safeties are built with Dunlop, Clincher or Boothroyd Pneumatic Tyres, geared to any size, and built to any weight required.
Special attention to repairs, which we execute with promptness and precision.
Everything appertaining to the cycle trade kept in stock. The trade supplied. Prices on application.
Special to Boot Factories, Clothing Factories, &c.
—All kinds of Machinery Repaired and Improved (if necessary).
R. KENT & CO.,
K310 Bedford Row (Next Cuff and Graham's).

While recent scholarship has sharply questioned the “rugby as nation” historiography under which Crawford’s thesis might be categorised, his argument that the structure of rugby as a sport represented and celebrated perceived social, occupational, ethnic or gender-based realities for colonial New Zealanders remains persuasive. Certainly, a case for exceptionalism cannot be made. If the various football codes are taken as a collective whole, the pattern of team success or failure becoming co-opted by loyal supporters is readily observed. By comparison, the relationship between audience and bicycle racer was complicated by a second relationship between the bicycle maker and the bicycle manufacturer. Advertising of bicycles and their component parts via racing success was an integral feature of nineteenth century bicycle racing (see *Figure 6.6*).

Open sponsorship and paid play does not preclude the production of a loyal fan base, as professional football codes and modern European professional cycling have demonstrated. But in both these cases, the symbolism which allowed for explicit identification of fans with athletes or teams of players was consciously constructed by

the sports' promoters.¹⁰⁷ In the case of nineteenth century track racing, the cycling clubs failed to construct bicycle racing as an effective symbol for social, economic, occupational or geographic loyalties. The dominant media construction remained the image of the bicycle "crack" as a representative of commercial products: bicycles, tyres, chains, and health tonics.

On a very practical level, it was difficult to foster cycling as a "grass roots" sport. The construction of a loyal, participating, juvenile fan base was an integral part of rugby's success in New Zealand. The New Zealand Rugby Football Union had recognised the value of fostering its game in schools, and as games played within defined fields conducive to multiple uses, football codes were ideal school sports. Cycling, by contrast, relied on the ownership of an expensive bicycle, construction of a special track or, conversely, racing in open roads, none of which recommended it to schoolmasters or boards of governors.

The reliance on spectacle to draw audiences left the bicycle racing wide open to competition from other sporting and non-sporting public events. The contrast between journalists' derision for loafing and their appreciation of "exceedingly picturesque" motor pacing is symptomatic of the inability of cycling's promoters to engage their audience on a deeper level. An audience drawn by picturesque racing might be easily distracted by picturesque soldiers parading, a picturesque circus or a picturesque International Exhibition.

Coda: Bicycle Racing in the Twentieth Century

While track racing declined in popularity in the first decade of the twentieth century, private enterprise worked to revive bicycle racing on the road. In 1898, The Dunlop Tyre Company ran the 50-mile Dunlop Road Race from Riccarton to Leeston return. In 1901 the same company sponsored the 165-mile Warrnambool-Melbourne, which soon served as the Australasian road championships. 100-mile Dunlop Road Races were held

¹⁰⁷ For a detailed exploration of the cultural construction of the Tour de France, initially by its founding director, Henri Desgrange, see Christopher S. Thompson, *The Tour De France: A Cultural History*, (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2006).

in each Australian state and on the North and South Islands of New Zealand, feeding into the blue riband event in Victoria. Beneath these races were purely local road events, run by local bicycle clubs and sponsored by Dunlop in conjunction with other commercial supporters.

In 1915, the hardships imposed by the Great War effectively stopped adult sport in New Zealand.¹⁰⁸ Cycling made a comeback in the 1920s, first on the road and then the track. In 1924 a cycling track was opened at English Park Stadium, located in the inner-city Christchurch suburb of St Albans. The track soon thrived under the able management of George Sutherland. American, Australian, British and New Zealand stars drew crowds of up to 10,000 people to English Park. In 1956, the year of the Melbourne Olympics and the Springbok tour of New Zealand, a record audience of 20,000 crowded into the Park to see Reg Harris, world sprint champion and one of Britain's best paid and most high-profile sports stars of the post-war era.

Although stars such as Harris and Australia's hugely popular Hubert Opperman had continued to visit New Zealand, a distinct localisation can be detected in cycling reportage after the First World War. The specialist cycling press had long gone, and the cycling sections of newspapers were replaced by straight reports of local bicycle races. The breathless reports of the latest cycling innovations in London, Paris or New York were a thing of the past. Cycle racing's status had diminished since the heady days when the League of New Zealand Wheelmen claimed to be the largest sports body in New Zealand. In 1974, local council politics and the financial costs of the Christchurch Commonwealth Games saw English Park converted to a football stadium. Track cycling shifted to Denton Park, a blustery concrete oval located in an unfashionable outer suburb of Christchurch. Just as when the Lancaster Park track was destroyed by the Rugby Union's refurbishment of the Park in 1909, track cycling lacked the profile or the financial and political muscle to resist marginalisation.

¹⁰⁸ There was a decline in sports articles in New Zealand's Newspapers throughout 1913 and 1914; after 1 January 1916, sports news all but disappeared from the pages of the dominion's newspapers.

Conclusion

There is sufficient evidence to show that the decline of track racing between 1900 and 1910 was both real and near total. With hindsight, the contemporary charges that professionalism, commercialisation, corruption and loafing were responsible for the downturn are all credible. They do not, however, tell the whole story of the sport's decline. Many of the stories of corruption appearing in New Zealand's daily and weekly newspapers and cycling magazines were not local, but were instead clippings from imported periodicals. The collective press' willingness to tell stories of corruption in cycling, whether these stories were relevant to local racing or not, is likely to have had a negative effect on the sport's popularity.

The fact that mentions of "cycling club" in the surveyed newspapers peaked before mentions of "wheel race" points to a systemic problem in club cycling. Cycling clubs and governing bodies, both amateur and cash, followed the precedent set by the PBC in the 1880s and concentrated on large race meetings, imported stars and spectacle to grow cycling as a sport rather than concentrating on weekly race meetings and regular, interclub competition. By doing so, they failed to capitalise on partisanship as a motivation for spectatorship and left track racing vulnerable to competition from other public spectacles. The negative effect of cheating and loafing on audiences were symptoms of the problem rather than its causes.

Chapter 7 – CONCLUSION

*Ordinary people constructed social categories – rank, race and gender – in sporting performances and in physical culture more generally*¹⁰⁹

Cash Amateurism and New Zealand Historiography

If one were pressed to identify a flaw in the relationship between New Zealand's historiography and sport, it would likely be one of oversimplification, as exemplified by Keith Sinclair's magnificently brief index entry, "Sport: *see* Rugby Union".¹¹⁰ But even when a more considered approach to the relationship between sport and society is taken, it is all too easy to fall prey to the views and opinions of professional witnesses when trying to "make sense" of the past. Individual opinions are accepted as axiomatic or widely held, and contradictory data is overlooked or ignored.

The social composition of the founders of cash amateurism in New Zealand serves as a warning for historians seeking to better understand the social and cultural mores of late nineteenth century society. As researchers, we are often at the mercy of professional witnesses – the journalists, editors, letter writers, politicians, committeemen and pundits who have left their thoughts and ideological beliefs on countless pages of books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets and minutes. We run the risk of exaggerating the popularity of these beliefs, of universalising them and conflating them with class behaviours. In the case of bicycle racing, editorial tirades against professionals, trade, bookmakers, cash amateurs and makers' riders might be juxtaposed with such inconveniences as the social respectability of cash amateurism's administrators, the enthusiastic attendance of the political élite at cash amateur bicycle races on both sides of the Tasman, and, in the 1880s, the Pioneer Bicycle Club's willingness to welcome international professionals such as Fred Wood to its meetings. Balancing ideologically driven observation with empirical data thus produces a more complex palette of middle class respectability than that which is visible when ideology alone is used as an historical lens.

¹⁰⁹ Nancy L. Struna, "Social History and Sport," in *Handbook of Sports Studies*, Jay Coakley and Eric Dunning, ed., (London: Sage, 2002), 192.

¹¹⁰ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, revised ed., (Pelican: Auckland, 1988), 358.

The problem is exacerbated by a limitation of sources. On one hand, cycling's modernity and spectacle made it a popular newspaper topic in the last decades of the nineteenth century. With the onset of the bicycle boom, this source expanded still further; "Wheeling" columns grew into multi-page sections and stand-alone publications. Even before the era of digital archives and electronic search engines, print media constituted the most complete and commonly consulted primary source of data on cycling in nineteenth century New Zealand. By contrast, unpublished journals, club minutes, photographs and similar primary sources are fragmentary, scattered or nonexistent. This leaves sports historians vulnerable to Douglas Booth's charge of "uncritically accept[ing] newspaper sources as credible evidence."¹¹¹

In this thesis, an attempt has been made to resolve this dilemma. The main source of primary evidence remains New Zealand's newspapers and specialist cycling periodicals, supplemented (sometimes crucially) by the *New Zealand Cyclopedia*. The value of search engines such as "Papers Past" and the New Zealand Electronic Text Centre (NZETC) in sourcing, collecting, analysing and understanding this evidence is openly acknowledged. The challenge has been to treat these sources critically; to acknowledge that newspaper reportage of a sporting event was, in fact, sports history in its own rights before it became historical evidence.¹¹² The conclusions drawn by treating newspaper sources critically indicate that late-nineteenth century society was more nuanced than is sometimes allowed in New Zealand's historiography. This is equally true on an intra- and inter-class level. Treating social classes as homogenous units risks turning history into a crude caricature of past societies.

Cash, Sport and Society in Nineteenth Century New Zealand

With due attention paid to Caroline Daley's request for New Zealand to be "decentred" from its own social history, can any observations on the nature of late-nineteenth century New Zealand society be drawn from the early history of its bicycle racers? By

¹¹¹ Douglas Booth, "Searching for the Past: Sport Historiography in New Zealand," *Sporting Traditions* 21, no. 2 (May 2005): 8.

¹¹² Nancy L. Struna, "Social History and Sport," in *Handbook of Sports Studies*, Jay Coakley and Eric Dunning, eds., (London: Sage, 2002), 187-203.

interrogating these sources rather than uncritically accepting them, a number of conclusions which challenge common perceptions have been drawn.

Between 1869 and 1910, developments in bicycle racing in New Zealand reflected, to a remarkable degree, technological and social innovations in Britain, Australia, North America and Europe. From velocipede mania to the bicycle boom and the sudden decline in track racing at the beginning of the twentieth century, the history of New Zealand bicycle racing conformed to international rather than national trends. Even when the League of New Zealand Wheelmen could legitimately claim to be the largest and healthiest sporting organisation in New Zealand, cycling was not the dominion's "national sport". Rather, it was an international sport, rooted in an enthusiastic public passion for speed, spectacle, modernity, progress and capital investment. New Zealanders, like Britons, Australians, Americans, Canadians, Germans, the French and numerous other nationalities, became temporarily enamoured with the bicycle. Stars travelled to New Zealand's isolated shores to race, while professional bicycle racers from New Zealand could be found as far-afield as the Salt Lake City Velodrome. Certainly, this phenomenon supports Daley's call for "a re-examination of New Zealand history outside of a cultural nationalist framework".¹¹³

To argue for the existence of inter-cultural and intra-cultural trends is not, however, to deny the existence of local innovation or change. Rational recreation, amateurism, modernity, Darwinism, capitalism and progress were, like velocipede mania and the bicycle boom, ideas that travelled across oceans and between nations. It is in the strategies used to resolve the inevitable crises of conflicting ideologies, however, that characterise the similarities and distinctions between nations. In Australia and New Zealand, cash amateurism developed as an attempt to resolve the internal conflict between amateurism and athleticism as an expression of human progress. As such, it was distinctive rather than unique.

¹¹³ See, Caroline Daley, "Women Endurance Swimmers: Dissolving Grease Suits and Decentering New Zealand History," *Sporting Traditions* 21, no. 2 (May, 2005): 29-55.

Discovering the Cash Amateur

There is something inherently intriguing about the notion of the cash amateur bicycle racer. Based on the bulk of amateurist writing, it seems oxymoronic that someone should wish to be called an amateur whilst racing for cash prizes. Yet, by deciding that acceptance of a cash prize did not automatically make one a professional, cash amateur bicycle racers anticipated late-twentieth century trends in sports administration by almost a hundred years. The aim of this thesis has been to determine who cash amateurs were, and to understand what motivated them to call themselves amateurs whilst breaking the rule which apparently lay at the heart of amateurist ideology.

Biographic evidence shows that the founders of cash amateur bicycle racing in New Zealand were young, white-collar and male. They were newspaper editors, secondary school teachers, lawyers, and commercial agents. They were educated at least to secondary level, and many had attended schools modelled on England's public schools. The founders of cash amateurism were thus socially indistinguishable from the founders of amateur sports clubs. Moreover, many actually sat on the committees of those amateur clubs. Newspaper editor W. G. Attack was perhaps the most spectacular example of this, but he was by no means alone. Cash amateurism did not, therefore, represent a storming of the barricade of middle-class sporting values by a vanguard of working-class bicycle racers.

This finding sheds important light on the behaviour of nineteenth century New Zealanders at play, and suggests that the ideology of "pure" amateurism (a gentleman "does not earn anything by his victories except glory and satisfaction...a gentleman never competes for money, directly or indirectly"), while vigorously supported in newspapers, magazines and other print media, was not universally adhered to by members of New Zealand's middle class.¹¹⁴ In their endorsement of cash prizes, the founders of the Cash Amateur Bicycle Club followed in the traditions of promoters and supporters of holiday sports meetings who had consistently claimed a rational recreation mandate for their activities whilst using a semi-commercial model, including the

¹¹⁴ W. C. Camp, *Walter Camp's Book of College Sports*, (New York: The Century Co., 1883)2-3.

provision of cash prizes, to finance and promote them.

The finding that some members of New Zealand's middle-classes and socio-political élite were not adverse to cash prizes in sport is not totally unexpected; it conforms to both contemporary observation and recent scholarship on the nature of nineteenth century New Zealand society.¹¹⁵ The argument for New Zealand exceptionalism in the case of cash amateurism is, however, tempered by the knowledge that the innovation was pioneered in Melbourne and is thus identifiable as a regional rather than purely local innovation. Furthermore, the timing of the introduction of cash amateurism (1890 in Melbourne, 1892 in Christchurch) coincides with international trends in sport in general and cycling in particular. Like the cash amateur, the makers' amateur in British and American bicycle racing, together with the rapid professionalizing of such sports as rugby league, English football and American baseball point to a crisis within the ideology of amateurism.

As indicated above, social class cannot be used to explain the introduction of cash prizes to bicycle racing. In this thesis, it has been argued that the crisis which led to the innovation of cash amateurism was prompted by the contradiction within amateurism between the idea of playing sport for the "pure" love of it and the concept of athletic record, which demanded time, money and specialisation. The crisis arose because of the importance of the term "amateur" to British identity, an importance which was as keenly felt in New Zealand as it was in England.

¹¹⁵ See, for example, Jim McAloon, *No Idle Rich: The Wealthy in Canterbury and Otago, 1840-1914*, (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2002)

The Importance of Being Amateur

The ideology of amateurism had been imported into New Zealand in part by newspaper journalists and editors who kept busy with the clipping scissors as well as the pen. It fit into the wider belief in the value of sport as an English expression of rational recreation. During the 1860s and 1870s, rowing regattas, cricket matches and rural or Caledonian sports meetings were increasingly held on New Zealand's public holidays. These events were supported by newspapers, clergy and politicians who identified them as antidotes to the "foreign" vices of drinking and prostitution. Sport was identified by its supporters as a British and, more particularly, an English activity. Sports meetings were, therefore, actively promoted as a way of maintaining and reproducing cultural bonds with the centre of the Empire.

Although debate over amateurism versus professionalism did occasionally flare in New Zealand's newspapers in this period (usually in relation to rowing regattas), the large holiday sports meetings and Caledonian gatherings existed almost completely independently of this debate. The terms "amateur" and "professional" were still somewhat loosely defined, although a common understanding was that a professional runner, boxer or bicycle rider competed for stakes and a share of the "gate" at a prearranged meeting with another professional. Crucially, these athletes defined themselves as professional

Geoffrey Vincent has argued that attempts to establish amateur sport in Christchurch in the 1870s were not an attempt to gain control over sport in the city, but were rather designed to provide a socially separate sporting environment by and for young white-collar men. The socially exclusive "clubability" of this group may well have been the driving force behind the 1879 establishment of the first bicycle club in New Zealand, which, from the outset, had written amateur clauses into its rulebook. The rapid establishment of the New Zealand Cyclists' Alliance by members of the Pioneer Bicycle Club suggests, however, the existence of a certain desire for hegemony over bicycle racing. Expression of this desire can be seen in the sanctioning of bicycle races at Caledonian gatherings and holiday sports meetings by the Alliance. In doing so, it

sought to control the conditions and rules of bicycle racing throughout New Zealand. This desire for control had a direct effect on the definition of what constituted “professional” behaviour. In short, anyone who competed in an open bicycle race, that is, one not sanctioned by the Alliance, “lost” his amateur status and was, ergo, a professional. Although couched in economic and sometimes classist terms, the differentiation between amateur and professional was now bureaucratic.

The establishment of nominal control over bicycle racing in New Zealand by young, Pakeha, white collar, men was a manifestation of their desire to follow the moral lead of amateurs in England. Although the disreputability of professional, or more correctly, non-amateur sport was referred to euphemistically, the “dangers” of non regulated sport might be summarised as cheating, specialisation, excessive participation (at the expense of more productive activity), greed, commercial taint and the mixing of social classes. These arguments were disseminated by the New Zealand press which regularly clipped editorial comment from English publications and which had appointed for itself a role of moral guardianship and guidance in the colony. Middle-class English social and cultural mores were thus transferred to New Zealand not only by migration, but also by a press which sought to be middle class and respectable, and which placed value on the moral innovations of English amateur sport.

As an ideology, amateurism was both out of step with, and ultimately necessary to, the industrial capitalism which characterised the nineteenth century expansion of the British Empire. It provided a secular partner to proselytising Christianity as a justification for the exploitation of colonial possessions and indigenous peoples. The amateurist concept of “fair play” was an essential component of the canon of middle-class English moral superiority which qualified it for administrating an empire.

Amateurism also provided an antidote to more personally felt conflicts for those members of the middle classes who were engaged in commerce or trade and who felt the social sting of being forced to earn a living. The class system in New Zealand was less rigidly stratified than that in England – a result of the colony’s low population density and the structural necessity of owners of means of production also taking an

active role in production themselves. Contemporary commentators observed the conflation of wealth with respectability, social class and political power in New Zealand. Codified behaviour did, however, retain a central role in securing and advertising social status. Playing amateur sport was a very conspicuous and symbolically genteel form of consumption. But as well as providing a medium for symbolic emulation of genteel values and habits, amateur sport also reinforced more middle-class values of industry and moral rectitude. The notion that amateurs eschewed practice or training was less widely held than is sometimes accepted. If “natural” athleticism symbolised “good breeding”, success at games via diligent practice signalled not only that one was wealthy enough to afford leisure time, but that one had “spent” that time well. In this way, amateurism bridged the gap between aristocratic pre-destiny and middle-class accumulation of wealth, power and social status, itself succinctly encapsulated by the ideological phrase “getting on”, so important in colonial New Zealand in the second half of the nineteenth century. Practice was thus vital to the concept of sport as rational recreation.

It is apposite to acknowledge that while amateurism was an important ideology which made an essential contribution to the constructed self-image of the British Empire, it was not the only game in town in either the literal or the metaphorical sense. Far from being the halcyon age of amateur sport, the last quarter of the nineteenth century was one of discourse, constant innovation and debate. The relevance of sport was, to its adherents, manifestly clear. Sport was healthy, moral and English. It tied New Zealanders to “home” and Empire via a perceived system of shared values. But if the virtues of sport as a form of rational recreation were widely subscribed to, the best method of sports administration, the rights and wrongs of cash prizes and the issues surrounding access to play, were all open to debate.

Internal Contradictions

When researching this thesis, it became clear that the social construction of the bicycle racer was very much contested space, inhabited by sports promoters, audiences, rational recreationists, amateurists, bicycle manufacturers, journalists, editors, newspaper

owners and last but most certainly not least, the athletes themselves. Much of the struggle over definition and classification sprang from this crowded landscape and from the series of internal contradictions which beset modern sports during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The ideology of amateurism which informed the New Zealand press was inherently complicated and even contradictory. As amateur sport developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, so too did technology that allowed ever improving levels of communication and time measurement. This facilitated the abstract concept of “record”, which was increasingly applied on local, regional, national and international levels from the final decades of the nineteenth century. “Record” links intimately to capitalism, progress, modernity and the dogmas of social Darwinism and eugenics. It emphasises and celebrates improvement, and so, in the progress-fixated nineteenth and twentieth centuries, became a socially, ethnically and politically powerful symbol of success.

The athletic record was both middle-class and modern. It relied on and revelled in bureaucratic precision, emphasised the “speeding-up” of time which accompanied the introduction of railways, telegraphs, trams, bicycles and motorcars. It also conformed to the middle-class ideal of “getting on” referred to above. Records (athletic or otherwise) were tangible proof of the fruits of progress. In the case of athletic records, this affirmation was necessary to quell fears that industrialisation and colonisation had negatively affected human health and strength. For industrialising states, sport provided a bulwark against the enervating effects of factory and office life, but it played an equally important role for colonial populations, particularly in the British Empire. If love of sport had defined Englishness, even at the edge of the Empire, athletic record provided empirical evidence that “Englishness” could survive and even flourish in the right colonial environment. Herein lay the root of the conflation of sporting performance with national pride. Record became an essential component of modern sport. But athletic record also destabilised amateurism to the point that its most essential tenet, playing purely for the love of sport, was severely undermined. This was equally

true of “pure” amateur sports such as rugby union and athletics as it was of rapidly professionalizing sports such as English football, American baseball and bicycle racing.

In bicycle racing, there was a particularly stark contrast between precepts of fair play – that one would not seek unfair advantage over one’s competition – and profound faith in progress, capitalist competition and modernity measured in the sporting arena by the athletic record. The legitimacy of methods used to fund equipment upgrades (self-funding versus subsidy by manufacturers, winnings, appearance money and club support) was vehemently debated, but the necessity of constantly updating equipment in order to be “more competitive” was, itself, rarely questioned. The combined use of technical innovation and racing to expand markets thus led to the peculiar situation where bicycle manufacturers were praised for seeking new means of promoting their products, while “makers’ amateurs” were condemned for taking an active part in that process.

The internal conflict between “sport for the love of it” and record has never been fully resolved. The weekly judicial tribunals of rugby, arcane rules of motor sport and drug scandals of weight lifting, athletics and cycling all suggest that “fair play” remains contested ground. The extensive level of intrusion and control over athletes’ behaviour exerted by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) in the twenty-first century has its roots in the reinstatement committees of nineteenth century amateurism. The power to define correct behaviour remains in the hands of sports administrators rather than athletes.

The suggestion that athleticism and record are more recent innovations which have been layered over traditional amateur values does not bear historical scrutiny. Records were a component of such early professional sports as boxing and pedestrianism, and were seamlessly adopted by both professional and amateur cyclists almost without question. Even with reference to public school games – rugby and cricket – the assertion of an historical distinction between athleticism and sportsmanism is suspect. Yearbooks and almanacs were a dominant feature of games, especially cricket, as well as athletic sports. The largely unacknowledged conflict between

progress and fair play is, therefore, difficult to dismiss. It ensured that bicycle racing, as with other modern sports, underwent constant upheaval and change in the 1890s, as the sport's administrators struggled to reconcile the two contradictory elements which comprised amateurist ideology.

Further heightening the fundamental tension between fair play and record was the commercial definition of a successful sports meeting. The criteria were:

1. lively competition;
2. broken records;
3. timely administration;
4. a large spectator audience;
5. *extra sportif* entertainment;
6. an operating surplus.

Even if amateur bicycle races were not purely commercial undertakings, they did adopt commercial *modus operandi* and used commercial criteria to measure success. In the first decade of amateur bicycle racing in Christchurch, professional bicycle racers were imported from Britain and Australia to provide lively competition and to act as a benchmark against which local amateurs could be measured. Later, as definition of suitable amateur behaviour tightened, open competition between amateur cyclists and professionals was abandoned. It was substituted by other methods of subsidising training, some approved, some not. Makers' amateurism, open orders, benefit races, appearance money and travelling expenses were all methods used to improved athletic performance by subsidising training.

Legacy

Ultimately, the cash amateur bicycle racer symbolises the complicated, often contradictory nature of nineteenth century social, political and commercial mores. As a social construction, he was rooted in profound nineteenth century beliefs about the nature of class, sex, race and progress. But he also stood as a symbol of pragmatism and adaptability; a blend of ideological doctrine and commercial realism. Briefly, this

combination proved highly successful, and thousands of New Zealanders paid a shilling each to watch him race. The strategies of novelty and spectacle proved vulnerable and the fortunes of bicycle racing, cash amateur or otherwise, declined in the wake of the bicycle boom's dramatic rise and fall.

Yet, after amateur sport's Olympic-fuelled triumphs of the twentieth century, "grass-roots" club events which Francis Kesteven, Walter G. Attack and "Dick" Clarkson would have instantly recognised as cash amateur have become realities of modern sports administration. Club cyclists, male or female, may ride for cash prizes one week and trophies the next, secure in the knowledge that they are easily distinguishable from the rarefied ranks of professional cyclists. The cash amateur bicycle racer should thus also stand as a reminder not to assume too much when searching for a halcyon, middle-class, amateur, sporting past. For some young, Pakeha, middle-class men, such a reality existed. For others, similarly young, similarly middle-class, similarly Pakeha, similarly male, the ideology of "pure" amateurism, as espoused in countless books, pamphlets and articles, was problematic. Their solution – cash amateur bicycle racing – should be recognised as a nineteenth century sporting innovation equally as significant as amateurism, the contradictions of which they sought to address.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1.1: Titles comprising the Papers Past collection of digitised New Zealand newspapers and periodicals

Ashburton Guardian (1887-1921)
Bay Of Plenty Times (1875-1910)
Bruce Herald (1865-1905)
Bush Advocate (1888-1909)
Clutha Leader (1874-1900)
Colonist (1890-1910)
Daily Southern Cross (1843-1876)
Ellesmere Guardian (1891-1906)
Evening Post (1865-1915)
Fair Play (1893-1894)
Feilding Star (1882-1909)
Grey River Argus (1866-1920)
Hawera & Normanby Star (1880-1910)
Hawke's Bay Herald (1857-1900)
Hawke's Bay Weekly Times (1867-1868)
Inangahua Times (1877-1900)
Kai Tiaki: the Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand (1908-1929)
Manawatu Herald (1878-1900)
Marlborough Express (1868-1900)
Mataura Ensign (1883-1900)
Nelson Evening Mail (1866-1909)
Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle (1842-1874)
New Zealand Advertiser and Bay of Islands Gazette (1840)
New Zealand Colonist and Port Nicholson Advertiser (1842-1843)
New Zealand Free Lance (1900-1909)
New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator (1839-1844)
New Zealand Illustrated Magazine (1899-1905)
New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian (1844-1865)
New Zealand Tablet (1873-1909)
New Zealander (1845-1852)
North Otago Times (1864-1900)
Northern Advocate (1887-1906)
NZ Truth (1906-1930)
Observer (1880-1909)
Otago Witness (1851-1909)
Otautau Standard and Wallace County Chronicle (1905-1932)
Oxford Observer (1889-1901)
Poverty Bay Herald (1879-1920)
Progress (1905-1910)
Southland Times (1862-1905)
Star (1868-1909)
Taranaki Herald (1852-1909)
Te Aroha News (1883-1889)
Timaru Herald (1864-1900)
Tuapeka Times (1868-1909)
Victoria Times (1841)
Waikato Times (1873-1886)
Waimate Daily Advertiser (1898-1900)
Wanganui Chronicle (1874-1900)
Wanganui Herald (1876-1909)
Wellington Independent (1860-1874)
West Coast Times (1865-1909)

VELOCIPEDES.

To break one's neck or to get drowned are the pleasant alternatives offered by those who, doubting the real utility of land and aquatic velocipedes, or the permanency of their use, choose to carp at them. The arguments employed are, the disuse into which the rude machines of former times have fallen, the want of adaptability of land velocipedes to our rough city roads, and the crowds of vehicles in our streets. But we have shown that modern construction has entirely changed the character of the vehicle, which is as much superior to the hobby horse as this was to the three-wheeler used by French postmen in 1830.

Roads, too, have vastly improved. As to alleged want of street space, English municipalities may with advantage adopt the transatlantic suggestion of bridging over the gutters with iron plate, and thus provide a comparatively unimpeded course for the bicycles.

The velocipede, as embodying the combination of physical and mechanical power for the purpose of locomotion, has had its claims to adoption fully vindicated; whilst as an amusement, it is in many respects superior to horse-riding, cricket, skating, or even rowing. A properly-designed velocipede, allowing, as it does, of the full development of the chest and I lungs, constitutes one of the best aids to the much-desired improvement of the human body. Amongst other hygienic advantages, respiration is facilitated, and the muscles of the back and shoulders are relieved from the injurious strain often imposed by habits of stooping. Lastly, velocipathy – thanks to our alma mater for the term – is the most excellent tonic and appetiser of the modern Pharmacopoeia.

Then as to the danger of running over people, the velocipede is more under the control of its rider than any horse driven vehicle. But it is the country, not the City or town that is destined to be the scene of its greatest exploits. Very few have had the

opportunity of giving them a trial on our country roads, though there is no longer any doubt of their utility in rure. In France, velocipedes are not only the amusements of the Paris gaudins of the Boulevards, but are found to constitute a convenient means of seeing a country without walking. Four velocipedes drove up the other day to the Hotel de France, at Mans, their drivers having started together on a tour from Trouville, whence they velocipeded up to Paris. From the capital they started for Bordeaux, Fete, Bernard, and Mans, accomplishing, on an average, thirty miles per day. This fact testifies to the safety as well as the speed with which velocipedes may be driven, for it is only reasonable to suppose that somewhat rough ground must have been encountered on the tour. As a trespasser on social notions, the velocipede, it must be confessed, is a fair butt for the shafts of wit. In Parisian caricatures we see phalanxes of ladies donned in bicycle garments, far more .intent on winning admiration by the grace with which they drive and steer than by the speed they attain. These sylph-like forms are only lounging on their steeds; and evidently, but for the gallantry of gendarmes, would be told to "move on." Not so the New York belles. Responding to the cheers of their admirer — some with a swift passing glance, others with the wave of their hands — they are pictured flying onward on the wings of the wind. It is the one-wheeler, however, which excites the greatest merriment among the wits ; but, judging of reported improvements, it may one day enter into; successful competition with the bicycle. There are, of course, suggestions as to one-wheelers in embryo or actual verities, which merit, all the ridicule they obtain. A one-wheeler, to be worked in a standing position by stilts and cranks, is a curiosity of mechanical misconception. The unhappy inventor, misled by the analogy of the balancing poles, puts heavy bosses at the end of the axle — weights which, if they could be afforded at all, would be better disposed on the periphery of the wheel — and a 32lb. shot is recklessly added. As soon as he puts pressure on the treadles, the machine "would move back. To advance, the centre of gravity of the whole suspended weight must be maintained in position more or less in front of the vertical line through the axle, which would require the treadles to be lifted by the toes! An American one-wheeler, for which great merit is claimed, is composed of a double rim, one working within the other. The driver and his centre of gravity being somewhat in advance of the vertical line drawn through the centre, his weight is made

to contribute to the propelling power. There is certainly no dearth of velocipede incidents and “improvements” of a more genuine character. A vehicle has been produced in the United States, to be worked either, by hand or foot, and which, it is asserted, will render a five-foot driving-wheel practicable; the wheels are furnished with rubber tires, facilitating driving on ice and snow, and protecting from a jarring motion on rough roads. The most remarkable machine announced is one driven on “independent” axles, meeting in the centre of the machine, there connected by a beautiful and novel system of gearing, so that either wheel can stand as pivotal point, and the other be driven round it by the operator fast enough to make one's head swim. Another velocipede has four wheels for propulsion, the fifth wheel being a guide-wheel; it is provided with cross seats, and the four riders are expected to unite in working their passage. Some former inventions are, no doubt, capable, in the light of improved science, of being rejuvenated. Thus we hear of the patent of the “Canterbury Propeller” — a hobbyhorse on wheels — of 1862, re-issued to widen the claims, so as to cover the patent bicycle of Lallement. Why the form of a horse should be adhered to we cannot tell, unless it is intended to inflate it with gas, or to secure, by the association of a good saddle and bridle, a more kindly adoption of the velocipede by the public. How horses themselves will look upon it we are not informed. Manifestly, the world in the “good time coming” intends to go lightly and airily on its way; and if elevated roads are not constructed specially for velocipedes, the roads that exist must be made to suit them. The iron-arched gutters will at least be ornamental. As to railways, if a velocipede with rimmed wheels can beat an express-tram, we shall expect to see individuals asserting the right never surrendered by the public of using the railroads of the country. The velocipedes suitable for ladies have three wheels, a steering-wheel in front, and two supporting-wheels in the rear, between which is placed a seat, the whole machine being so constructed as to distribute fairly the weight and strain. The seat rests on a spring of flexible steel, and the stirrup — connecting rods from which turn the cranks — are so shaped as not only to permit the use of the fore part of the foot, but to bring the ankle-joint into play. The steering-bars are in the form of levers, one on each side, this arrangement affording great ease in the position, as well as a good command of the vehicle. Some of the later improvements include extension or adjustable cranks, to suit

the driver's peculiarities. There are other velocipedes, furnished with side saddles, and the evolutions on these rival in grace and rapidity those of the best skaters. Those velocipedes will, in general, be preferred by ladies, which can be operated on by foot or hand, or by both together. With a proper teacher of their own sex, and with suitable dresses for the preliminary practice, ladies can attain such a command of the velocipede in one week as to ride on a side saddle with the utmost ease. Benedicts who have been permitted to glance unperceived at the evolutions of the fair sex in the New York riding-schools declare that they make a very graceful appearance. Every mail from Prance and the United States brings additional records of races. A couple of amateurs making a tour through a part of Prance challenged each other as to which could perform the greatest distance' within twenty-four hours. One went 87 miles, and then gave out, and the other 125 miles. Another party traversed 85 miles, at a rate of speed averaging between ten and eleven miles an hour. Practice with velocipedes has been carried so far, that offers of competitive trials of speed between them and horses on race-courses have been made. In determining adoption or rejection of velocipedes!, the million will think and judge for themselves. The hypercritical individuals, now so forward in thinking and judging for others, appear unwilling to admit that there is any waste of human energy in walking. Now, what is the principle involved in a velocipede? Assuming a perfect wheel on a perfect plane, it is evident that the least excess of weight or pressure on one side, represented on the velocipede by the mere extension of a foot by the rider straddling the saddle bar, will put it in motion, a result effected by the contrivance of the crank. In moving the wheel, the weight is taken off the top of one radius and handed over to the top of the next, and as there are as many radii as there are mathematical points round the circumference, the shifting is easily accomplished. We get, indeed, as closely to the conception of perpetual motion as its mechanical searchers ever got. — “Ironmonger.”

Correspondence.

THE CASH PRIZE QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WEEKLY PRESS
AND REFEREE.

SIR,—I have now received the major number of replies to my circular re substituting cash for trophy prizes at all race meetings. The replies, as I expected, prove unmistakably that the present system of trophy prizes is not only unsatisfactory, but a direct hardship on the racing men.

I have framed a motion bearing on the question, and given notice to the secretary of my intention to move it at the annual meeting of the Cyclists' Alliance. It was not my intention to have published the resolution prior to the annual meeting but as those holding opposite views persist in misrepresenting me on every possible occasion, and have, by requisition, caused a meeting of the Alliance to be convened, apparently for the purpose of frustrating my motion, I have to ask you to publish my resolution to enable those interested to learn exactly what I am doing. The motion is as follows:—

“That the time has arrived when it is essential for the conservance and furtherance of the interests of amateur cycle racing that provision be made in the constitution and rules of the Alliance to admit of cash prizes at all race meetings being utilised—either wholly or part—by the winners in assisting to lessen the heavy expense racing cyclists have at present to incur, and that a committee of three (or five), be appointed to consider the proposal, and draft a scheme as will meet the exigency of the case. The committee to give especial deliberation on the following points” :—

- (a). A clearer definition than at present exists of the articles that shall constitute trophies, and endeavour to provide for bicycles—more particularly racing bicycles—being included in the choice of trophies.
- (b). The expediency of making provision for prizes that are paid for out of club funds being defined “cash prizes,” such cash prizes (or a portion thereof) won by competitors at visiting race meetings being utilised in assisting to defray the travelling and other expenses incurred whilst attending such meetings.
- (c). The advisability of making it compulsory for clubs or promoters of race meetings to issue open orders for cash prizes won, to enable competitors to negotiate such orders in the selection of such trophies as shall be defined by the rules of the Alliance.
- (d). To make any other recommendation as may be suggested to the Committee that will give assistance to the racing men without invalidating their amateur status.

The result of the Committee's recommendations to be considered at an adjourned meeting and to be ratified by the affiliated Clubs before being finally confirmed by the Alliance.”

To give the reasons which led me to take the action I have and my opinions in support of the motion would necessitate my encroaching more on your space than I feel justified in asking, I shall therefore withhold further comment until I have the opportunity of moving the motion. Thanking you in anticipation for insertion, I am,
&c.,

ALEX. LOWRY,
Christchurch, September 8th.

Sports.

The New Zealand
AMATEUR
ATHLETIC AND CYCLING
SIXTH COMBINED
CHAMPIONSHIP
MEETING
(Under N.Z.A.A.A and N.Z.C.A.
Rules),
EXTENDING OVER TWO DAYS.
Will be held in Wanganui in
COOK'S GARDENS
ON
Thursday and Friday,
February 10 & 11, 1898.
All New Zealand Competing for the
N.Z.A.A.A. CHAMPIONSHIP BANNER, at
present held by Auckland.
The Australasian Athletic
Team,
Leaving New Zealand for England on the
17th February, 1898, will compete at this
meeting in Wanganui against the N.Z.
Champions before leaving.
Your only chance of seeing them. Here
they are,
The Australasian Team for
England,
Rowley (N.S.W.)
Rosengrave (Sydney)
Campbell (Queensland)
Cumming (Victoria)
Holder (Wanganui)
Wilson or Bennett (N.Z.)

DON'T FAIL TO WITNESS
The meeting of Rosengrave (Sydney),
Richards (Victoria), Martin (Auckland),
and Holder (Wanganui),
THE WORLD'S CHAMPIONS,
Over the 120 and 140 Hurdles,
and
THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN CRACK
SPRINTER, ROWLEY (Sydney),
and the
N.Z. CHAMPION, PATRICK (Wellington),
Over the 100 and 250yds Championships.

The World's Record Walk-
ing Men,
CREAMER AND WILSON,
Of Auckland.
The Little Native (Maori Boy) ERUERA
(Auckland),
AUSTRALASIAN CHAMPION POLE JUMPER,
AND ALL THE
N.Z. Champion Cyclists
From every town in New Zealand, off the
Scratch Mark, in the
Half-mile, 1-Mile, 5 Mile, 10 Mile, and
25-Mile
Bicycle Races.
All off Scratch. All off Scratch.
UNDOUBTEDLY THE GREATEST
COMBINED
Athletic and Cycling
Championship Meeting
EVER HELD IN THE COLONY OF NEW
ZEALAND.
EVERY EVENT A CHAMPIONSHIP
The Australasian Team for
England.
15/- Worth Going Miles to See.
15/- A Chance in a Life-time.
Trains delayed to suit the convenience of
country visitors.
Refreshments and Afternoon Tea on the
Grounds at Moderate Prices.
GARRISON BAND IN ATTENDANCE
BOTH DAYS.
First Event Each Day at 2 p.m. sharp.
Admission to Grounds, 1s; Children
under 12, 6d; Grand Stand, 1s.



THE
DRUIDS' GALA DAY!

DON'T FORGET

THE
 GREAT ATTRACTION

FOR

EASTER MONDAY

IS

THE DRUIDS' SPORTS

AND

ART UNION

AT THE

BASIN RESERVE.

These Sports will, without doubt, be one of the best gatherings of the kind yet held in Wellington.

No waits between the events. Always something exciting on.

THE CYCLING EVENTS

Will be a special feature of the gathering.

No less than 23 races are on the programme, including the One Mile Provincial (Cash) Championship.

CYCLING.

- 6 Competitors in the Ladies' Race
- 16 in the Maiden
- 30 in the Half-mile
- 35 in the Mile
- 33 in the £50 Wheel Race
- 31 in the Three Miles
- 30 in the Five Miles, and
- 20 in the Mile Championship

Such sterling performers as "Joey" Barker, "Ted" Reynolds, G. Sutherland, A. Maxwell, J. E. Blade, H. Lyon, A. Dalston, W. Tierney, L. Graham, E. A. Wall, and other cracks from Oamaru, Palmerston North, Christchurch, Feilding, Marton, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Napier, Hastings, and Wellington (including the five ex-amateurs, J. Chalmers, W. J. Pollock, D. A. Donn, E. H. Watson, and F. Caulton), have entered, so that these races must prove interesting.

THE PEDESTRIAN EVENTS

Include runners of note from all parts of New Zealand.

- 36 Competitors in the 100yds Handicap
- 34 in the 220yds
- 30 in the 440yds
- 23 in the Half-mile
- 15 in the Mile, and
- 14 in the Hurdles

Merry-go-Rounds, Swing-boats, and other Amusements.

COME AND SEE THE DRUIDS RACING WITH BEARDS AND GOWNS ON.

COME AND SEE THE MAORI "HAKA."

NO POSTPONEMENT ABOUT THE ART UNION.

We intend to adhere to our usual custom, and draw it at the Sports. Come and witness the drawing.

Admission to Ground (with chance in the Art Union), 1s; Children under 12 years of age free. Admission to Grandstand, 6d.

First Race Starts at 11 a.m. sharp.

Drawing of Art Union at 5 p.m.

S O C I A L .

Don't Forget the Druids' Grand Social in THOMAS'S HALL,

At 8 o'clock,

ON EASTER MONDAY NIGHT.

FISCHER'S STRING BAND.

Double Tickets, 3s 6d; Gentlemen, 2s 6d; Extra Lady, 1s 6d; Refreshments included. Catering by George Mawson.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—All blocks and unsold tickets must be returned to the Secretaries by 10 p.m. on Saturday, 9th instant, at Mr. Abel's, Tobacconist, Manners-street.

M. J. DONNELLY & CO.

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A Note on Digital Materials

Online collections and archives of both primary and secondary sources are powerful new tools for social historians. They do, however, raise problems of consistency when generating bibliographies. In the case of digitised print material where original pagination has been retained (as is the case in the Papers Past digital platform and most digitised academic journals) and where the material is available in multiple formats (paper, microform and digital) the material has been referenced in exactly the same manner as a hard-copy periodical or book. It is assumed that, given this information, a reader will be able to retrieve the material via the most convenient available collection, virtual or actual. Departure from this method has only been made in the case of the *New York Times*, electronic copies of which sometimes fail to show original pagination. In this case, the URL of the relevant PDF has been offered in the footnotes. Because of the heavy use of The Papers Past collection in research for this thesis, a complete list of the collection is offered in *Appendix 1.1*.

In the case of material originating on the Internet, if the writing is unacknowledged, the website owner has been offered as author. Otherwise, author and title are given in the bibliography.

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