

ATHLETICS.

Novice Championship.

WON BY R. WRIGHT.

ST. GEORGE TEAM WINNERS.

R. Wright, of the St. George Club, easily won the five miles novice cross country championship, controlled by the East Sydney A.A.C., followed by M. T. Emmerson and J. D. Hillier, of the promoting club. The teams' race, held in conjunction with the championship, resulted in St. George, with 18 points, retaining the honours. East Sydney (21) was in second place, and Botany scoring 66 points filled third place. G. Matterson, another member of the winning club, who finished fifth, secured the scaled handicap. It was the 16th race for the title, the first having been organised by the East Sydney Club in 1911. The competition has been held each year, with the exception of 1917 and 1918, when, owing to the war, the races were abandoned.

The entry of 57 was much below the number anticipated, as the total nomination was 17 less than the previous year. Conditions of the championship stipulate that those eligible to participate must not have won a prize in any open race of two miles or further. Six clubs nominated teams, and three supplied individual entries. Form displayed in club competition gave the race an open appearance, in contrast to a number of past championships when the winner was easily forecasted. Forty runners were despatched from Lyne Park, Rose Bay, the smallest number of recent years, and it is difficult to comprehend the reason of such lack of enthusiasm on the part of distance men. It was not representative of the strength of amateur clubs, and the promoting organisation deserved greater assistance for the enterprise in promoting this fixture annually.

Leaving Lyne Park the runners crossed New South Head road and Murdock, of South Sydney, assumed the lead, to be soon displaced by the Manly representative Baker, who held his position over the surrounding hill. Baker

to be soon displaced by the manly representative runner, who held his position over the surrounding hill. Baker still led as the men reached the main road on the return journey, with Emmerson, Hillier, Matterson, and Wright nearest. In New South Head-road, the Manly man was beaten, and he was passed by Emmerson, Wright, Hillier, Giles, and Matterson. The St. George man entered the park for the run to the finish in advance of Emmerson, and won by 9s, whilst the East Sydney runner was only inches in front of his club mate Hillier, followed by Giles. The winner's time was 30m 34s, sixteen seconds faster than that recorded by M. Vaughan last year. These figures have been surpassed upon a number of occasions, but the necessary alteration of the route each year makes comparisons useless.

St. George members won the teams' race for the first time in 1925, and the club's attention to distance running resulted in a triumph this year. Individual and teams championships, with three men placed in the sealed handicap, were a brilliant achievement, but the club was compelled to undergo a protest before success was assured. An objection by East Sydney members against the winner, on the ground that he had not covered the official course, was investigated by the officials of the N.S.W. Amateur Athletic Association, who dismissed the protest, and acted in a similar manner regarding complaints made by St. George men. This race has, in the past, been held in doubt until decisions have been arrived at, owing to similar happenings, and F. Bailey holds the unique record of having finished first two years in succession. In 1922 he was declared ineligible to participate, but after being reinstated, won the title in the following year.

The winner has been prominent in club competition this winter, commencing the season by winning a St. George road race at his initial effort, and he followed this success by appropriating the five miles novice championship of his club. The handicapper's opinion of Wright's ability as a cross-country runner was indicated by the fact that he was on scratch in the sealed handicap, in which he dead heated for fifth place.

Results.—

INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIP.

R. Wright (St. George A.A.C.), 30m 34s	1	
M. T. Emmerson (East Sydney A.A.C.), 30m 43s	2	
J. D. Hillier (East Sydney A.A.C.), 30m 44s	3	
E. Giles (St. George), 30m 47s,	4; G. Matterson (St. George), 30m 52s,	5; E. Baker (Manly), 31m 33s,	6;
H. Lee (East Sydney), 31m 33s,	7; A. V. Harper (St. George), 31m 39s,	8; F. L. Hunter (East Sydney),	31m 45s,
9; S. Vance (Kensington), 31m 48s,	10; E. Spillstead (Botany), 31m 57s,	11; E. Adams (Botany),	32m 14s
12; A. E. Murdock (South Sydney), 32m 43s.			

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32m 14s. 12; A. E. Murdock (South Sydney), 32m 43s.
13; Jno. Williams (St. George), 32m 47s. 14; L. Cal-
low (Western Suburbs), 23m 2s. 15; P. Medlin (St.
George), 33m 12s. 16; F. Bishop (South Sydney), 33m
26s. 17; Jos. Williams (St. George), 33m 38s. 18; E. J.
Ryan (Manly), 33m 45s. 19; J. McMahon (South Syd-
ney), 33m 46s. 20.