Sailing Over The Canadian Rockies—With perfect poise, this ski maiden sails high into space in the snow-capped Rockies at Banff National Park. Executing a cornice jump, the lady uses her ski poles to give force to the leap and length into the gliding landing.

SPORTS &c

by A Sixbit Critic

Not long ago somebody asked why, in this space, we don't pay more attention to the noble sport of Basketball which draws—at least so we are told—more cash customers and is participated in by more athletes than any other pastime. The answer, in a couple of nutshells, is that to our admittedly jaundiced view Basketball has developed into something which makes a whole lot of noise—but very little sense.

* * *

One criticism we have to offer is that sheer size—or rather sheer height—has come to play far too vital a part in the sport which was invented by a Canadian who had, as his aim, a game which could be played by one and all—a game which wouldn't take too much out of a boy or girl, and one that wouldn't require too much training or fine physical condition.

* * *

That's what it started out to be and—for some years—was. But, Gee, just look at the durned thing now! They tell the story of a certain American college coach who has, over the doorway of his office, a beam that is just six feet six inches high. "If a freshman comes in to apply for a trial on the basketball squad" he says, "and fails to bump his head on that beam—well, I just don't give him a second look."

* * *

Now, when we first read that anecdote, we thought it was just 'one of those things', evolved from the brain of some sports writer who was short of news—also of ambition to go out and dig up some. (There are a few such renegades in the profesion, fie on them!) But we learn that it is no joke—and that although the actual six-foot-six beam may be largely imaginary, unless a basketball hopeful comes close to touching such Alpine heights, he doesn't get much attention.

* * *

There is for instance a college basbetball star in the States who has an amazingly fine record. He ranks at or very near the top in points scored among the "simon pures". If he were a footballist, every professional team in the country would have lines out for him. Yet his pro prospects, after graduation, are anything but bright. The reason—his pigmy height—a mere five feet eleven inches.

* * *

Now in baseball, football, even hockey—although, in the latter, not as much as formerly—the little fellow still has a chance. But not in Dr. Naismith's invention. Other things being equal a team averaging six and a half feet in height will trim the ears off an outfit of six footers. In other words, in basketball, altitude has an advantage over aptitude which is beyond all rhyme or reason.

* * *

Then, there's the matter of far too much scoring—together with a quantity of whistle-tooting which makes a basketball game sound, to sensitive ears, like all the riot squads of New York, Chicago and Montreal in concerted action at a Communist uprising.

* * *

Take, as an example of what we mean, a game played not long ago in Columbus, Ohio. It is true that the struggle went five periods of overtime; but it was the final score which interested us most. It was either 99 to 99—or 99 to 100, which is to say that almost two hundred points were scored. And when all the shooting was over, they counldn't decide with any assurance whether it was a tie game, or if one of the two teams had won by a single point.

* * *

Now speed is a great thing in most any sport—but that appears to us, to be carrying the speed mania just a little too far. It is true that Basketball attracts huge crowds—and that people work themselves into conniption fits, and even fatal heart attacks, while watching it. But as for us, after watching a few sessions of the pro variety when they tried it out in Toronto, so far as basketball is concerned we're satisfied to wait till we get television in Canada, and take ours at long distance.

* * *

And when that day arrives, whenever there's a basketball game due to be televised, chances are we'll do just as is our custom when we hit a radio program with too many commercials—switch to something else, or shut the blamed thing off.

* * *

So that, dear readers, is why we pay little or no attention to Basketball in these columns. Somehow or other we don't feel sufficiently in sympathy with the game, as played, to make an unbiased commentator. And, in conclusion, you've heard what happened regarding Joe Louis. When Joseph—after his second fight with Walcott—made those touching radio remarks about his mother, and how that was his final fight nobody noticed that he had ihs fingers crossed.

★

A woman may put on a riding habit and never go riding. She may put on a bathing suit and never go swimming. But when a woman puts on a wedding gown—brother, she means business.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

WHAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD

by Norman Blair

Great Britain

During and since the war one of the most acute shortages in the United Kingdom has been that of news print. British journals, with their four pages of closely-packed fine print, appeared to Canadian eyes more like something dug up from a prehistoric era than they resembled our idea of a modern newspaper.

On New Year's Day British papers were allowed a 25 per cent in the amount of newsprint allotted to them, and it is rather interesting to note what use they made of it.

Serious papers, such as the London Times and The Daily Telegraph— which had been printing six or eight pages daily by keeping circulation down to a minimum—have not increased their size, but are using their extra paper to print more copies. But the four pagers—the "penny press"—are now publishing six-page papers two or three times weekly.

What are they using these extra pages for? Well, it is estimated that the morning papers have increased their news coverage from twenty to forty per cent, depending on the paper. Sports coverage remains about the same—which is rather surprising viewed either from a Canadian angle, or in view of the huge crowds attending all sorts of sports in Britain.

Advertising space has just about been doubled, and the remainder of the increase is devoted by features such as gossip columns, articles of special interest to women, pictures and—you might have almost guessed it—comic strips. For example, The London Daily Express is running a "home grown" strip called "Kit Conquest" and "Dick Tracy." One can't help wondering what the Londoners will make of B. O. Plenty, Gravel Gertie, Sparkle and all the rest of them.

Spain

Generalissimo Fransisco Franco is once again showing—or attempting to show—his "broadmindness" and love for his fellow men.

Back in 1492—the year when Christopher Columbus "discovered" America—at the instigation of Inquisitor Tomas de Torquemada all Jews were expelled from Spain. About 50,000 evaded the decree by becoming converts to Catholicism. Many of the rest of the former Jewish population about 100,000 of them, settled in Greece or Egypt.

Since that time Spain has had one of the smallest Jewish populations of any European country. Today, out of a total population of over 27 millions there are only about six thousand Jews.

Early in June, Generalissimo Franco signed a decree permitting Jews living in Egypt or Greece, who are descendants of pre-expulsion Spanish families, to apply for Spanish citizenship. According to the decree applicants will be selected by their "love for Spain." Those who have "shown they are worthy of this mercy," the decree says, will be given Spanish citizenship.

Just how the Jews in question will view this "mercy" remains, of course, to be seen. But this writer greatly doubts if they will flock to Fransisco's tender care in any wholesale quantities.

France and Italy

Those whose memories extend back more than thirty years will recall how, back in 1918, an epidemic which usually went by the name of the "Spanish Flu" swept through the world. It was an infectious respiratory ailment characterized by fever, headache, severe coughing and muscular pain.

Before the epidemic subsided more than 500 million persons were afflicted and deaths were estimated at more than 15 millions. Most of the fatalities, however, were not caused directly by the influenza, but by secondary infections of other diseases, pneumonia in particular.

For several weeks past the most widespread "flu" epidemic since 1918 has been spreading across Europe. It broke out first in Italy and rapidly spread northward. France was especially hard hit. In Paris hospitals were filled to overflowing, and practically every office or business establishment had at least one absentee.

However, so far, the present outbreak has been of a fairly mild variety. It causes great discomfort, but the comparatively few deaths have been principally confined to the aged and already-ailing. The name influenza, by the way, is of Italian origin. The full name, in that language, is influenza di freddo—which means, literally, "effect of cold."

The Dilemma

A gaunt farmer in a hardware store in North Carolina was complaining about the life of a tobacco grower. I sympathized that it must be hard work.

"Son, it ain't the work," he said. "It's knowin' what has to be done—and then rackin' your brain to figure out a way to get outa doin' it."

A Strange World Isn't It?

BAD NEWS

Bad news for cheque forgers is a new-style cheque developed by Burgess Smith, 73-year-old research specialist for a New York printing firm. The cheque looks like any other, but has a secret sound track printed on it. The bank clerk passes it through a small machine which, if the cheque has been tampered with, yells "Forgery!" loud enough for everyone in the bank to hear.

CUCKOO

Watchmakers' classic joke of the cuckoo that laid an egg has rebounded on a Sydney jeweller. He found more than two dozen eggs in the works of a cuckoo clock he was repairing. Authorities of the Australian National Museum established that a three-inch lizard was responsible.

TIME, PLEASE

Customers were leaving the public houses in King's Road, Chelsea, at closing time when they heard a wh-o-o-o-mph—and saw a manhole cover leap into the air. Pulling themselves together firmly, they went on . . . but it was no good. It happened again. Another wh-o-o-o-mph, another manhole cover dancing skywards. After Mrs. J. C. Warran, licensee of the Riley Arms, had seen this happen four times she dialled 999. Firemen came, explained it was gas exploding in the manholes, and closed a section of the street.

$3,000

While the passports of a father and son were being inspected at Hohenhems, on the Austro-Swiss frontier, a passport official asked the boy, aged 15, if his swollen mouth was due to toothache. "My poor afflicted son has never been able to speak," said the father showing the boy's identity card, on which it was stated that he was deaf and dumb. Just then the boy sneezed and precious stones worth $3,000 fell out of his mouth. Father and son were arrested by Customs officials.

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More than half of your digestion is done below the belt—in your 28 feet of bowels. So when indigestion strikes, try something that helps digestion in the stomach AND below the belt.

What you may need is Carter's Little Liver Pills to give needed help to that "forgotten 28 feet" of bowels.

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Then most folks get the kind of relief that makes you feel better from your head to your toes. Just be sure you get the genuine Carter's Little Liver Pills from your druggist—35c.

LOSS OF VOICE MENACES PROGRAM

Friend Solves Singer's Problem With Lymoids!

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Get quick relief with LYMOIDS. The soothing medicinal oils of this famous preparation help to quickly relieve hoarseness and coughing. Most stores sell LYMOIDS but if unobtainable, send 10c in stamps or coin, to LYMOIDS, 119 Pearl St., Toronto. LS-5

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FOR INSTANT THROAT RELIEF

ISSUE 5 — 1949

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