SOME SPORTS IN PITTSBURGH
DURING THE NATIONAL PERIOD, 1775-1860
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PART TWO
GROWTH AND ACCEPTANCE OF SPORTS:
LEGAL AND ILLEGAL 1850-1860

No less than seventeen different sporting activities made their appearance during the 1850's in Pittsburgh. They ranged from sports within the law such as cricket and foot racing to the unlawful horse-racing and prize fighting. Sports against the law were practiced openly and without much protest. The city was opened wide to gamblers, criminals, and corruption within the government. The lawlessness of the eighteenth century had returned. The Post made mention of an article in the Wheeling Argus which gave the following account of Pittsburgh in 1850:

Pittsburgh: Two deaths, on Monday, of Cholera. Street fights are common. Gloomy, suicidal weather on hand. Mayor Barker abates some nuisances, but not his own. Railroad rioters crowd the city at night. A dead boy left at the graveyard at night in a box unburied. A lady (?) arrested for bigamy! Churches and theatres remodelled. Model artists keep shy. Boat races are common, and racing with constables frequent. Sixteen cases of drunkenness, vagrancy, &c. on Saturday and Sunday, taken before the police. Deck hand on steamer Brooklyn fell overboard, and was drowned. Picnics no go. The Herons sing like Nightingales, at the Museum. Hard swearing out doors, and harder in the Courts. A crazy priest is about to reform our sister city, and has arrived in the "city of smoke." The anti-reformers may carry the day, and smoke him out.92

The anti-reformers apparently carried the day for the Post noted: "Horse races . . . and dog fights have been plenty during this week. What comes next?" 91

What did come next was evidence of the lawlessness which permeated the city and its sports. The inhumane activities of cock fighting and dog fighting were held openly and received mention in the local press. It appeared to be acceptable to raise game chickens. "A gentleman named Elliot, of Allegheny, yesterday made information against a man for stealing game chickens." 94 Purses were large for both cock fighting and dog fighting. The Dispatch reported that the

94 Ibid., July 16, 1850, No. 306.
dog, "Oscar," had won six hundred dollars in a fight that lasted one and a half hours.\textsuperscript{95}

Of the unlawful sports horseracing was probably the most popular. In addition to track racing, a new style, road racing, made its appearance. The road races featured neither a uniform distance nor specific rules concerning jockeys' weights or number of horses in the event. One feature which was present at all races of this type was the large amount of money at stake between both the competing riders and the bystanders. The \textit{Gazette} mentioned a race between a bay horse in harness and a grey mare under saddle held on the Braddock's Field Plank Road in which "... a large amount of money was staked."\textsuperscript{96} A twenty-seven mile pacing match took place on the Butler Plank Road in 1857 and according to the \textit{Post}:

Quite an excitement has been created among the owners of fast nags in relation to the pacing match that took place on the Butler Plankroad on Tuesday. The parties to the match were Thomas Fawcett, Birmingham, who entered the grey horse, "Bob," and John Vensells, of Clarion County, who entered his sorrel horse, "Jack." The purse was $600 — or, $300 a side, and the distance twenty-seven miles, starting from Stewartstown and ending at Zimmerman's Hotel, in Butler.

The horses started precisely at 1 o'clock on Tuesday, the grey rode by P. Quinette, of Deer Creek, and the sorrel by his former owner, Mr. Connelly. For a few miles the animals paced along beautifully, but as the road grew worse as they proceeded, it was evident they had hard work before them. Several persons on horseback followed the racers, and from them we learn that the sorrel broke several times, and gained advantage by so doing over the grey. The horses arrived at Zimmermans in two hours and ten minutes from the time of starting — the sorrel coming in about two lengths ahead on a "dead run," and the little grey keeping his pace the whole distance.

Upwards of five hundred people had assembled at Zimmermans to see the result of the race, and amid great excitement the crowd awarded the purse to Thomas Fawcett, the owner of the grey.\textsuperscript{97}

Fawcett's grey horse raced on the Braddock's Field road and lost a purse of one thousand dollars to Robt. M'Cutcheon's bay horse in two out of two one-mile heats.\textsuperscript{98} This race was run on June 29, 1857, thirty-nine days after the twenty-seven mile race on the Butler Road. Whether that race had affected the grey's performance in this race is not recorded.

While the road races were usually well attended there were some who were not impressed with the sport. The \textit{Dispatch} saw this type of horseracing as "... exceedingly dangerous to those traveling on the

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch}, July 17, 1856.
\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Daily Pittsburgh Gazette}, July 1, 1856, Vol. LXIX, No. 267. The \textit{Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch} of July 1, 1856, stated that the race was between John Robinson's horse and R. Mackey's mare.
\textsuperscript{97} \textit{Pittsburgh Morning Post}, May 21, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 188.
\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Ibid.}, June 30, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 222.
road." It called for the directors of the plank roads to forbid the sport on the roads, and added:

The whole thing is illegal, but if races must "come off," they should be on a well conducted track, devoted entirely to such purposes, and not on a public highway.  

Many races did take place on race tracks during this decade. The course in East Liberty began to draw large crowds on racing days. The one-mile course was situated on the Greensburg Pike near the residence of John Wilkins. Winners were usually determined by the best times in two of three one-mile heats. A one-mile course opened in the summer of 1850 on the grounds of the Agricultural Association near Wilkinsburg. Pacing races were run with the winner being determined by the best three of five one-mile heats. Another one-mile race track was situated on the Glen Road near the Monongahela River. The course was built on six acres of the old Ross farm. A large club house, called the Glen Hotel, was built by the wealthy club members who owned the land. The race track extended from Glenwood to the Twenty-second Street bridge.

Blooded horses owned by members of the Club were pitted against race horses brought out from the city or its suburbs. As the end of the race was reached, the jockeys began sawing on the reins, and yelling "So-ho" at the excited horses, endeavoring to bring them to a halt. This is said to be the origin of the name Soho.

The most beautiful, and probably the most successful, course was the Collin's Park Trotting Course. Everything was done to insure the comfort of the spectators. Trains were run from downtown Pittsburgh to the course and back. "A train will start to the grounds from the Pennsylvania Railroad depot at 2:50 p.m., returning at 6:30 p.m., thus giving visitors an opportunity to see both races . . . ."  

The concern by the owners of the course for the comfort and enjoyment of the spectators paid off for large crowds usually attended .

99 Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, June 19, 1856.  
100 Ibid.  
103 Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, June 22, 1855.  
105 The Pittsburgh Post, June 9, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 204.
the races.\textsuperscript{106} The \textit{Post} gave the following description of the course:

The "Collin's Park," for such is the name which it bears, occupies a beautiful tract of level sward, about fifteen acres in extent, and is situated a few hundred yards below East Liberty. It formed at one time part of the Larimer property, and, is one of the finest, as well as most complete trotting parks in the country. The course is half a mile in length, and forty feet in width, and admirably constructed. It is almost level, with very easy curves, and from the cohesive, yet elastic nature of the soil, and the bottom which underlies it, it must at all seasons be susceptible of very fast time. A plot of green sward occupies the center of the park, while the whole is surrounded by a durable and expensive fence. Sheds for the accommodation of horses and vehicles, have been erected, and a fine stable has been put up, together with a stand for judges and a gallery for the spectators. The course has thus far, cost the proprietors $7,600, and as it is their intention to further improve it by planting trees, &c., it is probable that it will stand them in the end $8,000.

The "Collin's Park" is under the control of an association now comprising some fifty or sixty members. This association has its President, Vice President, and Secretary, Board of Directors, &c., and is governed by a code of by-laws at once simple and effective. For instance no minors are admitted to membership; gambling is strictly prohibited; members are only permitted access to the grounds, with the privilege of introducing a friend, but this introduction does not give the friend the right to ride over the track unless in company of the member introducing him; drunkenness is prohibited on the grounds, and any person guilty of a failing of this character or of conduct unbecoming a gentleman, is liable to expulsion, with the further degradation of losing the privilege of visiting the grounds afterwards. To become a member you are balloted for, and if received, you pay a certain subscription and become entitled to the privileges above enumerated.\textsuperscript{107}

The owners of this course intended to make horseracing more acceptable by prohibiting gambling, the primary objection by law to the sport. Premiums were offered to the winners in the form of cups and medals.

One premium, a beautiful gold medal, with a medallion picture of Flora Temple, queen of the turf, is offered for the best trotting horse . . . a magnificent gold cup, on which is engraved a view of the club grounds, will be awarded to the best pacer.\textsuperscript{108}

Horseracing at this park was still illegal for there was a penalty of twenty dollars for "... entering, starting or running any horse, mare or gelding for any plate, prize, wager, bet, or sum of money, or other valuable thing."\textsuperscript{109} However, no mention was ever made in

\textsuperscript{106} See the following: \textit{Pittsburgh Morning Post}, Sept. 28, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 299, "The attendance of visitors was very large"; \textit{Pittsburgh Post}, June 10, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 205, "Everything was orderly and pleasant . . . the visitors at the course had a good time generally"; \textit{Ibid.}, July 6, 1859, No. 227, "The park was thronged with visitors on Monday"; \textit{Ibid.}, Aug. 1, 1859, No. 250, "Quite a number of visitors were present at Collin's Park on Saturday afternoon"; and \textit{Ibid.}, Sept. 3, 1859, No. 279, "There was a good attendance at Collin's Park yesterday afternoon."


\textsuperscript{108} \textit{The Pittsburgh Post}, June 9, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 204. See also \textit{Ibid.}, June 17, 1859, No. 211, where "The first prize was a silver pitcher."

\textsuperscript{109} By-laws and Ordinances of the City of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh: Johnson & Stockton, 1828), 307.
the available source material of anyone being arrested for racing at Collin’s Park.

Horseracing was not the only event held at the course. Novelty races were employed to maintain spectator interest. Mule races took place and kept the spectators “... in a continual uproar of laughter, by riders thrown and other incidents.” 110 Wheelbarrow races, with the wheelers blindfolded, “... created much laughter.” 111 Foot races and sack races112 also took place but the event which excited the spectators the most was the race for the pig:

A pig was let loose on the course, his tail having been previously greased, and five competitors endeavor to lift him from the ground by the tail. On the first trial it was claimed by three, and the judges ordered a second, when Dennis Cahill succeeded in raising the porcine prize from the ground, and bearing it off in triumph, amid the laughter of the assembled spectators.111

Prizes such as “... a fine gold goblet” 114 were offered to the best pacers or trotters who had never run the mile under two minutes and fifty-eight seconds in public. However, prizes such as this and the novelty races could not hold the interest of the public when advertised races did not take place. The Post noted that “... neither the two mile trot nor the match came off as advertised ... a large proportion of the visitors, determined to have a full day’s sport, crossed the river to the Belvidere, to witness the regatta.” 115 The managers of the course offered a public apology, stating it was “... entirely unavoidable, being caused by the withdrawal of horses after they were entered for the race and the fees paid.” 116 The Post warned that “... those who have control of the course must endeavor to do better hereafter, or their course will soon be deserted by the public.” 117 Some of the public accepted the apology for on the last day of the fall racing season: “There was a good attendance at Collin’s Park ... and those present enjoyed the races highly.” 118

The owners of the course were protected to some extent against the withdrawing of horses from the races. A cash payment was paid to the course owners by the owners who withdrew. One horse owner paid a forfeit of fifty dollars after withdrawing from a race.

110 The Pittsburgh Post, June 17, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 211.
111 Ibid., July 6, 1859, No. 227.
112 Ibid., July 19, 1859, No. 239.
113 Ibid., September 3, 1859, No. 279.
114 Ibid., July 15, 1859, No. 235.
115 Ibid., August 1, 1859, No. 250.
116 Ibid., August 19, 1859, No. 266.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid., September 3, 1859, No. 279.
on the Glen Road track because it was "... cruel and inhuman to put a horse on the race course during such hot weather."  

Other problems encountered by course owners were "fixed" races and illegal racing procedures. A race on the Agricultural Association's track was whispered about as being "sold." The Gazette mentioned that, in a race at East Liberty, the stakes were not given up "... owing to some alleged unfairness in the driving."  

These problems did not hinder the success of horseracing. Some men made racing a fulltime endeavor as jockeys and/or owners. Probably the best known was Felix Laverty who owned racing horses, trained horses, and rode as a jockey for other owners. He rode on race courses and in road races. He was the jockey who piloted M'Cutcheon's horse to a win over Fawcett's "Bob" on the Braddock Road. The Post noted that M'Cutcheon's entry had been "... under the skillful training of Mr. Felix Laverty" and "... it is fair to infer from his well known skill in matters of this kind, that the bay, in his hands, will do some tall pacing." Horses which he owned and rode were "Flat Foot," "Nigger Baby," and "Sallie Ward." He jockeyed at Collin's Park, the Glen Road and the Wilkinsburg courses. He also raced at the New Castle races in 1859, riding both "Riley" and "Harry Neil" to victory.  

Another prominent horseman was owner Samuel Keys. His "Vermont Boy" lost to Laverty's "Nigger Baby" on September 28, 1857, in the first race but his other horse "Bill" took the second race and a purse of fifty dollars. "Vermont Boy" had been highly successful at the Ohio and Pennsylvania Horse Show at Salem, Ohio, gaining three first premiums for trotting racers. The horse at that time was owned by Mansfield Brown of Allegheny. Keys' best horse was "Hawk Eye" who ran some close races with the "Cincinnati crack Walpole."  

Peter Quinnette was in demand as a jockey. Like Laverty,  

123 Ibid., June 29, 1857, No. 221.  
127 Ibid., September 17, 1859, No. 291.  
128 Daily Morning Post, September 28, 1857.  
129 Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, October 15, 1855, Vol. LXIX, No. 47.  
130 Daily Morning Post, July 22, 1850, Vol. IX, No. 1 and Ibid., September 25, 1850, No. 56.
Quinnette rode in road races and track races. He rode Fawcett's "Bob" in the road races. Late in the decade, when some men were making a living from horseracing, another sport which was a source of income to the participants became popular. The sport was prize fighting. Professional and well organized bouts were acceptable to the law-abiding citizenry, but those scheduled in haste between amateurs were not:

Two fast young men got into a difficulty, at the foot of Marbury street, about three o'clock on Saturday morning, and agreed to settle it in regular bruising style. A ring was formed, seconds, umpire and judges chosen, and the "mill" commenced, but only two or three rounds had been fought, when the police interfered, and took the whole party to the watch-house. The parties had a hearing on Saturday afternoon, when the Mayor imposed fines on all, which they paid.

Despite the lawlessness of such an event spectator interest was high:

On Monday evening a bevy of young men repaired to Soho bridge, and indulging themselves, somewhere in the vicinity of the bridge, by participating in a prize fight, either as principles, seconds, bottle holders, or time keepers. Some two hundred spectators are said to have been present, and the scene was disgraceful in the extreme, the contest being a brutal one. We learn that warrants have been issued for the arrest of the parties concerned.

Some of the well known fight personalities appeared in the city during this time. Aaron Jones, a fighter and the trainer of Benicia Boy, the most popular American fighter of the decade, appeared in the city to give a sparring exhibition in August 1859. The performance took place at Lafayette Hall and the sparring partners were volunteers from the city.

Jones and James Sanford opened a sparring school for those "... who wish to learn the 'manly art of self defense.'" It was located in the Lafayette Hall at the corner of Fourth and Wood Streets.

Jones was scheduled to fight Tom Sayers, the champion of England, in Pittsburgh but forfeited fifty pounds and attempted to "... get up a match between the 'Benicia Boy' and the English champion." There is no mention that the fight ever took place in Pittsburgh.

131 Kussart, 41.
While unlawful sports flourished, other sports, which were within the law and also highly popular, made their appearance. One of these, foot racing, mentioned in the '40's, gained more participants and publicity in the '50's. Some took place as part of the program at horse races. Others were run as foot racing programs only. These took place at Birmingham on the south side of Pittsburgh, Troy Hill and the West Commons of Allegheny on the north side of Pittsburgh. Puruses offered to the contestants ranged from five to two hundred dollars. "Dutch" Clark won a purse of one hundred dollars in a race with a Mr. Good on Troy Hill in August 1859. The distance run was one hundred yards and no times were mentioned. Clark raced Kelly Davis in November of the same year over a course of sixty yards at the West Commons in Allegheny for a prize of two hundred dollars. A large group of spectators witnessed the race. The judges declared it a dead heat and the purse was divided evenly. Sam Windle beat a boy named M'Kelvy at the grounds of the Agricultural Association near Wilkinsburg over the distance of a mile. His time of five minutes and two seconds was good enough for the purse of five dollars.

Competitors did not always run for cash prizes. Some ran for the sake of running and others ran against time. The races at Birmingham in 1855 did not mention any purse or prize. There was a two hundred-yard race between Daniel Macafee and Thomas Persley which Macafee won. The "Jersey Pet" from South Pittsburgh beat Macafee the next night by six feet on a course of one hundred yards. A man named Jones, running against the clock, ran five hundred and sixty-one yards in one minute and twenty-five seconds on the same night.

Bowling was a popular indoor sport at this time. At least two bowling saloons were added in Pittsburgh during this decade. On July 19, 1850, C. Glime, Jr., opened one over the stables of Mr. Obey on Liberty Street in the Fifth Ward. The Post stated: "It will be a well managed place for exercise and amusement." Messrs. Quinn and Daily bought the St. Charles saloon on Third Street between Wood and Smithfield Streets. The establishment was equipped with

140 The Pittsburgh Post, August 1, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 250.
141 Ibid., November 11, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 250.
142 Daily Morning Post, July 22, 1850.
143 Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, August 20, 1855, Vol. LXVIII, No. 308.
good alleys, balls, pins and attendants and no liquor was sold on the premises.\textsuperscript{145} The Gazette advised that "... those who prefer this manly amusement can find no pleasanter hall than the St. Charles." \textsuperscript{146}

Another sport of interest to those who sought their amusement indoors was billiards. In 1859, Michael J. Phelan, the United States billiards champion, appeared at the Franklin Billiard Saloon. He played two games with Pinkerton, the Pittsburgh champion. In one of the games, "... Phelan beat Pinkerton sixty points in the hundred, making some beautiful runs." \textsuperscript{147} The game at that time was a mixture of pocket billiards and modern billiards. The table had six pockets and four balls were used. Points were earned by caroms and by shooting the balls into the pockets.\textsuperscript{148}

Interest in developing the body in gymnasiums continued. In 1855, those in favor of establishing a gymnasium "... on an extended and complete scale" \textsuperscript{149} met at the Merchant's Exchange. All persons who were "... fond of sport that is conducive to health and physical development" \textsuperscript{150} were invited to attend and subscribe to its support. At the first meeting George E. Arnold was elected chairman and Thomas F. Wilson was named secretary.\textsuperscript{151} No mention is made of the development of the planned gymnasium.

The Pittsburgh Polytechnic Gymnasium Association, in 1857, purchased a large room above the livery stable of R. H. Patterson on Diamond Street near Grant Street. M. V. B. Harding was elected president; A. W. Gazzam, vice-president; E. S. Ulman, secretary; and F. Van Gorder, treasurer. A constitution was drawn up and plans were made to engage the services of teachers of fencing, boxing and gymnastics as soon as the finances of the Association would permit. Equipment was to be purchased to meet every form of gymnastic exercise.\textsuperscript{152}

Membership in the Association grew and in 1859 the officers were attempting to lease the city hall for eight hundred dollars for use as an additional gymnasium.\textsuperscript{153} The Post noted: "The Gymnastic

\textsuperscript{145} Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, July 4, 1856, Vol. LXIX, No. 270.
\textsuperscript{146} Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, July 17, 1856.
\textsuperscript{147} The Pittsburgh Post, August 8, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 256.
\textsuperscript{149} Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, August 31, 1855, Vol. LXIX, No. 9.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., September 14, 1855, No. 21.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., September 15, 1855, No. 22.
\textsuperscript{152} Pittsburgh Morning Post, October 20, 1857, Vol. XVI, No. 6.
\textsuperscript{153} The Pittsburgh Post, September 22, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 295. There were over one hundred members in the Association at this time.
Association is a flourishing institution — free of debt, and with thirteen hundred dollars in the treasury." 154

The large population of German citizens helped to build and maintain interest in the gymasia. The Post mentioned a gymnastic exhibition to be given by the Roman Brothers in which the "... Turners of the city will take part." 155 The Turners' grand national celebration was held in Pittsburgh in 1856. The Dispatch presented the following description of the upcoming festival:

The German Turners of the Union are to have their next annual celebration in this city, beginning on August the 26th, and, closing on August the 29th with a grand ball. There are expected to be in attendance delegations from all the Turner Societies of the United States, with the exception perhaps of some Southern Societies, which bolted against the Turner Union on account of a resolution adopted last fall, by which the Turners declared themselves opposed to slavery and its extension in those Territories. The Turner Society of Cincinnati, consisting of six hundred members, will probably send the largest delegation, numbering over a hundred young men, with a train load composed wholly of Turners.

There will take place at this festival not only physical exercises, by which the Germans are so renowned, but also mental exercises, by Dissertations, Declamation, etc., giving the whole a strong resemblance of the Olympic exercises of the Greeks in olden times. The victors too, on this occasion as then will receive prizes and wreaths of laurel from the hands of the twelve fair ladies. The physical exercises will partly consist in exercising with swords, and rifle shooting.

The main features of the festival will be the following:

Tuesday, Aug. 26th — Reception of the delegations at the Railroad Depots. In the evening brilliant torch light procession with music.

Wednesday, Aug. 27th — In the morning, official welcoming of the guests by the speaker of the Turnverein of this city. In the afternoon picnic excursion to some point in the neighborhood. In the evening grand concert, vocal and instrumental.

Thursday, Aug. 28th — Parading through the streets of the city — excursion to the place selected for physical exercises — speech — exercises on various instruments — dinner. In the evening mental exercises, music, singing, etc.

Friday, Aug. 29th — Excursion as on day before — physical exercises of the Turn scholars, prize contests with swords, and prize shooting — distribution of the prizes. In the evening grand ball.

The Turners of this city, who of course are to make the arrangements, have selected the City Hall for head-quarters and Denny's Grove, near Lawrenceville, for the exercises. Young's celebrated brass band of twenty-one skillful musicians is engaged for all the time of the festival.

The Germans of this city and vicinity particularly will have a pleasant time of it: all the societies, principally the glee clubs, (Gesangvereine) joining their Turner brethren! But it is expected that not only the Germans will participate, but also other respectable citizens. The arrangements will be made with great care and there is a strong hope that this festival will do something toward uniting the foreign-born and native population, and will remove some of the prejudices which too long have separated the different national elements, destined to form but one great freedom loving American nation. 156

154 Ibid., October 6, 1859, No. 307.
155 Ibid., July 2, 1859, No. 224.
156 Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, June 28, 1856.
Shooting matches received more publicity in this decade. Most of the matches took place between members of the military companies although some matches were arranged for the civilians of the area. Gold and silver medals, costing about twenty-five dollars, were awarded to the soldiers. The civilians usually competed for prizes of money. Areas in which the matches were held were McKees Rocks, Allegheny, Denny's Grove in Bayardstown, Linden Grove and Negley's Valley in East Liberty. The prizes were awarded on the basis of the best shot or the best three shots.

Sports for those who were "interested in agricultural matters" were mowing, ploughing and reaping matches. Premiums of cups, medals or money were awarded for the best performance in the opinion of the judges. A ploughing match on General Larimer's farm near East Liberty, consisting of fifteen competitors for five premiums, resulted in the judges awarding not only the premiums, but also two dollars to each of the contestants "... on account of the ploughing being so well done." A farm on which mowing and reaping matches took place was the farm of James Kelley in Wilkinsburg. Silver cups and medals were awarded to the winners who came from "... different parts of the country."

Coon hunting was first recorded as a popular sport in Pittsburgh in 1850. Throughout most of the United States, during the latter part of the '40's, "... hunting was becoming a sport rather than a necessity." The Morning Post noted in 1850 that:

Coon hunts have become quite fashionable of late. The local editor of the Gazette is the nimrod on most of these interesting occasions. He is now getting up a hunt, to come off next week, in the Diamond. The coons have been engaged, and will be on the ground.

On the basis of the number of participants and spectators, the most popular of all sports during the '50's, lawful and unlawful, were boat racing and cricket. Boat racing was mentioned often in both the '40's and the '50's, but no mention was made of cricket until 1850.

158 The Pittsburgh Post, August 15, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 262.
159 Pittsburgh Morning Post, October 13, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 312.
161 Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, July 8, 1856.
162 Daily Morning Post, November 9, 1850, Vol. IX, No. 95.
163 Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, June 21, 1856.
Boat races took place on the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers. Courses on the Allegheny ran from the Hand Street bridge to the foot of Herr's Island and back;\(^{166}\) the St. Clair Street bridge to the Bayardstown bridge and back;\(^{167}\) the St. Clair Street bridge to the Belvidere House;\(^{168}\) the St. Clair Street bridge to the Mechanics Street bridge and back, a distance of one and one-third miles;\(^{169}\) and the Belvidere House to the Sharpsburg bridge and back, a distance of two and one-quarter miles.\(^{170}\) One course existed on the Monongahela and this ran from the Monongahela bridge to Saw Mill Run and back, a distance of three miles.\(^{171}\)

Rowboats consisting of four or eight oarsmen, plus a coxswain, were widely used but flatboats and sculls, lighter and built for speed, became popular in the last half of the decade.\(^{172}\) A scull boat, built by M. F. Cassidy of South Pittsburgh for the Atlanta Barge Club, consisting of two pairs of sculls for four oarsmen and one coxswain, was twenty-five feet long and weighed sixty-seven pounds.\(^{173}\) Compare this with a heavier four-oared rowboat with space for a coxswain, built by the Union Club, which was ten feet long and weighed one hundred and sixty pounds.\(^{174}\)

Boat clubs such as the Fashion Club had been in existence before the '50's. During this decade many clubs were organized. Some of the more active were the Wave, Diamond Alley, Union, Undine, Keystone, Eclipse, Port Perry, Fisherman, Atlanta, and Irwin clubs. The Fashion continued its active participation in the races. The successful clubs employed well trained crews.\(^{175}\) Most crews came from members within the clubs but some sought outsiders to row their boats in important races. In the race for the championship of the city in 1859 between the Daniel Boisol, the Undine, and the Robinson, the winning boat, the Undine, was oared by members of the Fashion and Port

\(^{166}\) Ibid., August 22, 1850, No. 27.
\(^{168}\) The Pittsburgh Post, July 11, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 231.
\(^{169}\) Pittsburgh Morning Post, August 19, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 265.
\(^{170}\) The Pittsburgh Post, July 11, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 231.
\(^{171}\) Pittsburgh Morning Post, October 12, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 311.
\(^{172}\) The Pittsburgh Post, August 8, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 256: "The result of this race indicates the great superiority of shell-boats over the ordinary rowboats."
\(^{173}\) Ibid., August 23, 1859, No. 269.
\(^{175}\) The Pittsburgh Post, October 11, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 311: See also the August 8, 1859 issue which stated that the reason the crew of the Darling lost their race to the Woodward and the Gullet was that her crew were "... young men who are not accustomed to rowing, clerks, &c."
Perry crews. In a race in which fifteen to twenty thousand dollars changed hands, the winning Roberts was pulled by the Port Perry crew and the Josephine by the Fisherman crew.

Some crews wore their own distinctive garb. The Boisol crew wore pink shirts; the Undine wore white shirts; and the Robinson also wore white shirts. The Woodward crew was attired in pink shirts with blue and white caps; the Gullet crew in pink shirts; and the Darling crew in blue pants, white shirts and red caps.

While some clubs built and outfitted their own boats or employed someone in the city to do it, others went as far as New York to secure a good boat. One of the clubs purchased an “elegant rowboat called the Patnam, recently built at New York” in 1856. Three men of the city, Messrs. Hush, Nimick and Reymer, in 1855, purchased a “magnificent rowboat” in the East. The owners of the Josephine, after her loss to the Roberts in 1859, sent a messenger to the East to purchase a boat that would beat the Roberts. The Post, in the same year, noted that: “The Undine Barge Club have procured a new shell boat from the East.”

Races were run under the auspices of the Row Boat Association which set forth a list of rules and appointed judges for all races. Two types of races took place. One was the challenge race in which one boat challenged another or other boats. The other was the regatta in which any number of boats took part without any specific challenge.

The races were usually planned well in advance and expertly run. Each race had at least one judge and a starter. The large regattas employed more. The Belvidere regatta of 1859 had four judges and two umpires. These were split into two teams of two judges and one umpire with one team stationed in a skiff at the starting point and the other at the finish line in the eight-oared barge Albatross. A regatta held between the two scull boats, the Woodward and the Gullet, and the rowboat Darling also had more than one judge in attendance, for the Post mentioned that “... one of the judges, after reading the rules

176 Ibid., July 11, 1859, No. 231.
177 Ibid., November 9, 1859, Vol. XVIII, No. 21.
178 Ibid., July 11, 1859.
179 Ibid., August 8, 1859.
181 Ibid., September 8, 1855, No. 16.
182 The Pittsburgh Post, November 11, 1859, Vol. XVIII, No. 23.
183 Ibid., October 11, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 311.
184 Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, July 21, 1856.
and bidding the crews 'make ready,' cried 'give way' and the race began." 187

The prize for the winning boat in a challenge race was usually in the form of money. The Fashion, Grey Eagle and Black boats of the '40's were joined in this decade of the '50's in the challenge races by many new boats, most of them four-oared and employing four crewmen and a coxswain. In addition to winning the purse, the winning crew was usually treated to a dinner by the losers. Many of the dinners were eaten at the Belvidere House, an inn on the Allegheny River which was popular with boat club members. At least one time the only prize was a dinner and the Post noted that:

The stakes were small, being only a supper, which was discussed at the "Belvidere House" by the antagonist crews and their friends.188

Regattas were not run for prizes of money but for a stand of colors. The boats entered were usually eight-oared and manned by a crew of eight plus a coxswain. The Undine was crowned champion of 1859 after beating the Boisol and the Robinson over the Belvidere course. They were presented with an American flag and a silken streamer bearing the words "Champion — 1859." 189

Many spectators attended the races in any type of weather.190 The race between the Roberts and the Josephine on the Monongahela was witnessed by "... an immense conourse of people assembled on the bridge and the steamboats." 191 The Gazette, in 1856, advised that "... a large crowd will doubtless witness the exciting amusement" 192 of a boat race. A reporter for the Post, attending the race for the championship of 1859, found:

... a large fleet of boats, comprising at least one hundred eight oared barges, four, six, and two oared row boats, skiffs, scows, dug-outs, &c., all of which had been laden with spectators. The canal packet Jenny Lind had also gone out full freighted and many came over from East Liberty, Collins Park, Sharpsburg, and Lawrenceville, in buggies and on foot, so that at the appointed hour an immense conourse of people had gathered ... 193

187 Ibid., August 8, 1859, No. 256.
188 Ibid., July 11, 1859.
189 Ibid.
190 The Pittsburgh Morning Post, September 21, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 293, in reporting the results of the race between the winning Putnam and the Barclay, stated: "Notwithstanding the rain, a large conourse of persons assembled on the wharf to witness the contest."
191 The Pittsburgh Post, November 9, 1859, Vol. XVIII, No. 21.
193 The Pittsburgh Post, July 11, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 231. See also the Pittsburgh Morning Post, October 12, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 311, stating the race between the Buckeye and the Flora Temple was witnessed by an "immense conourse of lovers of the regatta."
The events were “spiritually contested.” Some were so spiritedly contested that:

Two Row Boats, the Buckeye and the Minstrel, ran a race on the morning of the Fourth, from the St. Clair street bridge to the upper bridge and back, for a purse of fifty dollars. When they returned, the Buckeye coming in a good deal ahead, some one suggested that the race was “sold,” which called forth some insulting language, and the consequence was that a general row ensued in the water, in which several participated. Bruised heads and bloody noses was the result, but the matter was settled without getting into the hands of the police.

The races were looked upon with favor by the local press. This fondness exhibited by the press probably aided the popularity of the sport. The Post, in 1850, made mention of a “grand and excellent boat race,” and called the race between the Wave and the Grey Eagle “... one of the prettiest and most exciting races ever witnessed on the Monongahela river.” The Gazette, referring to an upcoming regatta, said, “... those of our citizens who are fond of the beautiful, will have a chance of gratifying themselves.”

The sport of cricket also gained popularity through the press.

The game of cricket ought to be encouraged. It is the most healthy and respectable game under the sun, and we think if more young men would play at it, there would not be so many sallow faced, care worn countenances.

It also mentioned that:

The game of cricket, we think, is a very healthful and respectable amusement, and if young men would occasionally devote a day to such recreation, they would have less occasion for medicine.

The Gazette called cricket “... one of the most healthful” of outdoor sports.

Cricket came into existence in Pittsburgh in 1850 when a team of the nine best players of the local cricket club met a team consisting of eighteen other players on the Commons in Allegheny for a supper. The Post noted that: “The novelty of this match should draw a number of spectators.” The team of eighteen won the game, 155-120.

194 Pittsburgh Morning Post, August 24, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 269. See also the Daily Morning Post, August 20, 1850, Vol. IX, No. 25, in which: “The race was quite spirited...”

195 Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, July 8, 1856.


198 Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, September 8, 1855, Vol. LXIX, No. 16.


200 Ibid., September 4, 1850, No. 38.


202 Daily Morning Post, September 4, 1850.
LOCAL MATTERS.

THE CRICKET MATCH—ELEVEN OF PITTSBURGH AGAINST ELEVEN OF ALLEGHENY.—This contest came off on the Allegheny Common, on the Fourth, in the presence of a large number of spectators. It was a very exciting affair, as the cricketers of the two cities never appeared against each other before. There were more players on this side than in Allegheny, so it was agreed that the Alleghanians should have the choice of two of the Pittsburgh party to make the sides even. They accordingly chose Wm. Jarvis and J. Cliff. The play commenced by the Pittsburgh men giving in first, but who were soon put again by the excellent Bowling of Mr. Morris, scoring only fifteen matches the first inning. The Allegheny men then went in and scored thirty-two. The Pittsburgh men come in and made an excellent play, scoring seventy-one. The Allegheny men again took the bat and with a good deal of cautious playing, they rubbed off the score but not until their last man was in, and he being an inferior player, they had great doubts of winning, but at last they rubbed them off amidst the cheers of the spectators, who had gathered round them shouting “Hurrah for Allegheny.”

The game passed off very quietly and all seemed satisfied. A booth was erected on the ground where all sorts of refreshments were served. The party left the ground for Mr. Marietta where they partook of an excellent supper. After the cloth was removed Mr. Morris was unanimously called to the chair. At a late hour the company enjoyed toasts, when a vote of thanks was passed to the chairman.

We understand that the cricketers of the city will meet on this evening for the purpose of forming a club. Into their intention to challenge the players, east and west, Allegheny county against the Union!

Resumé of the first recorded cricket game in Pittsburgh between Allegheny and Pittsburgh.
Another match was played a week later at the same place by a team from Pittsburgh and a team from Allegheny for a supper and a purse of one hundred dollars. The teams consisted of eleven players each and the Allegheny team was victorious.¹⁰³ A match consisting of nine players against eighteen for a supper was scheduled for Dr. Denny's field in Bayardstown but had to be cancelled when a team from Pittsburgh, consisting of the best eleven players from the Pittsburgh and Allegheny clubs, left for Cincinnati to accept a challenge from the Union Club of that city.¹⁰⁴

The challenge was for one hundred dollars and the visiting club, Pittsburgh, was under no expense during their stay in Cincinnati. The secretary of the Cincinnati club wrote: "We should be very happy to see you, and will do our best to make you comfortable. While you stay here you shall be under no expense." ²⁰⁵

Upon the Pittsburgh team's arrival aboard the Buckeye State:

... a deputation from the Cricket Club waited upon them, who received them in the most friendly manner, and conducted them to the Walnut street House, one of the best hotels in the city, where the whole of the members of their club waited upon them, and informed them that they were very happy to see them, and that they received them as their guests, and would entertain them with the best their city could afford during their stay, gratis, and that they should not deal sparingly with anything they felt the least inclined to have... The deputation then conducted them to some of the principle places in the city, to the great satisfaction of all, and in the evening, players and friends met in brotherly friendship, at the Walnut street House, where toast and songs, with the best of wishes, were the order of the night; and kept up until the majority of them felt as though they were possessed of considerable property.²⁰⁶

In the match which took two days the Pittsburgh team was victorious, 135-66. One inning was played each day. The score at the end of the first day's play was Pittsburgh 83, Cincinnati 33.²⁰⁷

Most of the matches took two days to play because "... the darkness of the evening prevented the game from being played out." ²⁰⁸ This may have appealed to the players but probably caused some unusual apprehensive tendencies in interested spectators, especially if they had bet a sum of money on the outcome.

The leading club in the city during this decade was the Olympic

²⁰³ Ibid., September 13, 1850. In this game the Pittsburgh entry had a surplus of players and the Allegheny team had only nine. They were permitted to select two Pittsburgh players. They chose Wm. Jarvis and J. Cliff. See facing page for a résumé of this game and p. 74 for the lineups of the Pittsburgh and Allegheny teams.
²⁰⁴ Ibid., November 1, 1850 and November 4, 1850.
²⁰⁵ Ibid., October 21, 1850.
²⁰⁶ Ibid., November 20, 1850. For the lineups and tally of this game, see p. 76.
²⁰⁷ Ibid., November 14, 1850.
²⁰⁸ Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, June 12, 1855, Vol. LXVIII, No. 250.
CRICKET.

A spirited game of Cricket was played on the 6th of July, on the Common, in Allegheny, between eleven players of Allegheny city, and eleven of Pittsburgh, which was won by Allegheny, after a very hard contest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allegheny</th>
<th>Pittsburgh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Innings</strong></td>
<td><strong>2nd Innings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>John Rogerson, b Mr.</td>
<td>0 do b Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thelwell, do C</td>
<td>0 do b Haworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Johnson, c Cliff</td>
<td>0 do c Jarvis</td>
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<tr>
<td>H Nannett, c Jarvis</td>
<td>0 do b Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>J Jarvis, b Morris</td>
<td>0 do b Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Killeenlee, b Morris</td>
<td>0 do b Jarvis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Hunt, b Morris</td>
<td>0 do c Kimberlee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huney, b Jarvis</td>
<td>0 do run out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haig, b Morris</td>
<td>0 do c Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leighton,</td>
<td>1 do b Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilkinson, run out</td>
<td>4 do</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyre,</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<th>Allegheny</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1st Innings</strong></td>
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<td>Morris, leg before</td>
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<td>wicket</td>
<td>4 do b Johnson</td>
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<td>Haworth, b Wilkinson</td>
<td>4 do c Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>W Jarvis, c Hunt</td>
<td>6 do b Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Cliff, c Thelwell</td>
<td>4 do not out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Honey, b Johnson</td>
<td>3 do not out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Halley, b Johnson</td>
<td>0 do run out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Windly, b Johnson</td>
<td>0 do b Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberlee, c Johnson</td>
<td>4 do b J. Jarvis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, b Wilkinson</td>
<td>4 do c Wilkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowling, b Wilkinson</td>
<td>1 do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalewil, b Wilkinson</td>
<td>0 do</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyre,</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>11</td>
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Allegheny winning by one run and one wicket to go down.

Lineups and tally of the first recorded cricket game in Pittsburgh between Allegheny and Pittsburgh.
which was made up of the best players from Pittsburgh and Allegheny. Organized in 1854, the team competed against teams from other cities. Players who were not good enough to play for this team formed the Old Allegheny County Cricket Club. This club consisted of about twenty members and played its matches on the Allegheny Commons in back of the Penitentiary.\footnote{Ibid., June 29, 1855, No. 265.} They were scheduled to play the Olympic in 1855 at Craft’s Grounds but no record of the match was found.\footnote{Ibid., August 23, 1855, Vol. LXIX, No. 2.}

A rivalry developed between the Olympic and the St. George Club of Cleveland. The Olympic won the first game played in 1854\footnote{Ibid., July 21, 1855, Vol. LXVIII, No. 283.} but did not play as successfully after that. The 1855 match was played at Cleveland and a large delegation of spectators accompanied the team on its special Ohio and Pennsylvania train. The *Gazette* confidently stated that the club would “... meet with a welcome reception at the hands of the ‘Forent City’ boys.”\footnote{Ibid., July 25, 1855, No. 286.}

The “welcome reception” was not received, for, in addition to being badly beaten, the Olympic Club stated that “... the treatment they received is the subject of anything but eulogy.”\footnote{Ibid., July 30, 1855, No. 290.} The *Cleveland Herald* responded to this, declaring:

The Pittsburgh Cricketers, perhaps, thought the Mayor should have given them an official welcome, and tendered them the freedom of the city in a “gold box!” From our own observations, and that of others, they certainly appeared to enjoy the freedom of the city “in a number of horns.” One reason offered as an excuse for getting so badly beaten at play, was a “drunk” of the night previous.\footnote{Reprinted in the *Daily Pittsburgh Gazette*, August 2, 1855, Vol. LXVIII, No. 293.}

The bad feeling engendered by this match did not sever relations immediately between the two teams for they met again in 1856 in a game which “... resulted adverse to the Pittsburgers.”\footnote{Pittsburgh *Daily Dispatch*, October 11, 1856.} This game ended the competition between the two clubs although the Olympic attempted to renew the series in 1857.\footnote{Pittsburgh *Morning Post*, July 18, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 238.}

The team contented themselves in playing matches between teams composed of members of the club on their grounds at Linden Grove.\footnote{*Daily Pittsburgh Gazette*, June 9, 1857, Vol. LXX, No. 248.} This continued for two years. One game was played with an outside club during this time for a dinner. The team was made up of a collec-
Lineups and tally of the cricket game between Cincinnati and Pittsburgh: the first inter-city game played by a Pittsburgh cricket team.
tion of young players representing the Temperance Club.\(^{218}\)

The Olympic Club returned to inter-city competition in 1859. Their first game was played on the West Commons in Allegheny against a new team from Chartiers for a dinner and a cricket ball. The Olympic won sparingly, 119-118. A note of appreciation was offered through the *Post* to the umpires, Richard Brown and John S. Kennedy, "who maintained excellent order." \(^{219}\)

Many new clubs were formed in the area and the Olympic played most of them during this year. Eleven of their players traveled to Washington, Pennsylvania, to compete against nineteen men from the La Grange Club of that city. Concerning the match, the *Post* had boasted: "We can safely trust the credit of our city in their hands." \(^{220}\) Later, in announcing the return of the club, the *Post* stated that the team was "quite chap fallen" \(^{221}\) after a surprising defeat by the La Grange. The Olympic did gain revenge later in the season, winning 163-162 on the West Commons in Allegheny. The *Post* proclaimed: "Our boys were a little too fast for the Washingtonians this time." \(^{222}\)

Nine of the members of the club competed in Kittanning against twenty players from that city. Once again the Olympic was beaten while playing away from home, losing by forty-eight runs. The *Post* offered this excuse:

> It is probable our boys did not do their best. They were so well entertained that they thought it unfair to come away as victors. If the Kittanning boys come here, they may expect to go home badly beaten.\(^{223}\)

Competition with the Union Club of Cincinnati was renewed in this year. The game was played in Cincinnati and the usually optimistic *Post* remarked: "We can scarcely hope for a victory for the Olympics, as they are generally beaten by foreign clubs . . . ." \(^{224}\) Upon their return, news of another defeat and another excuse appeared in the *Post*:

> Our club feels confident that they would have been victorious but that Mr. Chambers, one of their best players, was seriously wounded in the thigh during the first innings, rendering him lost to do good execution afterwards.\(^{225}\)

\(^{218}\) *Pittsburgh Morning Post*, September 17, 1857, Vol. XV, No. 290.

\(^{219}\) *The Pittsburgh Post*, June 17, 1859, Vol. XVII, No. 211.

\(^{220}\) *Ibid*.


\(^{225}\) *Ibid.*, August 23, 1859, No. 269. For mention of other injuries occurring in local cricket matches see the *Daily Pittsburgh Gazette*, September 22, 1855, Vol. LXIX. No. 28: "On Thursday, while the Olympic Cricket Club
Two members of the Olympic Club played a novelty match in this year with six members of the St. George Club at Oakland. The latter club was made up of a group of young men, aged fourteen-to-twenty. Messrs. Earle and Sproull represented the Olympic in the game played in Irwin's Meadow in Lawrenceville. The Post noted that Earle was "... a very good bowler," but no account is given of the results of the match.

Other teams consisting of young players joined the St. George in competition during this season. Some of these were the Atlanta, Duquesne and Young America clubs. Although the teams were composed of young and relatively inexperienced players the Post found that they had "... a number of good players." The Atlanta defeated the St. George and was immediately challenged by the Duquesne and Young America for a "friendly match." No mention is made of any matches played with teams of young players outside of the Pittsburgh area.

Both cricket and boat racing were engaged in by men who could afford the cost of equipment and membership fees. It appeared that most of the sports during this decade which were lawful were activities which required some capital in order to engage in the sport — bowling, billiards, boat racing and cricket. While the gambling aspect was present at boat races this usually took place among the spectators and not the competitors. Such sports as horseracing, cock fighting, dog fighting and hog worrying could be engaged in by almost anyone re-

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227 Ibid., July 1, 1859, No. 223.
228 Ibid., July 15, 1859, No. 236.
229 Ibid., June 28, 1859, No. 220.
230 Ibid., August 15, 1859, No. 262.
wardless of personal wealth. All were illegal and were engaged in mainly for personal monetary gain.

Mowing, ploughing and reaping matches were engaged in by owners of mowers, ploughs and reapers for fun and little profit. Holding these matches on one's farm appeared to be a quick and expedient way of getting one's ploughing or harvesting done.

Foot racing and prize fighting were two sports in which one could participate either for the sake of competing or for material profit. Financial status certainly did not determine who would compete, for undoubtedly men of all social strata took part in the two. Professionals and amateurs were competitors in each. While both could compete legally in foot racing, the sport of prize fighting was accepted by the judicious as long as the professional was the competitor. Amateur prize fighting could result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

The 1850's had seen the development of new and interesting sports. The public appeared to enjoy the newly employed liberality toward sports exhibited by the enforcers of the law. Many sports which were illegal were witnessed and participated in without fear of fine or imprisonment. Gambling, sometimes in huge sums, accompanied most sporting events. Two classes of sports had been developed: the legal class for the wealthy and the illegal class for those without much money. Both were accepted.