

THE WORLD OF SPORT

The new candidate for the highest honors in the pugilistic prize ring is a man that was comparatively unknown two weeks ago or until that four-round bout with James J. Corbett, the so-called champion heavy-weight of the world. Springing from obscurity he is now made the subject of conversation in sporting circles the world over and is regarded as a "comer" in every sense of the word. J. W. Naughton, the sporting editor of the San Francisco Examiner, who is probably the best judge of Corbett's condition and his powers, thinks that he has retrograded since his fight with Mitchell, and that in a finish fight with Sharkey the latter would win. He thinks that Sharkey will be the next champion.

Sharkey began to box professionally in Honolulu in 1893, whipping Songley, Thompson and Pickett in short order, and also having the better of an eight-round draw with Nick Burley, the Californian light heavy-weight, who, a short time back, was knocking out second-raters in great shape in Boston. After these contests Sharkey journeyed to the coast, and in '94 whipped two or three men, among whom was J. Gardner, claiming to be the heavy-weight champion of the English navy. Gardner claimed a ten-round draw with Ted Pritchard of England, when that boxer was in his prime. The first thing Sharkey did to attract much attention, however, was his knockout of Australian Billy Smith, before the Colma athletic club of California, July 25, 1895. Smith is another of those light heavy-weights, and is not particularly easy for anybody. Last November Sharkey met John Miller before the same club, and after a slugging match of nine rounds the police stopped the fight, and the referee decided in Sharkey's favor. In an eight-round draw with Alex Greggins, he showed he was a degree too tough for the latter and had the fight gone on a few more rounds Greggins would have been knocked out. On the 16th of last March he met Joe Choynski for eight rounds. As in his fight with Corbett, he stood up while blow after blow was showered upon him, without effect, however. This fight was also declared a draw. Sharkey was born in Ireland in 1872, stands five feet three-fourths inches high and in fighting condition weighs 180 pounds. He has the dimensions of a gladiator and the strength of an ox.

Corbett and Sharkey have signed articles of agreement for a fight to come off sometime within the next six months for the championship of the world, \$10,000 a side and the largest purse offered by any club or individual. The South African fight promoter is after this fight, but it is doubtful if any offer from him will be accepted unless he shows pretty plainly that it would be possible to pull off this fight in El Paso or any other place that he might choose. El Paso again has the fighting fever and wants another trial. If Sharkey knocks Corbett out, as is generally conceded, unless the latter improves greatly in the next six months, he will have to best Fitzsimmons before he can be called champion without dispute. Then there will be Smith and perhaps Choynski will want a trial at the championship game.

New York bicycle policemen are jubilant over the fact that they will be given an opportunity to test their speed against "scorching coppers" of other cities in a track competition at the race meet for the New York Herald's Ice Fund, to be held at Manhattan beach on July 25. The New York "scorching cop" feels that he is the superior of any blue-coat in the coun-

try on a wheel. His speed on the road-way has never been questioned. In several instances where he has been called upon to suppress a racing man who showed "scorching" speed on the roadways or drives the "cop" policeman on a wheel has never failed to run the lawbreaker down. The belief of the men on wheels is shared by the police commissioners, and they are anxious to do everything possible to make the race a success.

Though he has been twice defeated by Fitzsimmons, Peter Maher has very little regard for Fitz's fistie abilities, and thinks him about the easiest of all the big men. In an interview with "Macon" recently he was asked, "Were your eyes really as bad as reported?" "I was in a bad way sure enough," he replied. Continuing, he said: "The space around the ring was enclosed with white canvas that was very trying on my eyes, and back of the canvas the cliff was almost as glaring. But the worst of all was the covering of the floor of the ring. The naked boards would have been bad enough, but they stretched white canvas all over the ring and it was as trying as snow. As true as I am a mortal man I couldn't see Fitz plainly, so as to judge my distance, even when we were standing up, talking to the referee, before we shook hands. Ordinarily I am a very good judge of distance, but I give you my word of honor, except when he clinched me, I wasn't certain, at any time, whether he was within reach or a yard beyond. I fought at random, like. Had I been able to see him plainly I would have put him out in the first round, for the two cracks I gave him on the head, they tell me, had him half groggy for a moment and had I been able to see him plainly I would have welted him for keeps without doubt." This coming from Maher has not much weight, however, with the public. But the fact cannot be denied that the canvas and the glaring cliff had a great deal to do with his defeat. While it is hardly probable that Maher could put Fitz out, even while in the best condition, he certainly could make a better showing than he did when they last met.

The subject of '97 improvements is pretty young, but it is nevertheless just what the manufacturers are most concerning themselves with at the present time, says the "American Cyclist." The prevailing standard will be carried along another year—perhaps for all time—but progress will be manifested in betterment of details, and the term "details" is comprehensive enough to include matters sufficiently large to come under the head of novelties and innovations. Although riders have as yet had but comparatively little experience with the larger tubing introduced this year, its superiority to the small tubes of the past has been made plain, and its use will be continued. The machine is more rigid, there is less "winking" of the frame and a resulting saving of the rider's strength. A general change in spokes may be regarded as a possibility. There is, in certain quarters at least, a tendency to return to the straight spoke. Deference to fashion seems to have been the main incentive to the universal adoption of the bend at the hub, but from the mechanical standpoint the bend has never been regarded as an improvement.

According to the common belief ball bearings have come to stay. They have, and then again, perhaps they haven't. Nothing known equals the "spinning" quality of the ball bearing carrying an unweighted wheel, but that is not saying that something may

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