

A FIVES MEET ON BOXING DAY.

BY C. R. BLACK.

One evening in the season of 1929 the Old Alleynians played the Old Blues at Rugby Fives at Dulwich College. The game was good, and afterwards thirsts were great. The Old Alleynians do not allow their opponents to remain thirsty, however, and we were told to make haste over bathing and dressing as the Inn closed at 10 p.m. sharp.

In spite of our efforts we did not arrive until 9.30, but the half-hour at our disposal was most enjoyable. Pipes were lit; beer and conversation flowed. So enjoyable was it, indeed, that standing afterwards in a circle outside the Alleyn's Head somebody said it was a pity we could not play in the afternoon, and spend all the evening in the "Head." Somebody else with a wider vision said it was a pity we could not play in the morning, and spend the rest of the day being sociable. "Couldn't we play on Boxing Day," was a suggestion, and within a week the first of what was to become an annual fixture was definitely arranged.

issue is decided. Then they congratulate each other on their play, for nobody else will, and so to a steaming bath. Now they feel at their best—they have earned their beer. Now they can indulge themselves for the rest of the day, and have the feeling that they deserve it. As they stroll down to the "Head," they are at peace with the world.

"Good morning Gentlemen." The proprietor of the "Head" is waiting at the door—he knows that it is Boxing Day, and that a score of thirsty men will visit him, and he is very interested in thirsty men. Tankards are raised to our hosts, and all agree that it is a great day, and will be so for years to come.

A Photographic Note.

After considerable consideration we thought it wise to name everyone from left to right, as we were unable to decide, in the case of Mr. Rimmer and Mr. Schlund whether they graced the back or the front row. Many famous players are here present. There are Messrs.



Photo by

R. P. Jonas. G. R. Rimmer. W. Schlund. F. K. Truman. K. W. Millage. J. G. Pettifer. F. A. Vogler. J. H. White. M. E. Disney. A. H. Buck. D. E. Smith. D. H. Ratcliffe. J. Battersby. L. H. Way. S. Bloomfield. A. E. Alexander. C. R. Black. E. W. C. Lewis. C. W. Newstead. V. U. Oldland. T. E. Elvy.

Sydney S. Walbridge, 37, Gipsy Hill, S.E.19.

On that occasion we turned out eight a side, though nowadays twelve a side is usual. Nobody knows who won—nobody cares. We had a fine game, and rumour has it that for the first time in its history the Alleyn's Head nearly ran dry. Those of us who had not any domestic ties then had lunch at another Inn, at Brixton. The remainder of the day was not lacking in incident, and we decided that this match should take place every year without fail.

So, if you are ever in the neighbourhood of Dulwich at about 11 a.m. on Boxing Day, you will see two dozen men making their way in twos and threes to the Fives Courts. They look a little tired perhaps after the Christmas Day festivities, but see them ten minutes later! Dressed only in shorts and vest, for even the fittest peels his sweater after a few points, these young men become masses of energy. They hurl themselves about the court, and thrash that little white ball unmercifully, till at last the

Black and Millage, who once again proved the worth of their partnership by reaching the final round of the Rugby Fives Doubles Championship. They are standing far enough apart in the photograph, however, as are another famous pair, this time an Alleynian one, Mr. Truman and Mr. Smith. Close to Smith is Mr. Battersby (with only his head showing), a great player who now lives and works in Manchester and a consequent great loss to Dulwich. Mr. A. H. Buck (Old Blues) standing in front of Mr. Disney, confines too much of his attention to Horsham, while next to him on his right is Mr. Vogler, one of the keenest Fives players the game can ever wish to know. At the moment he has his hands in his pockets but he is a lion in the court. Almost on extreme left is Mr. Rimmer (Old Alleynian) who does as much for his club as Mr. Millage does for the Old Blues; this is saying a good deal, for the game would be a great deal poorer if it should lose either of them.