

## A FIFTH BATTALION SPORTS DAY

**F**OR fifty days the men of the Fifth had not had a bath. Life had been one continual round of working parties and trench duty. Everyone was "fed up." More than that, they were seriously in need of relaxation. So a Sports Day was organized.

Everybody entered with a will into the arrangements for it. The Battalion was taken to a rest camp, far enough from the firing line so that a shell from the Germans was not very likely to interrupt the proceedings—and there they sported. Baseball, football, boxing, wrestling, all had a part in the programme, which extended pretty well over three days, concluding with a concert. As it happened, the days chosen for the sports were August 3rd, 4th and 5th—the anniversary of the declaration of war, which provided additional reason for a celebration.

For men who had been working night and day, and not getting regular sleep, the various events went off with a "zip" that was surprising. The baseball games, tug-of-war and boxing events were perhaps the most popular numbers on the programme, with transport races a close second. The baseball games were a touch from home, and the men gathered along the base lines and "rooted" themselves hoarse,—as much for old times' sake as because of the features of the play. A lot of expressions never heard before at baseball games were used.

"Hey there, you'd better dig yourself in," was the advice frequently given to the batters as some particularly speedy

pitcher "wound up," and launched the sphere at the batsman's head.

"Duck your nut, 'Tiny,'" they would shout at the lanky pitcher as the man at the plate sent a line-drive whizzing past his ear.

If the pitcher was wild, he was not told he had a glass arm, but: "What's the matter with your windgauge? Better raise your sights a bit for the next one."

The umpire, of course, as usual, got his share of heckling. But it was not the usual thing. Instead you would hear: "Gott strafe the Umpire," "Heave a bomb at him Jerry!" "I know what's the matter with him—he wants an Iron Cross."

Little scraps of "pidgin French" might also be heard.

"Na poo runs," they would say when the side was out. "Yes, you'll hit the ball all right—après la guerre," to the opposing batters; or: "No bon for soldat,—compris?" when the pitcher was working in good form.

Corporal Dominy showed himself the best man in the Battalion with the gloves, winning the heavy weight championship. Pte. Gabby's sportsmanship in the middleweight event won favourable comment from everyone, and his death since has been mourned by the whole Battalion. Pte. Cave won the light weight championship after a fast and clever bout.

"A" Company had a hard fight with "B" in the tug-of-war, but finally dragged them over the line. The greasy pig caused disappointment by failing to show sufficient activity. He was too easily caught, and for that reason was