

# TABLE TENNIS



THE OFFICIAL  
ORGAN OF THE

ENGLISH  
TENNIS



TABLE  
ASSOCIATION

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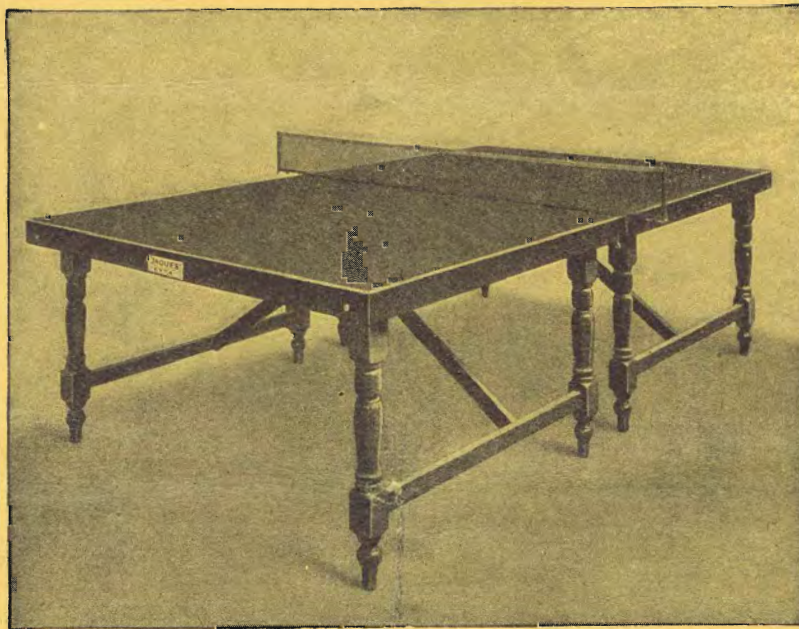
NOVEMBER, 1937

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# TABLE TENNIS

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE

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VOLUME III. No. 2

NOVEMBER, 1937

THREE PENCE

## WELCOME TO OUR PATRON

*"THE KING has graciously consented to be Patron of the English Table Tennis Association."*

This notice from the Court Circular has set the final seal of favour on our game, and table tennis players not only in England but all over the world are highly sensible of the great honour that has been paid them.

Table tennis has made big strides before. With His Majesty as Patron, there can be no limit to the heights to which the game can rise.

\* \* \*

**T**HE gesture is a typical one from a sportsman King who from the days when he graced the courts of the All-England Club at Wimbledon has never lost touch with the games-playing interests of his people. It is also, we feel, a mark of the personal interest in our game taken by the Royal Family.

His Majesty himself has recently resumed the game, of which he was an excellent player some years ago. Most afternoons he takes half an hour or so of exercise at the sport in an ante-room of his personal quarters at Buckingham Palace.

His opponent is usually one of his personal secretaries or an equerry, and with the quickness of eye which put him in the first flight at tennis, the King is an excellent player. Like all really enthusiastic table tennis players, he has perfected a shot peculiarly his own, which, made with exceptional timing and judgment, is said to be very nearly unplayable.

An official table has also been recently installed for Princess Elizabeth at Balmoral.



*The King in his Wimbledon days.*

**A**MONG the many congratulations received by the English Table Tennis Association from playing nations abroad were two from France and Germany. Monsieur R. Parent, of the French Association, writes: "In congratulating you, we are ourselves extremely happy that our sport of Table Tennis has received so great an

approbation, and we shall not let slip the opportunity of informing our clubs of the honour."

British table tennis, too, feels a deep sense of indebtedness. Our happiness would be complete if this Patronage should prove the forerunner of a Royal visit to the World Championships.

\* \* \*

**T**HE Hungarian Secretary writes: "All players in Hungary greet with joy the news that His Majesty, the King of England, has granted his patronage to you and we fully feel the importance of this matter and what it means to our sport. We relate with joy that the news has been communicated to our people through our Press and on our radio."

\* \* \*

From the heights we have now reached we look back upon the road we have travelled. No sport has such a romantic history and we remember the pioneering efforts of those few enthusiasts who so laboriously worked to found an Association in 1926. Eleven short years ago! And now there is interest in every country in the world. The game was born in England and in the traditional home of sport it is peculiarly fitting that our King should, in his person, represent the sporting characteristics of the Nation.

His interest is no mere formality. He is not only a sport-follower, he is an exponent. We are particularly proud to know His Majesty as a keen player of our own game and it is, therefore, with special warmth we welcome him as our Patron.

From The

**SECRETARY'S CHAIR**

Will all League officials please take immediate steps to send in the matter for the Official Handbook? Unfortunately, a number of Leagues do not hold their annual meetings until the middle of October—making it very difficult for us—but as soon as officials are elected the necessary information can be forwarded, and again I appeal to all concerned to co-operate in this matter.

The Wilmott Cup. Particulars of the draw will be found in this issue. There were complaints last season when the final could not be arranged until May 1st. The A.G.M. decided that the rules should be strictly observed, and all entrants are asked to arrange, and complete, the matches in the time laid down.

In the next issue of the Magazine it is proposed to run a column for clubs wanting new members to advertise briefly. At Head Office we get hundreds of enquiries weekly, but it is very difficult to recommend a suitable club, although we know that numbers of clubs want new members. Individuals wanting clubs can also advertise, and will be able to state the kind of club they require, standard of play, &c., and, in the big towns, the district they want. Rates will be cheap and those interested should write to the Magazine Secretary.

Finger Spin. The Advisory Committee of the I.T.T.F. at their last meeting in Paris considered the English wording of the new rule, especially "Knotty Point No. 4." It was unanimously agreed that the following wording would meet the desires of all countries and it has been circulated and will be voted upon. It is almost certain to be agreed and, therefore, likely to be enforced in all major tournaments:—

"Hand spin in Service. Any form of spin in service imparted by any agency but the racket is prohibited. Umpires shall, in any case of doubt, in the first instance in each match warn the server, declaring a 'let,' and recommend him to serve with serving hand open and flat, fingers straight and together, thumb free. In any subsequent case of doubt arising through failure of the server to do so, the umpire shall award the point to the striker-out."

**"TABLE TENNIS"**

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**To The Ultra-beginner****Grip and Footwork for the "Home Player"**

No. 2

**H**OW do you grip your racket? The correct way is as the illustration on the cover of this magazine. Let the bat rest comfortably in the palm of your hand, gripping the blade with the first finger and thumb.

When hitting a low, chopped ball on the forehand side of the racket the thumb is brought down and the finger is pushed up. This turns the bat slightly, enabling you to impart "topspin" (of which more anon) to the ball with greater ease. With the use of the backhand the reverse follows—thumb up, finger down. There is no hard and fast rule as to the exact position of the finger and thumb. This can only be learnt by getting the "feel" of the ball; but make sure that a free and easy motion of the wrist and arm is always possible.

When in play, grip the bat firmly. It will be found that, with practice, the backhand and forehand change of grip will become purely instinctive. Try, as much as possible, to keep the blade of the bat above the level of the wrist. This is the golden rule which should never be ignored. There are certain shots which necessitate holding the bat in a vertical position, blade downwards; but until you are a player approaching the class stage, this contingency will not arise.

**F**OOTWORK, one of the most important aspects of the game, is a study in itself. No matter how perfect your stroke-play may be, bad footwork will render your game comparatively ineffective.

Barna, the most perfect player yet seen, is an epitome of grace and agility at the table. Haydon, England's leading player, with his unorthodox grip, owes his success almost entirely to the attention he pays to his footwork.

An enormous disadvantage suffered by thousands of people who play only at home is that they are in a confined space, and in the majority of cases the table is smaller than standard. One immediate result of these drawbacks is that the feet are inclined to be in one position throughout the game.

*This is a fatal habit, and if persisted in will not only prevent further improvement, but will completely ruin what game you have when you come to play on a full-size table.*

**W**ELL then, what to do? The obvious answer is "Join a club!" This is especially applicable to youngsters. It is most desirable for them to have experience of club and league play, and the younger they are when they meet superior players, the

better it will be for them. The Association will supply information as to the whereabouts of any club in any district in England.

Back to footwork, always be on the *qui vive*. Stand so that you are ready and in a position to run backwards, forward or sideways at a moment's notice. Remember that table tennis is faster than lawn tennis and bodily movements must be correspondingly quicker.

Be determined from the start not to let a ball pass you without making an extreme effort to retrieve it. If the lady of the house casts significant looks at the carpet, wear rubber shoes. In any case they are more comfortable.

Bear in mind the importance of the position of the feet and body in relation to the stroke being played. Details will be given when describing the various strokes in later articles.

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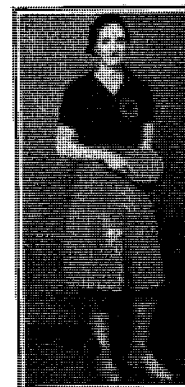
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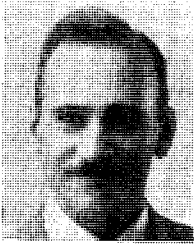
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# Improve your Game

## No. 2.—THE FOREHAND DRIVE.



M. A. Symons.

**T**HE attacking stroke most often in use is the forehand drive. It is the natural way to hit the ball really hard—an irresistible attraction to almost every player.

I am not going into any description of how the forehand drive is executed or what the correct footwork is. It is assumed that your forehand stroke is of a fair average club standard, and is your strongest attacking stroke. You expect a certain amount of success from it and if your opponent keeps on getting your pet shot back—well, you blame his defence or say to your clubmates that you can't understand what's happened to your forehand to-night!

You don't really think that. You are either secretly depressed at your attack not being as good as you thought, or you make up your mind to try to improve it.

Where do you start? First of all try to realise, when you hit one off, exactly what happened to the stroke just before. A real hitter has the feeling that his hit should never go off, or if it does it is his own fault (against a defensive player). It is *your* fault you miss. When do you miss?

\* \* \*

**H**ERE are a few examples of missed forehands and the reasons:—

(1) You have made a good hit and really expected to win the point with it. When the ball comes back into play, you, who have not watched your opponent, are not quite in position for his return. This does not deter you from trying to repeat your stroke, which you do from a slightly wrong position—*i.e.*, you don't move quite enough to right or left, or else you realise (too late) that you must move, but your lateness in starting leaves you too little time to execute your shot properly. You hurry it, and it goes off.

Fault: temporary lack of concentration on the ball, through thinking you had won the point before the rally was over.

This is one of the most frequent causes for a player not being able to keep up a regular series of drives. You should *always* play as though there was a chance of your shot being returned.

(2) Failure to recognise that your opponent has made a difficult return to you.

Two people are playing the game so don't keep on making up your

mind how you are going to make your next shot and then make it, no matter how the ball comes to you. If, for instance, your opponent suddenly makes an extra heavy chop return, you should be able to notice this, grade your drive down a little in speed, and concentrate on lifting the ball.

A sudden heavy chop is often deadly because of this lack of observation by players.

No matter that you are ready to make a really hard hit; speed is all very well, but banging the ball into the bottom of the net doesn't help to win the game. Get your drive on the table. The chop return is more difficult than usual. Treat it as such, and play the *easy* shot to it—a slower drive with more top spin.

(3) When your opponent places his return well wide of you, you should first of all *move towards where the ball is going*. Get into position first and *then* make your drive. If there is then time to get in a hard hit, all right, but very often it is hopeless to attempt it, and you must be contented with a medium-paced top spin stroke. A slower drive is better than a lost point.

It is also much better to do this than to alter your mode of play. Often by a quick move across and a slower drive, you can keep on the attack, whereas the awkwardness of your opponent's return may tempt you to make a poke shot (which is probably what he is hoping for).

You must recognise that you can't just "bang" your opponent off the table with your drive. Weak players will give weak returns in plenty—you can hit away merrily against such stuff—but against players with a fairly accurate defence

with

M. A. SYMONS,  
the well-known coach.

you must have *control* over your own attack. Opportunities for making winners will come along sooner or later, but don't throw points away trying to make them off good returns.

(4) When you have come right up to the table and leaned over it with your hit, and it is returned deep to you, your first movement should be to step back and recover position. Too many players neglect to do this properly or try to make another hard hit when they are half off their balance.

Step back and make a slower drive because you have been caught at a disadvantage. A chop return off a hard hit from well inside the baseline usually comes back fairly fast, and you will not have time to do more than make a medium-paced top spin reply to it. Your opponent's return has been a very good one, and cannot be treated lightly.

\* \* \*

**A** WORD to defensive or all-round players who would like (or think they would like) to become good hitters. They frequently fail because they forget that the good hitter is prepared to make (say) 12 attacking strokes for a point, just as the defensive player makes 12 chop strokes and thinks nothing of it. When the defensive player takes on the hitter's role he forgets this and thinks he should be able to finish off the rally with six attacking strokes.

No wonder the ex-chopper doesn't make such a success of it! All players play according to their own natural temperament, and you can't force yourself to become a real hitter if you are not one by instinct.

**Next Month.**—*Keeping on the attack. The Backhand Drive and Flick.*

## The Area Trials

The London Area Trials were held on October 17, internationals not being invited. The four players chosen to take part in the Final Trials were: J. Rogers (Woolwich), H. Rosen (London), L. Baron (London), and W. L. Muller (Southampton).

So far as London players are concerned, Muller is a dark horse. He uses the penholder grip and has a terrific hit both sides of the table. His style of play is very similar to that of Deane, of Yorkshire, but (a wail of protest from the North) he hits twice as hard. With the advantage of the lower net, he may be a potential "somebody."

His reactions to first-class players in the Final Trials will be watched with interest. Stennett wasn't well, and left without completing his matches. A decision regard-

ing his ultimate inclusion will be made at a later date.

Rosen was playing very well and won all his matches with the exception of that with Muller. Baron beat Muller, but lost to Rosen; one of the anomalies of table tennis.

\* \* \*

Last minute flash from the Manchester Area Trials.

The four representatives are all "Manchesterians," Davis, Goodman, Stanley and Casofsky. Add to their number Lurie and Cohen and you have a contingent from one town that need some beating.

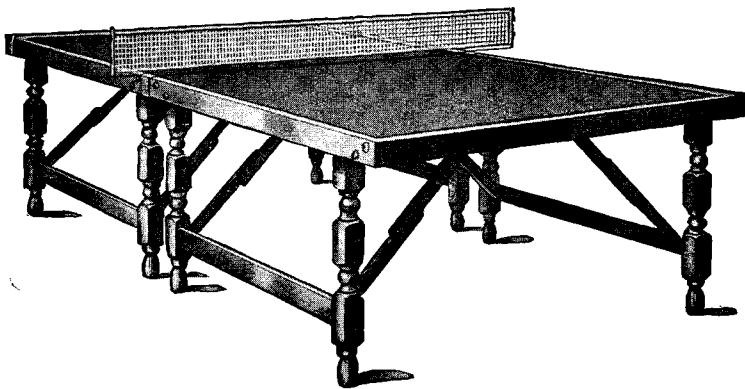
\* \* \*

Results yet to come are the North-East Area Trials, from Leeds; the Midlands, played at Birmingham; and the West of England, played at the Exeter Y.M.C.A.



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# OVER the NET



**T**HE blow has fallen. First issue of "Table Tennis" in its new form and we get a libel action. Or at least the threat of one. Villain of the piece is Mr. G. W. Decker, ex-international, and prominent lighting expert, who comes forward this time to throw light upon our ignorance.

Remember that picture on page 16 last month, of the first international team to play Wales? And the caption "perhaps the diamond shirt-studs dazzled our opponents into defeat?" Mr. Decker (centre, back) wishes to state that the team wore pull-overs to cover the shirts during the games. He calls it a libel, and is making more trouble than somewhat at that.

**W**HICH brings us to the all-important question — women readers please note—of dress, new ruling on which is sending sartorially-minded fans into a grey study. Grey trousers, skirts or shorts are already compulsory in all tournaments—I should think so, Mrs. Grundy! Grey shoes will be compulsory next season, and the A.G.M. showed distinct sympathy with "all grey."

That is, except for the ladies. Glamorous stars of table tennis are not attracted by the idea of any all-one colour scheme, particularly a dead colour. Complexions will suffer by comparison, they say, and after all, what is table tennis without the feminine appeal?

They point to Ruth Aarons' ensemble, in the final at Wembley—blue, gold and green was it?—with which she so dazzled the spectators, and some of the players as well.

This fashion problem is one that "Table Tennis" must look into, and applications are invited for a contact

officer, to get us the women's point of view.

Stop Press! Victor Barna has peered over our shoulder. By special request he gets the job.

**F**OR the first time for years, England prospects in international table tennis are definitely looking up. Reason is the brilliant displays of Lurie and Cohen against Barna and Ehrlich at Skegness. Even Ivor Montagu, cynic of so many losing trips abroad, was looking almost cheerful after reading that Lurie had taken the first two games off Barna, though something of the old disillusionment came back as he read on.

Still, it was a great performance. Both Lurie and Cohen are enterprising attacking players, and the 6-inch net may bring them into their own. Cohen played the best game ever played against Ehrlich in England, and confirmed first impressions by beating Boros in exhibitions which followed. He is really intelligent in his game, which goes further than a good many fancy strokes.

Manchester people are saying that Casofsky is even better than Cohen—which suggests that we might almost make it Manchester, not England, for our Swaythling Cup team this year.

***P**LEASED to hear from Mr. Bromfield, the game's most famous old-timer, and not so very old at that, of the engagement of his daughter Valerie to Mr. J. S. F. Law.*

*Better still is the news that Valerie is to make a come-back in the big tournaments very shortly, after an all-too-long absence from the game.*

**B**LUSH, please! We've been holding off as long as we could, but righteous pride has got the better of us. Last

month's "Table Tennis" was very nearly a world's best seller, and nearly everybody has written to tell us so. All right, all right. We know we're good.

Fact is, this paper had a maximum sale last season of 4,500 copies, and even in our new dress we thought we were flying high in ordering 7,000 last month. On first day of publication every copy was sold out. We had to print another 3,000, which also immediately went, and of a further 2,000 only a handful remain. Wholesalers were repeating orders; leagues, having seen the first copy, are ordering more; and one Fleet-street reporter rang us up specially to say that he thought it was the best magazine he had seen in connection with any sport.

But we hadn't got a fiver on us at the time.

**A**LL right, caddie, find the ball and we'll start! D'you remember that one about the Scottish golfer? You see, a Scottish Table Tennis Association has been formed at last, which gives us a real chance to get off a chestnut or two. Seriously, though, congratulations to Mr. Macwhirter on his appointment as Secretary. His address is 27, Eastwoodmains-road, Thornliebank, Renfrewshire, and we hope you will keep him busy, Scotland.

By a coincidence, which is just the way these things happen, the first letter we opened after this was from a Scottish boy who wants to know why some of the bigger and better players never find their way up to Scotland. Having cleaned up all the local villages, this lad is looking for someone to practise on, but Barna says he's lost his kilt.

(Continued on page 6.)



Five poses of Barna—(1) Forehand, (2 and 3) Backhand, (4) What happened to that one? (5) Getting down to a low one.

# Does Table Tennis Help Tennis?

**F**RED J. PERRY has done more than any other British lawn tennis player to put Great Britain right on the top of the lawn tennis world—more, even, than the Doherty brothers, who at their zenith 30 years ago were practically unbeaten. But in those days lawn tennis, like table tennis only a few years back, was not the world game it is to-day.

How much is Perry's skill at lawn tennis due to his table tennis skill? Does one game help the other, and if so which game receives the greater benefit from the other?

Perry was a table tennis champion before he became the great lawn tennis player he is to-day. As far back as 1927-8 he won the men's National doubles championships with C. H. Bull and they retained that title for three years. He became world singles champion in 1929.

It was not till 1930 that Perry started the lawn tennis world by beating H. L. de Morpurgo in the third round at

by  
**STANLEY N. DOUST,**  
The former Australian Davis Cup player,  
Rugby Footballer and Sprinter, now the  
famous Lawn Tennis and Table Tennis  
Correspondent of the *Daily Mail*.

Wimbledon. The Italian was the champion of his country, and had beaten Cochet on more than one occasion. In 1931 Perry achieved a lot of lawn tennis honours, including his selection for Davis Cup. In that year he played lawn tennis for the London team against Paris in Paris, and during the same week switched to the International Table Tennis Championships, winning the Coupe de Noel against a very strong field.

**T**HE fact that he was champion of both games proves, to my mind, that each game helps the other. In Perry's case I think he owes much of his lawn tennis success to table tennis.

I remember writing about Perry in 1931—during the Davis Cup trial tournament, when he nearly beat H. W. Austin



Mr. Doust.

## OVER THE NET — (Continued from page five)

Still, something might be done about it now an Association has been formed, and we are looking forward to hearing the skirl of the pipes at a world championship. We must have a little opposition to Gilbert Marshall.

**I**RELAND are also in the news with a proposal to amalgamate the Northern Ireland Association and the Free State. This would be a most welcome merger, with great possibilities in the form of an all-Ireland team for the world championships. After all, Irish golf has no political boundaries, so there is plenty of precedent.

Both the present Associations usually find their way very nearly to the bottom of the international table, and the sponsors of the amalgamation plan feel that it would materially increase their strength, and so encourage the game still more. For table tennis, like everything else, thrives on success.

**W**E mentioned last month that the E.T.T.A. were out to "catch 'em young." Their latest is an offer to put the whole of their organisation at the disposal of the educational authorities, with the object of putting table tennis into the schools. Nothing would be cheaper, easier or better than to have a few tables in school halls where the children could play in the evenings, when outdoor sports are impossible.

This is closely linked with the "Keep Fit" movement, and the E.T.T.A. are already in touch with the education chiefs.

Unfortunately, we feel that the first thing will be to teach the teachers, who still call it ping pong, and seem to think of table tennis as something like snakes and ladders.

One offer the Association have made is to let parties of children accompanied by teachers in free to the daytime sessions of the world championships at the Albert Hall.

**O**NE of the big playing problems which we feel the E.T.T.A. will have to tackle shortly is the questions of geographical qualification in the Wilmott Cup and other inter-league competitions. It has not been unknown last season for a "star" player to be in team B, which lost to team A, and then turn out for team A in the next round. It was even rumoured that one player found himself, during the course of the competition, opposed to the same player three or four times, each time for a different league.

This question of qualification is going to be a serious one, particularly if county championships develop. What, for example, will be the status of a Manchester player, member of a league in Lancashire, and of another over the border in Cheshire? Both counties could claim his services.

One of the troubles is that the players themselves do not wish to offend any of the various leagues they may play for, and are unwilling to make a choice, when pressed on this qualification question.

The problem was debated with some earnestness at the London League A.G.M., arising out of the fact that the Wilmott Cup winners were South London, whereas the London League, the premier league in England, were nowhere, such prominent players as Marshall, Filby, Brook, Proffitt or Bergl all choosing to play for other leagues.

in the final—that he produced his lawn tennis shots, especially that almost flicked forehand, as he did in table tennis. I remarked its unorthodoxy, but said for that very reason this stroke, added to his volleying ability, would make him world champion before very long.

Perry's stance and poise on the lawn tennis court are also similar to his table tennis stance and poise.

**T**HUS (taking Perry as my example) as far as strokes are concerned I do believe lawn tennis gains more from table tennis than the reverse. But where I think table tennis receives more help from lawn tennis than it gives is in the matter of tactics.

In both games tactics must be allied to strokes. Watch Barna and other great table tennis champions. They depend on tactical manoeuvres to get their opponents out of position before attempting their winning strokes. But Barna and these champions have had wide experience.

Again, watch young players like Filby, Nicoll and Archer, who were lawn tennis players before they entered the table tennis world. You see them adopting just as scientific a tactical scheme as Barna, but, of course, as yet without his quality of stroke.

They have brought their lawn tennis brains to bear on table tennis, and I dare to say that when these boys (they are all under 21) become more proficient with their strokes, they will do as much havoc to the table tennis stroke-player as Perry did to the lawn tennis player.

Still daring, I think Szabados, Barna and the other stars would be even better were they to take a course of lawn tennis just for the sake of learning the art of strategy and tactics.



# Those New Rules—Barna's View

I SHOULD like to have the opportunity to reply to the article by my friend Gilbert Marshall on the new rules, published in last month's "Table Tennis."

First on the question of finger-spin. You accuse the "continentals," Gilbert, of making the new rule just because they can't take finger-spin services, and you say they have not the ability to do them. In my opinion it is not only the "continentals"—nobody knows how to take a finger-spin. It is just a matter of luck.

You seemed to forget that even your own country—U.S.A.—those who have the biggest advantage from finger-spin—banned it not now, but years ago. They understand, as nearly everybody now understands, that this service has nothing to do with sport, with physical fitness or ability. It is a case of a few days', or perhaps weeks', hard practice.

Perhaps you didn't see what happened at Baden or you would have realised that some of the table tennis was simply ridiculous. I can tell you that after

Baden, the Hungarian Association decided that, if finger-spin was not banned, they would send to London not a team of table tennis players, but five jugglers good enough to make finger-spins.

\* \* \*

ON the question of the lower net, I agree that the 6-in. net allows of many crazy shots, but altogether the new rule improves the game. It does not, in my opinion, favour the hitter so much as it favours the player who has a complete game. In future it will not be enough to have one shot only. Perfect hitting from both sides and a defence is needed.

You, Gilbert, with all due respect, have not a complete game and the new rule will not suit you. You will have to develop the other sides of your game—and I feel sure you will. But I think you must agree that the game will benefit.

I also feel sure that, after a season's experience, everyone will agree that it is for the good of the development of the game.

## London Civil Service Clubs.

### No. 1. LABOUR PADDINGTON.

As the club with which our President, Mr. C. J. Balaam, is most closely connected, Labour Paddington is a most fitting commencement to this series.

The club joined the league in the 1929-30 season, and in two years rose to the Premier Division, where they have remained. The team's record has been a steady rather than a brilliant one, and last season, when they obtained third position, was their most successful.

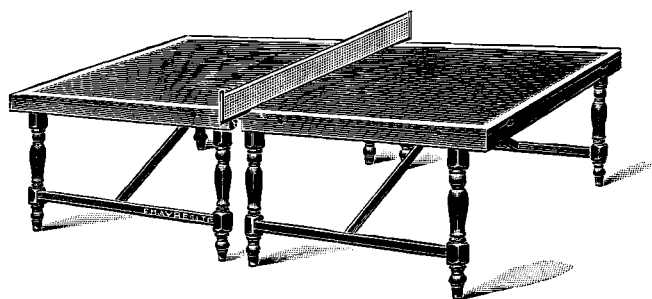
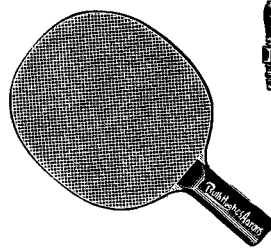
In addition to the men's Premier Division side, last season the club entered a second men's team and a women's team in the bottom Divisions of the two sections of the league. The women's team carried off the trophy for its Division, being defeated only once, whilst the men's "A" team finished third and have risen to the Division above.

### LATE NEWS.

#### WILMOTT CUP DRAW.

As we go to press we have been advised of the draw. Reddish v. Ribblesdale, Nelson v. Macclesfield, Ashton v. Bury, Urmston v. Manchester, Liverpool v. Chester, Southport v. Rhyd, Sheffield v. Leeds, Mansfield v. Grimsby, South Shropshire v. Birmingham, Bournemouth v. Salisbury, Bath v. Exeter, Bristol v. South Devon, North Middlesex v. Barking, Bishops Stortford v. Chelmsford, London v. N.A.L.G.O., Woolwich v. Surrey, Hythe v. South London, Leatherhead v. Farnham, Farnborough v. Slough, Luton v. Uxbridge, Reading v. Thames Valley, King's Lynn v. Ipswich.  
The remainder have byes.

# Ayres for Table Tennis



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*World Championships, 1935 and 1938.***THE TASK — and the GOAL**

**I** WAS one of the small band which gathered together in June, 1934, to consider the problems of the 1935 World Championships. I well remember the remarkable memorandum which was placed before us by Ivor Montagu, and the amazement with which we all listened to the thousand and one things to which we would have to attend.

Halls to be found—no easy task in spite of London's facilities. Twelve tables to be provided, with suitable lighting and run-back. Hospitality to be

found for 200 to 300 foreigners in suitable hotels, interpreters for all languages, since few of these players could speak English. Umpires needed for 400 matches a day, stewards, programmes, tickets, medals, publicity, &c., &c.

We left the meeting at midnight with heads awl.

At once negotiations were started with halls and hotels, and London University and Wembley were fixed. Sports firms were approached, printers were interviewed, and all the machinery generally set in motion.

Then we called a meeting of the "fans." How many of those who were present remember that first gathering in the Board Room of the Memorial Hall, when plans were discussed so enthusiastically?

Duties were allocated, committees appointed, and that historic world championship was on the way.

**I**T was at that meeting that one of our oldest and most cautious members said quietly: "I have listened very carefully to all your plans and suggestions, but could you tell us from where the money to pay for all this is coming?" We had scarcely thought of money in connection with our ambitions! An evasive reply was given, and the money

found, though how must still remain a secret among the members of that "inner circle."

The methods were honest, but with what palpitating hearts we watched the sale of tickets, and what relief we experienced when we saw the queues outside the Imperial Institute!

I was appointed referee of the championships, and look back on a hectic time of meetings, interviews and negotiations. Afterwards it all seemed unreal.

During ten days of the actual championships—or rather ten days and nights, since during that time we hardly slept—history was made. Thirty-two thousand spectators for table tennis. The Wembley Pool packed, and, most important, recognition by the Press and the public of the game as a serious sport.

**N**OW we are already in the midst of preparations for another world championships. The path laid in 1935 is making it easier for 1938. We have taken the Albert Hall and Wembley, and this has simplified what was our greatest problem. We are now assured of support. We still have our financial doubts, but we know the "fans" and the public will rally round us. We are, however, facing administrative problems,

and it may be interesting to readers to know what they are.

First, and most important, we have to provide ideal conditions. Tables, balls, lighting, run-back, flooring, &c., must all be above complaint. No word of criticism must be heard afterwards "that so and so would have won if..."

There will be four tables, divided by netting, on the floor at the Albert Hall. Above them 52 lights will be lowered from the roof. In the gallery of the hall there will be seven tables. Special flooring, lighting and netting will be provided for each. Dressing rooms have to be fixed up, notice boards to give results to players and spectators; offices, telephones, microphones and loud speakers.

A pretty job, this, for the equipment committee.

**H**OSPITALITY. Some two or three hundred players and officials will be reaching London from all parts of the world on Sunday, January 23. They will come at different times and to different stations. They must be met, their luggage attended to, and then they have to be escorted to their respective hotels.

Interpreters must be found, and instructions given about the tournament the next morning. There must be no late time keeping, or the schedule of play will be upset.

There must be no excuse on grounds of ignorance, so each nation must have its interpreter, or officer, to look after

it. During the week they must be helped and advised, and we must see that in every way their stay in London is completely happy. We must remember they are our guests, we the hosts. This job for the hospitality committee.

**T**HEN we have to get the crowds there, and that means publicity. We have to tell everyone what is going on, and when it is going on. Prices of tickets, who is playing, and all the other details that people should know. Circulars are issued to clubs. Posters and

By

**J. M. ROSE,**

Referee, World Championships  
in London, 1935 and 1938.

appeals must be sent, and each one needs an envelope addressing. There are 5,000 clubs. Can you imagine what it means addressing 5,000 envelopes? I didn't before I tried it, and neither did 50 other people who helped.

Then, when you have finished one 5,000, you get a call from W. J. P., "another 5,000 by next week." And so on until the time of the tournament.

Press circulars are sent out. Printers' proofs and designs revised, tickets printed and recorded; entertainment tax accounted for; ticket enquiries answered; monies carefully checked, banked and balanced. Excursion trains arranged; interviews with the railway companies; another circular.

The Secretary is adamant. "We must have another 5,000 envelopes by next Friday." Forward the publicity committee.

**T**HERE remains the organisation of umpires and stewards, medals and programmes; the arrangements for the draw; the advising of players; a hundred and one incidental arrangements with all and sundry.

That is just a little of the task of running a world championship.

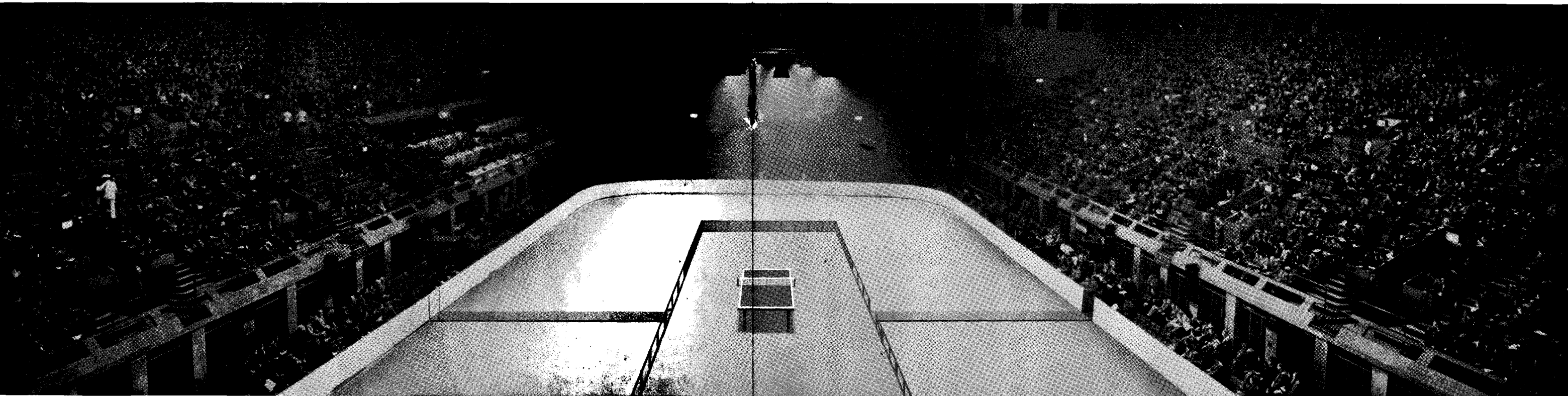
After my experience as referee, in 1935, I was able to apply the lessons I learned to the English championships in 1936 and 1937. I think it can be agreed we have got better and better.

Other organisations running similar affairs almost invariably have at their disposal a paid full-time staff, with all the advantages in efficiency that that means. We depend solely upon the spare time of our players who volunteer out of enthusiasm for the game.

We are intensely proud that in 1935 no single individual was paid for work done. I am sure it will be the same in 1938, because I am now in a position to call for volunteers and am certain that the response will be great.

If you have any special qualification—if you have a car to place at our disposal; if you speak languages, or if you wish to volunteer for umpire or steward, will you write to me at once?

Come along, everybody, for the success of the 1938 world championships.



*The Empire Pool and Sports Arena, Wembley. Venue of the Finals of the World Championships, January 29th, 1938.*

# Are Trousers (Be)coming?

Miss Dora Emdin sets a new dress style.

**M**Y postbag mentions a number of problems worrying women players.

The first, not surprisingly, is dress.

The all-grey suggestion does not find favour. It is pointed out that if we decide on all-grey we shall have to decide the shade of grey. But the problem of colour has been put into the background by the sensational step taken by Dora Emdin, who played in the Home Counties in trousers!

I think this is the first time a prominent English player has followed the example of the Americans. I thought she looked very nice, and Miss Emdin tells me she finds "them" much more comfortable than shorts or skirts.

Problem No. 2.—Is it better to practise with men or women? There is a definite conflict of opinion. I believe Margaret Osborne thinks it better to play with women. Others think that playing with men is good for defence only, as practising against hard drives makes it easier to take the smashes of women in matches and tournaments. I shall be glad to receive, and to publish, the views of other women players.

A third problem—Why has Manchester never provided a Corbillon Cup player when they have provided no fewer than five in the Swaythling Cup? And what can be done about it?

**R**EFERRING to my note about Exeter, Miss Joan Vickery, the energetic Secretary of the Women's Club, tells me that they have increased their membership from 17 to 45, play on three tables, and have formed a league in which the club have four teams. They have a new player of 17, Joan Brock, just joined; already "wipes up" all their members. I shall be glad to have news of other clubs for women only.

**M**ANCHESTER is the only town in the country with a separate women's league. Already matches have been fixed with Liverpool, Macclesfield and Blackpool. The league committee are to discuss the question of coaching and are expecting great things of the Lancs. Open, when entrants from all parts of the country will have an opportunity of talking over developments.

**L**IVERPOOL women are going great guns this season. The league decided, hesitatingly, to form a women's section and have been surprised at the

response. "Billy" Stamp, the popular Secretary, tells me 12 teams have entered, and expects this will be considerably increased next season.

Misses Malley and Doolan are winning their league games, but Ivy Pollitt, from whom big things were expected, has already been defeated, although it is only fair to say that she was recovering from the effects of 'flu. Freda Lasker, after being out of the game for two years, is playing again, and the sisters Thora and Phyllis Moss have been joined by another—Vera—three very promising players.

**B**IRMINGHAM "City" Club, champions for the past four years, may not be so strong. Peggy Vaughan, the Inter-City player, has resigned, and another, Betty Steventon, cannot turn out regularly. There are 32 teams in the women's league, and it is interesting to note that Birmingham have never lost a women's match.

**I**HAVE to apologise for a mistake which crept into my article last month.

It was Miss Beasley, of Swindon, who was capped, not Miss Jones. Perhaps I was anticipating the honour for Miss Jones. As her record proves, she well deserves it.



E. J. Filby.

## ABOUT OUR BEST PLAYERS.

No. 1. E. J. FILBY. By H. H. Bridge

**S**OME six years ago, at the Southfields Central Hall, a table tennis match was in progress between the first and second teams of the boys' club. In it, the dream of the underdogs was coming true—the second team were beating the first.

This soon became an accomplished fact, for which the E.T.T.A. must be duly thankful, for one of these second team boys was destined to become a leading England player—Eric Filby.

Hearing of the Wimbledon T.T.C., Filby thought they would, no doubt, be pleased to utilise his services. He visited that club one evening—and was beaten by the club "rabbit."

Far from being disheartened, he became determined to get his own back. A leading player in the club was impressed by his possibilities, and assisted him to make use of his undoubted talent.

Filby soon gained a place in the second team—who were not allowed a match with the first team—and after a season or two was promoted to the first team. His greatest trouble was lack of consistency. He scored one or two notable victories, then had some amazing losses.

**I**N 1935-6, still a comparatively unknown player, he won his first tournament, the Surrey singles, from quite an array of prominent players. He quickly followed with a victory in the Sussex men's doubles.

The following season he proceeded to annihilate all opposition—with or without reputations—and won many singles and doubles championships. His comment of "Neat work" became as well known as the "Cluck" of Gilbert Marshall.

Filby gained international status against Wales last season, and was reserve for the Swaythling Cup team. His most memorable moment was when taking the first game from Szabados in the South Londn v. Hungary match at Streatham, while the depths of despair were plumbed when he lost his three matches in an important club match, which meant defeat for his team.

**O**UTSIDE table tennis, Filby is a personality by reason of his success at lawn tennis. He has achieved many notable wins at this game, but one which stands out was his victory at St. George's, Weybridge, at the expense of C. R. D. Tuckey, H. Surface and C. Harris, among others.

He attributes his success to the ability to learn from better players, having self confidence and not being beaten by an opponent's reputation.

He is convinced he can become world singles champion. Good work, Eric. May you become a second Fred Perry.



# Perry, Bull and Haydon—They Knew the Way to Win

IT was ten years ago that we beat Hungary. It is worth recalling some of the circumstances.

When international table tennis started, we fancied ourselves. With the great Percival Bromfield, founder of the modern game, we thought we were pretty hot. But in the first year, in London, the Hungarians smashed us and wiped our best; and left not a shadow of doubt about it.

Still we thought we were good. When Bromfield and others couldn't make the trip to Stockholm, we were downhearted. We took C. W. Allwright, of the Railways and Ealing, then our No. 1; Mase, who was not at the top but had a style that bothered players abroad, and three youngsters. We reckoned we had no chance.

Who were these youngsters? C. H. Bull, F. J. Perry and A. A. Haydon. How did they come to table tennis?

\* \* \*

**BULL** had been playing in competitions 12 months. He had learnt the game in Bromfield's club; that had taught him defence (Bromfield was a hitter—the finest hitter). Then he had practised against his other clubmates. None were any good. He used to give them 15 or 18 start. That taught him grim concentration, never to throw away a point, and never to miss a service. And to go for his winners when they were visible, if he wanted to get home before morning.

Perry had been playing, but not too seriously. As a child some years before, he had seen Bromfield and some others giving an exhibition. He had said to himself: "I will wear that rose." (England's badge was a rose then, not the three leopards.)

He practised, and he ran. He was all legs and swift lawn tennis footwork. We thought little of him. But he was so fast and fast-thinking he was hard to get by. *That was all when he went out, but before he came back the experts said his forehand was the finest shot in table tennis. Nobody had ever seen it before. It just came to him.*

These were 18, but Haydon was a schoolboy of 16. Found by chance, he had never played outside the house of his father, an old champion. He developed his hitting because there was no room to run back and you daren't give the other fellow a chance to hit you. He could hit and hit.

Some day I will tell the instructive story of these players' careers. Sufficient now that when, years later, we

asked Haydon had he been nervous his first time, he replied: "Goodness, no. Why, I didn't know then there was anyone in the world better than me."

We wiped Hungary our first night, and all the night before, travelling, we had had to spend sitting up in the train, because there was a muddle about the sleeping cars. We sang. The other passengers marvelled. Some of them, maybe, felt another way about it. But we sang, and won next night when we never dreamed we would.

\* \* \*

**LET** us look for some lessons. The players were abroad. They were largely inexperienced. The conditions (lack of sleep) were frightful for them. But they fought like wildcats for every point.

Afterwards, the Hungarians said to me: "In future we shall look for such

By

**The Hon. IVOR MONTAGÚ**

players as the English. Not those with the best strokes, but the coolest fighters." (They are not easy to find.)

English players are not like that to-day. I remember at Prague a panic about conditions. The tables were slow; timetable was chaos. Help! Mother!

What happened? The U.S. pair took the doubles. U.S., whom our team had trimmed as novices a short week before! But when everyone else was moaning and complaining, these boys had stuck to it, and gone for it, had seen their chance and allowed nothing on earth to move them. Fine. As they flashed to the top, I thought of our three at Stockholm ten years before.

It is nonsense, of course, to say that players are not handicapped by conditions. Sometimes you can stand out so far they hardly matter. When Barna was young, he never knew what ball he was playing with. Nor Szabados, before he was bald. Mechlovits used to say you could give them a bullet or an egg and they wouldn't notice.

But, of course, different conditions do handicap different games. *But what beats you is not the conditions, but the thought "I should be doing better if..."*

If I'd had sleep. If I hadn't drawn this fellow. If the table was different. If we'd played this match last week. If I were anywhere but here and now.

In fact, if I were home in bed, dreaming.



**THERE** was once a player, who shall be nameless, but she was one of the best players ever. Against the champion of the world she would get to 20-15. Often. But never win.

She had too many friends. You could see, every time she got to 20, she was just hurrying to come back and sit among them and be comforted: "Poor ...! What bad luck again."

She was a nice girl, but you can be too "nice" for this game. There has to be something hard, a shadow of selfishness and ambition in a champion. This is not meant disparagingly. Look at the wonderful and grand types table tennis has been blessed with as champions. It is the quality of self-reliance just a *tiny* bit exaggerated.

What was common in the three boys I have described? All of them had awkward style, lack of all-roundness, plenty of nervousness. But they were as sharp as knives, stubborn as mules, and they meant to get somewhere.

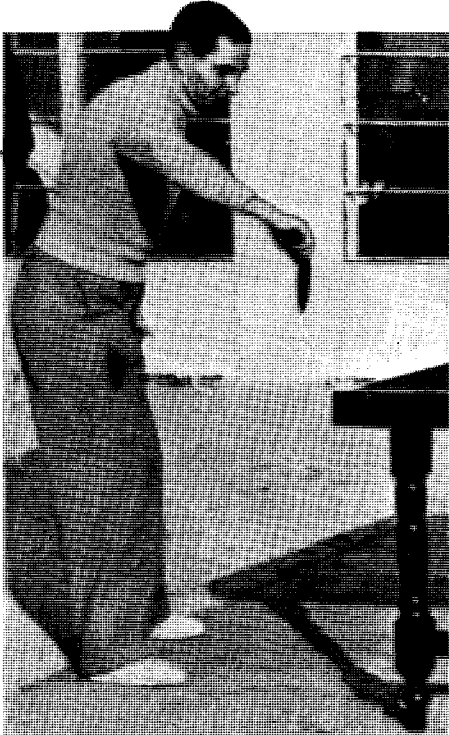
*They were dead keen on the game. They took advice. They made sacrifices for it. They even went to bed early for it. Sometimes.*

Our conditions of modern table tennis, with the public greed for exhibitions, the opportunities for local lordlings to strut it in a limited sun of parish praise, make too many satisfied with half-way progress.

To get there, you must have a touch of the divine discontent. Do not rest pleased with "putting up a show." Be miserable it was not enough. And no excuses; to yourself, at least.

# "Encouraging" Play by LURIE and COHEN

Brilliance of young England "hopes" against Barna and Ehrlich in Eastern Counties Open



Boros in play.

**A**PART from International Championships there has never been such a gathering of first-class players as at the first Eastern Counties Open Championship, at Butlin's Holiday Camp, Skegness.

There were the visitors, Barna, Ehrlich, Boros, Liebster and Miss Kettnerova, and there were our own internationals, Lurie, Cohen, Filby, Marshall and Miss Osborne.

The crowd, ignorant of the finer points of table tennis, wanted spectacle—and they got it. They were still speaking the following day of Marshall's victory over Boros; of Cohen's vain but truly magnificent fight against Ehrlich; of Ehrlich, gloomily shaking his head in profound disbelief as Cohen returned some of his hardest smashes; of the hero of the day, Lurie, who beat Liebster, beat Marshall, and then took the first two games from Barna before he finally was beaten—this in the final.

The organisation, under the secretaryship of Mr. Leslie Bennett, of Grimsby, with Mr. J. M. Rose as referee, was remarkably efficient. Lighting, tables, run-back, side-room, all were good.

It was an interesting tournament in two ways. Firstly, it was an innovation—and a successful one—by a holiday camp. Secondly, it was the first to be held under the new

rules. And here may I say that in my opinion the lower net is an unqualified success. From the players of all classes there was not one chiselling match, from the spectators not one groan. Boros, that most adept half-volleyer, demonstrated the new potentialities of the half-volley. Marshall, with the help of the lower net, showed him exactly where to get off. It is a great help to the all-round player, and is a definite incentive to attack.

Spin services were happily lacking, but there was some argument as to whether or not Marshall's services were legal. Umpires will have to be very careful.

**T**HE first surprise was the match between Filby and Baron, the latter winning in two straight games. Filby was nervous and ill-at-ease the whole time. His forehand drive was consistent, but weak, and his backhand never showed signs of that potency for which

By

Charles M. Hutt

he is noted. In spite of this I take off my hat to Baron. He played with the supreme assurance which won him the game against Kelen in the English last year. His defence was good, his drive was better, but he must do something about that glaring weakness on his backhand if he aspires to international honours.

In a way it was a pity that Filby lost. Had he won he would have played Barna (exit Baron) in the following round, and it would have been interesting to see how he got on.

Then Boros and Marshall. Nobody expected Marshall to win. It was thought that Boros' quick half-volley returns would leave Marshall hopelessly out of position. They were wrong. Marshall won the first game with fierce driving all over the table, but wild hitting lost him the second. In the third, Boros was leading all the way until 19-16, when he vainly appealed to the umpire for foul services against Marshall.

This apparently genuine, but nevertheless ill-advised attempt at retaliation against a service he couldn't take, lost him the game. Marshall, with a "you-wait-my-lad" expression on his face, gave him all he had and took the next five points to win.

Now Lurie and Cohen appeared. What to say of these two is beyond my powers of description. Think of two boys, in-

spired, playing as they have never played before, forcing the pace against two of the finest players in the world, Barna and Ehrlich. The foreigners were more genuinely impressed by their performance than they have been since Perry won the World Championship in 1929.

Lurie first, playing against Liebster. He attacked the whole of the time, using both forehand and backhand. After losing the first game 16-21, he followed up by winning the next two 21-19, 21-15. What impressed me most was that, being one game down, and 18-19 down in the second, he still took the initiative, winning the game with two back-hand flicks down the line. The lower net certainly seems to be waking our people up.

After this came Ehrlich and Cohen; and Cohen positively shone. More cautious than Lurie, he awaited his opportunity, hitting the ball only when he was sure of making it a winner. I think, however, that over-cautiousness lost him the first game, Ehrlich being out of position several times without Cohen pressing the advantage home.

The second game was the best of the tournament. Cohen went mad. He exploited his backhand flick to beat Ehrlich repeatedly. Some of his drop-shots Ehrlich just didn't attempt to play. It wasn't that the Polish champion had a sudden bad patch; but he could only play as well as Cohen would permit.

Unfortunately this super table tennis didn't last through the third game. Cohen eased up, which, against a man like Ehrlich, was fatal. In spite of this easing up, Ehrlich had to press for every point to win 21-17. I can only echo Barna's comment, "That boy is good."

**M**ARSHALL in the semi-final against Lurie, was disappointing.

He overdrove the line and netted frequently, and Lurie won fairly comfortably in straight games. Marshall had considerably curbed his usual barrage of self-revilement. If this is a new resolution, London audiences will sigh for days gone by.

A different matter was the other semi-final between Barna and Ehrlich. It is unnecessary to render a description of the play by these two brilliant exponents. Suffice to say that Barna won, the scores being 16-21, 21-19, 21-15—and the audience yelled itself hoarse. Ehrlich went to join Boros in retirement and contract bridge—at which they make the world's worst pair.

This left, for the final, Lurie and Barna; and here indeed was sensation. Lurie, attacking from the start, took



A group of competitors at Skegness. Left to Right: Gilbert Marshall, Fred Liebster, A. Boros, Miss Osborne, H. Lurie, Miss Kettnerova, Viktor Barna, Eric Filby and A. Ehrlich.

the first two games, 21-20 and 21-17. He played magnificently, and those who knew him say never have they known him to hit harder. His backhand and forehand were devastating, and Barna struggled in vain to parry his smashes.

The similarity in the style of these two was very noticeable. Backhand, forehand, stance, all the same—but there it ended. Barna's footwork and the nonchalant ease with which he plays would show up anybody.

The excitement at this point was so intense that even Boros and Ehrlich left their cards to watch. Boros yelled encouragement to Barna, and chattered excitedly in German to everybody in general. Nobody took very much notice.

However, in the third game, Barna brought out that extra bit of reserve which makes him what he is, and won home at 21-17. That was the end. In the next two he forced Lurie on the defence and simply crashed his way through, to win by 21-13, 21-14; a tragic ending to a brilliant start.

Without any disparagement of Lurie, I must say that he seems to me to be unable to stick for any length of time. He will play really brilliantly and then ease up just enough to enable him to lose comfortably, without too much loss of prestige. But he is young; his game, with a little more punch, is capable of

carrying him to the final in the World Championship, and the E.T.T.A. have splendid material on which to work.

\* \* \*

**M**ISS M. OSBORNE and Miss Kettnerova reached their final without any difficulty, the latter eventually winning in two straight games, 21-17, 21-18. The temper of Miss Kettnerova's play was never

seriously challenged, as Miss Osborne had not been playing at all during the summer, and was hopelessly out of practice to be any serious opposition to a first-class opponent.

One piece of news that may interest the ladies—during the whole of the two games Miss Kettnerova used her forehand drive only five times—I counted them! The rest of the time she chopped and backhand flicked.

Her chop at the moment is not very effective, coming back rather high, but I imagine her backhand will make Ruth Aarons sit up and think—hard.

At the end of the tournament there were speeches, everybody thanking everybody, and Mrs. Butlin presented the prizes. Let up hope that this championship will grow and prosper for many years to come.

#### FINAL SCORES.

**MEN'S SINGLES.**—Barna beat Lurie, 20-22, 17-21, 21-17, 21-13, 21-14.

**MEN'S DOUBLES.**—Barna and Filby beat Ehrlich and Boros, 21-17, 21-13.

**MIXED DOUBLES.**—Liebster and Miss Kettnerova beat Filby and Miss Osborne, 9-21, 21-14, 21-18.

**WOMEN'S SINGLES.**—Miss Kettnerova beat Miss Osborne, 21-18, 21-17.

**WOMEN'S DOUBLES.**—Miss Kettnerova and Miss Osborne beat Miss D. Frost and Miss Standaloft.

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## The Home Counties Championship.

**B**ARNA supplemented his success at Skegness by winning the Home Counties Championship at Whitfields, on October 16, beating Bergl in the fifth game.

The joint secretaries, Messrs. A. G. Honeyman and W. H. Livy, are to be congratulated on the manner in which the Finals were staged. Ample room for the spectators, more than enough room for the players, good lighting, and (organisers, please note), the last ball was hit at 10.20 p.m.

The high-light of the evening was the doubles match between Barna and Carrington and Filby and Rogers. The latter pair, undoubtedly the finest doubles combination in England, attacked the whole of the time, only losing the fifth game through inaccuracy of hitting at 18 all, after being 11-16 down.

Filby, to make up for his failure at Skegness, played superbly throughout the tournament. After beating in quick succession H. Jones, Coles and Bublely, he retired in what might be called glorious defeat before Bergl in the semi-final.

Bergl, in his match with Filby, and later with Barna, demonstrated once and for all that for sheer brains and the ability to

adapt his game to his opponent's disadvantage, he stands head and shoulders above any English player we choose to call first-class. It is suggested that the Association is making "revolutionary changes" in the personnel of the Swaythling Cup Team this year. In spite of this I find it difficult to conceive any reason why Bergl, on his present form, should not be picked.

The ladies were very dull and disappointing, Miss Jordan emerging the victor after beating Miss Woodhead in three games. Miss Woodhead attacked with almost monotonous half-heartedness, not varying her game in the slightest degree. Miss Jordan, though she woke up somewhat in the third game, did not show that standard of play which earned her a place in a Corbillon Cup Team. She has a really splendid forehand drive and kill. Why doesn't she force the pace and employ it to better advantage?

In the men's final Barna brought out everything that was best in Bergl. Both started carefully, treating each other with the utmost respect. Both played for openings, and, seeing them, did not hesitate to attack. Barna won the first game, 21-11. His accuracy of hitting, his almost perfect defence and complete composure was too much for Bergl, and a three-straight-game match was the general forecast. It is to Bergl's everlasting credit that he proved the prophets wrong. He confounded his

critics by taking the next game, 21-13, and again the next, 21-19. The audience was on tenterhooks of excitement and anticipation. A sensational result was in the offing and on all sides could be heard "Can he do it?"

He couldn't! In the fourth game he made his first tactical mistake. He defended and let Barna attack. Barna has met these inspired patches too often not to take full advantage of any easing up. And so it was. The reaction set in, and the result from that moment was inevitable. Barna won the fourth game, 21-14. In the fifth and final game, Bergl made a desperate effort to regain the attack and lost mastery, but it was too late. Five consecutive hits off the table; five consecutive points to Barna, and the title was won. The cheers which greeted the end of the match were as much for the loser as for the winner. Well done, Bergl!

### RESULTS.

Men's Singles: Barna beat Bergl, 21-11, 13-21, 19-21, 21-14, 21-12.

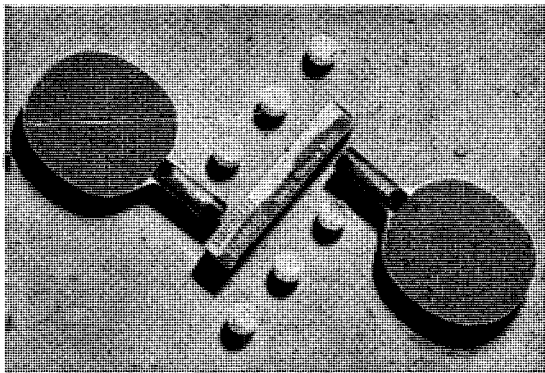
Men's Doubles: Barna and Carrington beat Filby and Rogers, 21-14, 21-19, 8-21, 15-21, 21-18.

Mixed Doubles: Bergl and Miss D. M. Emdin beat Dawson and Miss Wheaton, 21-16, 16-21, 21-20.

Ladies' Singles: Miss D. Jordan beat Miss W. Woodhead, 21-15, 17-21, 21-18.

Ladies' Doubles: Miss Wheaton and Miss Wright beat Miss Jordan and Miss Emdin, 21-15, 21-7.

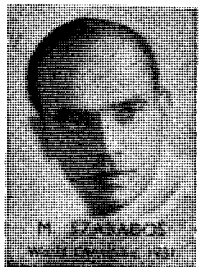
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## FLASHES from the PROVINCES

**DEAR LEAGUE CORRESPONDENTS,**  
 I wonder if any of you realise the extent to which table tennis has grown? If you are in any doubt at all, you should take a look at my league post-bag. Really I'm not just making excuses. It's the largest thing I've seen since Carnera.

Of course we're delighted to hear from you all, but this is just to hope you'll understand if your own district may have had to be disappointed. We'll do our best for you all, but if you don't see that "it" you took so much trouble with, please keep on hoping. We'll try to get it in next time.

For the present, here is something about some of you.

### London.

**T**HE London League will begin its season this month with 140 teams, comprising 15 men's divisions and 3 women's sections. More than 1,500 players have already been registered.

There should be a very keen fight for the leadership in the First Division East. Kingsway, last season's champions, will now have the assistance of M. Bergl, and he, with Gilbert Marshall, should give the club a good chance of retaining the title.

Strong opposition will be provided by the Indian Students and Manhattan Clubs. E. J. Filby has thrown in his lot with the Students, and E. Bubleby and his colleagues will no doubt strive to make their presence felt during their first season in the upper circle.

Prince Albert Club make their first appearance in this division to complete a first-class season.

In the West First Division Wimbledon will not have the services of E. J. Filby, but H. H. Bridge will be available to fill the gap. West Ealing, Kingsway "A" and Croydon should have a keen fight for the leadership. The League is experimenting with four Second Divisions this season instead of two.

### Liverpool.

**T**HE Liverpool and District League now have their full complement for this season. There are 96 teams in the eight divisions (seven men and one women). The twelve teams in the first season of the Women's Division has more than justified its formation, and judging by the keenness and enthusiasm so far displayed, this section will be considerably increased next year.

Liverpool won their first county fixture, beating Durham 7-2 at Durham.

After a hectic car journey across the moors, the match began with D. Foulis and J. Swales in opposition. Don hadn't quite recovered from the journey and lost 21-23, 12-21, but he won his next two events.

R. Hetherington, who was a last-minute selection due to Ken Hyde's hand injury, was a little nervous in his first game and was down 13-4, but he pulled up to win 21-19 and then took the next game at 22-20.

F. Bamford won his three matches and in his last game with J. Middlemiss produced some back-hand flicks that were a joy to watch.

Picton Hall will again be the scene of the Finals for the Merseyside Open Championships on November 27. The earlier rounds will take place on the 25th, 26th and the afternoon of the 27th, and a hall has been booked capable of taking 12 tables.

### Yorkshire.

**O**NE of the big problems facing Yorkshire is how to get the women of the county interested, and, having done that, how to help raise them to a standard of national and international honours.

For the past few years the same stalwarts have always been to the fore—Whitby, Leeds, Sheffield, Pontefract and Hull are towns in point—and such as Miss Rene Stott, Mrs. Hilda Amies, Mrs. Beecroft, Mrs. Best, Miss Gibson, Miss Piercey, among others, have long dominated women's play in the county.

How can Yorkshire improve their women's play? One idea is that of the Leeds League, which allows ladies who have reached a certain standard to compete in men's matches. A case in point is that of Miss Stott, who plays regularly in league matches with Bramley Liberal Club.

The day is not far distant when Leeds will be able to run a Ladies' League and that would be very satisfying to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. S. Carr.

Another suggestion for improving the women's play. In addition to allowing them to play in league matches, why not give them facilities for practising with the leading male players? Two or three nights a week over an extended period cannot but have a beneficial effect upon their play.

### Chester.

**C**CHESTER stars have been falling. In the first match of the season, between City and City Road Presbyterians, were two surprises—W. B. Fitzpatrick (City), the League champion, beaten in two straight games by T. Potts; and R. C. Juler, one of Chester's first five for the last four seasons, beaten by H. Jones two games to one. The City Club, however, managed to draw the match at five sets all, thanks to Miss Guest, who quickly found the form which has made her the women's singles champion for the last two seasons.

Another surprising defeat was that of A. E. Hughes (Y.M.C.A.) by H. Jeffs (All Saints'). Hughes had a lean time last season—he was at one time ranked No. 5 in Chester—but since this defeat he has begun to show something of his old form.

These results go to show how the general standard of play is rising in Chester, and the selection committee had a difficult task in choosing the teams to oppose Liverpool and Liverpool "A."

They decided, however, to stick to the old guard. The first team was chosen as:—J. Devine (Y.M.C.A.), W. T. Moore (Y.M.C.A.), E. W. Allen (City), R. C. Juler (City), R. N. McKee (Y.M.C.A.), reserve—C. Potts (City Rd. Pres.).

The "A" team chosen to visit Liverpool "A" will be—A. E. Hughes (Y.M.C.A.), T. Potts (City Rd. Pres.), W. Nield (St. Barnabas), J. Cadman (St. Barnabas), L. Dutton (County Officers), reserves—P. Powell (St. Pauls), and G. Mealor (St. Pauls).

### Bristol.

**B**RISTOL table tennis selectors are on the war-path.

With a full Western Counties League programme ahead the hunt for new talent is on in earnest.

A big blow to the inter-town team is the enforced absence of Don Parsons by doctor's orders.

Don's place will be hard to fill, but there is compensation in the return of H. S. D. Hutchings, who is expected to be available for the principal inter-town matches.

Young D. B. Shipton, of Central Y.M.C.A. who started the season well with a 21-13 victory over Fred Hipkins, the league singles champion, seems likely to be the chief rival to established contenders for a place in the Bristol team.

Bristol's other boy star—A. W. C. Simons, of St. Paul's, Bedminster—and W. M. Coombe, of Totterdown Y.M.C.A., represented Bristol in the Area Trial at Exeter on Oct. 23, neither Hipkins nor Hutchings being able to travel.

Bristol have entered the Wilmott Cup, but have decided to forgo the Plummer Cup.

Plans are in mind for a dance to develop the social side of the Bristol Association activities.

### Civil Service.

This month has been saddened for Civil Service table tennis players by news of the death of Mrs. C. J. Balaam, the wife of our President. We take this

(Continued on next page.)

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## IN THE PROVINCES

(Continued from page 15.)

opportunity of expressing our deep sympathy with Mr. Balaam in his great loss.

Arrangements for the Association's championships have progressed further, and the entry has now been closed. The large entry for the new junior event and the entrance of members from several clubs not represented in previous years have given much satisfaction to the committee.

The first representative game of the season, with the North Middlesex League, was played on October 28.

### Swindon.

**I**N response to the appeal for youthful candidates for the Swaythling Cup team, Swindon has selected a number of promising players for intensive practice. All are under 21, and two competed in the Area Trials at Exeter. To date, no results known.

Swindon will be actively engaged in the Western Counties League, in which they will be opposed by Cardiff, Bristol, Bath and Ilfracombe.

The draw for the local championships has resulted in some interesting pairings, and

ladies are hoping for challenges from the ladies' divisions formed by Swindon's neighbouring leagues.

The social side is going well, as the first annual dance will be held at the Bradford Hall on the Fifth. They're hoping for a big bang!

### Hartlepoons.

**H**ARTLEPOOLS, while showing the addition of only one ladies' team this season, are well satisfied at having maintained the big increase in membership which they achieved last year.

The Durham County Trials were held in West Hartlepool, and while not favoured with a representative on the Durham County Team to meet Lancashire on October 16, Hartlepoons are hoping to be recognised in this direction soon.

In addition to our usual competitions, there will be held a knock-out competition for juniors, to stimulate interest among the youngsters.

\* \* \*

**O**UTSTANDING among the Salisbury League changes this season is the introduction into the First Division of a three-a-side team playing the best of three games with each opponent. This bears significant relationship to the fact that there will be 11 sides in the division as opposed to six last year.

## Welsh Trials Impressions

by

R. H. WELSH

**T**O guide them in their choice of players to represent Wales against England, the Welsh selectors held a trial at Cardiff. This was confined mainly to players of the South Wales leagues. The North Walians and the exiled Welshmen will figure in a second trial to be held early in November.

In more ways than one the trial must have been a big disappointment to the selectors. Several of the younger players failed to impress, and it appears that the nucleus of the side will be chosen from the old brigade.

D. J. Thomas (Ogmore), the Welsh champion, failed to reproduce the form that won for him last season's title. However, I feel convinced that this very consistent player merely had an "off night" and that we can expect an early return to his best.

Meredith (Aberdare) was outstanding among the younger players and is almost assured of recognition. Undoubtedly a man for the future.

Tom Smith, the Cardiff captain, and the most unorthodox player on view, was in tip-top form. Smith has been overlooked by the Welsh selectors for several seasons, but his time seems to have come.

Dewi Lewis (Cardiff) was also in good form, and in his games with D. J. Thomas he showed us that he has lost none of his hitting power.

Frank Smith (Cardiff) was another player who must have impressed the selectors. He played very steadily throughout, and was probably the most dependable player on view.

The Penarth pair, Cann and Curtain, both did well without being brilliant.

Disappointing were K. Milsom (Cardiff) and T. Thomas (Ogmore Vale), both completely off form. Much was expected of Milsom, who performed brilliantly towards the end of last season. He is regarded as a real hope, and I sincerely trust that his loss of form is only temporary.

## OUR TOUR IN AUSTRALIA

By

MIKLOS SZABADOS.

**K**ELEN and I are now in New Zealand, having just concluded a tour of Australia. It has been a remarkable experience, but our surprise was not so great as that of the Australian officials. We played first in Adelaide, against South Australia, and won 12-0. Fully 1,500 people attended, and then we played at Melbourne, against Victoria,

when 5,000 people attended and more than 1,000 were turned away.

Nothing like it had been seen in Australia before, and the players, spectators and the Press were very enthusiastic.

We then played at Sydney, against New South Wales, 2,500 being present. In Sydney we played in the Australian championships, and all the best players from each state took part. In the men's singles I beat Kelen, who then, with me, won the men's doubles. Kelen and Miss Jacobsen beat Miss Simpson and myself in the mixed, while neither Kelen nor myself lost a game to any home player in the singles or men's doubles.

**T**HE Australian players are quite good, but most of them use wooden rackets and wrong grips. Now I think there will be a change, and I feel that within two years they will be taking part in the world championships.

Apart from the big matches we played exhibitions in the country districts and everywhere we were well received by big crowds. In some places they play tennis scoring, but general conditions were similar to those in Europe. The chief difference was in the doubles, where they served alternately from the right and left court.

This was very disturbing at first, and as the result of our talks with them I am certain they will change to the I.T.T.F. rules, both in doubles and in scoring.

The success of the tour was so great that when we have played in New Zealand we are to return to Australia and do the same tour over again.

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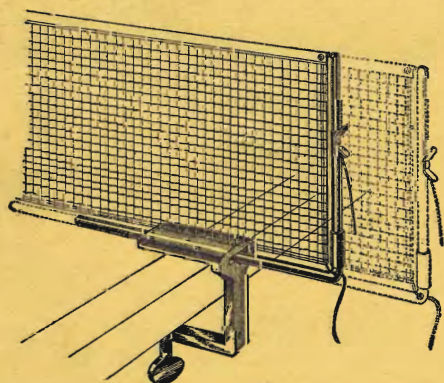
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