

APRIL, 1949

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TABLE TENNIS

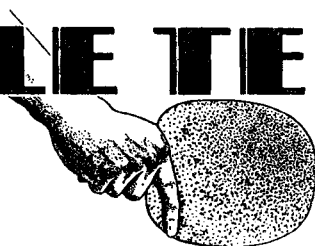
ADELE WOOD
Our
Junior
Champion



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

TABLE TENNIS

Official Magazine
of the
ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS
ASSOCIATION,
69, Victoria Street,
London, S.W.1



Publishers :
VAWSE & WILES
(LONDON), LTD.,
Guardian House,
London, E.17

Edited by JACK CARRINGTON

Vol. VII. No. 8

APRIL, 1949

APRIL. Another season draws to a close. Not just another season, though, but perhaps the greatest season so far, judged from the point of view of English playing performances. We have an English World Singles Champion; we had high placings in both Swaythling and Corbillon Cups; we contest the Challenge Round in both the Men's and the Women's sections of the Europe Cup.

Probably most important of all is the standard of our juniors and our younger players. This season there have been at least a dozen boys good enough to have reached the English junior final in any past year, whilst the girls' event has been a real contest for the first time. And our younger men have shown that they can frighten and sometimes beat experienced foreign internationals of high world ranking.

Unfortunately, with so many great achievements to report and so many claims upon our limited space, we have been able to give but little prominence to the doings of our junior players. This month we have endeavoured to remedy this in some measure and to tell you more about what the boys and girls have done.

TABLE Tennis people, however, have never been much inclined to sitting back and congratulating themselves on past achievements. This year, as usual, April begins a new season of planning for the future. The recent great development of the junior game, for instance, has given rise to a demand for a junior County Championship, and already the County Championship Committee are making plans to meet this demand. Arrangements are also being worked out to enable National junior doubles championships to be organised in future.

Planning is not, of course, confined to junior matters. A system of ranking players is being considered by the Selection Committee; this may well follow the principles of the Soviet system explained elsewhere in this issue. Administrative arrangements, too, are coming under review. The National Executive is drafting a rule amendment to meet the criticism that clubs playing in more than one League at present pay full E.T.T.A. affiliation fees through each League. A Sub-Committee is looking into the playing and administrative arrangements at Open tournaments, about which there have been several recent complaints. The vexed question of umpiring is also under national review. Amendments are being made to the County Championship regulations.

THESE are only a few of the subjects recently discussed at the National Executive. To recount all of them would be tedious, but one other may be of interest to our readers. A demand has been made for a Ladies' Veteran event, and serious consideration is being given to adding such an event to next season's National Championships.

RANKING OF PLAYERS

Could We Use This System ?

by IVOR MONTAGU

Chairman, E.T.T.A.

I WONDER what our readers think about ranking schemes for Table Tennis? From time to time suggestions have been made that we should introduce a system in this country, but the E.T.T.A. Executive Committee has so far always fought shy of one, evidently feeling that it might lead to more grief and misery than it's worth. Some people think of a ranking list as just covering, say, the ten or twenty best players. Others would like it extended to cover all the players in the country.

The French have a very detailed and complicated one of the latter type, providing for inclusion of every affiliated player and compulsory reports from them to a "National Ranking Committee" every time they lose to a player ranked below them or beat one above, and balancing defeats against victories.

Here is a simpler scheme, just issued by the Soviet Physical Culture and Sport Committee to rank Table Tennis players in the U.S.S.R., and embodying the following titles:

MASTER OF SPORT to the holder of any U.S.S.R. Championship title;
any singles runner-up in the U.S.S.R. Championships;
anyone twice singles semi-finalist in the U.S.S.R. Championships in the course of three years;
anyone who scores three victories over Masters of Sport ranked in the U.S.S.R. first ten;
and anyone who in the course of five years is three times included in the U.S.S.R. first ten.

1st CLASS to anyone who in the course of a year scores either 6 victories over 2nd class players; or 3 victories over 1st class players.

2nd CLASS to anyone who in the course of a year scores either 6 victories over 3rd class players; or 3 victories over 2nd class players.

3rd CLASS to anyone who in the course of a year scores either 3 victories over 3rd class players; or 5 victories over unranked players.

JUNIOR CLASS to any youngster who scores 3 victories while taking part in not less than 5 official junior contests.

To maintain a rank once gained you must in the course of the year achieve 2 victories over players of equal rank to yourself or better.

What do you think?

ADVANCING

STEADILY



is this young Surrey player, Miss JEAN MALGET, who has lately won the Kent Open Singles, the South London League Singles and Doubles, and the Surrey Closed Women's and Mixed Doubles. Last year she was junior champion of the Civil Service.

THIS IS YOUR BUSINESS

The Annual General Meeting of the English Table Tennis Association will be held on Saturday, 30th April, 1949, at the Kent Room, Caxton Hall, off Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, starting at 6.0 p.m.

Any member of an affiliated club may attend and may put forward his or her views with complete frankness.

REGISTERED PLAYERS

The National Executive Committee of E.T.T.A. have approved the Registration of the following players (in accordance with the "Regulations for Registered Players") for Season 1948/49.

M. H. Thornhill, 6, Brownrigg Road, Ashford, Mddx. (Staines Lge.)
E. E. Elinow, 57, Colwyn Road, Northampton. (Northampton Lge.)
S. H. Kempster, 122, Ladywell Road, Lewisham, S.E.13. (Central Lge.)
R. N. Greogy, Ballakillingan Lodge, Lezayre, Isle of Man. (Ramsey and Dist. T.T. Club.)
A. H. Shepherd, 42, St. Augustine Street, Bolton, Lancs. (Bolton Lge.)
W. T. Poole, 87, Glendon Road, Erdington, Birmingham 23. (Birmingham Lge.)
D. H. Williams, 46, Ware Road, Hoddesdon, Herts. (Castle Temperance Club.)
E. W. Hyde, 13, South Street, Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire. (Leicester Lge.)

NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN (at Manchester, 2-4-49)

Finals: M.S.: Leach bt. Casofsky —15, 12, 12, 21; W.S.: Doreen Watkins bt. Kay Benson 12, 17; M.D.: Stanley/Casofsky bt. Lurie/Cohen 16, —10, 14; X.D.: Leach/A. Wood bt. R. Rumjahn/Kay May 16, —14, 15; Boys: F. Daly bt. W. PIERCE 10, —15, 18.

REPORT ON YOUTH

LAST year the first Junior International Match was played, our team being Brian Kennedy, Michael Thornhill and Ron Thompson. The E.T.T.A. with this and other measures are drawing forth interest in the youngsters of to-day who will, we hope, be the champions of

by Tommy Sears,
former English International who now
captures the Junior team.



Why **MUST** these juniors
hit so hard?

to-morrow. We want to produce some more players to take their places alongside Johnny Leach, the World Champion, born and trained in England.

When we ask what last year's juniors have done this year, we find that:

Brian Kennedy can still beat all the juniors, but fails against seniors;

Thornhill in singles has not done consistently well, but in partnership with Crouch has a very good doubles record;

Thompson is in the Forces now.

We had hoped for better things.

This year's junior team—Derek Ellison, Louis Devereux and Bill Pierce—put up a wonderful show in Sweden, beating seniors and juniors alike, winning the international match against Sweden 5—1, and out of fourteen other matches, only losing one 5—4 (and excuses could be made for this loss). On their return to England, Ellison won the English Junior Championship, beating Devereux 2—1 in

the final. Devereux put Bill Pierce out 2—1 in the semi.

In the World's Consolation Singles, Pierce beat Kennedy two straight.

We have hopes of these three doing good things in senior play next year.

Apart from these three, we have had a wonderful increase in the numbers of very promising juniors. Ron Baker (Manchester) only just missed being picked; Daly of Bolton has had good wins and is highly thought of in many quarters. In the south, Peter Smith of Essex has done well and seems to be a "hoodoo" to Santer of Manhattan. Lipitch and Isaacs of Middlesex, Feldman of Bedfordshire, Cornwall of Cambridge, Crane of Notts are all playing very well, and young Eagles from Kent shows good promise.

Altogether, the outlook for English Table Tennis is exceedingly bright, if these youngsters make the strides which are necessary in the close season.

Perhaps the girls should have been mentioned first, and here again, if their improvement is maintained, we have in Ros. and Di. Rowe, Shelagh and Adele Wood and Doris Munnings what may well be the English side in the near future. Outside these names, there are a host of others who can make the grade.

Table Tennis champions are made as well as born, and sacrifice of other interests is sometimes necessary. Consistent practice and as much match play as possible; coaching can save young players a great deal of time and put them on the right path, but it is the individual's own exertion that finally makes the champion.

OUR COVER PICTURE

Miss ADELE WOOD, of Manchester, Junior Champion of England for the last two years, was selected for the Corbillon Cup team at Stockholm. She has neat footwork and a smooth all-round game with a slight advantage in defence—not a bad recipe for a keen youngster.

NORTHERNER'S NOTE-BOOK

by STANLEY PROFFITT

Bob
Roberts,
of
Liverpool



MANCHESTER'S GREAT SEASON

MANCHESTER, renowned for its rain, is making a stand to regain its renown in the table-tennis world.

Maybe the players are not the giants of the pre-war era, but their bulldozing to the final stages of the Wilmott Cup and Rose Bowl has inspired Northern fans to talk in terms of a double victory. If such a phenomenal feat were accomplished it would be the first-ever in the history of this National team competition. Northumberland had a good try last season, but the men just failed in support of the women.

Since the Wilmott Cup was first launched in 1936 only Manchester and London have had the honour of winning it. Manchester can produce the best figures, having been four times triumphant out of the five times they have competed. This in itself will take a lot of beating, and as they are considered present favourite by some, they have something to shout about.

Mainsprings in the men's success, both present and past, are **Benny Casofsky**, **Hymie Lurie**, **Eli Goodman**, **Andy Miller**, **Ken Stanley** (all former Swaythling Cup players) and **Leslie Cohen**. Only Stanley, on account of his change of residence to Leyland, is not available. Thus, the players who held the fort at the outset are still keeping the banner flying high.

During the current season the one and only set the team has dropped to date went to Staines when young **Michael Thornhill** "went mad" against the Manchester No. 1 player, **Benny Casofsky**, in the quarter-final, notching one for his team against the Northerners' 8. (*Congratulations, Michael, on being the only*

one to do so.) Previous rounds worth a line of publicity are: v. Leek 9-0, v. Nelson 9-0, v. Birmingham 9-0, v. Bolton 9-0.

We raise our best hats to the young Manchester women for the way in which they have struggled through to the semi-final. By no means has victory come easily, but by virtue of a splendid doubles combination, plus a happy team spirit, they have overcome opposition which on paper appeared much stronger. Yes, the value of team spirit has been most profound. Here's how the rounds have gone: v. Birmingham 5-4, v. Sheffield 8-1, v. Blackpool 6-3, v. Northumberland (holders) 7-2. Well done, **Doreen Watkins**, **Adele Wood** and **Vera Taylor**! And a hand-shake to those who have shown unquenchable enthusiasm behind the scenes—hard-working Secretary **Les Jones**, President **Jack Livingstone**, and Chairman **Harry Jones**.

Yet another outstanding performance came Manchester's way when the "A" team won the first Division (South East) of the Lancashire and Cheshire League without a defeat, and the "B" team (the nursery) were runners-up in the same Division, losing only to the "A" team.

LIVERPOOL SUCCESSES

HERE a word about Liverpool would not go amiss. Apart from being in the forefront in staging international events, they are beginning to push ahead in the playing sense after a lapse of a good many years.

Credit is due to near-veteran **Bob Roberts**. In fact he set the example at the Cheshire Championships recently and tasted the fruits of his first Open success. Bob was thwarted somewhat in his heyday when the Merseyside sported such internationals as **Don Foulis**, **Ken Hyde** and **Freddy Bamford**, but even though his Open success came late in table-tennis life he must have taken great pride in watching one of his pupils, "**Bluey**" **May** also win her first major championship title when she defeated the England Corbillon Cup player, **Adele Wood**, in the women's finals of the same tournament.

Miss May has been playing for 5 years, and as the holder of the Liverpool Closed Championship, she, attributes her rapid

(Continued on next page)

WEST MIDDLESEX OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

JOHNNY JOYCE, the old international penholder player, and his aide Bob Blower, found a whole week only just enough to cope with the flood of entries for this typical London tournament.

By all accounts they were much impressed with the standard of the average players who came in their hundreds, and many said that they had not seen such enjoyable table tennis as the final between

at West Ealing, March 21st-26th, 1949

Crayden and Sharman since the days of Fred Perry—whose ghost of course walks the West Ealing halls and courts.

RON CRAYDEN, whose battles with Ron Sharman are almost a standard feature of Saturday-night life in South London, on this occasion found himself two games down and 16—18 down in the third. Sticking to his policy of "mixing it," he overhauled the dour defender to win 3—2. Not a bad effort by a man who had to be almost carried home afterwards to take his "flu" lying down!

The entry of 123 boys on Saturday morning sounds like a record, but rival organisers need not start to stake their claims; the West Ealing quota was no doubt largely increased by a slight printer's error in the entry form, which allowed under-18's to slip under the curtain.

THE girls, with true feminine contrariness, upset the form books completely.

It was a fine performance by the Rowe twins, inspired by their home conditions, to reach the final of the open singles. Rosalind beat Rene Lentle, the international, and Eileen Benstead the titleholder, while Diane weighed in with a victory over Middlesex 1st-team-er Joyce Roberts.

Yet it was grand to see that the other junior girls were not at all over-awed; along came Peggy Piper of Surrey to defeat Rosalind Rowe for the second time, while an "unknown," Daphne Ellis of Willesden, nearly ousted Peggy herself.

Diane's junior conqueror was Pauline Cantor of Broadstairs, a hard and consistent hitter who will certainly not languish unnoticed in the seasons to come.

Final—
Crayden bt. Sharman —20, —20, 18, 14, 14.

W.S.—
Miss R. Rowe bt. Miss D. Rowe 20, —18, 17.

M.D.—
Crouch and M. Thornhill bt. Craigie and A. R. Miller —14, 12, 10.

W.D.—
Misses D. and R. Rowe bt. Miss A. Fowler and Mrs. R. Lentle 19, 15.

X.D.—
Craigie and Miss R. Rowe bt. A. R. Miller and Miss J. Roberts 7, 17.

Junior Men's—
Thornhill bt. K. Beamish 10, 20.

Junior Women's—
Miss P. Cantor bt. Miss P. Piper —17, 18, 14.

Northerner's Notebook (continued from page 4)

improvement to the coaching of Roberts. For that matter, so do others, for among some of the younger branches from his nurseries now beginning to sprout their leaves are junior international **Bill Pierce**, and **Bernard Hands**.

DOWN IN CHESHIRE

SWITCHING slightly South, Cheshire are winners of the Northern Counties Championship mainly as a result of their 7—2 victory over Lancs. II at Wallasey recently. Both Yorks. II and Cheshire have each lost one match, but the latter have a much superior sets average. Cheshire shouldn't have much difficulty in their remaining match against Cumberland, after which they intend to challenge the Yorkshire first team for their place in the Premier Division. Cheshire owe their success this season to the captaincy and playing ability of **Deryck Heaps**, who has a 100% record. Amazing that this player, who spent four years in a Japanese horror camp and was told by the doctors on his return to England that he would never play again, should make such a comeback. An unbeaten record in women's doubles is held by the team's two women, **Eileen Grimstone** and **Dorothy Banks**.

OVER TO GRIMSBY

OVER the Pennines **Douglas Sheader** enhanced his reputation with a grand men's singles win in the Grimsby tournament. This laddie is destined to go places someday if he improves on this form. The North-West were well represented here and **Ronnie Baker**, the Lancashire Junior champion, eclipsed George Mitton in the first round, but, later, didn't make much headway in the senior event. As anticipated, however, he collected the junior cup without real exertion. The much-improved **Irene Grimstone** (Cheshire) reached her first final. She was beaten by the more experienced **Betty Steventon**.

ODD

SHOTS



by "The Umpire"

T.T. TRUE STORY

During an exhibition, at a large departmental store copies of *Table Tennis* magazine were on sale to the public in the sports section.

As the pile diminished a breathless schoolboy dashed up and accosted his pals : "*I say, how much are the table tennis books?*"

The answer, of course, was "*Six-pence.*"

The laddie's crestfallen comment was : "*Dash it . . . wish I hadn't bought that choc-ice now !*"

* * *

"*THANK goodness that's the last tournament!*" How often do we hear these words about this time of the year? And yet how long is it before those same T.T. fans are feeling rather lost with nothing to fight for . . . no more matches until October?

Then there are the hundreds of tennis and cricket clubs, where table tennis is played in a sketchy way throughout the summer. For all these folk, a few friendly out-of-season contests would be a blessing.

And here is an easy way to arrange your little private tourneys: Write to the Central Council of Physical Recreation, 6 Bedford Square,

London, W.C.1,

for details of their club tournament scheme. They provide the tournament chart, and a trophy for the winner; the 16 entrants are each asked to subscribe 1s. towards that very good cause, the National Sports Development Fund.

* * *

THE Essex news-sheet, "Nine by Five," makes the unusual boast that three of the county's vice-presidents walked to the table in the centre of the Wembley arena for the English Open doubles final! (They were Johnny Leach, Victor Barna

and Jack Carrington.) As Peggy Franks made a fine show in this championship, and Harry Sugarhood of Romford took the veterans' title, not to mention Dennis Miller's defeat of Hagenauer and Simons, Essex may fairly puff out their chests.

With the new generation of Beamish, Keith Collar, Bill McCave, and Peter Smith coming along, "Nine by Five" should have plenty to tell us in future.

* * *

RICHARD BERGMANN and Victor Barna are hoping to make a two-months' tour of the Antipodes this summer.

They plan to sail about June 21st, spending one month in Australia and one month in New Zealand. Between them these two can tally up eight world's singles titles, and another one will join them in the person of Szabados, now a naturalised Australian and still the supreme player out there. The game "down under" is just ripe for big development and such a tour might well be the means of setting the keen-eyed Aussies or New Zealanders on the trail of international fame.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

. . . I have served on several Tournament Committees and know the problems that arise, but there can be no excuse for the complete chaos at Chatham on the occasion of the Kent Open Championships.

Amongst many complaints were these:—

Twenty-six men were exempted from groups (without asking for this) and told to report at 10 a.m. Sunday morning. Most of these lucky (?) exempted ones had their first game at 3 p.m.

Fourteen of the exempted 20, all from London, met in the first round.

It was evening before it was announced that no "knocking-up" was allowed—this at once cleared 9 tables out of 14. At 7.30 the organisers ran out of balls!

The Men's Doubles final was not announced, in fact the umpire did not know it was the final until afterwards.

The main game of any tournament, the Men's Singles final, was played off on table 2 while players were knocking-up on the next table and indeed on six others.

Such things can surely not be allowed in tournaments sanctioned by E.T.T.A. In view of ever-increasing entries, action should be taken at once to help such inexperienced organisations.

ROY MARKWELL.

JUNIORS FLOCK TO EXETER

For West of England.
Open

at Exeter, March 19th, 1949

AS in other centres this year, so at Exeter the story was "Record number of competitors and record number of spectators." What was really noticeable, however, was the extreme youth of the large majority of the players, suggesting that many newcomers have "joined" only recently and thus the West Country must be due for a real boom in forthcoming seasons.

Just one example was the Plymouth contingent, which numbered 70 active players and 30-odd supporters. This from a town which previously had considered itself rather too isolated to take part in such events! Incidentally, Laurie French, their league chairman, although well into the veteran department, astonished several youngsters by his fitness and agility in defence, and won through 4 rounds of singles and as many doubles.

Torquay's secretary **Terry Gill** did not have quite the same personal success as Mr. French, yet probably deserves the medal-of-the-month for bringing forth the Junior Men's champion, **Louis Devereux**, and both the finalists of the Junior Women's event.

Devereux showed the benefits of his Swedish and international experience in overcoming the immaculate stroke play of **Alan Morris**, the Welsh junior star. Morris cheerfully travelled the awkward 8-hour journey to and from Wales on his own, and such keenness is sure to bring its reward. A 15-year-old Egyptian laddie also came alone from Monmouth in search of honours, but this time got only experience!

Kathleen Mann of Torquay was the most stylish girl on view in the juniors, and as her match nerve is clearly improving, we may hope for big things from her later. As it was, it took some wonderful defensive shots on the part of her St. Georgians' clubmate, **Maureen Leaman** to master Kathleen's gallant attacking spasm at deuce in the final game.



KATHLEEN MANN AND MAUREEN LEAMAN
By courtesy of The Western Times Co.

REDRUTH ENTHUSIAST

AN interested spectator was **Mr. Stewart Smith** who has been instrumental in fostering such enthusiasm in the unlikely metropolis of Redruth, Cornwall, that the local Grammar School has reached the semi-final of the "Sporting Record" Schools Competition, and a recent exhibition attracted over 700 spectators!

EXETER EXPORTS

EXETER'S own star has been temporarily a little dimmed, what with the emigration of Betty Blackburn and Ron Litten to South Africa, the absence of Dora Beregi on "domestic duty," and the semi-retirement of Harry Amery, Lionel Kerslake and Len Suter to the administrative and coaching department. Nevertheless there was some good young blood around and there was plenty of evidence that in hospitality and sporting spirit Exeter are still in the highest class.

Dora Beregi smiled in towards evening with good reports of her three-months-old boy; another whom Londoners will recall was **Jim Stalibrass**, whose left-handed attack showed that Devon county cricket and soccer have improved his eye and footwork.

THAT'S GLADYS, THAT WAS!

And, talking of eye and footwork, that's where **Mrs. Gladys Horn** of Salisbury comes in. This dynamic little left-hander packs a forehand wallop like **Dora Beregi's** and a backhand like **nobody's business!** She has been just missing in several recent tournaments, although always playing marvellously in doubles, but this time there was no ques-

tion of missing. She outspeeded **Joan Crosby**, England's third lady, who is no sluggard, you must admit.

Gladys' sturdy partner **Mrs. Wilson** of Salisbury earns a hand for her good support in this and several other doubles events.

Talking of footwork, that's where **Aubrey Simons** of Bristol usually goes out, although we will concede that behind those spectacles lurks one—or should we say two?—of the shrewdest table tennis eyes in the game.



GLADYS HORN, surprise winner of the West of England, joins Richard Bergmann to receive her prize
By courtesy of The Western Times Co.

AND THIS IS AUBREY— OR WAS IT?

But tonight was different, and Aubrey must have been in holiday mood after the stress and strain of the international season. At all events, he blossomed forth as a really severe and continuous attacker against **Richard Bergmann** in the final. He several times recovered a deficit of 3 or 4 points by punching right through Bergmann's fantastic defence, a feat which few world players can perform, and then by close play he demonstrated to Bergmann that the latter could not hope to launch any serious attack in return.

In fact it reads as though Simons had **Richard** properly "cooked"! Well, he did, when he led by 2 games to 1, and started the fourth game by leaving **Bergmann** all the responsibility of making the game.

If the Bristol man had "rationed out" his hitting he could even have taken the fifth game, although fifth games against **Richard Bergmann** don't fall like ripe apples.

M.S. Final—**Bergmann** bt. **Simons**—12, 18, —22, 10, 15.

W.S.—**Mrs. G. Horn** (Salisbury) bt. **Mrs. J. Crosby** (Exeter) 26, 18.

M.D.—**Carrington/Simons** bt. **Markwell/Brumwell** 17, 13.

W.D.—**Mrs. Horn/Mrs. M. Wilson** bt. **Mrs. Hunter/Mrs. J. Fulford** (Exeter) 18, 20.

X.D.—**Bergmann/Mrs. Crosby** bt. **J. Stall-brass/Mrs. I. Hunter** 18, 15.

Junior Men's—**L. Devereux** bt. **A. Morris**.

Junior Women's—**Miss M. Leaman** bt. **Miss K. Mann**.

ENGLAND 9, IRELAND 0

LIVERPOOL and District Table Tennis Association are to be congratulated for their enterprise in staging the England v. Ireland international match in the Philharmonic Hall on March 11th.

Ron Crayden was the star in England's 9—0 victory. From the outset he went into the attack and later when 21-year-old **Jimmy O'Hara** compelled him to defend he was equal to the task. Second in line came **Benny Casofsky** and he together with Crayden featured in a grand doubles game against **O'Hara** and **James Burns**.

The introduction before the match was well staged but appeared to upset **Hilda Agnew**, making her debut for Ireland. At no time did she or **Mina Minshull** show their true form, thus both English girls, **Peggy Franks** and **Joan Crosby**, had easy victories.

The promise of **Joe Fox** was evident when he smashed through **Richard Bergmann**'s defence to take the first game 21—18.

Scores (England names first):—

B. Casofsky beat **J. Burns** 21—14, 24—22.

Miss M. Franks and **Mrs. J. Crosby** beat

Misses M. Minshull and **H. Agnew**

21—15, 21—15.

R. Crayden beat **J. O'Hara** 21—10, 23—21.

J. Leach and **R. Bergmann** beat **J. Fox**

and **I. Martin** 21—13, 17—21, 21—11.

Miss M. Franks beat **Miss M. Minshull**

21—10, 21—13.

J. Leach beat **I. Martin** 21—14, 22—20.

Mrs. J. Crosby beat **Miss H. Agnew**

21—14, 21—18.

R. Bergmann beat **J. Fox** 18—21, 21—13,

21—8.

B. Casofsky and **R. Crayden** beat **J.**

O'Hara and **J. Burns** 21—11, 15—21,

21—10.

"EQUIPMENT BY DECKER"

For many years this phrase has signified the best playing conditions obtainable. The work of Godfrey Decker has contributed greatly to the success of World and English Championships in this country since 1926 and of many other major tournaments. Mr. Decker is going to reveal some of his experiences and secrets to our readers; here is his first article.



Decker equipment is a family affair. This picture shows Mr. Decker instructing one of his sons about a lighting fixture

IT is some forty years ago since I first played table tennis and I still get much pleasure from the game.

I first became interested in the equipment side about twenty-five years ago when I was secretary of the All-England Club. In those days the Table Tennis Association (newly formed from some of the officers of the Ping Pong Association) had no home and for a year I was secretary and the committee functioned from our club address at St. Brides Institute. I remember a disgruntled critic complaining about "*having to bend the knee to decisions formulated in the attics of St. Brides.*"

We were very pleased with our conditions in those days. We had 4-ft. between each table and a run-back of less than 20-ft. We were playing by ordinary hall lighting and many of the players complained about their blinding headaches. I installed lighting consisting of a 60-watt lamp in a small holoplane reflector over the centre of each half of the table at a height of four feet. It was considered marvellous lighting.

From this I soon went to larger lamps, but it was some time before I realised

that the 20-in. billiard shade is the ideal and in most lighting now installed I seldom depart from this. They are surprisingly durable and are very light for carrying about. **I can still carry on my back a folding frame which opens out to 23 feet by 5 ft. and carries ten shades, with 150-watt lamps, together with the necessary cables, fuse-box, and a collection of frames and green cloth which form a surround 40 ft. by 20 ft.**

Included in the outfit are nets and posts, wood-filler, white paint, green stain, chalk and string, copper wire, pliers, screw-drivers, first-aid set, tape, screws, nails, etc. The thin copper wire is useful for many purposes. One can effect very quick repairs to many things, such as broken braces, belts, shoes, etc. Table tennis players are a tear-away lot and do a lot of damage to themselves and their clothing.

In succeeding articles I shall be pleased to reply to readers on matters of interest with regard to exhibitions, tournaments, matches, etc., from the equipment point of view. I think I have come up against most problems in my time, but some readers may be able to tell us of new gadgets or ideas. When I first decided to do my own wiring I took a Polytechnic course, but most of my knowledge has come from hard experience, and I am still willing to learn!

EXCURSION TO BELGRADE

AS this trip proved unusual and most interesting, I feel I must give you more than just a report of the match.

On Thursday, March 17th, the eve of our flight to Belgrade, after many 'phone calls from Mr. Pope re visa and currency regulations, etc., the match was officially postponed owing to the 'plane connection from Prague to Belgrade being cancelled.

On telling my wife of this decision, we began discussing what we should do with five whole evenings to ourselves, which was unheard of in the Leach family. During supper at 11 p.m. we were studying the entertainment columns in search of a good play, when a loud knock at the door disturbed us. On opening the door I was confronted by a policeman. Before I could speak he began to reel off a string of instructions from Ivor Montagu: the gist of it was that the trip to Yugoslavia was "on" again and that I was to be at Kensington Air Office at 9 a.m. next morning.

Next morning early I met Victor at Northolt airport and we flew to Prague. The promise of a special plane from Prague to Belgrade proved too good to be true. Arriving in Prague, we spent three hours rushing from one Embassy to the other before we were issued with the necessary transit visas. It took two diplomats to acquire the train tickets with five minutes to spare.

During all this dashing about the only food we had managed to get was a bowl of weak soup in the station buffet. Exactly 24 hours later we arrived in Belgrade tired and starving as the soup was all we had eaten since the morning we left except for some chocolates Victor possessed. But the welcome we received was so great that inside an hour we were little the worse for our journey.

Now for the match, which was played in a very large theatre on the stage. It held about 2,000 and the tickets had been sold weeks in advance. The conditions were far from good, by our standards. Victor started the ball rolling for us by playing V. Harangozo and what a match it was, full of excitement and good rallies. The result was always in doubt until the last point, especially when Victor was losing 16-20 in the final game. He had been forcing the game, and his kills were missing by fractions, but he played safe

"How lovely," you say?

But World Champion JOHNNY LEACH warns us that the international's path is not always strewn with roses!

ENGLAND 4, JUGOSLAVIA 1 (Europe Cup inter-zone Final)

V. Barna bt. V. Harangozo 18-21, 21-16, 24-22, 14-21, 22-20.

J. Leach bt. M. Dolinar 14-21, 21-17, 21-14, 21-15.

Leach/Barna bt. T. Harangozo/V. Harangozo 21-19, 21-16, 21-12.

Leach bt. Harangozo 21-13, 21-11, 21-13.

Barna lost to Dolinar 19-21, 13-21, 16-21.

England have now qualified to meet the holders, Slovakia, in the final of the Europe Cup.

in the crisis, and waited for the right balls before doing some very clever angled back-hand flicks to pull the game out of the fire 22-20.

I went to the table against Dolinar, somewhat nervous after watching Victor's struggle. However, I soon settled down and although losing the first game in getting used to his rather unorthodox play the next three games came my way easily.

The doubles turned out easier than we anticipated, and gave us the match 3-0. The last two matches were played off, but of course with rather less tension than the others. The match was most enjoyable as the audience were very sporting and appreciative, applauding all good rallies irrespective of who won the point.

The next part of our programme was an entertaining hour with the British Consul and his wife at their flat; afterwards in the course of a pleasant supper we allowed secretary, host and player Harangozo to talk us into playing on the next evening, Monday, at his home town, Subrtica (this being on the Hungarian-Yugoslavia border about 150 miles from Belgrade). On agreeing, our friend Harangozo telephoned his town to pass on the news, this being the only communication about the forthcoming match.

No newspaper or radio announcement was made, yet by lunch-time next day they had cancelled the Opera, returned 400 tickets, and completely sold out the tickets for the table tennis match! Once more people queued from noon until night in the hopes of getting standing-room. The reception we received was

(Continued on next page)

Looking Around

with George White

MOST players have a pet grouse about the game, and the magazine post-bag recently has suggested that for many it is something to do with the service rule. Mr. Wherry, the Salisbury Secretary, has one that is new to us. It is the net-cord ball that wins or loses the point outright or gives the lucky player an easy kill from a scrambled return.

Mr. Wherry suggests that no point should be won from a net-cord. Presumably, as soon as the ball touched the net-cord, he would call a let and the rest would be started afresh, as with a net-cord service. The obvious objection is that this would slow down the game; but Mr. Wherry discounts this, saying that players would be able to play more confidently and naturally free of net-cord worries and that this would speed things along.

ANOTHER player with a grouse is Mr. Paul Sommers, who writes from Leytonstone on behalf of what he calls the "forgotten middle class"—the club players who, encouraged and advised as beginners, get as far as losing regularly in the early rounds of tournaments (enjoying it all the same) only to find that there is no clearly marked pathway

on to greater prowess. The remedy Mr. Sommers has to suggest is a series of articles in this magazine analysing the best shots of the world's greatest players.

It might help if we could do so. But remember, Mr. Sommers, that it took nearly four pages at the beginning of this season to deal with the American topspin. What would you cut out (apart from this column) to make room for it all? Isn't what you want a book, not a series of magazine articles?

WESTERN COUNTIES CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS

(at Bristol, March 26th, 1949)

A. Simons (Bristol) bt. S. Jones (Newport) 9-21, 21-18, 21-9; Mrs. J. Crosby (Exeter) bt. Miss A. Bates (Cardiff) 21-10, 16-21, 21-16; S. Jones and J. Davies (Cardiff) bt. Simons and L. Devereux (Torquay) 25-23, 21-14; Miss Bates and Mrs. Roy Evans (Cardiff) bt. Miss E. Pomroy (Bristol) and Mrs. M. Pickett (Bristol) 21-14, 21-17; Simons (Bristol) and Mrs. Crosby bt. J. Davies and Mrs. Evans 21-11, 19-21, 21-11. Junior: L. Devereux bt. B. Evans (Newport) 22-20, 21-13; K. Mann (Torquay) bt. M. Shearing (Bristol) 20-22, 23-21, 21-9.

In this final Simons was losing 7-16 in the second game, having lost the first 9-21!

Excursion to Belgrade (continued from page 12)

really terrific. On being presented with a large bottle of liqueur, the match began, this time against the Harangozo brothers only. Tibor Harangozo was in devastating form and the stage conditions were again rather strange, but once more we came away with a 4-1 victory.

Within a few moments we were being fitted out for the return journey through the snowstorm. Sandwiches, hot bricks, cognac spades (and two volunteers to use them) besides the two tired players were piled into a car. The weather gave us 50 miles start, but the remaining 100 miles had to be fought for. Icy surfaces, a blizzard and finally a lorry buried in snow across the road brought us to a standstill. Fuming in despair we found the exit apparently closed too, but by dint of some inspired digging and some truly slap-happy driving through the drifts we staggered to a small rail halt (at the cost of a broken back axle). Fate must have been smiling on us, as ten minutes later along came an unadvertised milk train for the City. In spite of many gloomy prophecies the plane from Sofia actually landed and took off through the snowstorm.

Club Secretaries!

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COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

by GEOFF. HARROWER

(Owing to pressure of space, only a brief summary of the Championships can be given in this issue, but a full review will be published next month.)

CHESHIRE WIN NORTHERN DIVISION ON THE POST

There was an exciting finish to the North Division, in which Cheshire were four points behind with two games to play, but they won both these matches in great style, to pip Yorkshire 2nds on goal average.

In the Premier Division, Middlesex beat Warwickshire by 5—4, to retain the Championships.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Correspondents are asked to note that Mr. Geoffrey Harrower has changed his address to:—

68, Gloucester Road,
New Barnet, Herts.
Telephone: Barnet 7470.

WILMOTT CUP and J. M. ROSE BOWL

Arrangements have now been completed for the staging of both the Wilmott Cup and J. M. Rose Bowl semi-finals and finals, although, unlike last season, they will be played separately.

The Wilmott Cup will be the first event, and will be held at the Polytechnic Extension, Little Titchfield Street, W.1, on Easter Saturday, April 16th, commencing at 2.30 p.m. Some first-rate matches will be seen, the four semi-finalists being the holders, Manchester, who oppose the Southampton Civil Service Club, and Bristol versus South London.

Manchester field an all-international side in Benny Casofsky, Hymie Lurie and Les Cohen, and it will be interesting to see how Muller, undefeated for Hampshire in the county championships for the past two seasons, and No. 1 for Southampton, will fare against this opposition. Ron Sharman and Ron Crayden, two more Internationals, play for South London along with the Surrey County player Jackie Head, but they will have to go all the way to beat Bristol, led by Aubrey Simons and including Shipton, who recently beat Sharman in a county match.

In conjunction with the Wilmott Cup, the "Sporting Record's" National Schools Championships semi-finals and final will be staged, giving the youngsters an opportunity of seeing some of our best players in action. The boys will be carefully watched by E.T.T.A. officials who will be present. Semi-finals start at 2.30 and the finals at 6.45, and tickets have been designed to admit to both sessions at 5s. (reserved) and 2/6d. (unreserved).

On the following Saturday, April 23rd, Croydon will stage the semi-finals and final of the J. M. Rose Bowl, and again a well-known table tennis hall will be used, this time the Acc and Tab (Powers-Samas Accounting Machines), Aurelia

CHAMPION COUNTY versus THE REST OF ENGLAND

Tentative arrangements had been made to play this match on Wednesday, April 27th, but a last minute hitch resulted in the loss of the hall. In view of various factors, this match will now be played at the beginning of next season.

CHAMPIONS

Premier Division: MIDDLESEX.

Home Counties Division:

MIDDLESEX 2nds.

Southern Division: HAMPSHIRE.

Northern Division: CHESHIRE.

Supplementary Division:

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

CLASSIFIED RESULTS

Premier Division:			
Warwickshire	4	Middlesex	5
Northern Division:			
Durham	3	Yorkshire 2nds	6
Lancashire 2nds	2	Cheshire	7
Cheshire	8	Cumberland	1
Supplementary Division:			
Leicestershire	4	Nottinghamshire	5

FINAL TABLES

(Home Counties and Southern given last month)

Premier Division

	P.	W.	L.	F.	A.	Pts.
Middlesex	...	6	5	1	34	20
Surrey	...	6	4	2	29	8
Gloucestershire	...	6	3	3	29	25
Lancashire	...	6	3	3	28	26
Warwickshire	...	6	3	3	24	30
Essex	...	6	2	4	25	29
Yorkshire	...	6	1	5	20	34

Northern Division

	P.	W.	L.	F.	A.	Pts.
Cheshire	...	6	5	1	36	18
Yorkshire 2nds	...	6	5	1	32	22
Durham	...	6	4	2	28	26
Northumberland	...	6	3	3	37	17
Lincolnshire	...	6	2	4	24	30
Lancashire 2nds	...	6	2	4	23	31
Cumberland	...	6	0	6	9	45

Supplementary Division

	P.	W.	L.	F.	A.	Pts.
Nottinghamshire	...	4	4	0	26	10
Leicestershire	...	4	2	2	16	20
Derbyshire	...	4	0	4	12	24

COUNTER ATTACK

WHAT is meant by "Counter-Attack"?

In orthodox play, a topspin drive is usually answered by a chopped defensive return or a half-volley blocking shot. In many cases, however, it is better to answer attack with attack instead of automatically defending.

In good tournament play you will often see two strong attackers opposing each other, each determined not to surrender the initiative to the other; they will stand up to the table "swapping punches" in exhilarating style. It looks exciting, but a young player must be prepared to study their methods before adopting a slap-happy counter-attacking policy.

Points to remember are:

1. As you are dealing with a top-spinning ball, not so much "lift" is required in your own stroke as you would normally use to hit a chop.

2. For the same reason, your bat should be rather more "closed," i.e., sloped more forward at the top edge.

3. **FAST HITTING IS NOT NEEDED.** Your opponent puts the speed on the ball with his hit, all you have to do is to give it a certain amount of rebound.

Think hard about this, and watch the counter-hitters you see in tournaments—Leach, Crouch, Thornhill, Casofsky, etc. You will notice that although the ball travels fast, the hitters' arm does not move so fast as when they are driving against a dead chopped ball.

4. Following on from the above: **PLACING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS.** A slow arm stroke allows you to place

some Carrington comments

the ball more carefully. A good plan is to indulge in a short "duel" of hitting back to the same corner each time and then slide a slower one down the other side.

5. COUNTER-HITTING IS NO GAME FOR THE FLAT-FOOTED. It involves picking the ball up early from the table wherever it goes, and therefore you must be well on your toes, ready to move rapidly across the baseline, backwards or forwards.

Notice, you move **ACROSS** to the ball; you do not fall back. If you do retreat, you have lost that particular counter-attacking duel and must adopt a normal defence for a moment while looking for another chance to break in.

Which brings us to . . .

6. IT RARELY PAYS TO COUNTER-ATTACK FROM LONG RANGE. If you have been forced back, your balance will be wrong, and your opponent will be waiting on the table with plenty of time to see your ball coming. If you have been forced out from the table to either side, your fast return going in to the table enables your opponent to angle it out to the other side all the quicker.

The man who is on the table can hit out from it . . . the man who is out can only hit into it.

As a general guide, you can say that if you have not got your bat to the ball before it drops below net-height, you are too late to gain anything from counter-hitting. (This does not apply to advanced players.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Tournament or Event	Venue	Tickets or Information from:
April 16-17 ...	Scottish Open Champs.	Murrayfield Indoor Sports, Edinburgh, 12	R. W. Stewart, 45, Hope Street, Glasgow, C.2.
April 16-18 ...	North-East England Open Champs.	All Saints' School, Scarborough	S. Waller, 2, Sydney Street, Scarborough.
April 16, 2.30 p.m. and 6.45 p.m.	WILMOTT CUP, Manchester v. Southampton C.S.; Bristol v. S. London (and final)	Polytechnic Extension, Little Tichfield Street, London, W.1	G. R. Harrower, 68, Gloucester Road, New Barnet, Herts.
April 23, 2.30 p.m. and 5.15 p.m.	J.M. ROSE BOWL, Manchester v. Wembley and Harrow; Croydon v. Central League (and final)	Powers-Samas Club, Aurelia Road, Croydon, Surrey	G. R. Harrower, 68, Gloucester Road, New Barnet, Herts.
May 2-7 ...	Thameside Open ...	Hydro Hall, Plaistow, E.13, London	L. R. Norminton, 31, Acacia Avenue, Romford, Essex.
May 21-22 ...	Buckinghamshire Open	Community Centre, Slough, Bucks.	L. Thompson, "Auchmead," The Avenue, Wrybury, Bucks.