

Table Tennis REVIEW

Vol. 6 No. 2

DEC., 1951



NEWS



VIEWS



HINTS



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TABLE TENNIS

REVIEW

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One Shilling

Editorial Notes

IN this issue a League Secretary makes a strong appeal to players all over the world to object against the present Service Law. Whether players will spring forward *en masse* is more than doubtful. Unfortunately one of the weaknesses of our democratic methods of organisation is that the vast majority will go on grumbling but do very little to seek a popular change. Meanwhile petty annoyances continue. At a recent open tournament a player demanded a change of umpire because he felt his service was fair and according to rule. The tournament referee came to witness his service but ruled him out of order because the palm wasn't perfectly flat.

Unfortunately we have had to hold over our usual "Readers' Letters Feature" and also the photographs of attractive T.T. girls sent in by readers. We hope to include both these in a bumper January/February issue, ready January 20th.

To-day there seem to be two distinct styles of table tennis. One, that served up at exhibitions where the players do their best to emulate pre-war players and bring about long breath-taking rallies featuring miraculous returns, and two, competitive stuff where there is much close-to-the-table play, hard hitting and rallies of short duration. Take your choice, but personally I prefer the former. I have seen too many recent tournaments, etc., where the public have been bored and restless after the first hour. And we could have that old-time stuff back again in competitive play if the net went back to its former height of 6½ inches. If there is going to be some demand for service reform, then why don't those old stalwarts get together again and revive their higher-the-net movement? If that came about, what a clear-out there would be among many of our so-called leading lights. As to the danger of "chiselling," well we still have that but it now goes under the heading of "good tactical table tennis."

Ronnie Baker did enough at the North of England to win him that longed-for international badge. But there were only two of the Selection Committee present and they were both Northerners. It will be interesting to see whether Messrs. Cook and Thompson can make their voices heard, or whether Baker has to dispense with their services completely and play himself on to an English team with results that just can't be ignored.

Americans feel that this may be the year when Marty Reisman is likely to break the Richard Miles domination of American table tennis. Miles has not played too much during the summer while Reisman has practiced intensively. Reisman is also likely to be a strong contestant for the world title. In recent weeks the performances of Johnny Leach when playing abroad in international events have not enhanced his prestige, and many doubt whether he will be able to retain his title. Still Johnny has a habit of rising to the occasion.

An American youngster to remember for future years is seventeen year old Harry Hirschowitz. He is a defensive player with a severe chop. In September last he won the New York City Open which featured such competitors as Louis Pagliaro and Lazlo Bellak, neither of whom went past the quarter-finals.

DOWN THE WHITE LINE

by "Gossima"

Tickets are now being booked for the English Open Championships the finals of which are to be played at the Empire Pool and Sports Arena, Wembley, on Saturday, March 29th, 1952. Prices will be 21/-, 12/6, 8/6 and 5/-. Reduced club tickets are available through local leagues, these being the 8/6 tickets for 5/6. For other tickets apply to the English T.T. Association, 214, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2.

The Central Council of Physical Recreation have arranged a table tennis training holiday at the Lilleshall National Recreation Centre, near Newport, Shropshire. This will take place from December 28th, 1951, to January 2nd, 1952. It is for men and women not under the age of 16 years who wish to improve their standard of play or to learn the game. The coach appointed by the C.C.P.R. is Jack Carrington. The cost of tuition and residence is £3/15/-. Full details can be obtained from Miss P. Colson, Central Council of Physical Recreation, 6, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

Richard Bergmann tells us that he will definitely play in the world's championships in Bombay. In the doubles he will be partnered by Johnny Leach. Bergmann says that though his stage work is proving such a great success he has left open a few dates for exhibitions, etc., and people interested in arranging such displays may contact *Table Tennis Review* and inquiries will be forwarded on.

While on the subject of Bergmann we should like to quote a letter received from our own feature writer, Sam Kirkwood. Sam writes: "What's all this academic controversy about Richard Bergmann and his 'Undefeated World Champion' title? Why are people getting all heated up about it? What is Dick, anyway, if not the undefeated champion? And why is it deemed incorrect, or unethical, or presumptuous, of him to say so? A fact's a fact, no matter how you look at it. That some prefer to gaze at a fact sideways, backwards or upside down doesn't alter an incontrovert-

ible truth. However, when he goes to Bombay he will settle the issue one way or the other to everyone's satisfaction. And I have an idea that he may well smack the pedantic in the optics by regaining his title."

In our issue just exactly two years ago we included an article about 13-year-old Yorkshire girl, Wendy Blades. Maybe you will remember that at that time Victor Barna had been playing at a Leeds theatre and had invited Wendy up on to the stage to play him 11 points. There was a little controversy as to whether 13 was too young to take up serious T.T., points in the argument being that at 13 a youngster has still to grow and also to extend arm-reach. Because of this it was suggested that after a couple of years a youngster would find that his or her whole stance and hitting angle for shots would undergo a drastic change. On the other hand it was argued that a person grows so slowly that stroke execution adjusts itself as the body develops.

Well, Wendy is now growing up. She is 15 years and just as pretty as she promised to be when she was 13. And her play—well, in October she won the North of England Open Junior Girls Championship at Manchester. She is Junior Girls Champion of Lincolnshire (she now resides in Boston, Lincs) and last season won the Boston Ladies title. This season in order to get better practice she is playing in the Boston Men's 1st Division and up to the present out of six sets she has won five. Although her forehand and backhand attack are developing rapidly her strong point is still defence. Several times a week brother Derek gives her intensive practice on a tournament table which has been installed at home by her proud father. Good luck to you, Wendy. See you at Wembley!

When Dora Beregi left England to make Australia her new homeland she automatically stepped into the No. 1 ranking position of that country, a position that she has maintained since then with the greatest of

ease. But to be No. 1 player doesn't necessarily make you the greatest player. True greatness has a lot more to it than that. Now a player like Dora, who is obviously head and shoulders above any of her countrywomen (and a lot of the men too), should have been great-hearted enough to ignore the minor irritations of any imperfections in the playing conditions of the Australian Championships. To insist on being moved to another table because of daylight reflection was surely not necessary. Then during another incident at the championships Dora stopped playing because a nearby table was drawing continuous applause. All very annoying we agree, but not to make the best of it was also annoying to the public and what is more it must have been extremely troublesome to the hard-working tournament organisers who naturally have to work to a set schedule. Anyway, Dora, had your opponents been able to beat a world-famous player like yourself in spite of faulty lighting and disturbing noises, then they would most certainly have earned a great victory and proved themselves better players simply because they were adaptable. One day, Dora, some young Australian lass is going to give you a good walloping and as you come away from the table she may even say: "Wasn't the lighting bad? I just couldn't get my backhand going!"

Australia is now in the midst of its closed summer season, but T.T. still goes on. Under the direction of their President, Mr. R. A. Vardon, a summer coaching school has been opened in Adelaide.

Johnny Leach is seeking fresh fields to conquer—literally. Mr. C. Corti Woodcock of the National Executive is also Secretary (since 1937) of the Theydon Bois Golf Club, a well-known Essex rendezvous for good golfers, and on his introduction, Johnny, who is an enthusiastic 18-handicap golfer, was elected a member. Johnny hopes to play many rounds there—in order to get down to Mr. Woodcock's handicap of eight which is better than average! It is not generally known that Mr. Woodcock holds many golfing offices and is as well known in the golfing world as he is in the table tennis sphere, where, it may be recalled he presented the World Singles Trophy

In 1938, advertisements appeared in the press of an athletic massage cream. A photograph of Stanley Proffitt, together with a testimonial from this Swaythling Cup player, was reproduced. Stanley then said, "How great the benefit I have



WENDY BLADES
(Lincolnshire)

obtained from this preparation you can judge for yourself when I tell you that although, according to age (26), I should be past my prime at table tennis, I am still playing in international matches, and what is more I am playing better than ever." A new muscle cream has just been prepared and this time the first testimonial comes from international Brian Kennedy. The manufacturers of this preparation (advertised in this issue) say that for a start they are aiming solely at the table tennis market.

For the County match between Yorkshire and Essex at York, on November 24th, three thousand terraced seats have been built up. A similar packed house is expected for the Yorkshire v. Middlesex match at Leeds on January 18th. Tickets can be obtained from Mr. F. B. Walker, 72, South Place, Vernon Way, Barnsley.

Ken Stanley tells us that his pupil Cliff Booth, who is only sixteen, is a lad of the future. Ken goes on to say, "He has a table tennis brain, which is more than you can say about a lot of players that have jumped up since the war. Booth has an ideal temperament and in my opinion is a good bet for England's future No. 1. He

will trouble a lot of people in tournaments this season and I certainly hope I don't come up against him myself."

Ken Stanley is having trouble at the moment with his knees and attends a masseur twice a week. Once he gets them fit he reckons it will put five points on his game. Even so he intends entering all the major tournaments and is out to prove that his English Ranking position of No. 13 is completely wrong. Ken remarked, "If they are ranking purely from results, and that is what they are supposed to do these days, then I fail to see why several players are ranked above me. But I don't like this idea of choosing players by results all the time without taking the potentialities of the player into account."

According to the statements of Mr. Leslie Woollard and members of the English Selection Committee they intend to try for some improvement in their methods of selection this season. From the Northern players' point of view some improvement is wanted. We have a letter from a Northern reader who suggests that Northern players could do with a little more pushing. He writes, "Ronnie Baker is having to wait a heck of a time for the honour he deserves. When I say he deserves a break I am thinking of players like Hurlock who gained an international badge for one good performance. There are a number of such cases. Look at Thornhill. As far as I know he never won a tournament or did anything outstanding last year, yet he walks on to the English team."

Still another reader writes, "There is no doubt in my mind that the E.T.T.A. is still a long way from being an English Table Tennis Association. It seems that even yet there are just about two men running the whole show. Perhaps I'm wrong!" Well, that is at least one supporter for our feature writer Sam Kirkwood.

As far as the Selection Committee and the North-West of England is concerned we feel that the dropping of Stanley Proffitt and his replacement by Lancashire County Secretary, Norman Cook on to this much criticised body, was not exactly an improvement. Norman Cook, is a grand fellow and a first-class worker and administrator, but as far as the technicalities of table tennis are concerned Norman is likely to be baffled by the scientific talk of the London committee members. We can't imagine Norman talking Ivor Montagu and Geoffrey Harrower into giving a badge to someone who has great possibilities but no "giant-killing" record.

English international Ken Craigie is faring well to top the County Championships individual records. He came through the German tour unscathed and was also unbeaten in the strongly contested Middlesex Inter-League Championships.

Attractive, blonde Peggy Franks is something of a multi-sportswoman. She and hubby Ronnie Hook recently purchased a very large house at Woodford, Essex, where there are six bedrooms and a large sports room complete with "Decker" lighting and equipment. Peggy is a promising member in the crack Stewart Ladies Towing eight. She also spent the summer playing tennis, golf and numerous T.T. appearances.

B. Denis George, well-known in English table tennis but now in South Africa, made a 900 mile trip to Johannesburg to witness the National Championships and to acquire photographs and a first hand report of the tournament. He has already made himself known and has been elected to represent the Eastern Province on the National Executive Committee which usually meets in Cape Town.

While in Australia Johnny Leach was asked why it was that Richard Bergmann loses so often in Swaythling Cup matches and yet wins in the World's Singles. Johnny remarked, that, like himself, Richard is a five-game player and team matches are the best of three.

However, the Australian Parkside T.T. Bulletin tips England for the Swaythling Cup if the above two players are in the team.

Leach first saw Michael Szabados play in 1931 when he won the world's title, then contested in England. At that time Johnny was a mere nipper of ten years of age and little did he realise that one day he too would not only hold the title himself but would also perform against the famous Hungarian star. They met on the table for the first time during the Leach-Haguenauer Australian tour. A letter from a correspondent down-under gives all credit to Leach for his wins but also goes on to say that the Leach v. Szabados games will be talked about for many a long day. At Brisbane these two great players brought the crowd to their feet time and time again. Szabados (the "old man") heaped laurels upon himself. As one spectator pointed out there was little to choose between the two, although on the following night Leach disposed of Szabados with greater ease.

Continued on page 16

Who Started It All?

THAT stage table tennis is remunerative as well as spectacular pastime, is being proved yet again by Bergmann and Steve Boros. Others who have coined a pretty penny from stage work include Stanley Proffitt, Norman Evans, Ruth Aarons, Glantz, Paghliaro, Barna, Brook, Seamen, Rosen, Marcus, Bellak, Peggy McLean, Miles and Reisman.

There are various claims as to who first took to the boards with bat, table and ball, and, from what I can gather, the general belief is that Proffitt and Evans were the first pair to pioneer theatre exhibition work. That was round about '37.

Ruth Aarons was playing for cash before that, in 1935 to be precise, in America, while she and Victor Barna partnered each other in 1937 in an exhibition act which took them to the Rainbow Room, New York (they played there for six weeks), Washington, New York Radio City and Baltimore.

If there are pioneers who go back further than this, who are they?

Which brings us to another query. Who first thought of table tennis as a medium for the stage?

Bergmann claims that long before the war he got the idea after watching Ken Davidson and partner play badminton at the Palladium and discussed stage T.T. with fellow Austrian Fred Leibster. The pair forwarded the proposition to a theatrical agent and were offered a six-month contract at £120 a week. The "plot," however, was quashed by the E.T.T.A.

Ernie Bublely has it that he had a stage turn ready for presentation in the mid-thirties, no less a person than impresario George Black, Jnr., son of the George Black, being prepared to try out the innovation. The parties could not come to terms, so nothing came of that.

No doubt others will come forward and stress that they were the original bright boys and girls. One strange fact emerges: that the Continentals, who have ruled the roost since the twenties, have never been interested in the stage as a medium to express their skill.

(Editorial Note: Yes, Sam, I'll be a bright boy and claim to be a member of the first stage table tennis act. The quartet, complete with compere in evening suit, were all internationals and were as follows: Andrew Millar, H. C. Cooke, L. Bowyer and (myself) Arthur Waite. We played in 1934 on the stage of a Manchester theatre for one week. I have a souvenir programme as proof.

SOMETHING LIKE A CENTRE!

Sixteen International Matches Could Be Played In This Hall

At One Time

★

OVERSEAS visitors have expressed amazement at the splendid table tennis conditions made available in Brisbane, Australia. A vast hall, which is the headquarters of the Queensland T.T. Federation, is open six nights a week. Monday to Friday 32 teams play fixtures on the 16 tables, each one being divided into areas sufficient for any international match.

The lighting for each table is perfect and it is claimed that the hall has no counterpart in any other part of the world which is run on such a grand and regular scale.

In all, over 160 teams compete each week in 17 men's and women's grades under the direction of the Brisbane section of the Q.T.T.F., while on Saturday nights the hall is open for practice and handicap tournaments.

Such conditions have been made possible by the voluntary service rendered by officials. Each night a member of the committee is rostered to man the hall and to supervise the tables. All players have to do is to arrive and play.

During the recent Leach-Haguenauer Australian tour one table was centralised in the hall and special seating built up.

Queensland can trace her table tennis history back to 1902 when the first championships were held. The game then faded away but was revived in 1923. To-day the game is a major sport in the State as far as numbers of players and active centres are concerned. Over 3,000 players are affiliated.

Probably the greatest Queensland player of all time is Chic Shaw. Although now 32 he has just won the State Championship. Chic first won this title in 1937 when he was 17. Prior to this last championship he was ranked No. 8 in the Australian ranking lists.

Queensland Open Championships, 1951. Final Results.

Men's Singles: Chic Shaw bt. R. Picking 18, —17, 18, 16.

Women's Singles: Mrs. E. Schulz bt. I. Irvin, 12—11, and 14—13 (Time limit).

THE GERMAN TOUR

Reported by JOYCE ROBERTS
(Mrs. A. R. Miller)
Corbillon Cup Player

I THINK my fellow members of the English team which toured Germany in September, the first to visit that country since the end of the war, will agree with me when I say that our chief memory of the trip will be the abundant hospitality which met us everywhere, and perhaps Mickey Thornhill will qualify his statement by mentioning the cream cakes which seemed to impress him greatly. Wherever we went, in both the West and East zones, we were treated with the utmost kindness and it was literally flowers all the way.

We began our tour at Hamburg, a city combining industry and, by virtue of its lake and river, beauty. Our match here was against a representative team of West Germany and we looked upon it as a pretty stiff hurdle. The West German team consisted of Frl. Bussman, Frl. Kappellman and Vossebein, already known here, German International Raack and Braun, the latter being an unknown quantity to us. The conditions were fairly good, we found the balls not quite as reliable as our own and the tables slower. The only member of our team to come through this match unscathed was Ken Craigie. Simons and Thornhill both fell victims to Braun, who played cleverly, especially against Aubrey. Kathleen Best and myself lost to Kappellman and Bussman respectively. We licked our wounds and told ourselves we had to get used to the unfamiliar conditions and looked forward to our revenge later in the tour.

The next morning saw us playing in Lubeck, an old and charming town. Here we met the Geoff. Harrower of the German Table Tennis world, Herr Schlaff, the Secretary of the Association, who was a member of the Lubeck team together with a former Lithuanian Swaythling Cup player Herr Upmanis and Raack again. The girls were both young. Kathleen played a young lady who had fought bravely against infantile paralysis and my opponent was the Junior Champion, a sixteen-year-old (Frl. Paulsen) in pigtailed which fascinated me by flapping up and down when she played. She will be seen in the English Championships this year. We won this match 9—1, the lost game being the ladies doubles. It was here that we had the longest rest of our tour—a whole afternoon and evening—and we were taken to



JOYCE ROBERTS

Travemunde, a pretty little seaside town about six miles away to see Hein Ten Hof training for his title fight with Jack Gardner.

We were taken everywhere in West Germany in a six seater shooting break driven by a gentleman calling himself the International Sports Agency, whose permanent job it is to convey visiting sports teams from one place to another. We thought the rides quite pleasant whilst the distances were short, but were less happy about this mode of transport on the eight hour journey to Berlin. Mr. Ivor Montague, however, with his interesting and amusing anecdotes, speeded the hours which were spent in travelling.

From Lubeck we went to Bremen where we were entertained to lunch in the impressive Rathaus. The team registered a comfortable win here, the only game being dropped by myself to a young whirlwind who, drawing inspiration from her home crowd, played like our own Jean Mackay and produced hitting which I found unstoppable. Both Aubrey (18—15 down in the third to Vossebein) and Ken (15—8 down in the vital game to Kohlberg) had uncomfortable moments but battled through.

Our match the next evening was played after travelling all day to Berlin and we were glad that the West Berlin team was not strong. Our old friend Herr Raack, however, on his own ground, played very well and surprised Mickey in a thrilling

counter-hitting game. This match we won 8—2, Ken and I losing a deuce in third mixed doubles thriller in which Raack again figured conspicuously.

International Game

So to the big night, the full International in East Berlin. This was staged in a magnificent sports hall recently built for the World Youth Festival. The organisation for this match was excellent and the conditions very good. The German men's team was not announced until the evening, a fact which we found encouraging. We played on the Swaythling and Corbillon Cup basis, the ladies' match being played first. Kathleen, whose first important international appearance this was, rose to the occasion and played very well in the opening singles game to turn the tables on Kappellman 2—1. I then had my revenge on Bussman and, after we had lost a hard fought doubles match, was fortunate enough to play the final game against Kappellman which I won. We were then able to sit back and watch our men win to the tune of 5—0. The Germans eventually selected were Raack, Vossebein and Schneider, the latter being an 18-year-old from East Germany, a member of this year's Swaythling Cup Team. They were not as weak as the score might suggest, our boys had to play their best to keep on top and it is great credit to them that the result was never in doubt.

The remainder of our tour was spent in the Democratic Republic and here we visited Dresden, Jena, Halle and Leipzig, playing representative teams from the areas around each of these towns. Our results in these matches were: Dresden, won 10—0; Jena, won 9—1; Aubrey and Kathleen losing a mixed; Halle, won 9—1, Ken and Aubrey losing a men's doubles; Leipzig, won 8—1, Mickey losing to Hanschmann.

Young German Star

In Dresden we first became acquainted with Helmut Hanschmann, a 16-year-old who has ball control and T.F. craft beyond his years. His agile defence and quick hitting are reminiscent of Koczian, and his ability may be judged by the fact that only losing 19 in the third in his first meeting with Thornhill, he beat him on the second. His engaging smile and manner make him a great favourite with the crowd and he hopes to come to England to play in March. In Halle and Leipzig I met Astrid Horn, followers of pre-war table tennis will remember her when, playing under her maiden name of Krebsbach, she was ranked in the world's top four. This charming and vivacious lady is now the mother of a 15-

year old daughter but still retains evidence of her superior game, chiefly in her flowing backhand.

The match in Leipzig was the last of our tour, being against the combined forces of Eastern Germany. It was played at 10-30 on the Sunday morning and by this time the succession of journeys, matches, banquets, and early mornings, was leaving its mark on us and we all felt that we were fighting fatigue as well as playing our opponents.

Summary

Thus our visit came to an end and on the way back we indulged in the usual reflections. We thought the standard of the men players was quite high, but the chief players all have the same fault of staying too far away from the table and top spinning, hardly chopping at all. The West relies on the old school whilst the East have many up and coming youngsters besides the two already mentioned and should eventually eclipse the older side.

The older girls are still well ahead of the rest of the field and the premier positions of Bussman, Kappellman and Horn are not seriously threatened. Bussman makes a habit of winning the National Championship and is now in her seventh year of possession. The girls—dare I say it without bringing a flood of masculine wrath about my ears—have much more fighting spirit than the men and do not crack at vital stages in the game.

As for us, Kathleen did extremely well in her matches, playing with the calm of a veteran. Ken and Mickey, when tried, did all that was expected of them, Ken achieving a praiseworthy 100 per cent. record on the tour and Aubrey, although perhaps not as happy as on his native tables, quietly piled up the points against his opponents with his usual tight, relentless game.

AN APOLOGY

We wish to apologise to readers and also to Messrs. John Jaques & Son, Ltd., White Heather Works, Thornton Heath, for a mistake which was made on our back outside cover advertisement of the September/October *Table Tennis Review*. The famous Jaques Tournament Tables were quoted at £44 10s. each instead of the new price of £47.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR YOUR FRIEND?

Why not a subscription to *Table Tennis Review*? We will include a Greetings Card.

Form on page 31.

Richard Miles Beaten In Brazil

Follows With Trinidad Tour

ON his way back from a Brazilian tour in September last, Richard Miles, age 26 years, six times U.S.A. champion, called at Trinidad in order to take part in a series of matches.

While in the West Indies, Miles did not concede a single game, but in a tournament in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Dick Miles was beaten in the final by Hugo Severo 15, 17, and 15. Severo played an excellent game, sometimes retrieving impossible balls. He continually pushed the ball to Miles' backhand corner and this appeared to tie up the champion who was too eager to employ his mighty, flat forehand hitting. The general view in Brazil is that the Miles forehand attack and defence is terrific but he sadly needs a backhand so that he might counter the style of play adopted by Severo.

In the Rio de Janeiro Open Championships Richard played better and beat Hugo Severo by three straight games in the final. It was obvious, however, that he could not really let himself go against pen-holder Severo, who returned smash after smash with brilliant accuracy.

In Trinidad

When Richard Miles' plane touched down at the Trinidad airport of Piarco he was greeted by the ex-Lancashire and English official, Jack Thompson, who is now resident on the island. The American player carried under his arm the beautiful silver trophy he had won at the Rio de Janeiro championship.

His Excellency the Governor, Sir Hubert Rance, was among the big crowd who saw Miles play against local players at Port-of-Spain. Sir Hubert summed up the evening later as being "two hours of intense enjoyment." Sir Hubert said that Miles, though an expert, played the game for the benefit of his opponents and did not at any time make them look foolish.

Long after the crowd had left, Miles stayed on talking to the local players, giving them advice. He told them how they could have done better against him. He impressed on them that the strongest point is footwork. This, he said, was the thing which made Ralph Legal their best local player. He also pointed out the

benefits of spin, wrist play and of a compact game. He mentioned that Hubert Griffith, the West Indies champion, was a good player, but his game was too loose.

He stressed the value of practice and recalled a story of Victor Barna. When Barna and other leading Hungarian players had finished a night of table tennis there was one player who would always say, "Right, now let's have a last 25 games." It was well after midnight when Miles left. The next day he visited a shirt-making factory where the proprietor, himself a table tennis enthusiast, presented Richard with a box of the factory's best products.

The night after the Port-of-Spain display Richard Miles visited the South of the Island to play against San Fernando players. The story here was much the same and spectators were again impressed by the fact that he did not play in a manner that won him all the cheers.

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Introducing You To...

The International T.T. Federation

by LESLIE S. WOOLLARD

THERE is no more international sport than table tennis. Apart from Tibet, I know of no country where it is not played. I know of no other single sport where so many nations are represented in international competition: from China to Peru; from South Sea Islands to Iceland; from equatorial Africa to India or America or the continental vastness of Russia.

Table tennis is a U.N.O. of Sport that has successfully bridged political barriers and through its activities fostered unexampled goodwill and common interest between many peoples. In Ireland and Germany for instance, countries with sharp political boundaries dividing, it is (only, I think) with table tennis that a representative national unity has been achieved.

In little more than a quarter of a century, the International Table Tennis Federation has grown from a membership of four national associations to more than 50, plus many moral supporters. It is the realisation of an "impossible" ideal dreamed, fought, and worked for by a happy few.

Because the I.T.T.F. is a confederation of national associations it is neither approached nor approachable by individuals as such. Consequently, its work, achievements and activities are little known, yet no one can play table tennis without being vitally affected by the I.T.T.F.

It is a virile and continuously active organisation. It is the keystone which holds the entire structure of international table tennis together. Its activities have a direct effect on our own little game in the club and the way it is played. The value of its work to us (even without international competition) cannot be assessed.

But to start at the beginning. The constitution of the I.T.T.F. is the "Magna Carta" of table tennis; a noble precedent of international agreement that is jealously safeguarded and scrupulously upheld.

"The Federation shall consist of the affiliated Table Tennis Associations or corresponding organisations, conducting the sport in their territory in such a way as to enable participation in it of all their inhabitants WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF COLOUR, RACE or CREED..."

The long-term vision which right from the beginning inspired this golden rule has the touch of genius. It is worth a lot of your thought.

The keystone of the organisation is universality, the essential principle of its existence being based, one might say, on the traditional British readiness to combine in sporting friendship with players of every country.

This principle has (inevitably in such turbulent times), frequently been strained, but fortunately the I.T.T.F. has so far successfully survived, sometimes by compromises, sometimes by adherence to sound basic principles, sometimes—perhaps—by indefinite postponement of an issue, but always with a sincere and genuine endeavour to find the means by which everyone can meet at the conference or playing table without political complications.

No international sports federation has been more successful than the I.T.T.F. in maintaining harmony between players whose countries have widely different views, and there are obviously very sound reasons why nationalistic emblems, anthems, etc., are left to a minimum at I.T.T.F. events.

FOR XMAS—GIVE A

Bukta

"ACTION-CUT"

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Bukta sport shirts are action-cut to give freedom during the game and smartness after the game.

Obtainable from all good outfitters.

Table Tennis is very proud of being the only international sport that does not admit an enforced colour bar, a principle adopted by Congress without a single dissenting vote. This has, up to the time of writing, meant some complications with South Africa, but officials are not without hope that even this particular problem may be solved with goodwill on both sides.

The principles of the Federation are briefly "general unity," "mutual respect," etc. If a national association, for instance, suspends a player, the suspension will also operate in the other countries.

The organisation of the I.T.T.F. is simple and democratic. No-one can dominate, and the smallest association has exactly the same rights as the largest. Management is vested in a council which normally holds a congress at the time of each world championship. Each association (regardless of its size) is entitled to send two representatives to council; each association (regardless of size) has only two votes.

The council can make alterations to the laws of table tennis only with a majority of three-quarters of the votes cast. Two-thirds of those present and voting in favour are required to approve a new member.

Annually, the council elect their "board of Directors," i.e. the Advisory Committee, which, in effect, becomes the active authority of the I.T.T.F. throughout the year. The three important Committees of Rules, Equipment, and Ranking are also elected to aid and advise the Advisory Committee.

Each of these committees is given certain directives or recommendations, and the duty of promulgating the decisions of Congress. The Rules Committee might, for example, have the duty of framing certain new rules or drafting improvements to existing ones, or examining specifications for equipment, or defining "expenses."

The Equipment Committee (where the late A. J. Wilmott was of such outstanding value) is constantly checking and experimenting—it might be "alleviation of the stroboscopic effect of fluorescent lighting," effects of temperature, net material or posts, and arranging for tests under actual match conditions, etc.

An attempt is made to get the "specialist" committees "composed principally by experts" with the obvious purpose of co-ordinating the best expert skill in the world for the all-round benefit of the sport. Unfortunately, there are all too few individuals (who are known, anyway), who have the skill, experience and adaptability for this comparatively new field of research work.

Now whether you play table tennis in England or Hong Kong, in New York or

Paris, in Melbourne or in Rio de Janeiro, you play exactly the same way. The laws of table tennis are formulated by the International Federation (who are likewise the only body who can alter, modify or amend them). The laws are international and are adopted by each national association.

Supposing we want to raise the height of the net (law 2) to 6½ ins., we raise the matter through our league or county representatives, with all the evidence in favour (or perhaps, otherwise) to the E.T.T.A. The E.T.T.A. will debate at a general meeting. If the vote is in favour, the E.T.T.A. representatives will pass the motion to the I.T.T.F. for consideration at their next congress.

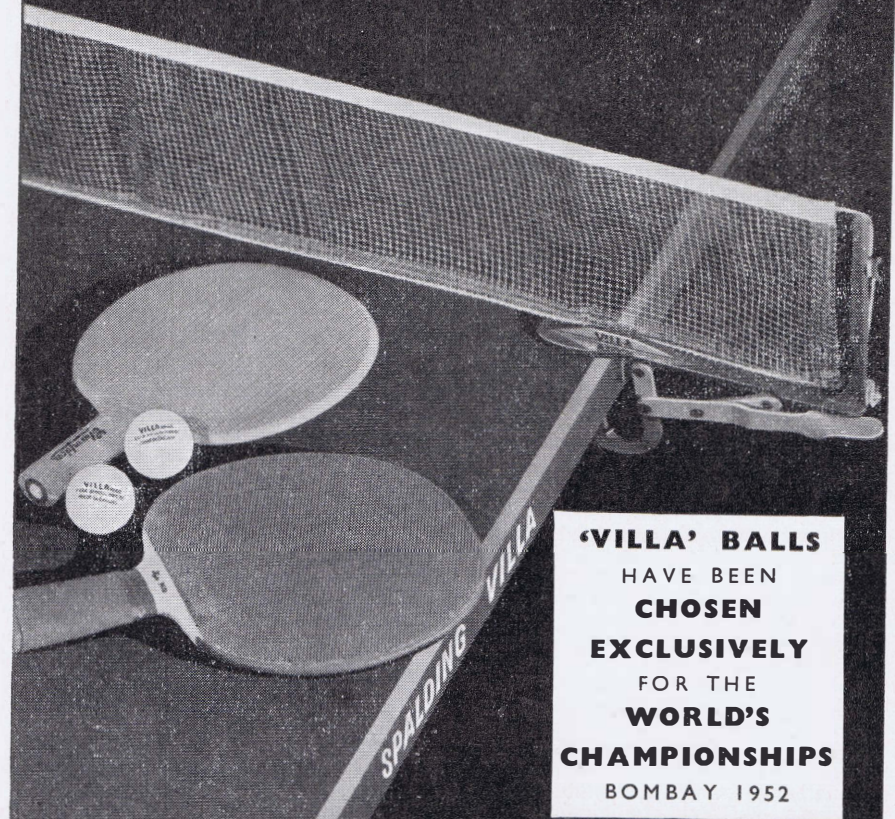
In addition to the laws of table tennis, the I.T.T.F. are also responsible for drafting the regulations for world championships, the Swaythling and Corbillon Cup competitions, international play, disciplinary regulations, and such things as minimum hospitality allowances for players of other associations.

The Hon. Ivor Montagu has been President of the I.T.T.F. in unbroken succession since the foundation in 1926, and at last year's congress was given a presentation in a spontaneous tribute in which every member wished to be associated. Only those who deal to any extent with international administrators can know anything of the high regard and respect universally accorded him. Occasional clashes are, of course, inevitable, but it seems impossible to think of anyone else so particularly gifted for the job or capable of achieving so much. He has an unquenchable faith in the athletic and sporting potentials of table tennis, a wide knowledge of all sports with a dominant fanaticism for T.T., a remarkable linguistic ability, the charm of a diplomat and the steel of authority, plus a unique aptitude of never permitting the intrusion of other interests that enables him to concentrate quite impartially on the sport and its best development.

The late Bill Pope, founder-secretary, also served in unbroken succession until his death, and was posthumously honoured by Congress. He was succeeded by Roy Evans of the Table Tennis Association of Wales, who was appointed secretary at the last Congress.

Secretary of the Indian T.T.A. and Organising Secretary for the World's Championships, Mr. T. D. Ranga Ramanujan has already published a most attractive booklet entitled "Welcome To India." It is beautifully illustrated with a score of large photographs of places of interest in India.

TABLE TENNIS EQUIPMENT...



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KIRKWOOD

HERE'S something to provoke and stimulate a discussion calculated to help pass an interesting hour. Whom do you consider (a) the six greatest players the world has produced, and (b) the six greatest players, of English birth, produced by Britain? I've tried my hand at sorting out six of one and half a dozen of t'other, but am forced to confess that the self-imposed task is quite beyond me. I make Barna, Bergmann and Vana numbers one, two and three respectively in the world rankings, and Leach, Haydon and Buble England's outstanding all-time trio. After that, I'm well and truly stumped. Bellak, Szabados, Kolar . . . Proffitt, Perry, Lurie? All right, let's see your numbers for each section. The Editor has promised to award a bat to the lady or gentleman who compiles what he considers to be the best ranking list. Mark your envelope "Best Six Ever."

Received a severe shaking the other day. I ran across a keen youngster who told me he *wasn't* being coached by Jack Carrington.

Ali Akbar, ex-Cambridge University President and member of several London T.T. clubs, is back in India visiting his home and family and to play in the World Series scheduled for Bombay in February. Sheik Nawab Akbar, is, as you may remember, the man who did more than anyone else to persuade the Cambridge sports authorities to award T.T. half-blues to the university's representative players, and who has the reputation of being the world's most versatile athlete—he is expert at some 30 sports. Ali, who sailed with the M.C.C. side on its way to engage Indian and Pakistan cricketers, is to help organise his country's Olympic Games team, with whom he will travel, either as an active member or an official, to Helsinki next year.

To help trim England's Germany-tour players into shape, Ernie Buble was pressed into service by Ivor Montagu, who figured, and rightly so, that a man of his style was needed, to be practised against, to fit our representatives to go into action against Deutschland's half-volleying specialists. It is now history that our men and girls trounced the Germans and enjoyed a highly successful tour. No-one can claim that the credit is Buble's, but at

least he helped. The glove-wearing left-hander would be a great acquisition as an official coach and could help along our youngsters no end. An unorthodox, fast-playing, close-to-the-table, half-volleying expert, he forces the best out of an opponent and makes him think and act quickly. Ten minutes practice with Ernest is worth more than an hour's knock-up with the average player. I contend that we need men of his unique talents and brain-power to nurture our youth along newer and more effective lines, and I offer the suggestion that Mr. Montagu could do the game a power of good by obtaining and retaining the player's coaching services.

A newspaper report has it that the Rowe girls have cashed-in on their world doubles title to the extent of £5,000. If that is true (and who am I to doubt a Press statement?) what the devil am I doing writing about table tennis when I should be playing it?

During the past I foretold that likeable and modest Joyce Roberts would one day earn an international shirt. She bore out my words right handsomely, being awarded international and then Corbillon Cup representative honours. And happy, too, I was for her sake, for I knew how very hard she had worked, struggled and sweated for recognition. Now the girl won't mind if I offer a little constructive advice I feel she needs. Cut out the jumping up and down between rallies, Joyce. That's a waste of good energy.

There's no future to the jack-in-the-box act. Other points you may care to bear in mind are (1), you need to develop a fore-hand kill; (2) you could do with a "tight" backhand; and (3) your outstretched left arm tends to unbalance you. Having said which, lass, I hope Tony Miller won't track me down with his hunting knife or, worse still, rush into print to tell me what an impertinent and ignorant cad I am . . .

Many aspiring young players must be asking themselves why that man Adrian Haydon doesn't turn in the game and confine his sporting attentions to fishing or chess. When trials are held Adrian is usually around to give prospective candidates for honours a run-over. And the old

Birmingham star, more often than not, not only gives them a bash but a bashing. Adrian, in fact, is making many of the new school of so-called stars look like cheesy third-raters. And the veteran with possibly the world's weirdest style was a star 25 years ago and more! It seems they don't breed 'em like Adrian any more.

Trevor Flint, 26-year-old, fair-thatched, bespectacled New Zealander, came to Europe last year to play, first, in the English Open and then in the World Series. He is still here, working in London, which city he likes and where the table tennis standard is to his taste. Though his bread-and-butter labours don't permit him too many outings to open tournaments, he is nevertheless doing his stint at the table for the famous City of London club, St. Brides Institute, for which body he plays in the first division of the Central London League. In the ten months he has been in England, Trevor has sharpened up his game—his hitting is snappier and his defence noticeably tighter. His comrades "down under" will find him a different player from the one who left home to seek, not fame and fortune, but experience against tough opponents. He is, at a conservative estimate, at least five points better than he was this time last year.

County Match

Glamorgan 1, Middlesex 9; at Pontypool, October 6th, 1951.

Rich in world titles, champion county Middlesex proved too strong for newly promoted Glamorgan, and the final score of 9—1 gave a fair indication of their superiority.

Sole Glamorgan success was registered by Walter Sweetland whose inspired hitting gained him a third game victory over Bernard Crouch.

Detailed Score Card

V. Barna (M) beat W. Sweetland, 21.15, 14.21, 21.9; beat S. Jones, 21.17, 21.15.

M. Thornhill (M) beat S. Jones, 21.18, 21.15; beat G. Chugg, 21.17, 21.9.

B. Crouch (M) beat G. Chugg, 21.15, 22.20; lost to Sweetland, 18.21, 21.17, 14.21.

M. Thornhill and B. Crouch beat J. Davies and G. Morgan, 21.16, 21.12.

Miss D. Rowe (M) beat Miss A. Bates, 21.16, 22.20.

V. Barna and R. Rowe (M) beat S. Jones and B. Gray, 21.7, 21.14.

D. and R. Rowe beat Bates and Gray, 21.18, 21.14.

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AUSTRALIA

JUBILEE TABLE TENNIS CARNIVAL

Michael Szabados Suspended

DORA BEREGI, ex-Hungarian and ex-English Corbillon Cup player, displayed brilliant form in the Australian Jubilee Table Tennis Championships, played in Adelaide at the end of September. Her hard-hitting forehand retained for her the singles title and in the final she beat the Australian Women's No. 2 player, D. Shipp, in two straight games, scores 8 and 11. An action photograph of Dora Beregi occupied the whole of the front cover of the championship programme.

Winner of the men's singles was Phil Anderson who defeated Dr. Walter Lowen in the final in three straight games, scores 19, 15 and 9. Anderson played forceful table tennis throughout the tournament. In the first game of the final against Lowen both players had been repeatedly counter-attacking and at 19-all Lowen had his chance to snatch that vital first game but he overhit a forehand and lost the game. Anderson then gained confidence and went on to take the next two games.

For a number of reasons Michael Szabados, ex-world champion, did not compete, but the opinion in some quarters was that Phil Anderson was playing so well that he would have beaten Szabados anyway. Still, as Phil said afterwards, "You can never tell in table tennis."

It was not until after the championships that Szabados was again suspended by the Australian T.T.A. for an indefinite period for giving exhibitions in Melbourne without official permission. This seems to make Michael the Australian counterpart of Richard Bergmann.

One of the surprise results was the defeat of ranked player Miss E. Nicholls by Miss Von Harvey, scores to Miss Harvey being 21-14, 20-22, 21-19.

The Inter-State Teams Championship was won by Victoria, with New South Wales second, followed by South Australia, Queensland, West Australia and Tasmania.

Latest official rankings for the first four positions are as follows: *Men*: 1, P. Anderson; 2, W. Lowen; 3, R. Clements; 4, K. Evans. *Women*: 1, D. Beregi; 2, D. Shipp; 3, A. Snarskyte; 4, N. Buckland.

The organisation of the championships was not everything that could be desired, but on the whole it was successful—though not from the financial angle. However, Australia is not in the same happy position

as England who can command such big gates and include so many stars. The next year's championships are to be held in Hobart, Tasmania. The long distances and travel involved are big handicaps to these events as naturally some of the best players cannot always obtain the time off from employment.

Final Results

Men's Singles Final: P. Anderson (N.S.W.) d. W. Lowen (Vic.), 21-19, 21-15, 21-9.

Men's Doubles Final: P. Anderson/L. Laza (N.S.W.) d. J. Klesman/B. Honeywood (N.S.W.), 21-14, 21-15, 21-17.

Women's Singles: D. Beregi (N.S.W.) d. D. Shipp (N.S.W.), 21-8, 21-11.

Women's Doubles: D. Beregi/M. Bowler (N.S.W.) d. A. Snarskyte (S.A.)/N. Buckland (Vic.), 21-15, 21-11.

Mixed Doubles: P. Anderson/D. Beregi (N.S.W.) d. R. Richards/M. Edwards (S.A.), 21-8.

RICHARD BERGMANN

(**Undefeated World Champion**)

Following their phenomenal stage success at the London Palladium, Richard Bergmann, undefeated World Singles Champion, and Steve Boros International Champion, are now heavily booked at theatres in Great Britain and the Continent. They will, however, be available for a limited number of exhibitions during this season and inquiries should be

sent without delay to:

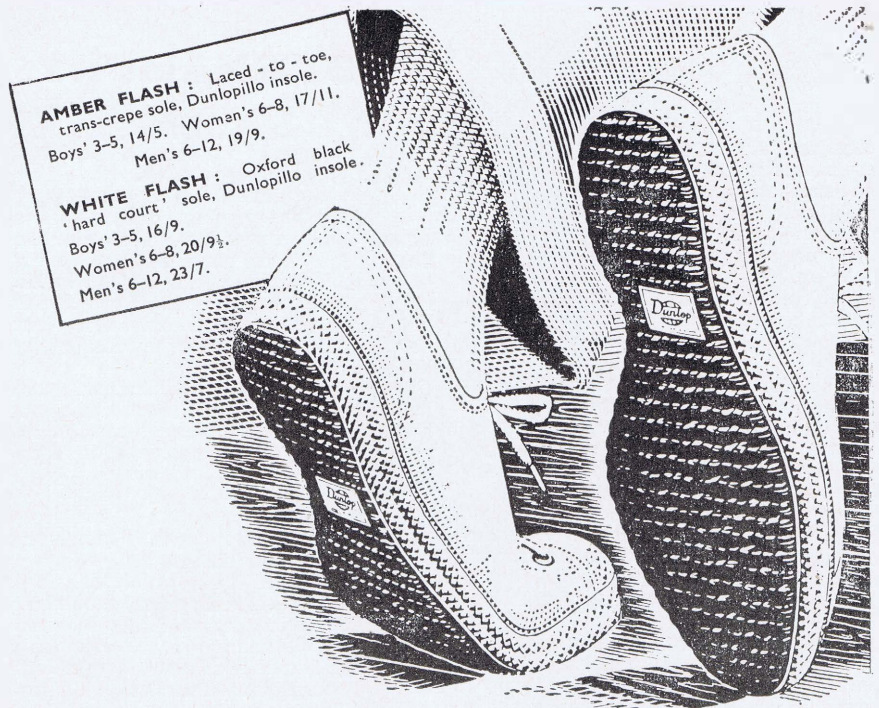


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Down the White Line

Continued from page 4

The general view of Michel Haguenuer in Australia is that he is a charming fellow and most obliging in every respect. At times, however, he is extremely temperamental. One night he broke a bat and this upset him to such an extent that in a one game up match against Australian Ron Picking he just made no effort at all and allowed his opponent to win.

* * *

This No. 1 French player, Michel Haguenuer, is now 35 years of age and is often described as the "Old Warhorse of France." He is six feet two inches and has represented France in international events since 1933. In his early table tennis days he was given extensive coaching by Victor Barna, then in 1935 it was Michel who toppled the great Victor from his throne, breaking his remarkable run of world championship wins by beating him in that year's premier event. Since then Haguenuer has been something of a giant killer in the world series and it was in 1950 that he defeated the reigning champion Johnny Leach in a brilliant five-game match. This year may well be Michel's last chance to obtain the title himself. His weakness, however, is carelessness when playing against opponents of a lower grade. His grip is not the orthodox one for he holds it "hammer fashion with no fingers resting on either side of the playing surface. He does not care for being called Michael, so fans please remember that his name rhymes with "fish-shell."

* * *

Latest news received from Bergmann is that on November 16th he starts an eight weeks run in the variety programme of a top class Parisian theatre. Since arriving on the continent Bergmann and Boros have not had an unbooked week, although Richard Bergmann planned to take part in the Austrian Open during the first few days of November. Considering his eighteen months absence from competitive table tennis his recent record against French players does not reflect badly on his present form. Against Haguenuer he has played three and won three, while against Roothoft and Amouretti he has won three and lost one in each case. During his Paris Variety contract Bergmann will train at a local gymnasium and take regular morning runs. In the hope that he will be selected to take part in the World's events in Bombay, Richard has not booked any theatre engagements for the first two weeks in February.

TOURNAMENT

IT was the day of our big county tournament. Of course, I was there, and with the spotlight of the final in mind, had festooned myself in my blue shirt and yellow sweater, grey shorts and red socks.

Surveying the crowded scene from a canteen table, I was just thinking of the final, when a county player sat on one of my jam-tarts. Angry though I was, I said nothing and moved quietly away. An unpleasant scene would only upset my nerves and perhaps affect my future play in the final.

It was just after I left the canteen that I met the Hobdens. I had seen a chair with a vacant look, and moving fast, unloaded myself into it. As I did so, however, a cry rang out.

"Hey! My Bat!"

I got up, and removing a bat from beneath me, handed it carefully to a young man who had come dashing up.

"Here you are," I said with a smile, and at the same time looking calmly around me to see if anyone appeared to be over-interested. No one was, I was safe. Only I had heard the tell-tale crack of wood.

"Are you playing?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied.

This answer did not greatly surprise me, since the lad was attired in playing kit, but at least it kept his attention away from the distressed bat.

At that moment, two older men came up.

"My father, Mr. Hobden, and my grandfather," announced my new acquaintance.

I smiled condescendingly.

"Are you playing?" I asked the father, paying a cunning compliment.

"Good heavens, no," he laughed.

A glance at his plump figure and shining head decided me against piling on the agony, by enquiring why.

Then came a surprise. The metallic voice of the loudspeaker called my name against that of my companions.

"First round game—Chopback versus Hobden—table three," droned the announcer.

I don't know how I got through that awful game. Shock and surprise dazed me into stupid errors. When I did get to the ball it was with the edge of my bat or the front of my nose. In a short time the umpire had called twenty-one, twice; and I was beaten!

There was only one thing left to do then. Get away quickly before my name was called up for umpire duty. As I passed back into the oblivion of the crowd I heard old Hobden congratulating my victor.

"Well done, Grand-dad!" he was saying.

Richard Bergmann tells why...

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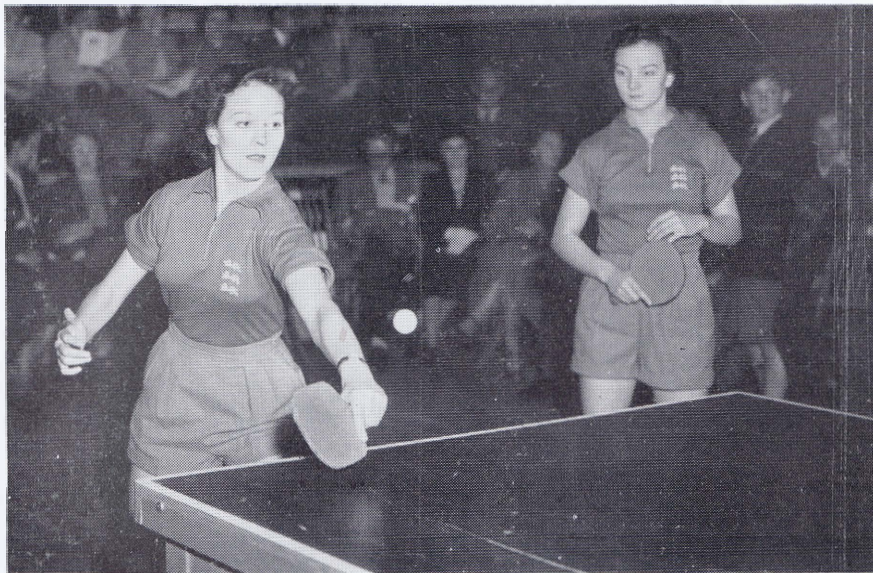


Richard Bergmann
Undefeated World Champion, 1950

Such advice is not to be taken lightly especially as the Bergmann bat costs only 10/11 including P.T. so why not try one and improve your play.

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Di and Ros take the Cake—and Cut it

DESCRIBED as the most distinguished assembly of sportswomen ever gathered at one function, thirteen leading British girl athletes were the guests of the Sports Writers' Association dinner especially given in their honour at the Criterion Restaurant, Piccadilly, London, on Oct. 3.

Well to the fore in even this outstanding gathering were Di and Ros Rowe, dressed, as one might have expected, in identical pink evening frocks, each with two carnations, long gloves and row of pearls.

Their companions of honour were Marjorie Pollard, team games administrator ; Susan Noel, England squash rackets captain ; Jeanette Altwegg, World and European figure skating champion ; Sheila Lerwill, World high jump record holder ; Dorothy Tyler, Empire Games high jump champion ; Mary Russell Vick, star hockey player ; Mary Glen Haig, Empire Games fencing champion ; Petronella Burr, World archery champion, 1946 and 1948 ; Mollie Hide, England cricket captain ; Peggy Lodge, England hockey captain ; and Brenda Fisher, Channel swim record holder.

The dinner was history-making as the first ever to "The Sportswomen of Britain," and it was particularly gratifying in that table tennis received its due and full recognition as a sport ranking with every other.

Roy McKelvie, famous London "Star" sports columnist, introduced Di and Ros as two of the country's most brilliant young sports stars, and expressed the hope, on behalf of everyone present, that the girls would retain their world doubles title at Bombay and also that one of them would bring back the singles title.

The Helms Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles had sent along a magnificently decorated cake for the occasion, as a tribute to the part British women had played in the realm of international sport, and to our twins was delegated the honour of cutting the confection, a task which they performed with pretty modesty and not a little efficiency before flashing cameras. It was then, incidentally, that the diners were enabled to solve the mystery of the evening, namely ; who was which ? One knife wielded by a right hand and the other by a left told their own revealing tale !

That the Misses Rowe ate heartily, despite the fear of having to give an after-

dinner speech, I can vouch for, for I sat between them. But Di is still puzzled as to why our waiter seemed to have it in for her. The tail-coated gentleman positively persecuted her, whipping away her plates before she had completed her courses, forgot this and that where she was concerned, even though he remembered everyone else, and in general gave her clearly to understand that she wasn't his little favourite, even though she may have been everyone else's !

In-between mouthfuls, the girls gave out with the following information. They are confident that they'll do well at the World Series. They insist on dressing alike for table (tennis !) activities because (a) it looks smart, (b) it achieves an harmonious effect beneficial to both themselves and spectators, and (c) they are certain that a team is the better for identical wear.

They also proffered the information that they are managing quite nicely since giving up work. They like their freedom, particularly on cold mornings, when they can snap their fingers at the alarm clock and take another nap with an easy mind. As for that reputed £5,000 they are reported to have earned, they gave out with a horse-laugh when I broached the matter with them.

The after-dinner speech ? Di spoke for herself and sister, and did a competent job. And that, despite her obvious feeling of apprehension. As Ros said gratefully : "Good old Di ; she never lets me down !"

A great evening with great people. Here's hoping that you'll be around at other similar S.W.A. functions, girls.

S.K.

HAVE YOU A PLAYING PROBLEM ?

We invite readers to send us their playing problems. This is a service which no table tennis magazine has ever done before and we realise it has its difficulties. You will help us if you describe your difficulty or playing weakness as clearly but as briefly as possible. Printed queries will bear only the sender's initials and town, but we do insist on you sending your correct name and address. Address to The Editor.



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LONDON GOSSIP

Return of the Prodigals

by **BILL PARKER**

THE past four years have seen the removal from Essex of several of its leading players. First Jack Carrington went to live in Surrey and was followed a year or so later by his friend and business partner, Johnny Leach. Then Peggy Franks and Ronnie Hook crossed over into Kent, where Ronnie made his name before the war and later became county champion and number one player.

But Essex must have something that "gets you," for in the last few months Peggy and Ronnie have moved back and are settled down nicely at Woodford Green, table-tennis table and all. So now it's a case of, as Ronnie put it, "a bash, a bath and then bed." Next the Carringtons, following their return from Sweden in the late summer, went straight to Upminster, where Essex County Secretary, Harry Walker, spends his sleeping hours. And now to cap everything, it's more than a racing certainty that by the time you get this issue of the *Review*, the Leach family will have left their flat in Croydon for the Gantshill district of Ilford, where Johnny and Daisy have been after a house for some time. Johnny's parents, who can often be seen shopping in Ilford High Road on Saturday afternoons, have had a male guest since the kiddies went back to school after the summer term. The gent's name is Johnny Leach, junior, now approaching the ripe old age of five and a half years and attending school in Ilford. Mum and Dad are pleased with the little chap's progress—seems as yet he's the only boy in the class who can count up to twenty-one!

Whilst in Australia and New Zealand during the summer, the World "Champ" caught the golf bug and after a very few rounds, got his handicap down to eighteen. Does this mean Johnny will be cutting out his training, especially now he is so far from the Crystal Palace F.C. ground? Not on your life! The Spurs and West Ham grounds are within easy distance of Johnny's new home and both clubs will welcome him to train with the lads—especially as he'll be on a free transfer!

Although the number of mixed leagues in the London area is being slowly whittled down, in the large area of N.W. London, administered by the Willesden League, where George Rutherford appears to be permanently installed as scribe, the lads

and lassies are still mixing it merrily. The Premier division is more or less of "Men Only" vintage, but playing regularly in Division I, are Peggy Veal (Ridgeway), Joan Sims (Dollis Hill) and Mary Stafford (North Met), the last named an 18-year-old who should make the representative team this season. Another promising youngster is Helen Gelfarb (Maccabi), who after putting in a season with her club's junior "A" team in Division 6 has this year been registered for the junior team in Division 3—a jump of three divisions. Not bad for a 15 year old! Incidentally Helen's big brother Stan (Maccabi Premier Division) is still young enough to realise the hopes the league selectors have of him.

But Maccabi isn't all youngsters—they have a useful "oldster" in Benny Bernstein, who won the Jubilee Cup (open to competitors in the 1926/27 World Championships) in 1948. Benny still manages to hold his own in the Premier Division.

In the last "London Gossip," I had quite a bit to say about the newly-founded Putney Club. Since the membership includes several internationals and county players from various parts of London and suburbs, I make no apology for mentioning it in these columns again. You may remember there was to be a "Champions' Tournament" in October, for those successful in the summer competitions. Well, that's all over now, Ken Craigie winning the men's event (2—1) from Keith Hurlock, and Barbara Milbank beating Elsie Carrington (24—22 in the third) to capture the women's title.

The standard of women's play in the Metropolitan area is unquestionably higher than ever before, the beauty of it being that there are so many promising youngsters. The Rowe twins no will doubt improve further and are already certainties for the Corbillon Cup team. Now we hear that Betty Blackburn will soon be back in England and competing in the London tournaments; the press-boys are asking "Will she play her way into the England team for the Bombay trip?" Naturally, Betty wouldn't know much about the London girls—Yvonne Baker, Elsie Carrington, Barbara Milbank and Peggy Piper, to name a few. But they're going to be mighty hard to beat!

NEWS from WALES

LAST year's discreet decision by the W.T.T.A. to enter a side in the English National Counties Championship was justly rewarded in promotion to the Premier Division. Competition with the elite of English table tennis will undoubtedly bring about an improvement in the play of top-class Welsh players, while the drawing powers of names like Leach, Barna and the Rowe twins should result in bumper gates. Originally entered as "South Wales," constitutional difficulties enforced the Welsh T.T.A. to use the label "Glamorgan," and, as in the case of the County Cricket Club, selection under special registration can be made from the county of Monmouth.

The new scheme of ranking players into four distinct grades should ease the task of our selectors, but the task of collating results will inevitably fall on our already overworked Association Secretary, Mrs. Nancy Evans.

What of the players themselves? Last season's Glamorgan team, Walter Sweetland, Stan Jones and Gerald Chugg, will again form the nucleus of the Welsh international team, although strong challenge is expected from Michael Jones, John Davies and Alan Morris. The Welsh champion, Monty Smith, who displayed such good form towards the end of last season has not, up to the time of going to press, informed the selectors of his availability.

In the juniors we have an abundance of promising talent, while the Welsh women give us good reason to believe that they will prove our strength in coming international events. Welsh No. 1 lady player, Audrey Gabets, must surely be Britain's foremost sportswoman. She is the reigning table tennis and tennis champion of Wales and the latest honour to come her way is an invitation to take part in the British Squash tour of America.

Swansea's international, Betty Gray, has abandoned her defence for an unorthodox, close-to-the-table half-volley game. Although not stylish, Betty is difficult to beat and should have a good season.

Congratulations to Welsh international Audrey Coombes upon her recent marriage. Also congratulations to Vera Rowe on her recovery from the illness which kept her out of the game last season.

Who Gets the Point?

We have received a query from the well-known Australian player, Cecil Shaw, who writes:

"While at the recent Australian Championships I was involved in a discussion regarding the following knotty point. Assuming a rally is in progress and the ball strikes the top of the net and then trickles over the net and falls on to the net support or bracket which extends six inches from the side of the table and then falls to the floor—whose point is it? Please note that the ball does not touch the actual playing surface of the net or even the side of the table, but, after passing over the net it touches the protruding bracket only. The best umpires and authorities at the championships were divided on this question, which you will agree is a ticklish one. My personal opinion is that such a return would count against the last striker as the ball did not touch the table after passing over the net. Perhaps you would give the official ruling in *Table Tennis Review* as I am sure other T.T. bodies have experienced this problem at some time or other."

Yes, Cecil, you are quite right. There is no doubt whatever that the point would be against the striker-out. Law 11 requires that "a good return" must "touch directly" the opponent's court and under Law 13(b) the failure to make "a good return" loses a point.—Editor.

Snips and Smiles

We smile at Bergmann's fabulous description of dour Stan Jones as a "vicious attacker" in the book "Twenty-One Up."

Swansea & District League Coach, Ivor Williams, found verbal encouragement insufficient in the case of one pupil. When "back with the right foot" proved ineffective, a hard tug on a rope attached to the offending leg worked wonders.

Cliff Smith (Milford Haven) attended a C.C.P.R. table tennis course at Bisham Abbey last month. Nothing extraordinary about that—except that Cliff was on his honeymoon!

The licence enjoyed by table tennis players is being continually abused. Witness a certain player commencing a Port Talbot League game attired in collar and tie, shoes, and with a lighted fag to complete the picture. When reproached he replied: "Visitors' privilege."

OPEN TOURNAMENT ORGANISATION

(Some Suggestions by W. E. Wood)

THESE notes are complementary to my recommendations on administration printed in the September-October issue and are intended to demonstrate their effect on organisation.

They introduce a system for scheduling events in playing order, with a timed programme covering all sessions.

A method of automatic control is suggested, to enable events to be run concurrently without clashing.

For illustration purposes I have visualised a tournament, conditions as follows:—

1 Venue: 12 tables: players under 25 miles play Thursday and Friday evenings: players 25 miles and over play Saturday from 12 noon: finals 7.30 p.m.

I would estimate $3\frac{1}{2}$ sets per hour per table, i.e. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 12$, say 40 sets per hour.

I would allow for $2\frac{1}{2}$ playing hours Thursday and Friday, i.e. $2 \times 2\frac{1}{2} \times 40 = 200$ sets.

indicating chart numbers, byes, transfer spaces and seedings.

Entry Forms, S.A.E.'s, and Competitors' Forms would be kept in alphabetical order and with the prepared charts, some score sheets and numbered draw discs would be required for making the draw.

Competitors' Forms would be thrown out during the draws, as completed, for mailing, but otherwise kept in alphabetical order. The chart numbers of all accepted events would be posted on the forms and the scheduled times for attendance.

The draw would be made in the scheduled order of events. After Saturday M.S. draw the time of the first 12 sets (12 noon) would be posted on the chart, then the next 12 sets (12.15) continued through rounds 1 and 2. For this purpose I would allow $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. per set. Some consideration could be given in this allocation to allow a degree of exemption to selected players.

SETS

Event	Entry	Transfers	Total Entry	Byes	Start	Round 1	Round 2	Others	Total
M.S.	104	4	108	20	12.0	44	32	28	104
M.D.	42	2	44	20	3.0	12	16	14	42
B.S.	21	1	22	10	1.30	6	8	6	20
V.S.	2	4	6	2	2.0	2	2	1	5
W.S.	24	2	26	6	2.0	10	8	6	24
W.D.	11	1	12	4	3.0	4	4	2	10
G.S.	1	5	6	2	2.45	2	2	1	5
X.D.	23	1	24	8	4.0	8	8	6	22
TOTALS	228	20	248			88	80	64	232

I would deduct $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours safety margin, Saturday, i.e. $6\frac{1}{2} \times 40 = 250$ sets.

This would indicate the maximum permitted entry as:—

Preliminary rounds .. 200

Saturday rounds .. 250

Total .. 450

I would have "Competitors' Acceptance Forms" printed on paper, separate from entry forms; competitors having been instructed to send a S.A.E. with entry.

Separate cumulative records of entries would be maintained for Preliminary and Saturday (Saturday less "transfers"), entry being closed when maxima are reached or on closing date.

At close of entry, schedules would be prepared for plotting the sessions, per the Saturday specimen.

All charts would then be prepared by

The scheduled starting times of all other events would be indicated at the top of each chart.

During the first Saturday draw (M.S.), I would post the next scheduled event entered (e.g. B.S.), against each player's name on the M.S. chart: "X" would indicate no further event entered.

The principle of this double record is that each Saturday chart would indicate the next scheduled event entered by each player.

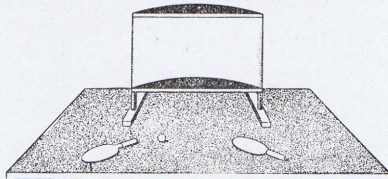
The preliminary charts would be cut at the "transfer" round and the Saturday chart numbers and times for transferred players indicated.

It will be noted that I advocate M.S. as the starting event, and timed sets in rounds 1 and 2 only of this event. I consider that more precise timing is neither necessary nor desirable.

I would have score sheets prepared for all

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events where all opponents are known.

Competitors' Acceptance Forms would contain usual details, plus the following directions :—

“Please report to Control at least 15 minutes before, and be ready to play at the above times.”

“Sets will be announced at the scheduled times whether or not players have reported, and any player absent from the table three minutes after the announcement will be IMMEDIATELY scratched from the event concerned.”

Final Day's Play

I will now illustrate control at the Saturday session.

From 11.45 a.m., players' arrival will be signalled on the chart for the first scheduled event entered.

At 12 noon, score sheets for the first 12 sets will be released to the announcer, and release signalled on the chart, irrespective of whether players have reported or not.

The 12 sets will be announced and score sheets passed to the table stewards. After two minutes, a second warning announcement will be made where necessary, giving one minute final grace.

Score sheets will then be returned by table stewards to announcer where players are still missing : the set will be announced as

cancelled, together with the result (i.e. walk-over for the player present or the set void) and the names of players scratched from the event.

It will be noted that the reporting-in of players does not influence the progress of the tournament, but no set can be announced before the scheduled time.

Should, however, there be a table empty, and players for a later set have reported in, they can be called to the Control, and if ready to play, the set can be announced.

On return of the completed (or cancelled) score sheet, winners will be carried forward to the next round on the chart. The “next event” e.g. (B.S.) of the loser or scratched player will be crossed through on the chart and recorded on the score sheet. The losing player will then be signalled from the score sheet, as available for play on the appropriate chart.

At the scheduled time for starting the next event (e.g. B.S. 1.30 p.m.), Control will start releasing score sheets for those sets where players are available. Events will thus run concurrently without clashing.

Later in the tournament (say 4 p.m.) a closer liaison between chart controls will be desirable, to “loan” winning players, in order to keep events progressing.

All this may appear somewhat involved at first reading, but some careful study should clarify the details, and provide appreciation of the practical aspects and advantages.

I leave you with the submission that a well-run tournament brings its own reward to the organisers, and that time saved at the tournament is well worth the preparatory work involved.

Also that all players must submit to reasonable discipline. The referee is in charge, and no referee stops to look at the player's name before whistling an infringement of rules.

Sussex Open Championships

October 28th, Hastings Pier

FINAL RESULTS

M.S.—Venner beat Head 13, 12, —11, 15.

W.S.—R. Rowe beat D. Rowe 18, 18.

M.D.—Venner/Craigie beat Barna/Thornhill 16, 16.

W.D.—Misses D. & R. Rowe beat Misses P. Franks & J. Roberts, 17, —16, 17.

Mx.D.—Barna/R. Rowe beat Venner & P. Piper 16, 17.

Junior Cup—Campbell (Dagenham) beat Tingling (Horsham) 14, 8.

NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN

THE North of England Open Championships played October 18th to 20th was probably Manchester's most successful tournament since 1939. A record entry of 870 was received but as a limited number had been decided upon, over 200 entries had to be returned.

Every competitor received by post a notification saying at what time and on which table he or she would be required to play their first round match, and Tournament Secretary Leslie Jones reported that everything ran to schedule. Play commenced at 10.30 a.m. and at noon hot lunches were provided at 3s. per head. By 6 p.m. tables were cleared away and the hall was rearranged for the evening's finals. (Pats on the back for those officials who looked so smart in their navy-blue blazers which sported the bright red and gold Manchester badge.)

Yes, everything went off in grand style except that all-important side—the standard of play. It was only during the Men's Singles Final that the crowd of over 600 people were moved to any pitch of enthusiasm. In one men's semi-final Ronnie Allcock was hopelessly outclassed by Harry Venner (London). Allcock just didn't have a semblance of a reply to Venner's quick half-volley hitting.

In the final against Ronnie Baker (Manchester), however, Harry Venner, ranked England's No. 4, was given a rough handling by the Manchester boy who has been so long neglected by the English Selection Committee. For the first two games it was all Baker, who hit hard, accurately and acutely. In a final of three games Baker took the first at 15 and then in the second game he was within a fraction of an inch of taking the title. With Baker leading at 21—20 Venner luckily had an edge-ball which brought the score to 21 all. Venner then carried on to take that vital second game and also the third at 12. What happened to Baker in the third game? Over-eagerness which led to over-hitting!

There were two surprises in the fourth round when Ken Stanley was beaten two straight by 36-year-old ex-international Les Cohen (Manchester). Benny Casofsky also went out in two straight games to Skerratt (Scunthorpe).

Women's outstanding results were the defeat of ex-Corbillion Cup player Adele Wood by Marjorie Lightfoot (Leeds), Lightfoot then being beaten by Jean Winn (London).

An attractive newcomer to open tournaments, brunette 19-year-old Pam Mortimer,

of Birmingham, accounted for Andre Jones (Liverpool) in an early round, while pre-war Manchester player, Beryl Hardman, beat Yvonne Baker (London) and Mrs. Cumberbatch before losing to Margaret Fry (Bristol) in the semi-final. Catherine Best (Wakefield) (English international) defeated K. Benson and J. Winn before meeting M. Fry in the final. The women's title went to Catherine Best, who won two games to one.

Final Results

Men's Singles Semi-Finals : R. Baker beat R. Hinchcliffe (Huddersfield), 24, 13 ; H. T. Venner beat R. Allcock, 6, 13. *Final* : H. T. Venner beat R. Baker —15, 21, 12.

Women's Singles : C. Best beat M. Fry, 5, —25, 13.

Men's Doubles : Allcock and Baker beat Stanley and Casofsky, 22, 20.

Women's Doubles : Fry and Best beat Benson and Mansell, 15, —13, 14.

Mixed Doubles : Adele Wood and Casofsky beat Eileen Grimstone and Baker, 18, 12.

Junior Boys : C. Booth (Bolton) beat G. Pullar (Oldham), —20, 12, 10.

Junior Girls : Wendy Blades (Boston) beat V. Lackman (Manchester).

BRIAN KENNEDY

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SERVICE IMPOSITIONS !!

By HENRY A. SENIOR, *Darlington Hon. Secretary.*

I AM impelled to write on the question of the Service Rule because of Mr. J. Carrington's article in the October *Review*, and also because in the first week of the league season here I have already received a written complaint by one team accusing another team of gaining advantage by faulty serving.

More than two years ago—in your May/June 1949 issue—you summed up the position admirably in your editorial. That article is as true to-day as it was then. In the intervening period, there has not been any improvement. The I.T.T.F., instead of really tackling the problem, have merely trifled with it, and they have now aggravated the position by introducing further contentious wording. I refer to “vertically up.”

The rule imposes an exact geometrical pattern on the server.

In the appendix it is stated that this is not the intention ! So the umpire asks himself the question “How far from a geometrical pattern am I to allow players to stray ? Probably no two umpires will give exactly the same answer, and probably no two players will be in complete agreement with the umpire. And therein lies all the trouble.

Cause of Friction

As a league secretary, I am greatly concerned about this rule, because it is the cause of much friction between players and clubs and is affecting the popularity of the game.

The complaint I have received from one club regarding their opening match is no isolated one. Similar complaints have reached me at intervals during past seasons. In these incidents, the sequence of events is usually the same. First, someone objects to a player's service. This player, or others in his team, point out that there isn't much wrong with his service, and, anyway, the players on the opposing side are not serving correctly, either. The poor umpires then decide to be more strict. They are next accused of being more lenient to their own team than to their opponents. Then when the umpires, who are usually volunteers from the competing teams, go to the table to play their games, the others glare and nudge each other, “Just fancy him pulling me up for bad serving. Look at his own service !

There is bickering and general irritation, and relief when the match is over.

Even when not a word of complaint is spoken, in many cases in my experience, players who execute an impeccable service have felt that they have lost games solely

because of extreme leniency allowed to their opponents.

It is no good saying that neutral umpires should be chosen. In small clubs such as make up my league, it is seldom that more than a few club members are present while a match is in progress, and probably none is capable of umpiring, and anyway if they were, being members of the home club, they are not strictly neutral. Umpiring, then, must be done by the competing players, the usual procedure being that a member of each side officiates alternately.

Some teams, to avoid disagreement, tacitly agree to turn a blind eye to the service. An enjoyable match usually results, and the practice tends to grow.

The reactions of new players and clubs entering the league can be imagined. They soon find that what in one match is passed as a good service, is considered a bad one in the next match before different umpires, and they are left in a state of confusion.

This is bad for the game as a whole, and it adversely affects league membership.

Rule Revision Vital

I have reviewed the position in my league fairly fully because I am certain that a similar state of affairs exists in most other leagues, and something must be done about it as soon as possible. But what ? It is no good me and others moaning unless we also offer constructive suggestions, so here goes !

First, a suggested re-wording of the rule. The wording suggested by Mr. Carrington in his article will not do, for it is open to the same objections as he himself raises against the present rule. For example, he asks, quite rightly : How flat is “flat” ? What then, referring to his own wording, is an “open palm” ? How “open” must it be ? And what exactly is “direct propulsion” ? If the word “direct” is necessary, then what would be “indirect” propulsion ? Further, Mr. Carrington states that it is almost impossible to tell definitely if spin is being imparted to the ball in service, so why introduce the words “without spin” which put the onus on the umpire as at present ? No, the wording put forward by Jack will not do.

At this point let me say that Jack's article admirably sets out all the objections to the present rule, but his re-wording still retains most of those objections.

I would simplify the rule still further something like this :—

“The ball shall first rest in the palm of the free hand. It shall then be released without being touched by the fingers or

thumb, and struck by the bat, after leaving the free hand, so that it first touch the server's court.”

Could anything be simpler ? True, the hand may be cupped or turned over, and the ball struck away from the vertical, but why not ? The amount of spin that could be imparted to the ball would be so small, or at least not great enough, to make the service at all difficult to take.

My wording :—

- (1) Removes rigidity of service ;
- (2) Allows a limited amount of freedom to vary service ;
- (3) Still bars finger-spin.

Mr. Carrington's opinion as an expert would be valuable. Does he consider that any player, except perhaps the most expert, could possibly develop an “ace” service, if the rule was simplified to the extent I have suggested ?

Wake Up ! Object !

However, whatever the ultimate wording may be, certainly the present chaotic situation cannot be allowed to continue, and so the rule *must* be altered.

Mr. Carrington says “wake up and press for improvements” but does not say how.

We can press for improvement in two ways :—

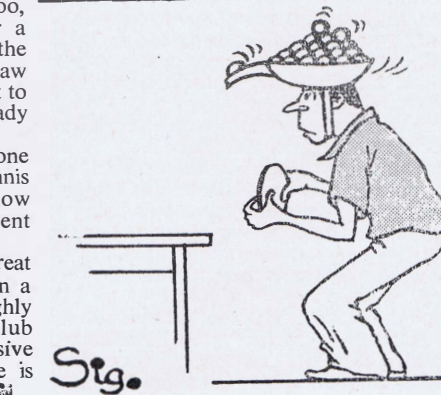
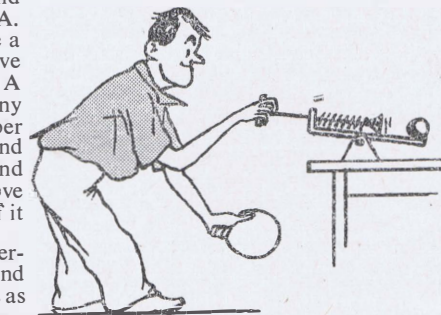
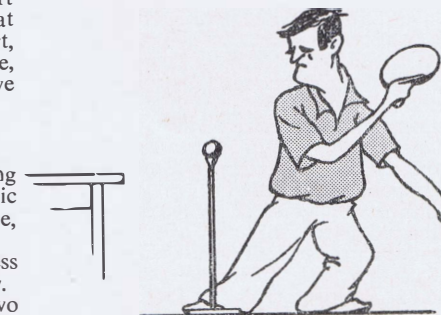
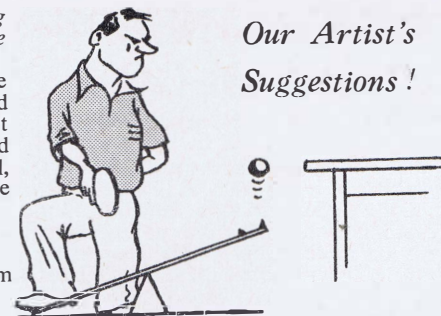
(1) By letters of protest from league and club secretaries sent to the E.T.T.A. demanding revision of the rule. To have a chance of success, such protests would have to reach the proportions of a flood. A trickle of letters would be no good. Many league secretaries, and a far greater number of club secretaries, I fear, are apathetic, and would have to be moved by appeal and advertisement. A protest on the above lines would, therefore, gain much force if it could be organised.

(2) By a petition : “We, the undersigned, demand the revision” etc., and signed by as many players and secretaries as can be found to support it. This too, would have to be organised by either a particular body, or paper such as the *Review*, which would be prepared to draw up a petition suitably worded, circulate it to leagues, and receive lists of signatures ready for forwarding to the E.T.T.A.

I sincerely hope something will be done to mobilise the forces of table tennis opinion against the unnatural rigidity now being imposed on players by the present service rule.

My heart is in the game, and my great desire is for all matches to be played in a sporting and friendly manner thoroughly enjoyed by all. Too often, at present, club matches are played in a potentially explosive atmosphere for which the service rule is directly responsible.

Our Artist's
Suggestions !



Sig.

E.T.T.A. NEEDS NEW BLOOD

says Alec Brook (ex-Swaythling Cup)

IS it not time we had new blood—and plenty of it—in table tennis administration? The more I see of committees and the people who conduct the policy of our sport, the more I realise those same people control who were there, 10, 15 and 20 years ago.

Much good has been accomplished and much the other way, but a lot more progress could, in my opinion, have been made had the work not been confined to so few, especially as some of those few have made certain their views and ideas have been those to be adopted.

Our committees have consisted of far too many "yes-men" and, in consequence, the same cliques have been able to carry on monopolising the game.

Strong words these, but I have proved on many occasions that this is so and the greatest example was during the last war.

Charlie Seaman, of Brighton, and myself, had been suspended in 1939 for taking on a contract which, unbeknown to us, had previously been offered to the E.T.T.A. and had been accepted by them. We both applied later on for reinstatement, and after a while Seaman had his granted but mine was declined as I was considered too belligerent. I made many requests which were all refused and then decided to team up with someone else for stage work, having just had my discharge from the Army. Again I requested to be reinstated and again it was refused. This meant that my partner had to be suspended.

After making every effort to get my partner to change his mind about playing with me and finding he would not change his mind, on the day we started playing together, I had a wire saying my suspension was lifted. A letter followed and included this: "We admit we have kept you suspended more out of pique than anything else."

Is this sport and was a whole committee honestly unanimous about this?

It is my firm opinion that not only at the top, but right down to many local leagues, there are too many of these people doing as they like. These persons usually are the type who are good organisers, can dominate and whenever it suits them, see that they get their own way.

So many times I have seen a candidate for our National Executive express himself most forcibly before the election and then afterwards, slowly and surely (sometimes quickly



ALEC BROOK

and surely) he quietly submits to the stronger personality and becomes yet another "yes-man" willing to be as passive as the rest.

My words are not aimed at every long-time administrator. The Guildford league in particular, as an example, has had Percy Lawes at the helm for many, many years and I cannot think of anyone more conscientious or who could have the game more at heart than Percy, and Guildford owes much to this man.

Table tennis can be, and is, a business with quite a few people these days. There is a lot of money to be earned in different ways from coaching, exhibitions and tours, and there are also some very nice foreign tours for those elected to travel with our teams. The people to look after these affairs should be the persons most suited and not those who happen to be in favour, the self-chosen or the strongest characters. There is, and has been for a long time, too much favouritism in table tennis and some of those to blame have a very strong foothold.

Eastern Suburban Open

Ilford, November 11th

FINAL RESULTS

M.S.—Semi-finals: H. Venner beat A. Rhodes 12, 19; J. Head beat K. Cragie—11, 17, 17.

M.S.—Final: H. Venner beat J. Head 17, 11, 19, 22.

M.D.—V. Barna/J. Carrington beat J. Head/K. Hurlock 17, 16.

W.S.—Miss D. Rowe beat Miss R. Rowe 16, 14.

W.D.—Misses D. and R. Rowe beat Mrs. Cumberbatch/Miss Hall 8, 16.

Mx.D.—V. Barna/Miss R. Rowe beat R. Crayden/Miss J. Winn 16, 21.

Jr.B.—C. Darts.

Jr.G.—Miss J. Bottrill.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR TABLE TENNIS

(Part II)

Compiled by Arthur Waite, *Ex-International and the Editor*

The Half-Volley Game

Having acquired a good grip that allows you full scope to develop the maximum number of strokes your next step is to check up on your half-volley game, or, if you are a complete beginner, you should go to the table with the determination to learn to keep the ball on the table before learning the more difficult shots.

As I go around to clubs giving talks and coaching I am amazed to see the number of beginners who dig themselves in four, five and six feet from the edge of the table and completely neglect the close-to-the-table half-volley game, or as Stanley Proffitt likes to describe it, "the middle game."

I suppose what happens is this. The complete beginner sees some of the stars in action and realises the thrills of modern table tennis when it is played well away from the table. He goes back to his club and straight away sets up his basic position as far from the edge as he can conveniently back, and from there he starts to learn to play. He could not fall into a greater error.

Much that we despise the game of "ping pong" we must admit that after all it is the foundation of modern table tennis. Call it what you will, "ping pong," "pushing," "half-volleying" or "the middle game," but see that you are a master of this department of the game.

What are you going to do when you are attacking close to the table and suddenly a quick counter-hit smacks down just on a spot where your attack is too weak to counter-hit? Your answer of course is a half-volley return keeping the ball low over the net and falling as short as possible on the other side.

What should you do if you are defending well away from the table and playing a losing game? The realisation comes that you have just got to get up to the table and take over the attack if you are going to get to 21 first. Maybe you spring up to the table prepared to attack, or perhaps you gradually manoeuvre yourself to closer range, but whatever you do, what happens if you get to the table and find that the opportunity to hit just doesn't present itself immediately? The answer again is the half-volley game. No matter how hard your opponent may be hitting the expert half-volley player can return practically all smashes and what is more he can place

them just where he wants to do. Don't you believe me? Then you have never seen ex-English Swaythling Cup player Ernie Bubleby in action. He used to worry people like Vana, and boy! could Bo hit them when on top form!

This move-up from defence to close-range play is aptly described by Stanley Proffitt as "the link-up between defence and attack."

By the way, I suppose you know what a half-volley is? Let's go into it. In the first place the half-volley is when you hit the ball a fraction of a second after its bounce. Your playing arm, from the tip of the racket to your elbow should be nearly parallel to the table. Don't hold the arm stiff. Relax and upon impact with the ball slight wrist action can be made according to the angle from which you play the ball. Make your stroke with a calm, unhurried pushing movement.

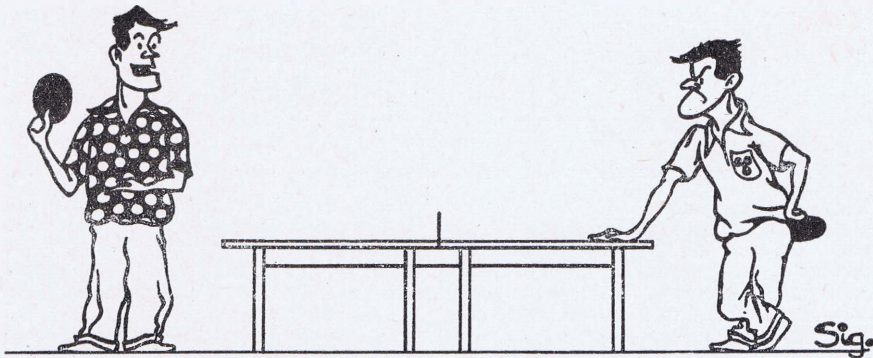
The playing surface of the bat should be at right-angles to the surface of the table providing your opponent is imparting little or no spin. If your push strokes sizzle to the bottom of the net, then your opponent is using back-spin and this calls for you to adjust your bat so that the playing surface is tilted away from the net. This gives you return the necessary "lift." If, however, you find your half-volley returns are going too high or maybe falling off the edge of the table, then you have to counteract top-spin and for this your bat's playing surface should be tilted forward towards the net.

Have you got all that? Well, put it into action next time you are at the table. You are not reading this to enjoy yourself, you know!

The preceding description of this close-to-the-table play is, of course, the half-volley *defence*. There is such a thing as half-volley *attack*—that is to say hitting the ball with a forceful attacking stroke immediately after it has bounced, but if you are just a moderate player you had better wait until Volume Six of *Table Tennis Review* is complete before you try anything so advanced.

Stance

In the matter of body-stance for the various strokes we have two schools of thought and we shall go into this more thoroughly in the next lesson. For the time being you will not go far wrong if you play your half-volley game with both feet the



"My lucky shirt—never lost a game with it on!"

same distance from the table. Hold your body almost parallel with the net, just swaying round *slighly* towards the right for forehand push strokes and slightly to the left for backhand push strokes.

During practice do you still have a check-up now and then on your grip? We talked all about the grip in the September-October issue and if you desire the first of this series of instructional articles you will probably be able to obtain the back issue from our address. But do watch your grip if you happen to be in the elementary stage. When giving coaching I often find that after demonstrating the best grip a pupil gradually allows his hand to slide away from the shoulders of the bat. Or some players allow that second finger to creep on to the playing surface.

Forehand Drive

As I stated in the first of this series my purpose is not to tell you just one method of executing the strokes, but to give you the views of the experts and so enable you to choose that method which best suits your own style of play. In this way the instruction should become as near personal as it is possible to get written advice.

In the forehand drive, however, most of the experts hold very similar views, and so at the risk of going over old ground I will give you the main essentials of this stroke.

Victor Barna says there are two types of attacking shots (either forehand or backhand), these being the "lift" and the "kill." In the "lift" you hit the ball carefully and early on its rise from the table (not half-volley), and in the "kill" you wait until the ball is at the crest of its bounce and then really wade in with everything you've got. The idea of the lift, of course, is to maintain your attack while the chance of a "kill" comes along.

But let's get down to the fundamentals of the stroke. Get your friend to serve the ball

to you and then follow by placing his next shot on your forehand side and about 18 ins. from your base line. Return his service with the half-volley and then (*follow this closely*) as the ball comes towards you on your forehand side take a short step forward with the left foot holding the weight of your body on the right foot. As you go forward you obtain the sideways stance, that is you bring your left shoulder towards the net. At the same time take your racket arm back a little so that the bat itself is about hip level. Now as your left foot makes contact with the floor go into action. Transfer the body weight from the right to the left foot and at the same moment swing forward and upward with the bat. After contact has been made with the ball allow the racket arm to continue its flight striving to follow the ball for a split second and then completing the stroke above your head. Do not allow your racket arm to cross your body. If it must finish nearer your left shoulder than your right, then allow the hand to be above the head. Anything lower will either block your vision for a brief moment, or if lower down still will rob your shot of vital top spin.

Where do the experts differ in this stroke? Well, let's have a look at what they say.

Sol Schiff in his book "Table Tennis Comes of Age" (Rich & Cowan) says: "Bring your racket forward and upward with the blade forming an angle of about 45 degrees to the surface of the table. Make contact and keep contact as long as possible. Help the ball on its journey over the net as much as you can by continuing along and extending the racket upward and after the line of flight of the ball."

Well, the point I want you to note about Sol Schiff's advice is that forward tilt of the racket.

Victor Barna in his small booklet (now out of print) says that when making the forehand there should be slight pressure

from the first finger which rests on the blade of the bat. While Victor makes no mention of racket tilt I am inclined to believe that the finger pressure will give a slight tilt as contact with the ball is made.

For a forehand top-spin attack Johnny Leach goes in for a tilt of between 45 and 90 degrees. Against this Johnny's tutor, Jack Carrington, advocates a varying slope according to the amount of back-spin to be dealt with and according to the height of the ball. High balls to be driven with the bat sloped forward but low-chopped balls to have no forward slope. In a photograph in Jack's book, "Modern Table Tennis" (Bell & Sons), the playing surface is even tilted backwards during a demonstration of the forehand drive, but a caption states that the tilt has been exaggerated and should vary according to the type of ball to be hit.

As regards body stance and arm movement the experts agree, so follow their advice. As regards the angle of the playing surface I feel that Jack Carrington's book goes into the matter in more detail and offers good advice. If, however, the bat is held so that the playing surface is at right-angles to the table, then you should get all the top-spin and speed necessary to deal with the average amount of back-spin.

* * *

Are you going to put in plenty of practice until we meet again in January? Tell your newsagent to order your copy and deliver when ready.

Looking Back . . .

Extract from "Table Tennis World" (February 1933)

The dramatic declaration that Szabados and Bellak will not be playing in this year's world championships raises the hopes of England by 50 per cent.

It would be ridiculous to say that we are bound to succeed, but I have a very strong hunch that either Victor Barna or the English player, Adrian Haydon, will win the singles. Haydon is playing on the top of his form and if he can keep it up his chances of bringing the title to England are indeed rosy.

The suspension of the two Hungarian players will also, in my opinion, give other nations a lot of encouragement to have a smack at the Swaythling Cup. In days gone by they considered their chances very poor when Szabados and Bellak were there to help Hungary.

In any case I expect many surprises this month and I am hopeful that the British players will supply them.

(Written by the late Eric Findon)

And this is what did happen—

The 1932-33 Swaythling Cup contest was won by Hungary with the following team: Z. Mechlovits (N.P. Capt.), G. V. Barna, I. Boros, L. David, I. Kelen and S. Glancz.

The Men's Singles was won by G. V. Barna (Hungary).

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"Table Tennis Review" is published during the third week of the following months: September, November, January, March and May.

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SOUTH AFRICAN T. T. CHAMPIONSHIPS, 1951

By B. DENIS GEORGE

Elizabeth Blackburn defeated, but retains Triple Crown

IN spite of suffering her first defeat since her arrival in S. Africa three years ago, Elizabeth Blackburn retained her triple crown for the third year running at the 1951 South African Championships. Rex Edwards, late of Wolverhampton, also retained his singles title for the third successive year.

Due to the enormous distances between centres S. African T.T. fans only get together once a year when the S.A.T.T.U. holds its Annual Championships. The various Associations take it in turn to stage this event and players come from all over the Union. This year it was the turn of the Transvaal Association, who sponsored the Championships at Johannesburg from September 10 to 14. Other Associations taking part in the Inter-Provincial matches were Western Province (Cape Town), Northern Transvaal (Pretoria), and Natal (Pietermaritzburg and Durban), while Eastern Province (Port Elizabeth), Border (East London), and West Rand associations were represented in the individual events.

The first part of the week was devoted to the Inter-Provincial Foster Trophy matches. As a departure from the usual combined teams, this year saw the men and women battling for honours in separate competitions, the men for the "Sofer Trophy" and the ladies for the "Crumley Trophy," with the "Foster Trophy" going to the Province with the most wins in both series. Teams consisted of three players playing 9 singles and 1 doubles.

In the men's series Western Province and Northern Transvaal drew with 5 points each, while in the ladies' series Western Province won with 6 points, which also gave Western Province the premier honour—the Foster Trophy. Best match of the Inter-Provincial series was W. Province v. Natal (Men), the former were considered to be easy winners but Natal had other ideas. Up and coming Eric Ruggier, a young player with a fine match temperament, defeated Theo Paitaki and Monty Shotland, while Manchester's Norman Davis defeated Paitaki and Peter McKie; however, from 3-4 down Province eventually won 6-4, turning point being Shotland's masterly defeat of Davis.

The first match of the ladies' series, W. Province v. Transvaal, found Elizabeth

Blackbourn in top form. In some of the best women's table tennis I have been privileged to witness she defeated Betty Clack, the Transvaal triple champion, 21-5, 21-8. In the first set Elizabeth obtained four of the first five points off Betty's service with the neatest dropshot that one could wish to see.

The Inter-Provincial games were not without their surprises, greatest of these being Betty Blackbourn's defeat, 19-21, 17-21, by Mrs. Gwen Pretorius of Pietermaritzburg. After her brilliant form on the Monday night Betty appeared to lose confidence in her forehand drive and for the rest of the week had to rely, to use her own words, "... on a chop and a dropshot." Young Ruggier took a set from Edwards, and Ron Litten lost to Aaron Ravinsky (Transvaal) and Norman Davis.

Ladies' Singles

The Ladies' Singles produced a surprise in the very first round when Dora Blignaut, the Eastern Province champion playing in her first S.A. Championship, defeated Betty Clack, who had been expected to go far. Mrs. Clack must be Transvaal's best all-round sportswoman, having represented her province at hockey as well as table tennis, and she is also a keen cricketer. At the moment, while having a nice fluent hard-hitting style, she lacks the temperament to gain top honours, but I'm sure that within the near future with a bit more experience she will be a force to be reckoned with. Bubbles Whittle, penholder from Western Province, on top of her form throughout the week, defeated Rene Paterson twice and took a set from Betty Blackbourn in the semi-final. Myra Kaplan, Transvaal stalwart of the heavy chop, advanced serenely to the final where she met Elizabeth Blackbourn for the third year running. This year, however, it was a very subdued Elizabeth who chopped her way to a 21-14, 23-21, victory; whenever she tried to force the pace her forehand let her down and she had to return to her defence.

Men's Singles

In the Men's Singles things went very much as expected and Shotland, McKie, Chiat and Paitaki of Western Province, Edwards, Katzeff and Litten of Northern



WESTERN PROVINCE TEAMS—WINNERS OF FOSTER TROPHY, 1951
Left to right : Boy Chiat (Manager), Evelyn Chiat, Peter McKie, Bubbles White, Monty Shotland, Elizabeth Blackbourn and Theo Paitaki

Transvaal, and Ravinsky of Transvaal contested the Quarter Finals. Generally acknowledged to be the finest game of the week, and one of the best ever in these Championships, was the five set defeat of Ron Litten by Peter McKie. McKie hails from Newcastle and possesses a good all-round orthodox style, a perfect foil for Litten. Ron's immaculate backhand drives sent Peter deep to both corners of the court but his fine fighting spirit enabled him to hold on and come back to the table to hit repeated winners.

On Finals Night, however, McKie could not produce the same form and lost comparatively easily to team mate Theo Paitaki. Rex Edwards meantime progressed to the semi-final without the loss of a set, where he met team mate Joe Katzeff, who had beaten Shotland in a marathon quarter final. Katzeff, playing a close to the table defensive game and placing the ball well, made Edwards fight all the way for a 3-1 victory. The Final, however, found Rex "safe as houses" and Paitaki went down three straight being unable to get his attack going and having no answer to Rex's sudden bursts of aggression.

The Doubles events were distinguished by two unseeded Transvaal pairs winning their way through to the Finals. Thora Hodson and Ruth Cairns took the first set from Blackbourn and Whittle, and S. Segal

and S. Alberts lost to Edwards and Litten in the men's final. In the Mixed Doubles the old Exeter firm of Litten and Blackbourn staved off all challengers to retain their title, defeating Edwards and Mrs. Clack in the final.

At the conclusion of the Championship the following official gradings were announced:—

Men: 1, R. Edwards; 2, J. Katzeff and T. Paitaki; 4, P. McKie; 5, R. Litten; 6, N. Davis; 7, M. Shotland; 8, E. Ruggier.

Women: 1, E. Blackbourn; 2, M. Kaplan; 3, E. Whittle; 4, R. Paterson; 5, B. Clack; 6, G. Pretorius.

Results

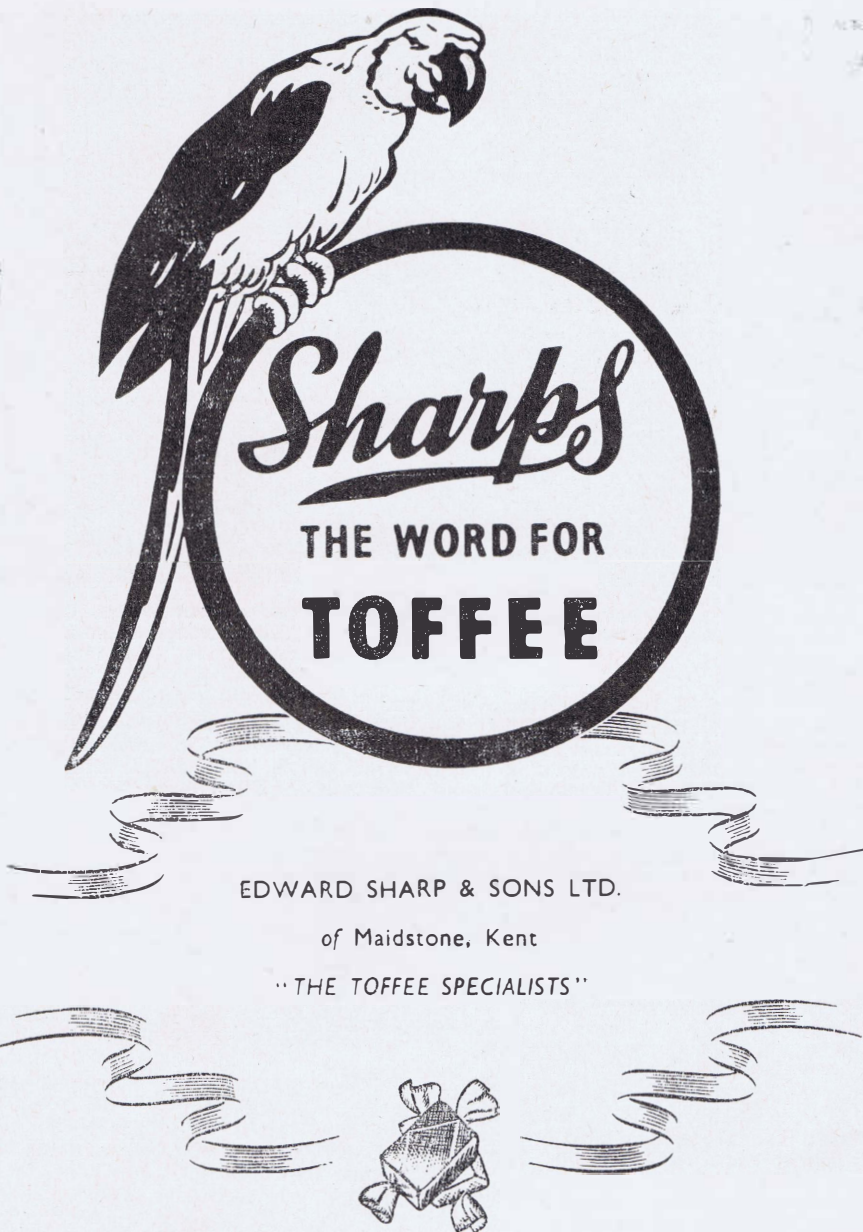
Men's Singles: R. Edwards bt. T. Paitaki 21-15, 21-15, 21-8.

Ladies' Singles: E. Blackbourn bt. M. Kaplan 21-14, 23-21.

Men's Doubles: R. Edwards and R. Litten bt. S. Segal and S. Alberts 21-10, 21-14, 21-19.

Ladies' Doubles: E. Blackbourn and E. Whittle bt. R. Cairns and T. Hodson 21-23, 21-13, 21-17.

Mixed Doubles: R. Litten and E. Blackbourn bt. R. Edwards and B. Clack 21-15, 21-17.



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HEY! READER!

What do you think of this?

MR. H. A. SENIOR, Hon. Secretary for the Darlington and District League, gives below in no uncertain terms his criticisms and suggestions regarding *Table Tennis Review*. We are open to receive articles and photographs on the subjects mentioned by Mr. Senior and payment will be made at our usual rates. In the meantime we hope to make our own arrangements to oblige our candid critic and no doubt lots of other readers.

Glamour Girls!

Well! Well! I suppose it had to come! T.T. Pin-up girls! I cannot but regret that you have succumbed to the idea.

Surely the gentry who asked you for pin-up pictures can obtain all they wish from the mass of periodicals which make a feature of photographs of bathing belles, lovelies, cuties, etc. ! Let us keep to table tennis.

May I briefly set out a few things I would like to see in the *Review*?

Peggy Allen's occasional articles on matters concerning the ladies were always interesting and informative. I should like to see these articles become a regular feature.

Balls

Has any contributor written an article about the little white ball? If so, I want a back number! Questions I should like to have answered in such an article are:— What exactly is the difference in quality between one, two, and three star, crown, or X balls? Do the various firms making balls work to the same standards? Have "Meteor" balls with two seams any advantages over the usual type, either in performance or length of life? Is it possible for a player to tell the difference, in play, between a two and three star ball? I ask this question because certain players in my league grumble when they have to play with anything but the three star balls.

Rules

In the minutes of the E.T.T.A. annual meeting, held April 28th, 1951, as circulated to leagues, occurs the following:—

"Mr. Blum, of Lancashire, thought there was great scope to make the rules of the game more attractive, etc., and that a committee should be formed to look into the

whole matter. This was duly noted and referred to the National Executive Committee."

Now here is a grand subject for an article. How can the rules be improved? I make only two suggestions. (1) **Edge balls**. Surely when a ball strikes the table edge and skids off, with no hope of return, a "let" should be the decision, if not a fault against the server. Such a ball has its "axis" past the table edge when it strikes the edge, and should certainly not count as a fault of the striker-out, which is the present interpretation. (2) **Volley Rule**. When I see a player strike the ball so wildly and inaccurately that it misses the table by at least a yard, and yet he gains a point simply because his opponent, with bat in position for a stroke, can't get his bat out of the way quickly enough, and the ball hits it.

I really wonder why this rule is tolerated. I have seen games at a vital stage won on the volley rule by wild strokes that would have disgraced even a novice! This rule should certainly be amended. Surely a ball can be volleyed only within the table area. Beyond that it is a bad return and should count against the server.

I like the sketches by your artist, and would like to see more.

The fine photographs have always been a strong feature of the *Review*, and I prefer the "action" kind, the photos that "say something." Posed photographs are attractive if the persons portrayed are well known, but if of little known players, like the Bradford team in the September/October issue, the photograph is then not of sufficient general interest to warrant its inclusion.

I have noticed in photographs of winners of the National and World trophies being presented with their awards, that some of these trophies appear to be fine examples of the silversmith's art. Why not publish photos of these trophies together with a paragraph describing each trophy, name and other details of donors, when presented, and other information? This feature could be run as a series.

Perhaps my letter has become far too long, but I trust that my views are constructive and that my comments on the *Review* have been of some interest to you.

Season's Diary..

Nov. 24	Bath Open (Bath)	L. Le Gren, P.D.S.A., 4, Newark St., Bath.
Nov. 30/Dec. 1	Pontefract Open (Pontefract)	T. Horrocks, 44, Baghill Lane, Pontefract, Yorks.
Dec. 1	Bournemouth Open (Bournemouth)	N. N. Read, 21, Gainsborough Road, Bournemouth.
Dec. 4	ENGLAND v. FRANCE (Bristol)	I. C. Eyles, 115, Wick Road, Brislington, Bristol, 4.
Dec. 7/8	WELSH OPEN (Cardiff)	Mrs. H. Roy Evans, The Rise, 16, Ty-mawr Road, Rumney, Cardiff.
Dec. 10/15	Central London Open (Kentish Town)	Mrs. E. G. Johnston, 141, Ingram Road, Tnorton Heath, Surrey.
Dec. 12	ENGLAND v. FRANCE (Women) (Eltham, S.E.9.)	F. H. Derbyshire, 55, Rennets Wood Road, London, S.E.9.
Dec. 17	SCOTLAND v. ENGLAND (Glasgow)	J. M. Muir, Kemsley House, 67, Hope St., Glasgow, C.2.
Dec. 28/Jan. 1/5	Metropolitan Open (Polytechnic, W.1)	Metropolitan Champs. Committee, Polytechnic Extension, Little Titchfield St., London, W.1.
Jan. 5/8	French Open (Paris)	
Jan. 7/12	South London Open (West Norwood)	K. G. Havill, 4, Chesnut Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.
Jan. 11	ENGLAND v. WALES (Junior)	Mrs. H. Roy Evans, The Rise, 16, Ty-mawr Road, Rumney, Cardiff.
Jan. 11/12	South Yorkshire Open (Sheffield)	
Jan. 13 (or 20)	Southampton Open	
Jan. 19	ENGLAND v. WALES (Liverpool)	
Jan. 24/26	Cheshire Open	
Jan. 26/27	Kent Open (Folkestone)	
Feb. 1/10	WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Bombay)	
Feb. 2 (or 9)	Portsmouth Open (Portsmouth)	
Feb. 6/7 and 11/16	Middlesex (Herga) Open (Harrow)	
Feb. 18/22	Surrey Open (Epsom)	
Feb. 24/29 and Mar. 1	Midland Open (Birmingham)	
Mar. 1	Yorkshire Junior Open (Darlington)	
Mar. 8	Wilmott Cup and J. M. Rose Bowl Finals	
Mar. 3/4, 6/7, 10/11, 13/15	West Middlesex Open (West Ealing)	
Mar. 10/24	Swedish Junior Tour of England (International at Hull—date not yet known).	
Mar. 21/22	West of England Open (Bristol)	
Mar. 22	Grimsby Open	
Mar. 25/29	ENGLISH OPEN (Wembley)	
April 5/6	Bucks. Open (Slough)	
Apr. 12/14	North East England Open (Scarborough)	
Apr. 17/19	Lancashire Open (Manchester)	
Apr. 20/26	North West Kent Open	
Apr. 28/May 3	Thameside Open (Plaistow)	
May 6	FRANCE v. ENGLAND (Paris)	

The following are still under negotiation:—
North Midland Open.
Mixed Junior match with Wales (away).

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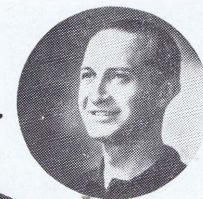
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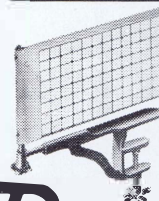
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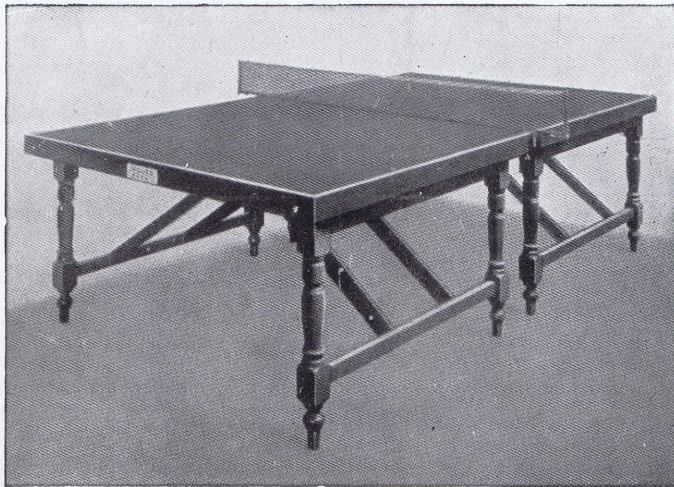
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