

Table Tennis REVIEW

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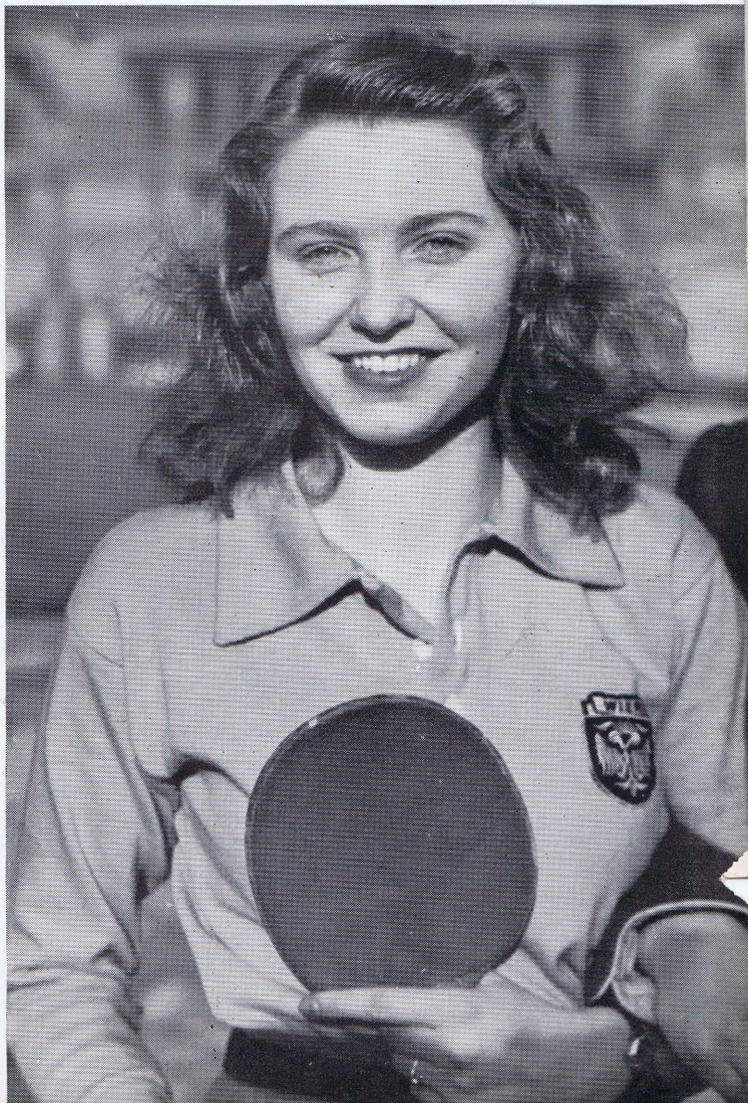


Contributors

- R. BERGMANN
- V. BARNA
- M. SZABADOS
- A. BROOK
- K. STANLEY
- S. PROFFITT
- A. K. VINT
- Etc., Etc.

★

COVER PORTRAIT
Miss INGE POETSCHKE
(Austria)





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TABLE TENNIS REVIEW

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Vol. 3 No. 1

SEPT./OCT., 1948

One Shilling

Here To Stay

TWO years ago, "Table Tennis Review" made its first appearance and had the honour of being the first post-war British table tennis magazine. It is a simple task to bring out a new magazine, but to keep the magazine going in the face of present-day difficulties is far from being easy. It is, therefore, with no little pride and pleasure that we announce that "Table Tennis Review" now has both feet on the ground and is here to stay.

Early in the summer of 1946, the English Table Tennis Association very generously suggested that this magazine should be the official organ, but feeling that a publication without the restraining influence of a governing body is able to cover a much wider field, we respectfully declined the offer. It was then stated by one official that we could not possibly remain on good terms with the Association and that sooner or later, in our own interests, we should become anti-E.T.T.A. This well-meaning official no doubt based his remarks upon his recollections of the pre-war "Table Tennis Activity," which at times was strongly critical of the E.T.T.A.

Well, we have been critical ourselves and our views have been offered for your consideration, but happily, we still remain on the best of terms with the English Association. They don't supply us with exactly "red-hot" news, but they do keep us reasonably informed of what goes on and we are grateful to them for all their little acts of assistance. For instance, they thoughtfully gave us the opportunity of putting the magazine on sale at Wembley early this year—an offer we were unable to accept at the time because all current copies had been distributed.

We hope to maintain these good relations and that they will treat all future criticisms in the spirit they are meant, not as acts of hostility (for we have nothing to be hostile about) but as modest efforts on our part to assist them in keeping up the high pitch of popularity which they themselves have so creditably won for the game in the past twenty-one years.

And so, we will continue to give readers the best in table tennis journalism, printing all shades of opinion and remaining an independent magazine.



By GOSSIMA

In our last issue, we made the announcement that Messrs. Barna and Brook required a new compere for their table tennis stage act and we now hear that the fellow to get the job is one Charles Hayes. Alec Brook writes, "You would be surprised just how many chaps came along at the time, and went round to see the act. They must have got scared for few of them came back. It was not an easy job to choose the right person. The choice seemed to lay between the theatrical who knew absolutely nothing about T.T. and was never likely to learn, and the table tennis player who did not possess the necessary personality for the stage. It is not easy to score and keep up an entertaining commentary at the same time, although Mortlake Mann and also Tony Joseph who was a well-known London T.T. player years ago, both managed to do it well." The best of luck to you Charlie. You are with a great act that is doing splendid pioneer work for the game.

* * *

From October 15th to October 29th, a team of Czechoslovakian players will visit England. There will be four men and two women and it is proposed to divide the tourists into two parties of two men and one woman, each party to play matches and exhibitions in various parts of the country. An international match England v. Czechoslovakia will be played at the Stadium, Liverpool, on Saturday, October 23rd.

Lots of people by now know that Richard Bergmann is married to a good-looking Irish girl, formerly Miss Eileen O'Flynn of Dublin, but few know that Mr. and Mrs. Barna were present at the wedding with Victor standing as best man. The wedding took place quietly in London the day after Richard had won the world's title. We are sure all readers will join with us in wishing them every happiness. However, it seems to me that Eileen will be something of a table tennis widow for a time. This month Richard is due to leave for America where he will tour the States playing Richard Miles in a series of exhibition games over a period of six weeks. He has also applied to the E.T.T.A. for permission to play exhibitions in Spain, but as that country is not affiliated to the I.T.T.F. it is doubtful whether such a tour would be sanctioned.

* * *

The Spanish championships held early this year resulted in the Men's Singles going to twenty-six year old Duesso and the Ladies' Singles to Lolita Moline. All the leading clubs in Spain hail from Barcelona and the country has approximately 5,000 registered players. Duesso has held the title for three years. During the war, a Czech. team toured Spain and in an international match beat the Spaniards by five events to two. A leading club is run under the title of "Seven-to-Nine," named thus because the club is open from seven o'clock to nine o'clock. We know

of plenty of English clubs which might be named "Ayem-to-Peehem."

* * *

We hear that the Prague Open Championships was won by Tereba beating among others, Vana and Andreadis. Now that Tereba has taken up the game again it is likely that he will represent Czechoslovakia at Stockholm in the coming World's Championships.

* * *

At the moment we would not care to say whether Bergmann is likely to defend his world title or not. He has very definite views about remaining the only undefeated world champion. He has made a statement to Mr. Montagu saying he will endeavour to enter different championships—professional contracts permitting, but table tennis is Bergmann's career and an attractive contract which spells "bread-and-butter" is sure to be given first thought. However, let us wait and see. For the time being my money goes on U.S.A. to sweep the board at Stockholm.

* * *

Norman Davis, well-known North of England player has now settled in Durban, South Africa, where he has quickly placed himself at the top of table tennis in that country. In the Natal Championships played at Durban early in July, Davis was beaten in the final of the singles by Alan Brown who played for England against Wales and India in the seasons 1932-1934. Davis, together with Ken Twitty, another North of England player, took the Men's Doubles title without very much effort. Along with his wife, formerly Miss Joyce Keay who emigrated to South Africa a few months ago, Davis succeeded in reaching the final of the Mixed Doubles where the two were beaten by Hclder and Miss Butler.

The E.T.T.A still have under consideration the matter of appointing a paid secretary, but owing to the loss sustained on the World Championships and in general administration last season, this may be delayed for some time. The present Honorary General Secretary, W. J. Pope, has agreed to continue until the problem has been finally settled.

* * *

In the first round of the Europe Cup, England is to play Netherlands at the Hague on October 5th.

* * *

The Welsh, Scotch and Irish Associations have invited an Austrian team to come over at the end of November. It is expected that an Austria v. England match will also be staged.

YOUR SEASON'S DIARY

Week ending.	
Sept. 25/26	.. East of England Open
Oct. 9 Birmingham Open
Oct. 16 Hartlepoons Open
Oct. 23	.. International—England v. Czech. (Liverpool)
Oct. 30/31 Sussex Open
Nov. 1/6	.. Eastern Suburban Open
Nov. 12/13 Yorkshire Open
Nov. 20/21	.. South of England Open
Nov. 25/26	.. Merseyside Open
Dec. 3/4 Pontefract Open
Dec. 11	.. West of England Open (?)
Dec. 13/18	.. Central London Open
1949	
Jan. 3/8 Metropolitan Open
Jan. 15 Hull Open
Jan. 16 Hampshire Open
Jan. 20/22 Lancashire Open
Jan. 30 Kent Open
Feb. 4/10	.. World Championships (Stockholm)
Feb. 16/19	.. English Open (London)
Feb. 26 Midland Open
March 5 Surrey Open
March 12 Cheshire Open
March 19 Grimsby Open
March 21/26	.. West Middlesex Open
March 31, April 1/2	.. North of England
April 5/10	.. Middlesex (Herga) Open
April 16/18	.. North East England Open
April 25/29 Wembley Open
May 7 Thameside Open
May 21 Bucks. County Open

LOSS OR PROFIT?

By A. K. VINT

Hon. Treasurer, World Table Tennis Championships 1935, 1938, 1948 and E.T.T.A. Hon. Treasurer.

THE English Table Tennis Association made a bold gamble when they undertook to stage the World Championships at Wembley this year. Never in the history of the game was so much nerve required to make the decision when the Committee were faced with an estimated expenditure of £8,000 which would enable them to more or less make ends meet. The National Executive Committee faced up to the position in a statesman like manner and took the unprecedented step of giving plenary powers to seven members of the Association to get on with the job. Needless to say they were old war horses, but it certainly makes one go hot and cold thinking of the sleepless nights before the championships got under way. Having survived, and after totting up and making arithmetical calculations, receiving and paying accounts, we find the deficiency is £266 and we feel that the effort was more than worthwhile.

Official and Committees paid a lot of attention to finance and each of those responsible for spending money made superhuman efforts to economise and axe any unnecessary items of expenditure. We are sure they are more than compensated for their efforts by the financial result. In the past thirteen years, three world championships have taken place in England and as matter of interest the following comparison of our Income and Expenditure is given:—

	1935	1938	1948
Income ..	£1,825	£2,077	£5,687
Expenditure	£2,340	£1,794	£5,953
Surplus ..	—	£283	—
Deficiency	£515	—	£266

As will be seen, we experienced a loss of over £500 in the 1935 world

championships but this loss provided a situation which proved to be the turning point in the Association. It was money well lost. New leagues came into existence and in the following four years we recruited 45,000 additional players into our clubs. The Press took us seriously and we achieved our rightful status in the sporting world. Will we be able to record the same about 1948? Will it have been worth it? We certainly made our mark with all countries competing. The praise we received from them on the organisation of the championships was embarrassing to a degree. The national press in spite of shortage of space were most generous; a leading article in *The Times* sang our praises. The team work from hundreds and hundreds of volunteers gave us one of the biggest thrills!

The sacrifice of holidays, the working day and night, the thoughtfulness and the spirit of comradeship expressed beyond doubt in the words of a common phrase that this organisation "Has Got Something." The championships were worth it if only to bring all these people together into one big team, and it may be many years before the world championships come again to these shores. But perhaps our own National Open Championships, our Open Tournaments, the County Championships, the Wilmott and J. M. Rose Bowl Games, the league and club games will all benefit from the Press publicity, the new public we have found, and the army of volunteers in our midst. All this achieved by the biggest job we have yet undertaken. Wembley 1948 was indeed a triumph and long may it remain in our memories.

A COUNTY RULE TO MODIFY

By VICTOR BARNA

(Swaythling Cup Player and World Champion Five Times)

THERE is not the slightest doubt that the County Championship was a great success last season, and it is equally certain it will do even better this year. Still more county associations are being created and are losing no time in entering teams. In the First Division, we shall see seven counties lined up this time, but I think that within a few years, there will be as many first-class table tennis counties as there are in championship cricket.

Everybody agrees it is a fine competition and that it is doing the game a lot of good. Naturally, being new, it was freely discussed all over the country during its first season, and there was general agreement that the organising committee had done their job well. The system of arranging the matches worked smoothly—the rules were regarded as fair and reasonable—but with just one very important exception.

As the rule stands now, however long a player has represented his county with a residential qualification, if he moves to another one, he automatically becomes ineligible for his former county after six months or so. For example, if for some reason I have to change my address and live outside Middlesex, I am no longer allowed to play for my old team. If I happen to have a birth qualification for it, well and good; but if not, I have no alternative but to use one qualification or the other and join another county, with a prospect of opposing my former teammates.

If England is not the actual birthplace of sport, it certainly is the cradle of the spirit of sportsmanship. By tradition, and in fact, the standard of that sportsmanship is higher here than anywhere in the world. It shows itself in the modesty of victory, in the smiling good humour of defeat, and, above all, in the genius for team-work and the special selfless quality demanded by it. And I make a strong appeal for the encouragement of this *esprit-de-corps* in county table tennis.



VICTOR BARNA

I see no reason why the rule should not be changed so as to enable a man who has represented his county a minimum of say, twelve times, to continue to play for it, wherever he happens to reside; provided, of course, he doesn't turn out for any other county.

I believe this modification of the rule would be warmly welcomed, even though its operation can only affect a few score of the leading players. It's also easy to appreciate that, given the opportunity to choose between one county or another, some of them might find it very difficult to decide. But my point is that, in principle, the player should have the right to exercise that choice and to demonstrate his own loyalty one way or the other just as he feels inclined.

Already, due to this residential qualification snag, we shall see many changes in last year's teams. Some of them will look decidedly strange and may be difficult to recognise at first, and I think it's a pity. One expects that sort of thing in football, speedway racing, and other sports wherein elaborate transfer systems flourish; but surely in table tennis we can conduct our affairs just that bit differently—just that bit better—than the others?

I, for one, believe we can.

Give Youth Its Chance

By PERCY C. LAWES
(Hon. Sec. Guildford League.)

*

A GOOD number of leagues now run separate sections for Youth Clubs, but is this really wise? In the majority of Youth Club activities the young people contact each other again and again and, in consequence, there must be a tendency for them to develop a small world of their own. The development of such a world could be a deterrent to the progress of a potential table tennis star both in regard to improvement in playing ability and the outlook towards the older and more experienced players.

Surely we should be wise in persuading the Youth Clubs to enter teams in the ordinary sections of the leagues and so help the youths themselves in the difficult period of graduation from youth to adult status?

Talking to youths it is readily learnt that the sudden switch from inter-youth club play to the more advanced league match play can be a most disturbing experience and is liable to do more harm than good. If, however, we give them the chance of regular play at ordinary league standard, and also the opportunities of mixing with and getting to know the older and more experienced players, then surely we are helping them to feel acclimatised to the higher grade of club life and play from which they would be excluded if we confined them to inter-youth club games. By making them fellow league players we must improve their play and their outlook upon the higher grade of playing conditions.

Another way in which we can help to smooth away the rawness of youth is for some of the older players of a league to each take a Youth Club under his wing and to spend an evening or two giving the younger players the benefit of his knowledge and experience. I am sure that if such assistance was sought among the senior clubs more than sufficient volunteers would come forward.

We, of course, must look to youth for our future stars, but don't let us merely stand and stare. There is much spadework to be done, and much intelligent thought and planning.

NOT TO COMPETE IN SWAYTHLING CUP

Ireland will not compete in the world's championships at Stockholm in February, but a men's team will be entered for the Europe Cup competition. The Irish Open Championships and the "home" international match against Wales, have been allocated to the Leinster Branch while the Irish Closed Championships will be staged in Ulster.

Mr. Victor Mercer, Belfast, and Miss Mina Minshull, Dundalk, were the outstanding players of last season and have been awarded the Rhanboy and Eleanor McKee Cup, respectively.

At the annual general meeting of the Irish Table Tennis Association in Dublin, the following officers were elected for 1948-49:—

President: F. McKee.

Vice-Presidents: Messrs. J. Drum and R. Greer.

Chairman: W. H. Leadbeater.

Hon. Secretary: Norman M. Wilson.

Hon. Treasurer: A. P. MacKay,

HAVE YOU ORDERED YOUR "REVIEW"?

The next "Table Tennis Review" will be out on November 1st. Place an order with your news-agent or Sports Dealer NOW. In case of difficulty there is an enrolment form in this issue.



WINNING SMILES

Pictured above are the American pair, Richard Miles and Miss Thelma Thall being presented with the World's Mixed Doubles trophy at Wembley early this year. The defeated pair were Bohumil Vana and Mrs. Pokorna of Czechoslovakia. Seen presenting the cup is Mr. Ing. Zdenek Heydusek, manager of the Czech team. Mr. Heydusek first came over as a playing member of the Czech team and took part in the first World's events held in London in 1926.

Wembley Stadium Photograph.

Let's Get Chummy by JOHN BULL

FUNNY when you come to think how an evening's enjoyment varies so much. You go to some pokey little club and get the hiding of your life and go away feeling it has been a whale of an evening. Next week you play at one of those stiff-collar clubs that remind you of the holiday hotel where you paid fifteen bob for b. and b. Maybe all the games go in your favour, but the evening had a hole in it somewhere.

I've been in some clubs and seen the away team sitting isolated in one corner. Anyone would have thought they had no cigs. Then along comes a fellow of the home club. In a tremendous hurry can

he play all his games right away. The visiting captain says sure. Nice of him to turn up anyway and squeeze in his games. The match progresses mournfully with the home team coming and going through a door at the end of the room. Wonder what goes on out there?

The time eventually comes to say goodnight. Or maybe you don't need to say goodnight. Perhaps the last remaining home player went out while you were putting your clobber on.

Well . . . so what? You've a whole season of club fixtures in front of you. Going to make some new pals and have the best season ever. What do you say?

TABLE TENNIS DOWN UNDER

By M. SZABADOS

TABLE tennis in Australia is, at the present time, following the general post-war boom which is evident throughout the world. Registration of players is increasing and with Victoria as the strongest state numerically, Australia has quite a large pool from which to draw players. Unfortunately, many centres are without any coaches or players with sufficient experience and ability to train the youngsters and, this is the only reason as to why Australia's name is not as well-known in the table tennis world as it is in tennis and cricket spheres.

In N.S.W., the game is not founded as well as in other Australian states, however, they have produced so far a number of players who, given the opportunity, would do reasonably well in world class. The outstanding Australian born player is Phil Anderson who has a very good style. Anderson is now my exhibition partner and we shortly leave for a three-months' tour of New Zealand. It will be interesting to see Russell Aglie, the New Zealander who entered the last world championships. His clash with Anderson will give a good indication of Australia's strength.

Although many capable officials are controlling the game in this country, the value of one like the Hon. Ivor Montagu at the present time would be of inestimable value. I sincerely hope English players stop and think how lucky they are to possess officials such as their President. Australian officials have many problems to deal with at present and I hope the sport can survive this period.



Michael Szabados won the world's title in 1930-31 and represented Hungary for a number of years in Swaythling Cup events when Hungary carried everything before her. From 1929 to 1935, along with Victor Barna he won the world's doubles title on six occasions. Many will remember him as a member of the famous Hungarian trio Barna, Szabados and Bellak, whose tours of this country did much to make the game what it is to-day. Michael is now happily married in Australia with a little boy age four, and if you ever go to Sydney, you must certainly drop in at the famous "M. Szabados Table Tennis Academy."

Transport is a major problem. To stage an inter-state match involves as much travelling and costs as to stage a France v. Hungary match. The conducting of an Australian team involves both land and sea travel. Some players need up to two weeks' leave to play in an inter-state match, and for a country where the sport is more or less in its infancy, this is a serious problem.

English officials, who always seem to be on the look-out for new



PHIL ANDERSON

Phil Anderson. The best table tennis player Australia has produced. Anderson in three years' competition play has won 6 Open Singles, 7 Open Doubles and 3 Open Mixed Doubles Championships. In Melbourne, last season, he fully extended Michael Szabados, losing after four closely contested sets. Anderson is, at present, touring New Zealand with Szabados, greatly impressing all who have seen him play. Pictured here, he is being presented with a trophy after winning the City of Sydney Singles Championship.

No Australian championships have been held since the war, but this season the Victorian Table Tennis Association will conduct the Australian Titles. While I am writing this, I have heard that it is probable that my old friend Victor Barna will defend the title he won in 1938. I sincerely hope Victor comes, as it would be a great pleasure to meet him once again and talk over old times.

* * * * *

Editor's Note.—Victor Barna informs us that there was some talk of him going out to Australia on tour, but as he will be busy for months ahead there seems little possibility of the trip materialising in the near future.

Australian Championships

THE first post-war Australian Championship carnival will be held this month at Wirth's Olympia, Victoria (seating capacity 4,500). Teams' championships for men and women should attract entries from all Australian states, whilst in addition, the individual open titles will be held for men, women and juniors. Owing to local rulings, Phil Anderson, my Australian exhibition partner, and myself, will not be playing in the team for N.S.W.; however, I expect this state to win the men's teams event. The Men's Singles will be contested by a good field with main state contenders as follows:—

South Australia : J. Mehaffey, D. Furze.
Victoria : A. Champion, W. Lowen, R. Summers.

Queensland : C. Shaw, J. Robinson.
New South Wales : P. Anderson, M. Dankin, L. Laza, N. Dunn and myself.

(Continued on page 11)

Its Points That Count

By World Champion

RICHARD BERGMANN

AS in all other sports, there are often widely differing opinions when it comes to the matter of deciding which are the best table tennis players in a certain group. In our game, which harbours so many different styles of play one can be easily misled, and official team selectors often jump to wrong conclusions in determining those players which are likely to prove the strongest match-winning side.

Team selectors come in for a good deal of criticism and it has been known for unpopular selections to lose them a number of their friends. They are constantly in danger of being accused of favouritism, yet in spite of everything, only one thing should rule their judgment, and that is, "Who are the players most likely to carry the side to victory?"

Types of Players

How to distinguish the best players from the rest is not an easy task, especially when there are so many would-be stars claiming attention and dimming the vision and judgment of the selectors.

There are those players whose stroke productions are stylish and easy on the eye, and who appear to know everything there is to know about the game. Quite frequently you will see such players lose against opponents who execute their strokes in a clumsy and most unattractive manner.

Then we have the international or known player who is already on his way out having enjoyed a few brief moments in the limelight. By talking of his past great wins he



RICHARD BERGMANN

continues to bluff his way into various teams, yet fails to win his present-day matches.

There are many players all over the country who manage to give everybody around them terrific impressions by the way they come out with spectacular smashes and drives, making the onlooker forget the five efforts that were missed previously.

And of course, we have all seen the player who exhibits unbeatable table tennis in practice and unimportant matches, but fails lamentably in a big game where every result is of vital importance.

Here is the Answer

As I said previously, there is only one thing which should rule the judgment of a selector, and that is, "Which are the players whose fixed determination when they go on the table is to reach twenty-one before their opponents?"

The best players are those who win their matches and not those who lose them in a pretty-pretty manner.

Exhibition table tennis and match play are entirely different, although I will admit it is often possible to play exhibition stuff and still win—so much the better. However, nowadays things are not as easy as they were before. The general standard has improved tremendously

and club players of to-day are quick to make full use of any opening that presents itself.

A game of twenty-one points is a very serious business for the good match player. He gives his opponent few openings and uses great strategy in preventing him from bringing into play his best strokes. From the first serve to the last, his one aim is to win. His concentration is intense and every single point is a battle to be fought with victory as the only end in view.

Don't Copy

I don't advise young players to spend much time endeavouring to copy the style or strokes of any particular star player. You will never succeed in executing the stroke in exactly the same manner. Your one aim is to develop your own particular style and to develop it to such a pitch that it wins you games. People may criticise your strokes but if those strokes win you points, then ignore all their remarks. Remember, it is results that count. Go all out to win and prove yourself the better player of every opponent you meet.

AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

(Continued from page 9)

The ladies' championships should be dominated by South Australian players. Mrs. Edwards, Miss Murphy, Miss Stafford (S.A.) are title prospects. Miss White (Victoria) and Miss Shipp (N.S.W.) seem the only likely challengers.

Phil Anderson and Lou Laza (N.S.W.) are outstanding in the Open Doubles, being a pair specialising in this event and quite up to the average world class.

These Australian Championships will be conducted by the very capable officials of the Victorian Table Tennis Association.

The titles will commence on September 6th and events will be held every afternoon and evening with the finals on September 10th. New record Australian figures for attendance and takings should easily be established.

M. SZABADOS.

The Advantages of Half-Volley Play

★

EVERY player should be able to execute the half-volley type of play whenever the occasion demands. (For the benefit of beginners half-volley play means standing close to the table and taking the ball almost as soon as it has bounced. The aim being to return the ball low over the net and to restrict its flight to a short length.)

It is important, however, to resort to half-volley play only when you have some definite purpose in mind, otherwise you will be accused of "chiselling" and your game will become dull and unattractive.

One excellent use of half-volley play is at the beginning of a game when you wish to accustom yourself to unfamiliar conditions and the speed of the table. Present-day tables vary so much in quality that it is unwise to commence to attack right from the first point, or even to stand back and chop defensively. Half-volley play for the first few points is the safest course and keeps you from sacrificing valuable points in order to get your "eye in" and to acquire the "feel" of the table.

Another use for half-volley play is after some particularly hard-fought rallies when you desperately need a little respite to recover lost stamina.

A third and most important advantage of this type of shot is when used as a link-up between defence and attack. Perhaps you have been defending well away from the table but have gradually manoeuvred your way back with the hope of taking over the attack. Before you can attack, however, you naturally have to wait for a suitable opening and it is during this waiting period that you can return your opponents' shots with the half-volley. You will find that when you have become proficient at this particular type of defensive play you are able to stand up to a most fierce attack. The advantage here is obvious. If the hard-hitting of your opponent cannot succeed in forcing you away from the table, then you are constantly in a position to take the initiative at the first opportunity.

You will best appreciate the above points by watching how top-class players make use of the half-volley.

Choosing England's Team

WHO should represent England at Stockholm in February? The problem this season is probably more difficult than it has ever been and whatever the team may be it cannot hope to meet with everybody's desires. Still, that is not the point for the players selected should be those who are likely to bring the greatest benefit to English table tennis.

Women Players

The women's team is not so difficult. Their splendid achievement in winning the Corbillon Cup last season is sufficient testimony for their inclusion again this year. Marriage does not usually enhance a player's skill whether the player is male or female, but in the case of Vera Thomas and Dora Beregi we feel that for this season at least, the two girls should be able to maintain their world class standard of play. Miss Peggy Franks, although a little shaky at times last season is still one



ADELE WOOD

of our best bets. If we are to win the Corbillon Cup for the third successive year, a feat never accomplished before by any other nation, we feel that our wisest policy is not to change a winning team.

Non-playing captain, Mrs. M. Knott, has already proved her worth, while the reserve position might be chosen from Misses E. M. Steventon and Pinkie Barnes, although serious consideration must be given to the girls from Northumberland, Misses Smith and Purves who so brilliantly captured the Rose Bowl trophy. The Birmingham girl Miss Jean McKay also makes a strong challenge for that fourth position.

With regard to the junior girls, our prospects are good and we do think that England's future is bright. Sixteen year-old Adele Wood has been receiving weekly coaching throughout the summer by ex-international Stanley Proffitt who reports a noticeable quickening up of her game. While two other girls, Miss D. Banks (Crewe) and Miss M. Booth (Blackpool) will be appearing in the closing rounds of open events in a season or two.

Men

In our columns we have always called for a bold policy in the selection of the men's team, believing that as we have not been in a position to win the Swaythling Cup, our young players should be given the chance to blossom out and bring credit to the old country in seasons to come. With five players on a team there is surely room for two of our best youngsters.

In pre-war years, the E.T.T.A. frequently selected players in their mid-teens, producing such English



THE ENGLISH JUNIOR TEAM: Left to right 17 year old Ron Thompson, 16 year old Michael Thornhill and 16 year old Brian Kennedy.

stalwarts as A. G. Millar, H. Lurie and M. Bergl, but since the war, they have played for safety relying at times on players over thirty years of age. Their view-point has been that there have been no young players worthy of the test.

To-day, we have a host of youngsters clamouring for attention and now is the time to do the spadework which might win the Swaythling Cup either next season or the one after. We cannot possibly afford to neglect them for even one more season. If we do, what will our team be for the 1950 championships? We should then have either a team of young and completely raw recruits or else a team that carried with it an aroma of moth balls.

Let us make a quick survey of our leading players.

The Possibles

BARNA and BERGMANN. Last season the inclusion of these two players caused a certain amount of controversy which need not be repeated this year. Bergmann has no desire to take part again in competitive events unless they are run on proper professional lines, and therefore he should not be pressed to play for England.

Popular Victor Barna, much though he may be worthy of a place, is now approaching the veteran stage, and even Victor himself feels that it may be best to restrict his competitive play in future to doubles events.

JOHNNY LEACH. Still our No. 1 player and still young enough at 25 to have a good outsider's chance of winning a world title. A case of this season or never!

ERNE BUBLEY. Had his share of Swaythling badges and we cannot see him improving his close-to-the-table style of play.

BENNY CASOFSKY. Always a fighter with plenty of confidence and had his form been more stable, he would have achieved much more. We have seen him outclass Leach, and yet lose to unknowns.

KEN STANLEY. Out of the game until last season, but now rapidly making up for lost time. Age 26 years. Gave Bergmann something to think about in both the Merseyside Open and later, in the Scottish Open.

GEOFF HARROWER. Good players were scarce immediately after the war and Geoff filled the gap admirably. Now, like lots of other players, definitely on his last leg.

AUBREY SIMONS. Was impressive in the international trials and also world's singles. Should never have been neglected so long, but if given the chance now, may prove of good value in an English team. He has still a few years left of top class play and if given the chance may reveal undreamed of qualities.

SHARMAN, MARSH and CRAYDEN. Each at one time gave hopes of becoming world class, but last season their form began to slide. A coming star should not halt or slide in his progress and development.

GEORGE GOODMAN. He could have been one of England's Swaythling Cup pillars for years to come, but disagreement with officials took the edge of his enthusiasm and he now shows only luke-warm interest.

JACK CARRINGTON. Can still render invaluable service as a coach and adviser, or even non-playing captain.

HYMIE LURIE. Plays a grand game but can no longer hold his own with the continentals.

DENNIS MILLER. No fire in his play. Came up, then went down.

Juniors

Here we have a wealth of likely talent and it would be quite impossible so early in the season to say which are our first three. During the summer months, we have seen youngsters practising regularly night after night, and we are confident that some pleasant surprises are in store for the selectors.

At the moment, we feel it safer to mention the Junior International team which beat Sweden, namely, Ron Thompson, Michael Thornhill and Brian Kennedy, but we can also name many others who will strongly claim the right to be included in the junior team to visit Sweden in February, among whom are, Costello, Kelly, Beamish, Devereux, Shaw and Parry.

Our Choice

It is, of course, just a little early to start picking teams, but at the present moment we should be inclined to choose three players from Leach, Stanley, Simons and Casofsky and the remaining two players from the juniors. In this way, we should be playing our three strongest players and also giving a fair chance to youth by including two of the most promising juniors.

What would be your ★ Team?

We invite you to send us your views on this very debatable matter. Name those players you think should be chosen to play for England at Stockholm, but at the same time give a few brief words telling why you favour such players. Best quality table tennis bats will be sent to the senders of those letters we use.

Closing date for letters,
October 1st.

"Table Tennis Review"

TO BE BI-MONTHLY

WE apologise to all readers who wondered what had become of their summer issue of *Table Tennis Review*. We decided after much thought, that in future we would not appear during the summer months and with the paper thus saved, to come out every other month during the playing season from September to May, inclusive.

As near as possible, we will have the magazine on sale on the first of the following months: September, November, January, March and May, although in these days of printing difficulties it is not always easy to appear on the advertised date, especially when it is desirable to include the report of a tournament or match which takes place near to the date of going to press.

All dealers were informed of the non-appearance of the summer issue, but to those of you who looked for the issue in vain, we tender our regrets.

Contributions Required

We again extend to all readers and players the invitation to contribute articles, news items, tournament and match reports, humorous jokes and sketches, photographs and cartoons. We especially welcome articles of a controversial nature. Except for Readers' Letters all contributions will be paid for at a good rate and we sincerely hope that you will take this opportunity of getting some grumble off your chest, or else to give other readers the benefit of your ideas. To those of you who are not literally inclined, we assure you that good English and a perfect style of writing are not necessary as such articles will be carefully sub-edited at this office. In the

past, few ladies have ventured to put forward their ideas and to them we would say that we are ever welcome to consider their contributions or to feature a photograph which might add a touch of beauty to our pages.

Back Numbers Available

We are still able to supply certain back numbers of *Table Tennis Review*, and these possess many



instructional articles by famous players as well as other matters of interest. The numbers available are as follows:—

Volume I, Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5.

All sixpence each, post free.

Volume II, Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5.

All one shilling each, post free.

Our Souvenir Number of the Wembley World Championships contains a number of attractive photographs including a full page one of the Wembley Stadium with play in progress on eleven tables. The usual articles including detailed reports of the Championship are featured. Price for the Souvenir Issue is one shilling, post free.

IN SEARCH OF A LAUGH ★ With INKSPOT

LAST season the official Danish Table Tennis Magazine pinched one of the *Table Tennis Review* articles, and so this season I am starting off on the right foot and borrowing one from the official Swedish Table Tennis Magazine. Here it is chums :-

After a heated argument Mrs. Brown had succeeded in persuading her husband to allow their daughter to go to a boarding school. After a few weeks, the girl wrote home and said, "I'm awfully keen on Ping-Pong."

"What did I say," exclaimed Mr. Brown. "I knew it would come to no good. Now she's fallen in love with a Chinaman!"

Wouldn't it be funny if the Swedish people had lifted that one from the official English organ—oh yeh!

Last season a table tennis player who was not quite so well known as he thought he was, received an invitation to take part in an open tournament. He replied promptly by telegram saying, "Will accept if you pay all first-class travelling and hotel bill for one week. Otherwise count me out." He hadn't long to wait for a reply, which also came by telegram and read, "One—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—ten, OUT."

Mary Lou helped to run the last Scottish Open and on one occasion she turned to a competitor and said rather impatiently, "You'll have to sit down and wait until you are called."

"Cauld!" exclaimed Jock, "Ah've already waited two hours and Ah'm near frozen stiff."

Just Available !!!

The "Albion" Club Table

of special new design conforming to all regulations and giving bounce superior to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. plywood.

All Tables personally inspected by Jack Carrington or Johnny Leach before despatch.

Price £22 18s. 4d. excl. carriage.

ALBION SPORTS LTD.
2526 Morden Court Parade, Morden, Surrey.

TABLE MANNERS FOR BEGINNERS

If the umpire forgets the score don't leave it all to your opponent to suggest what it should be.

Don't allow your money to jingle in your pocket. Count it out carefully then give it to the umpire to hold.

If an injured leg pains you during play don't moan and complain. Be thankful your nose isn't bleeding as well.

If you get a net or edge ball when the score is deuce in the fifth game say "sorry" as quickly as possible. It helps to stop you from breaking into a snigger of delight.

Overheard at the refreshment table.
"I see Janet is playing in the Mixed with that X-ray specialist."
"Is she? I wonder what he can see in her."

"Fourteen—love," the words came to me mockingly.

Beads of perspiration stood out on my forehead. I knew my stamina was running out. I looked at Mary Lou and she smiled back encouragingly. Come what may, I must see it through. What a fool I would look if I was beaten. I had gone to the table calm, cool and confident. At first I had taken things easily—too easily, in fact, otherwise I might not have been in such a sorry plight.

"Seventeen—love." The voice continued mercilessly as I edged my way to the corner of the table. Now was my chance. I must make some impression. But no! That sudden downward sweep had been of no avail.

"Nineteen love—twenty love—twenty-one."

It was over. I looked down at the table with shame. Mary Lou had bet me half-a-crown that I could not pull it off. Still I don't think she was quite fair. After all, twenty-one seconds is a ridiculously short period in which to open a tin of sardines that is built like a Chubb safe.

OUR BEDTIME STORY

THE GAME

CHARLES licked his lips and looked round the club. He could see, clearly, that this was a good club. He looked at the man in the fierce yellow sweater.

"I—I've come," Charles stammered, "to join your club."

The man in the fierce yellow sweater bent his head. "You realise," he said in a loud voice, "that this club is only opened for first-class players."

Charles didn't know and gave a despairing "Oh!"

"Of course," the yellow sweater continued, reaching for his bat, "the standard is so high that we have to refuse the majority of applications."

"Oh!"
"Do you play?"

Charles shook his head. "Not table tennis," he despaired, "only—only ping-pong." In his last club at Walcombe he had been considered pretty good. But here—well how could Walcombe T.T.C. compare with a city club like Brighton?

"Ping-pong!" the man in the yellow sweater shouted. "Ping-pong indeed!" The joke seemed to be good. "Come on," he continued quickly, "we'll give you a test."

Charles peeled off his coat. Well, he had asked for it. He picked up a bat. He couldn't do more than his best.

The smile on top of the fierce yellow sweater had faded. Somehow Charles had managed to win the first seven points. Never before had he played so well. The fierce drives of the yellow sweater left him cool. Always his bat seemed to be there. Now he was ten up and his service.

Just a normal short one, but the yellow sweater failed to reach it. The yellow sweater moved in. This called for a service with plenty of top—Charles gave it. The prodded return cleared the table. The next two were slashed wildly into the net. His last serve seemed a winner, but somehow, the yellow sweater got it back, running deep into his backhand to do so. Charles dropped his return short and the ball bounced three times.

Fifteen love—now sixteen. The yellow sweater was beside himself, cursing bat, ball, table and light. Charles popped up the eighteenth serve. "At last." He could see the words smiling on the lips above the sweater. The bat crashed down and the ball skidded off the table like a bullet. But, standing almost in the shadow, Charles chopped. He felt the full bite between bat and ball. A feeling of pleasure swept over him. That really was a winning return. Nineteen love.

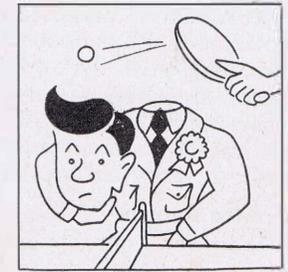
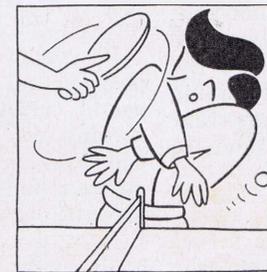
The exasperated twentieth serve was almost too good. Charles drew back his bat, stamped his foot and sent the yellow sweater scurrying back into a deep defensive position. Charles tickled the ball over the net.

A bat was thrown onto the table. "Thought," said the blustering yellow sweater sarcastically, "you had never played table tennis before."

"Table tennis?" gasped Charles, "is—is that what we were playing?"

"What the blazes do you think it was?" Charles put his bat on the table. "Why ping-pong," he stated with surprise. "That's all we ever play in Walcombe. Table tennis is too fast."

MR. EASY ONE (The Table Tennis Novice).



A COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

Body Balance

IT is amazing how the average player gives so little thought to footwork in table tennis. As in all ball games if your footwork is wrong then you just can't get beyond a certain standard of play until you put it right.

Before I commence, I would like to explain the term "Body Balance." which I will refer to in future as "B.B." This is obtained by placing the feet to a short astride position until the weight of your body is evenly distributed on both feet. Your upper body should be completely relaxed, heels slightly raised with the weight resting on the balls of your feet. Bend your knees a little and you should have B.B. In this position you have perfect control over your body and should be like a tiger ready to leap. It is, of course, obvious that the distance between the feet will vary according to the height of the player concerned.

This B.B. is most important. It is the starting point for all positional moves and I do want you to master it completely. Practice obtaining B.B. from all positions.

To ensure that you have acquired correct B.B. try swinging the upper part of the body from side to side constantly maintaining every detail of the above stance. If you are not able to do this then move your feet until the action feels free.

It is easy to understand that with stiff knees you cannot possibly have the same quick take-off as when the knees are slightly bent. Relaxing your upper body is also important for any stiffness or tension tends to make a jerky action.

Service Return

Wait for your opponent's serves with the body square on to the

by Ken Stanley
(*Swaythling Cup Player*)

table, your feet in B.B. position and about two feet from the centre edge of the table. As soon as your opponent serves then you move into position.

Supposing it is a fast topspin service to your forehand and you decide to return it with a forehand chop. From B.B. position move your right leg back until your left shoulder is facing the table. This movement should be effortless and be careful not to lift the right foot too high. (In all your movements aim at raising your feet no more than is necessary.) The weight of your body should now be transferred on to the right foot with the right knee well bent. The left foot stays in the same position and the left leg is now extended. The left arm should also be extended to help your balance. At the same time as your left foot moves back make the same action with your bat so that leg and arm move as one.

In one quick movement you have now placed yourself in a favourable position to receive this fast-moving service. As you play your chop stroke downward and forward, your weight should move forward slowly with the stroke until it comes to rest on the left foot.

If you were to remain in this position and await the next shot you would certainly have a hard time moving over for a fast angle shot to the backhand. As soon as your stroke is finished slide the right foot forward until you are in the original B.B. position. You are now once again ready to move to either wing.

Part III FOOTWORK

If you happen to be hit down the backhand then the left foot would be the one to move this time in the manner similar to the forehand return.

The two moves mentioned above only apply to receiving fairly straight drives. Footwork for acute angle shots is very much different and will be explained later.

Forehand Attack

For the forehand attack your left foot moves forward from B.B. changing the body from square-on to a side-on position. Once again the movement of racket arm and leg should be as one. As the left foot moves in so should your bat make its approach to the ball. Your left shoulder should face the table and the weight of the body finally rest on the forward foot. Don't just plonk your weight flat on the left foot. Carry it through with the stroke. Upon completion of the stroke move back to B.B.

I don't want you to get the idea that I advocate moving back to B.B. after every stroke, but in the case of the beginner I do think it is essential. It is of course, all a matter of anticipation. The experienced player will have, or should have, some degree of ability in anticipating where the next shot is likely to come and often it is not necessary to return to the basic position. However, even the experienced player will find it excellent footwork practice to return to B.B. after every stroke—this of course, only in practice games.

Returning Angle Shots

As you are standing alert in the B.B. position let us assume that a really wide angle shot is driven to your forehand side. Here is where swift and smooth footwork is of inestimable value. The movements of your feet are as follows: right foot back turning your body swiftly to a side-on position, weight on the right foot; then left foot over the right bringing you well behind the ball.

These two movements are much better than one long awkward stride and an outstretch arm which cannot impart much backspin to your return. In addition, it is easier to recover from the left leg over the right position than it is from a sprawled out position which leaves you at the mercy of a drop shot or smash to your backhand.

The movement for the return of an angle shot to your backhand is, of course, the opposite to the above.

How to Practice Footwork

I do urge you to practice the above steps in the manner that you would practice some sequence of ballroom dancing. Your aim must be a rapid and smooth action.

I feel that for the time being I have given you quite enough to do, and in another article I will describe other stroke positions and tell you the best footwork to use.

When you practice the movements alone and away from the table always hold a bat in your hand. When you are at the table tell your opponent which strokes you wish to practice and get him to play the ball to the various positions. Always have a set purpose in mind when practising. It is foolish to play aimlessly and hope that continued play will improve your game.

Book Review

All about Sport and Games and Your Camera. By Lancelot Vining. Published by The Focal Press, 1/6.

Here is a most useful book for all photographers. It deals in a simple manner with speed (appertaining to sport) and your camera. It lets you into some of the secrets of press photography and tells you how to get the best from your camera, even though it may be of the modest box type. There are thirty-five photographs printed on art paper and every possible sport is dealt with separately. At the back of the book is a table of shutter speeds required for the various sports. Table tennis is, of course, given its share of attention and it is interesting to see that the shutter speed recommended is as fast as that of any other sport. We reproduce here a photograph taken from the book . . . nice work fellow, but you didn't really hit the ball while you were up there, did you?



MIDDLESEX. CHAMPIONSHIP COUNTY TEAM.

Left to right : G. V. Barna, Mrs. I. Lentle, G. R. Harrower (Capt.), Miss M. Franks and W. B. Bergl.

NATIONAL COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

A Summary of Last Season's Play

By STANLEY H. KEMPSTER

WITH the completion of the first season of this new competition, we are in a position to analyse some of the results.

In the Premier division, the southern counties held the field with the first three places and Middlesex with a 100 per cent. record became the first "Champion County." Their success was due to the incomparable Barna, who, on two occasions, against Essex and against Surrey, was left to play the last match of the evening when the score was standing at 4-4. He achieved his team's expectations by winning the match for them on each occasion, beating in the first match Johnny Leach, 21-13, 11-21, 21-12. On all his appearances for his county he has, together with Miss Franks, who in the match against Surrey defeated Mrs. V. Thomas, 21-7, 22-20, an unbeaten record.

Some other outstanding results in this division include the defeat of Harrower by B. Kennedy (Yorkshire), Merrett (Surrey), and Langner (Essex) and the performance of young Jean Mackay who, in her singles matches only lost to the international players, Vi Patterson and Peggy Franks.

Southern Division

In the Southern division, the final result was in doubt until the last moment and depended upon the result of the Surrey 2 v. Hampshire match. Hampshire led this division with an unbeaten record followed by Sussex who beat Surrey 2 for second place on games average. Surrey were surprisingly beaten by Kent at Epsom in December last, but atoned for this by beating Sussex the following month at Horsham. Kent's success on this occasion was probably due to the introduction of Stanley Coles, the pre-war player to their team. L. W. Muller of Hampshire played in all five matches in this division and was only beaten once by J. Head of Surrey. C. Seaman (Sussex) played in four matches and only lost to Muller. Miss E. Benstead with Mrs. P.

Pitcher had an unbeaten doubles record for Middlesex, but Mrs. C. Brigden of Hertfordshire had the best record of the ladies in this division winning four of her five matches.

Northern Division

The winners of the Northern division title were Lancashire 2 who were fortunate in having a large number of players to call upon. The outstanding player in this division was undoubtedly A. Hall of Lincolnshire who, playing in every match, won all his ten sets only dropping one game to Hewitt of Northumberland. The Northumberland ladies who recently won the J. M. Rose Bowl appeared in every match for their county.

Champions v. The Rest

At the conclusion of the season, a special challenge match was held at the Seymour Hall, London, between Middlesex, the Champion County, and the Rest of England. Almost 800 spectators and some thousands of television viewers watched "The Rest," captained by Dennis H. Thompson of Gloucester beat Middlesex by 6 sets to 3. The sets were level until 3-all was reached, but then "The Rest" soared ahead and took the last three sets. The Middlesex girls, Peggy Franks and Rene Lentle, put up a good show by beating Vera Thomas and Pinkie Barnes in the ladies' doubles then Peggy again repeated her previous victory over Vera in the singles by beating her 21-18, 17-21, 21-18. These two victories and Barna's win over Sharman comprised Middlesex's three successes. Both Harrower and Bergl lost their singles matches and the expected highlight of the evening, the match between Barna and Leach came as an anti-climax as the result of the match was then known. Leach played extremely well and Barna lost his unbeaten record, 21-10, 21-14. The Rest of England team included J. A. Leach (Essex), R. Sharman (Surrey), K. Stanley (Lancs.), Mrs. V. Thomas and Miss L. R. Barnes (Surrey).

NATIONAL COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

	Games				
	P	W	L	W	L
Premier Division :					
Middlesex ..	5	5	0	29	16
Surrey ..	5	4	1	27	18
Essex ..	5	3	2	30	15
Lancashire ..	5	2	3	21	24
Warwickshire ..	5	1	4	16	29
Yorkshire ..	5	0	5	12	33

Southern Division :					
	P	W	L	W	L
Hampshire ..	5	5	0	29	16
Sussex ..	5	3	2	26	19
Surrey 2 ..	5	3	2	23	22
Middlesex 2 ..	5	2	3	26	19
Kent ..	5	2	3	21	24
Hertfordshire ..	5	0	5	10	35

Northern Division :					
	P	W	L	W	L
Lancashire 2 ..	6	6	0	28	17
Northumberland ..	6	4	2	34	20
Lincolnshire ..	6	4	2	26	19
Durham ..	6	3	3	26	20
Yorkshire 2 ..	6	2	4	31	23
Cheshire ..	6	2	4	25	20
Cumberland ..	6	0	6	2	52

≡ ALEC D. BROOK ≡

(Swaythling Cup Player)

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I can supply a few table tennis shirts as used by Victor Barna and I on the stage. 21/6 (inc. postage) and 6 coupouns

Anything and everything for sport supplied.

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COUNTY GAMES, 1947/48

INDIVIDUAL AVERAGES (Qualification : 3 Matches)

Men, 75 per cent. Ladies, 66 per cent.

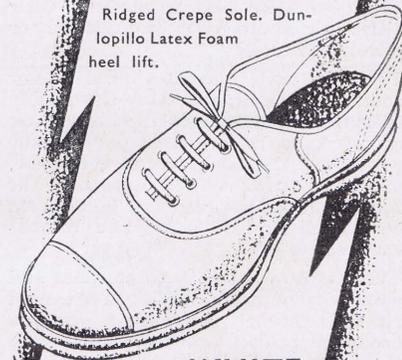
Player	County	P	Sets			%	Games		
			W	L	%		W	L	%
<i>Premier Division :</i>									
G. Barna ..	Middlesex ..	8	8	0	100	16	4	80	
J. A. Leach ..	Essex ..	8	7	1	87	15	4	79	
R. Langner ..	Essex ..	6	5	1	83	11	3	78	
J. H. Carrington ..	Essex ..	10	8	2	80	17	10	63	
K. Stanley ..	Lancashire ..	8	6	2	75	14	6	70	
R. Sharman ..	Surrey ..	8	6	2	75	12	7	63	
Miss M. Franks ..	Middlesex ..	5	5	0	100	10	1	91	
Miss V. Patterson ..	Essex ..	4	3	1	75	6	4	60	
Mrs. V. Thomas ..	Surrey ..	3	2	1	66	4	2	66	
<i>Southern Division :</i>									
L. W. Muller ..	Hants. ..	10	9	1	90	18	4	82	
C. Seaman ..	Sussex ..	8	7	1	87	15	3	83	
S. Minter ..	Hants. ..	6	5	1	83	10	5	66	
J. Head ..	Surrey ..	9	7	2	77	15	7	68	
Mrs. C. Brigden ..	Herts. ..	5	4	1	80	8	3	73	
Mrs. P. Pitcher ..	Middlesex ..	3	2	1	66	4	4	50	
<i>Northern Division :</i>									
A. Hall ..	Lincolnshire ..	10	10	0	100	20	1	95	
D. S. Heaps ..	Cheshire ..	6	5	1	83	11	3	78	
W. Devine ..	Cheshire ..	8	6	2	75	13	5	72	
R. Thompson ..	Yorkshire ..	8	6	2	75	13	6	68	
Miss D. Smith ..	Northumberland ..	6	5	1	83	11	2	85	
Mrs. E. Dodds ..	Durham ..	4	3	1	75	6	4	60	
Miss E. Mansell ..	Lancashire ..	3	2	1	66	4	3	57	
Mrs. P. Lammin ..	Lincolnshire ..	3	2	1	66	4	3	57	

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There should be a Law against It

By STANLEY PROFFITT

(Swaythling Cup Player 1929-1937.)

IN my table tennis travels I am asked various kinds of questions, but two that have become more insistent of recent months are as follows:—

(1) Are English international badges becoming cheap?

(2) Do some players magnify their titles for commercial propaganda or personal kudos?

Frankly, both questions need a fair amount of thought, and there is certainly food here for controversial discussion. At any rate, the table tennis public, who after all are the backbone of the game, are entitled to the ungilded truth of the achievements of the players who perform before them in exhibitions and tournaments, etc.

There is no easy path to stardom and the majority of internationals have earned their title through meritorious work on tournament fields. Granted, some people will raise their eyebrows at an odd player sporting the English shirt, but such might be a case of the player concerned being so geographically situated that travelling expenses have been kept to a minimum. However, results to date have justified such inclusions, thereby safeguarding question number one.

Grade the Honours

The second question is undoubtedly the root from which the whole discussion springs. For instance, it is very misleading and indeed, damaging, to the organisation of the game when one visits an exhibition, either in some provincial town or holiday resort, and finds names of fairly unknown players billed to the heavens. During the cut and thrust of local championships these players rarely get a glimpse of the last sixteen in the singles. In addition, there are others who on emigration are referred to as internationals, etc., by the Press of their new-found nations. Perhaps the only



step these players have made towards international honours has been a trip to London for trial purposes. I do think that this is a form of "gulling" the public which should be stopped—don't you?

To enable the average spectator to become better informed as to the various international awards is a poser which may bring headaches among the officials of the game, but perhaps a few suggestions may help to iron out the difficulty.

Would it not be possible to have some sort of "half-blue" for solitary appearances against any of the countries in the British Isles, giving an appropriate insignia to fit the occasion? Only after having figured against each of the countries concerned, namely Wales, Ireland and Scotland, would a "full-blue" be awarded and the holder entitled to be regarded as an international. Anticipating brickbats from the rival Associations, I readily admit that this suggestion has its flaws, and if anyone has a brighter scheme to put forward I do hope they will send it in.

But when all is said and done, if the above scheme was put into effect you would not have the player of just one solitary match displaying the same badge as one who had fought through each of these international games.

Continental Games

Our Swaythling and Corbillon cup badges are unique and should remain so even though one or perhaps two of the players may never be called upon to face up to opponents during the whole series. The fact that they are expert enough to be considered for the "Blue Ribbon" of the game is sufficient to enable them to wear the emblem. Few will dispute this.

The Europe cup matches also come under the hammer. Far greater is the achievement in representing one's country in this competition than in competing in a minor international event. It might be as well to class the Europe cup events and any match against a continental team under the combined heading of "Major International."

Those players who have not made an appearance in first-class matches for a couple of years or so and are unlikely to catch the public eye again should be styled with the prefix "ex" in front of any previous title.

Educate the Public

Finally, I would like to say that top-class exponents should be requested to wear the badge of their highest honour when playing in championships, and that the local organiser be asked to give a brief pen-picture of the various badges in their programmes. That should not be difficult. Just a few scanty words on the Swaythling and Corbillon Cup badges, and also the "Major," "Minor" and "Half-Blue" international emblems. As things now stand, you will see the finalists wearing county or humble club badges, and the layman spectator goes home not knowing one from t'other, being further confused on reading the morning press accounts and seeing the names trimmed with their rightful headings.

The object of my roughly outlined scheme is to get the public accustomed to the various ranks and standings of the individual players, but it may also be the indirect means of solving the problem of the "lesser-light" posing as the big-time star.

Our Cover Photograph

Miss Inge Poetschek, nineteen years old, daughter of a Viennese doctor, and member of the Austrian Corbillon Cup team. It is expected that Miss Poetschek will accompany the Austrian team which will tour the British Isles at the end of this year. This good-looking Continental was one of the most photographed girls at Wembley.

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Some European Touring Experiences

by

ALEC BROOK



Alec Brook is an English International and is now touring the theatres of this country with his world-famous partner, Victor Barna.

ALTHOUGH in later issues, I hope to continue with more of my stage experiences, I am breaking away now to recall something about my trips abroad with Richard Bergmann.

By mutual arrangement with Victor Barna with whom I have been nearly seven years, it was agreed in 1947 I should go with Richard and tour Germany, Austria and Italy. This was the official tour and the less said about the unofficial itinerary so much the better. Sufficient to say, we furraged into every corner of Europe.

With Bergmann and Barna together, I estimate my travels have covered something like a quarter of a million miles, having visited among other places, Paris, Brussels, Vienna, Trieste, Berlin, Heidelberg, Venice, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Munich and Milan.

Naturally, on journies so varied, we had thrills in plenty, lots of excitement and a ton of fun. It was mostly servicemen who were our audiences and they are the finest in the world. They gave us wonderful receptions everywhere.

Into the Russian Zone

We were playing in Graz one Saturday with the next day free. Vienna, not in our schedule was only about 200 miles away so we were both anxious to see it again, particularly Bergmann, who was

born there. The chief difficulty appeared to be getting through the Russian zone without a pass. The obstacle was short-lived and after a lot of wangling with a capital W, we arrived in Vienna in the early hours of the morning.

Possessing officers' status, we managed to get ourselves comfortably installed in an officers' hotel for the day. While I was changing, Dickie, in his inimitable style of always saying the wrong thing at the wrong moment, proceeded to tell the manager we were not on duty. We picked ourselves up from the snow and after gagging Richard, I was able to fix another place.

The rest of the day was spent in the entertaining pastime of trying to trace Dickie's long lost relatives, during which I used about three rolls of precious films, photographing him with his aunts and uncles.

Monday, we were due back in Graz for an evening show, which necessitated another hitch-hike, again through the Russian zone. We stood for an hour in a street before finding it was for Russian traffic only. The back of a small open truck was our final conveyance. From the start there was a blinding

snowstorm and neither Richard nor I will ever forget that journey.

After about five hours we had a puncture which probably saved us from being exhibited as eskimoes instead of table tennis players. Every part of us was numbed and we literally fell off the truck. We crawled into a nearby house, where a most hospitable man, with his wife and daughter, helped us to thaw out. *Some idea of our feelings can be judged from the fact that neither of us noticed how attractive was the young lady until we were on the point of leaving.*

We played to a number of camps in isolated areas up on the Morgan line near Yugoslavia and around Trieste. Little entertainment reaches those places and we were nearly mobbed by the enthusiastic fellows. One place even worse, was an internment camp between two mountains at Viesenstein in Austria. How pleased we were that we were only visitors.

Gondola Transport

We arrived in Venice as they were experiencing their first floods for years. Our table was carried round in a gondola and on one occasion we nearly lost it when the gondola all but capsized as it was being loaded.

About this time we were requested to play an extra show one evening in the ballroom of an officers' hotel.

We came on to the floor for the preliminary knock-up to find a party consisting of three officers and their lady friends with their table about five feet from the end of ours. I asked if they would mind moving back about ten to fifteen feet as we would require the space. The reply was "Not — likely." I then again asked someone else and after a negative reply, I turned to the rest of the party. They also declined to

move. They had been imbibing during the evening and this may have been one of the reasons, or they may not have previously seen modern table tennis. However, after further inducements from other persons who could see what was happening, they still refused to move.

I then asked Bergmann to hit every ball hard down the middle and I would try to effect their removal. It was more successful than I anticipated. For the sixth shot I had the table immediately behind me, and for the seventh, I backed right into it. Glasses, drinks and everything went for six and some of the spectators started to cheer.

I was really sorry for the ladies as everyone was soaked when the table went over. They all left the room extremely quietly and somewhat shamefaced. Not a word was spoken and we then carried on with the exhibition.

Playing in Candlelight

A further reminder of people who still have not seen table tennis as apart from ping pong, came from one of the outlying camps. Light was derived from generators and the day we were due to play the generators broke down. The person in charge thereupon fitted up a number of candles, to be exact, three! We thought it was a new type of black-out and the gentleman was quite surprised when we were unable to see the ball. Eventually, candles were studded all over the canteen and we managed to play, though not without terrific eye strain.

The majority of places did their utmost to provide us with the best possible conditions under the circumstances, but it would have been a lesson to some of the fastidious people over here, had they played at a few of the centres we visited.

Best League Handbooks

WORCESTER and WOLVERHAMPTON

WHAT are the essential qualities of a really useful League Handbook? As it will be the constant companion of the ardent table tennis fan, it should be of a size and thickness that makes it easy to carry about, along with other personal items, in an inside pocket or ladies' handbag. For nine months it will have to stand up to wear and tear and therefore a stout and durable cover is desired.

The main contents should be: Officers of the League, League Rules, names and addresses of clubs and their secretaries, and of course, the playing fixtures for the season. If finance permits the inclusion of more pages, or if an enterprising secretary succeeds in obtaining a useful number of advertisements, then such extras might be included as, past records of individuals and clubs, rules of table tennis, and financial balance sheet, etc.

The handbook should be a small guide on all matters relating to the game and should be at the service of a club player to settle any matter of debate or to give assistance on any little knotty point.

With the above views in mind, we set about the task of choosing the best handbook from a selection of twenty-six. We did invite any three or four league officials to act as judges, but as none volunteered the choice is merely that of *Table Tennis Review* Editor.

Some of the Entries

The North Acton book was attractive and neatly printed but its contents did not justify forty-eight pages, and there was a great waste of space.

The handbook of the Wembley and Harrow League was actually one of the best. We passed this book

for one reason. The fixtures were set out in code. A code is generally used when it is essential to economise in space, but we cannot see that much space was saved here.

Another most compact and useful book was that of the North Middlesex League which gave all kinds of interesting records and also the laws of table tennis. Here again, however, the fixtures were in code, quite an elaborate and ingenious code. Still we're glad we don't play in North Middlesex!

Twenty-eight Advertisements

Grimsby sent a useful book and so did Nottingham. The latter had twenty-eight pages of advertisements, out of a total of ninety-six pages.

Cardiff had a most excellent book but the cover pages were too flimsy and certainly the opposite to Wembley and Manchester. Manchester's cover pages were of a similar quality to present-day floor

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The fixtures of the Bradford book were exceedingly well set out, but those seventeen pages of league rules would frighten us away from Bradford.

The pages of the Cheltenham book were on a type of art paper and the printing was of good taste. Here again, the fixtures were in code and entirely different to any other league. Surely there is work in the country's espionage department for some of you league secretaries!

The Winners

We considered Wolverhampton and Worcester to have the most useful handbooks and the prize of two guineas has been shared between them. The Wolverhampton book is similar to the one we reviewed in this competition last year when Aldershot won the prize, but the book from Worcester is worth the study of any league secretary (price is one shilling!). The fixtures of four divisions are on as many pages and they are not in code. The

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If you are a league official and interested in acting as a neutral judge of this contest we shall value your assistance.

★ Worcester League was founded in 1932, yet it manages with eighteen rules occupying three pages. The whole book only had twenty-eight pages, yet it had everything except the laws of table tennis, although a page of "Knotty Points" was included.

READERS' LETTERS

It is to be hoped that this season, with no World Championships to worry the E.T.T.A., the Wilmott Cup event will be given a little more thoughtful organising and the finals staged to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Hall chosen for this important final last season was totally unsuitable, having a composition floor and windows on either side for the whole length of the room, setting up cross lights across the table.

The humid atmosphere was reminiscent of a bakery and stale air persisted all day. Suggestions that this was due to the sunny day were ridiculous and there was a beautifully refreshing breeze blowing. Although the organisers had pre-knowledge of the fact that visitors would be coming from considerable distances, no attempt was made to provide some refreshments for them, and the fact that the hall was literally miles from anywhere made it difficult for them to obtain anything themselves. Spectators and employees of Rotax wandered about "willy-nilly." The protest made by Mr. Harrower in the evening that a young lady walked across the room was rather late in the day. A player of his experience should have appealed in a proper manner to the Umpire.

It is obvious that the higher affiliation fees are being frittered away by bad management and it is hopeless to expect good gates when there are such conditions. The E.T.T.A. statement that they were prepared to lose £1,000 on the World Championship, and the above, show an attitude which is, in my opinion, defeatist.

These matters indicate the need for an efficient business man of the entertainment world as a full-time organiser of the game.

W. BEVIN, Bristol.

★

Having been present at Wembley early this year, I personally feel that even if the loss had amounted to £1,000 it would have been worth every penny of it. The affair was magnificently staged and organised and the publicity and prestige won for English table tennis was worth far more than this figure. Having organised such an important event so splendidly, one or two flops might be forgiven—still you are entitled to your opinion, Mr. Bevin, and we agree that it is more than a little annoying to travel so far and find conditions so bad.—

EDITOR.

In this part of the country, we are naturally very proud of Aubrey Simons who many critics confidently expect (after a little more practice against top-notchers, like Bergmann, Barna, Leach, etc.) to become England's No. 1. Last season, in the space of eight days, Aubrey Simons beat Bergmann, Barna and Leach—Bergmann and Leach in straight games. With all good wishes to your excellent magazine which is doing great service to the game.

J. TOMPKINS, Keynsham, Somerset.

Thank you for your encouraging remarks regarding "Table Tennis Review." Remind us to treat you to a gill in a pint glass if ever we meet. Thanks also to your Aubrey Simons for his last season's splendid performance. Why he wasn't chosen for the Swaythling Cup team only the selectors know. We rank him to-day in the first three.—

EDITOR.

★

I am constantly trying to convince my long-suffering husband (who doesn't play t.t. by the way) that the game is quite an inexpensive hobby. He has now given me a list of overheads which he considers the absolute minimum. This reads as follows: "A couple of rackets and a supply of three starred balls. The latest in sports shirts and shorts, and also a fur coat to wear in between tournament rounds. An attractive looking sports bag and a

regular supply of magazines, handbooks and books on the technique of the game. In addition there are Club membership fees, tournament fees, travelling expenses to tournaments and week-end hotel bills. Finally a popular extra is the taxi fare when the last bus is missed."

Personally, I think any ordinary tournament player can get by on a couple of pounds a week, don't you?

PEGGY ALLEN, Blackpool.

My wife doesn't play t.t. and if ever she starts, the price of "Table Tennis Review" goes up to two shillings!—

★

I hope that the selection committee will continue to choose Bergmann, Barna and Beregi for English international matches. Would any other nation quibble about playing the strongest team they could raise? I think that England should put forward her strongest team in fairness to the other nations. I think their's would be a hollow victory if they knew we were capable of turning out players of the standard of the three B's and did not do so. The position is analogous to that of a small league in which the conditions at one club are better than the others. (No one will deny that conditions in England are the best in the world.) The good players, of course, join the club with the best conditions and that club has, or should have, no hesitation about playing them in all matches. My thanks go to the selection committee for their sound common-sense.

P. E. MORLEY, Liverpool.

We have heard so many excellent arguments from both sides of public opinion that all we look forward to is the day when the three B's are old and grey, and the chief point to debate is again why the selection committee chooses more southern players than northern ones.—

★

To settle an argument can you tell me when the Swaythling Cup contest was first held and who were the winners.

R. M., Rhyl.

Hungary was the first winner of the Swaythling Cup which was contested in London in December, 1926, during the first World Championships. The Hungarian team was: Kehrling, Jacobi, Mechlovits and Pecsí. They then held on to the trophy until 1931 when it was won by Czechoslovakia. Barna and Szabados made their entry into the Hungarian team in 1928.—

EDITOR.

Ranking Lists

A RANKING list, no matter by whom it is compiled, can never be accepted as perfectly correct. Such a list is merely the view of the person or persons concerned. Even the number one position is not always easy to name and it does not say that because a player won the world's title he should necessarily be the world's number one player. He was merely the player who was able to win the event on a particular occasion under certain circumstances such as conditions and the luck of the draw, etc.

In our last issue, we issued a world ranking list which, although not compiled by ourselves, we felt to be reasonably near the mark. Our contributor wished to remain anonymous but upon the request of a reader and together with the permission of the contributor, we now disclose his identity to be Richard Bergmann.

Victor Barna, who writes regularly for *Sporting Record* included in one of his articles the following ranking list:—

- 1.—Bergmann (England).
- 2.—Andreadis (Czechoslovakia).
- 3.—Vana (Czechoslovakia).
- 4.—Miles (U.S.A.).
- 5.—Amouretti (France).
- 6.—Soos (Hungary).
- 7.—Reisman (U.S.A.).
- 8.—Leach (England).
- 9.—Nash (U.S.A.).
- 10.—Sido (Hungary).
- 11.—Flisberg (Sweden).
- 12.—Haguenauer (France).

In his article Victor wrote: "The name of 'Barna' is missing, and if any reader cares to put this down to modesty he's welcome."

That again is a good list, but who can say whether it is right or wrong.

Then and Now . .

Part II—POST WAR T.T.

By GILBERT MARSHALL (*International*)

WHAT have we today? New names? Very few. Improved play? No, the standard is lower. More spectacular displays? Never more spectacular, but occasionally just about as good.

I have not overlooked the astonishing American hitting of this year's Wembley, but would point out that the answer to it, as found by Bergmann, was the half-volley or quick hit back, which as Mr. A. J. Wilmott remarked to me, created a kind of super ping-pong. Gone is the beauty of stroke, gone except in isolated instances is the spectacle, and in its place is the rapid fire, bang-bang-chancy-game which was the inevitable product of the 6 ins. net.

What have the changes in the rules of the game achieved? Nothing to the good but a whole heap to the bad. The result is most surely seen in English table tennis, for now we have one player only who would rank in the world's first twenty in this country by reason of the poverty of the play in general.

The spectators of to-day may imagine that they are seeing super-stuff, but many of them, most indeed, never saw top-grade T.T. in the pre-war era. Those of us who did, and played then, know perfectly well that modern play is inferior and we know the cause. Do we now see long, thrilling rallies? At Wembley in one or two matches—yes, but in the old days even the early rounds were packed with thrills. How often do we see a real kill, not a slap-happy swipe, but the well earned end of a series of ever faster top-spin strokes forcing the ball up and up, in spite of all the wiles of an agile defender.

My critics will refer to the Bergmann-Vana final, but Vana and Bergmann, because of their youth, are survivors of pre-war table tennis.

An Absurd Rule.

Mention of Bergmann-Vana brings me to almost the last point I wish to make. People may wonder how it is that Bergmann, decisively beaten by Vana in last year's English Open, could turn the table twice this year. They will put it down to Bergmann's earnest endeavour, fighting spirit, and adaptability. All true, but, and a very big "but," the chief reason is that by the absurd change in the rules Vana has been robbed of a most potent weapon—his fierce top-and-side spun, kicking, *perfectly legitimate*, bat spin service—an essential weapon of a world champion and indeed of any first class player. Such a weapon was not a gift of the gods but the reward of hours . . . weeks . . . years of practice devoted to service as to any other department of the game.

Once again, as in another journal, I call upon the E.T.T.A. to wake up and make a stand against foreign opinion. Foreign table tennis needs its association with the game in England because our conditions are unequalled. But the reverse does not apply. Make one more experiment to end all experiments—scrap the changes, restore the 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins. net, and re-introduce finger spin in the English game. The game as played by English players would soon become as grand and exciting a spectacle as it did in the good old days.

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