

Table Tennis REVIEW

Vol. 4 No. 3
JAN.-FEB. 1950



NEWS



VIEWS



HINTS



COVER PORTRAIT:
BERNARD CROUCH
(Middlesex)
English Swaythling
Cup





Johnny Leach

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REVIEW

Managing Editor :
ARTHUR WAITE
(.931 International).

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Vol. 4 No. 3

JAN./FEB. 1950

One Shilling

The World Title

THERE are quite a number of people who are not in favour of a World Championships being held at all, some of their points of argument being that it is not always possible for all the world's best players to compete at the same time, or that travelling expenses restrict some countries from taking part, or that a player who wins this premier knock-out tournament might win simply because conditions and luck favoured him. But these are points which are surely appreciated by everyone. We all realise quite well that a player who is fortunate enough to win the world title is not necessarily the best player in the world. To turn to the other end of the scale we do not always regard the club champion as the best exponent in the club. On the day of the tournament a certain star man might be condemned to minding the baby or something. Just because we agree that the winner of the annual club tournament might have luck with him in one way or another, we do not talk of abolishing the club championship contest. The World's Championships acquire far too much publicity for our game and any suggestions for bringing them to an untimely end should be ignored. The ideas of Richard Bergmann, however, might be worth some serious consideration. He thinks that from the quarter-finals the knock-out system should be abolished, and that the remaining eight players should play one another, the title going to the player with the most number of wins. But come what may, our one desire is that these championships will continue. The most serious menace at the moment appears to be the opposing political beliefs of various countries. Already a certain amount of ill-feeling has been caused by the press and radio of both East and West who have distorted table-tennis affairs to serve their own propaganda purposes. We can well do without that type of publicity. We of the table-tennis world enjoy a happy feeling of international friendship and at all our events there is comradeship and sportsmanship. We hope to be left alone to run our World Championships and other international events without having undue restrictions placed upon us.

DOWN THE WHITE LINE

By GOSSIMA

Mike Szabados asked the promoters for 10 per cent. of the gross take of a Barna/Bergmann night at the Sydney Stadium. This 10 per cent. slice of the gate was allowed in payment for appearance money and services rendered towards the publicity angle.

In November last the U.S.A. T.T.A. began their trials for the world championship teams. There was first a tournament among the best Eastern players, and also one for the Western players. This was followed a week later by a teams trials tournament between the best players of each zone, the teams to go abroad being then chosen.

Hungarian Ferenc Sido, who triumphed in the men's doubles and mixed doubles in the Budapest Championships last September, won the Bulgarian international event recently. Before returning home, he played three exhibition matches in Bucarest, Rumania, against the Rumanians, Vladone, Roseanu and Naomescu.

During December a Hungarian team composed of Sido, Koczian, Soos, Gizi Farkas and Karpati met the best Czech players in Prague and Czechoslovak provincial towns. For the last 16 years the Hungarians have never beaten the Czechs on their own ground, although they recently beat them in Stockholm and a number of times in Budapest.

New address of the English Table Tennis Association is 214, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2.

Welsh international matches have been arranged as follows:—
February 20th v. England (Cheltenham)
February 25th v. Ireland (Bangor, S. Wales).
April 1st v. England (Junior Match) (Newport).

Entries for the English Open Championships to be held at Wembley Stadium on March 11th are expected from top ranking players from U.S.A., France, Sweden, Poland, etc., and very probably from Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Congratulations to Peggy Franks and ex-Kent Champion Ronnie Hook who were married in January. Also to Pinkie Barnes and film actor Sam Kydd who are now engaged.

OFFICIAL SOUTH AFRICAN RANKING LIST

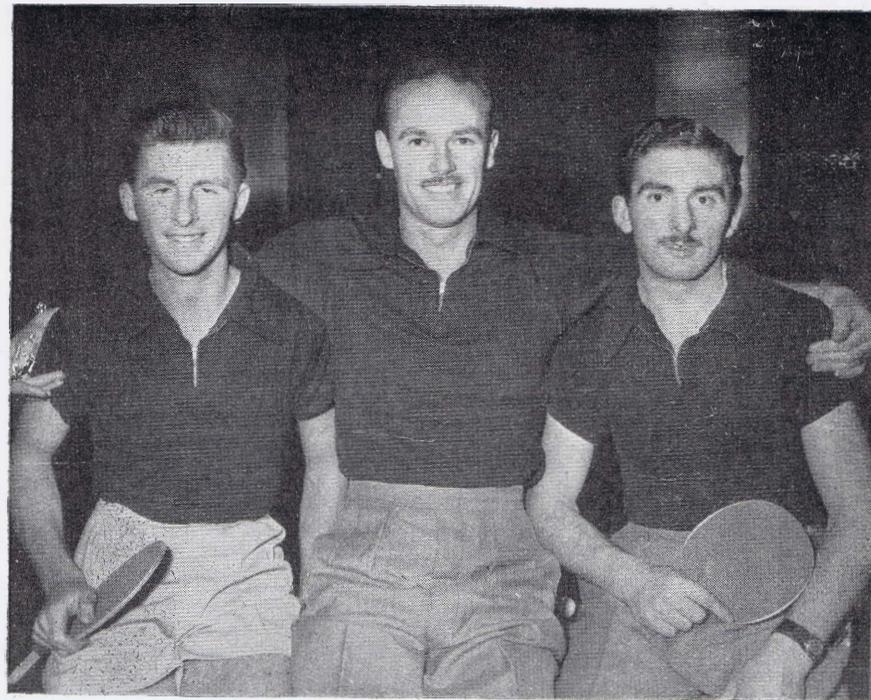
Men.—1, R. Edwards; 2, H. Sofer; 3, R. Litten; 4, J. Paitaki; 5, M. Shotland; 6, N. Davis; 7, C. Millar; 8, J. Katzeff.
Women.—1, E. Blackbourn; 2, R. Patterson; 3, W. Hawthorne; 4, E. Whittle; 5, M. Kaplan; 6, F. Rabinowitz.

INTERNATIONAL MATCHES

England 8, Ireland 1 (Belfast, November 10th).
England 7, France 2 (Wolverhampton, December 16th).
Wales 8, Scotland, 1 (Rhydney, December 9th).



Welcome home. Richard Bergmann and Victor and Mrs. Barna.



NEW ZEALAND SWAYTHLING CUP TEAM.
John Stewart, J. S. Crossley and Neville Brightwell. This enterprising trio are working their passage to Budapest. Arrived in England in January.

WELSH OPEN RESULTS

CARDIFF, DECEMBER 10th, 1949
M.S.—*Semi-Finals.*—Leach beat Casofsky, 18, 15; Simons beat Sweetland, 14, 13.
Final.—Simons beat Leach, 19, 16, -17, 13.
W.S.—*Semi-Finals.*—Franks beat Fry, 16, 20; Steventon beat Bates, 14, -19, 19.
Final.—Franks beat Steventon, 13, 15.
M.D.—*Final.*—Leach/Carrington beat Jones/Davies, 17, -13, 9.
W.D.—*Final.*—Bates/Steventon beat Pithie/Tolan, 17, 10.
Mx.D.—*Final.*—Leach/Franks beat Simons/Steventon, 14, -16, 20.

IRISH OPEN RESULTS

DUBLIN, NOVEMBER 12th, 1949
Finals.—
M.S.—A. Ehrlich beat J. Leach, 12, -18, 10, 11.
W.S.—A. Egan beat Darlington, 15, 22.
M.D.—Leach/Crayden beat Mercer/Martin, 17, 16, 19.
W.D.—Cooms/Fearon beat Roberts/Jones, 15, 20.
Mx.D.—Leach/Minshull beat Ehrlich/Coombs, 17, -17, 18.

THE PERFECT PLAYER?

What assets, of those possessed by actual exponents, would a player need to be as near perfect as it is possible for a human being to be? A group of London club fans discussed this interesting question and arrived at the conclusion that he would need the following:—

1. The grace, thinking ability, and backhand flick of Barna at his best.
2. The ease of stroke execution of Andreadis.
3. Ernie Buble's half-volley.
4. Bergmann's footwork and retrieving propensities.
5. Sido's forehand.
6. Vana's speed and fighting spirit.
7. Ehrlich's patience.
8. Garrett Nash's aggressive qualities.
9. The foxiness of Bellak.
10. The cheerful sportiness of Dora Beregi.

We invite readers' views on this matter and we will award a book prize or table tennis bat for the best letters published.

Table Tennis On Broadway

By LESLIE J. BUGLASS

THREE months ago I said goodbye to my table tennis friends on Tyneside before boarding the *Queen Elizabeth* to set sail for the United States of America in pursuit of dollars. Needless to say I took along with me my two favourite bats, and indeed, made excellent use of them on board ship. Tournaments are held for passengers and while glorified ping-pong is the order of the day it is none the less very enjoyable.

My destination was New York City itself and naturally I was curious as to how table tennis in that City would compare with our own. I arrived in New York in August and as anyone who has spent August in Manhattan will tell you, table tennis is the last thing even a T.T. enthusiast would think about. Yes sir! It was much too hot for my favourite sport. As the cooler September days arrived I began to dust my bats ("paddles" is the American expression) and practise my most ambitious strokes in my little hotel room against an imaginary opponent who always seemed to be toiling against my superior attack (what an imagination). Even a fan will tire of this and in due course I commenced to look for a club. What a surprise was in store. No-one seemed to have heard of table tennis—or else they vaguely said "the folk in the next apartment have a set." In desperation I wrote to the Sports Editor of the *New York Times* and he was good enough to give me an address to which to write. I received a reply by return which made me rub my eyes in amazement. It read "I am afraid that in New York table tennis does not attain the popularity that it enjoys in Great Britain. Compared with other sports we are weak. If it were not for a small public court at 1721 Broadway (near 54th Street) known as the Broadway Table Tennis Courts, we would have almost no facilities for playing table tennis." And this was New York, the wonder city!

Mecca of Stars

At the first opportunity I proceeded to 1721 Broadway. Sure enough a sign protruded into the sidewalk—"Table Tennis. Daily, 10 a.m. to 2-0 a.m., seven days a week. The place where the ranking champions play." Up the stairs I bounded my

heart quickening at the familiar sound of bat on ball. Suddenly I was in the midst of it—six tables going furiously with frequent exclamations of joy or annoyance as the case may be. It was all so familiar—only the accents were different. That is how I got my first game of table tennis in New York—and my second, third, etc., *ad infinitum*. Yes, the Broadway Table Tennis Courts are table tennis in New York City. Veritably an amazing place—here you can find almost any class of table tennis—the beginner, the star, the veteran. I like to think of it as table tennis' own United Nations—practically every nationality is to be met—American, British, West Indian, Negro, German, Czech, etc., etc.

It is not a pretentious place. There are 11 tables on two floors and playing conditions are about the same as in public courts in London. It is the general standard of play which is so staggering. Here, one can meet Marty Reisman, Dick Miles, Sol Schiff and though I've never met him myself I understand the superb Bellak is an occasional visitor. Previously I had not had an opportunity of seeing Reisman play and the very first night I was at the Courts I noticed a tall, slim, immaculate youth playing out of this world stuff. "Who is that?" I asked an onlooker. "Oh," he said casually, "that's a feller called Reisman." That was my first glimpse of the English Open Champion.

Marty is a perpetual visitor to the Courts and we had many interesting discussions. When I expressed amazement that it had been possible for him to reach world class with so little tournament play he attributed most of his success to his early practice with Miles. Marty is a much wiser and sadder young man since his disastrous encounter with authority in London last season. He is truly repentant and is hopeful that all will be forgiven in time for him to play in next year's World Championships. I had an interesting talk with Sol Schiff, whose stroke play is still a joy to behold. Sol is hoping to visit England in January and was full of Johnny Leach's feat in winning the world title. "He *must* have played well," he said, "because he had to play all the best players." It's all yours Johnny.



Susper ded Marty Reisman.
"Wembley Stadium Photograph"

Out First Round

Stars apart, this joint is one of the most, if not *the* most enthusiastic hive of table tennis I have yet encountered and I say that with all respect to my own clubs in England, North Durham and Cranbrook Castle, both of which want a lot of beating

in that direction. Tournaments are held each Tuesday and Friday (admission \$1) with consolation singles for those knocked out in the first round. *And last Friday both Miles and Reisman were eligible for the consolation event!* Yes, the standard is terrific all things considered, and would seem to be the answer to the school of thought which thinks you can't produce champions without travelling to tournaments all over Britain. My personal view is that continuous play on a competitive basis is the answer even if it means playing the same players over and over again as is the case in New York.

What does it cost the enthusiast in the American metropolis? It's not a cheap sport here. The charge is \$1 per hour per player. So you players in Britain who never have any change when the treasurer calls (not you Norman—sit down) just think how much you owe (not only financially) to your club whether it be in Peckham or Perth.

Any time you visit New York be sure to pop in at 1721 Broadway. You'll be sure of a welcome and don't mind the ejaculations, the show of temperament, the chewing gum on your shoes or the empty Coca Cola bottles that roll in the gangways. It is all part of New York's welcome to table tennis players of every clime. Yes, it's certainly true what they say about Broadway.

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Choosing England's Team

By **STANLEY PROFFITT**

(Member of the E.T.T.A. Selection Committee) (Ex-Swaythling Cup Player)

I'VE been present at most English Swaythling Cup trials since 1927 either as a contestant or spectator, and those trials held on December 16th and 17th at Kentish Town held nothing new on the trials of yester-year. There was the same grim determination to win through. The prize being the most coveted in the game—a place on the Swaythling or Corbillon team, this time to journey once more to Budapest, Hungary.

Taking into account that Johnny Leach, Richard Bergmann and Aubrey Simons had already accepted invitations to wear the three golden lines in Budapest, the task of the selectors to choose the final two places for the Swaythling Cup team was one which needed careful thought. In fact, at the time when I left London, the matter was still unsettled, but later I saw in the press that Venner and Crouch occupy the honoured places with Crayden as reserve.

Undoubtedly the man who took the spotlight was little Harry Venner (Surrey).



Harry gave up his job for a whole month in order to get in perfect trim for the event. He cut and carved his way through the opposition to such purpose that at the end of the two days' play only one defeat was registered against him. Sound in defence and devastating in attack if he is to be faulted at all it is when coupling extra speed into a quick forehand kill. He tends to pull his head away from the line of follow-through, thus not making full use of what height he possesses. Some say he loses sight of the ball by tucking his head too far down. Nonsense. Would he have beaten Johnny Leach in the recent county match if this was the case?

Either Bernard Crouch (Middlesex) or Ron Crayden (Surrey), both tall chaps, would have been an acquisition to the team but unfortunately one had to drop out. Bernard is 24, stouter built and more aggressive. Incidentally he reached the last eight of the English Open at Wembley last year and also gave veteran French star, Michael Haguenuer a terrific struggle in the December Central London Open. In comparison, Crayden appeared to be the more studious type of player. It was a delight to see him split the defence of Crouch wide open with well thought out strategy and ultimately return the winner 3-0.

Craigie (Middlesex) and Allcock (Lancashire), also tall exponents but somewhat erratic when compared with Crayden and Crouch, both won and lost gloriously. Triers all the way. The same may be said of Brian Brunwell of Essex (finalist in the last Merseyside Open) and Wally Poole (Warwickshire) whose solid defences and indeed all-round ability earned them many scalps. Michael Thornhill and Brian Kennedy turned up in Air Force blue. Their time will come along with the Lancashire boys Ellison, Daly and Pierce.



A pause for Baby Lynda but now Vera Dace (Mrs. Thomas) is again after that World title.



A. A. Hayden, Non-Playing Captain English teams.

Civil Service champion Len Adams, in spite of a cumbersome style, has a bright outlook. This Middlesex player puts all he knows into his game but I do think it would be to his advantage to take a shorter back swing and less body movement when playing a forehand drive. Needless to say his accuracy is amazing under the circumstances and likely to upset the apple-cart of big-time players on occasions.

Chief interest from my point of view in the women's clash, was to confirm the good impressions left by the 16 year old Rowe twins at the back-end of last season. They did not disappoint, and both Rosalind and Diana (I cannot tell the difference in features) are certain to make the grade later. At the moment they are a grand doubles pair and their flat forehand hits are a joy to watch, making them both exceptionally useful mixed doubles partners. They lack little in defence, and like Adele Wood, they have unique footwork—a feature lacking in the majority of women players. Margaret Fry (Bristol) too, is in this class and has a splendid match temperament, inherent, no doubt, from the many county lawn tennis duels in which she has taken part.

The team selected for the Corbillon Cup is a strong one, namely, Vera Dace, Dora Beregi, Peggy Franks, and Pinkie Barnes. I don't think anyone will fall out over that

combination. Note that the first three players are the same that defeated Hungary in that dramatic final during the last Wembley world championships.

Vera Dace and Dora Beregi both unavoidably absent from last year's Stockholm event and given time they should certainly reach their peak form once again. Although left-handed Vera was not smacking the ball with the same assurance of 'old, the fact that she defeated Peggy Franks in the singles final of the Central London Open speaks volumes. Dora tells me she is practising hard. In her case there is the added incentive of returning to the land of her birth.

Whether the teams will return triumphant is a matter of conjecture. They tell me that Rose Karpati, Hungarian No. 2, is playing seven points better while Gizi Farkas is still expected to retain the singles title. Well we'll see. They've something on to beat the English lassies in the team championship.

Miss MARGARET FRY (Bristol)



What They Say . . .

The World Champion

Many of us feel that in Johnny Leach's sensational victory there is more than one valuable lesson to be learned and taken to heart. Firstly, all "rank and file" players can now see for themselves that anyone who is prepared to work hard at the game, to mould his style and develop his strokes in accordance with the dictates of first-class coaching, and can keep his nerve and courage in the face of disappointment, can get right to the top rung. Johnny is a grand player, thoroughly well equipped at all points, a conscientious craftsman, a sound tactician and a fighter to the finger-tips. But his is not a genius, in the meaning of the word as applied to, say, Victor Barna, or Laszlo Bellak. So the inference is not only that what Johnny has done once, he can do again, but that anyone can, if he sets about it the right way and gets right down to it.

C. CORTI WOODCOCK—*Nine By Five.*

India's No. 1

Chandarana, the All-Indian National Champion, who won the Madras Open, relies on sound, clever tactics, and his style could be compared to that of Tage Flisberg of Sweden. In the third and final Test, England v. India, my first match was against Chandarana, India's No. 1, and before I knew what had happened, I found myself 0-2 down in games. Chandarana played brilliant, inspired table tennis. I made a great effort, and pulled up to 2-all. In the final game I could do no better than level the scores at 19-19 but at this stage, managed to return a few "impossible" shots in the narrowest of margins.

RICHARD BERGMANN—*Cavalcade.*

Big Match Nerves

On the day of the World Championship Singles final, many thoughts ran through my head—and I had an awful job to find one to console me, as Vana had made mincemeat of me so many times. All I could say to myself was this:—Over the previous five years, the title had been won by Bergmann, Vana, Bergmann, Vana, Bergmann, and they just couldn't go on for ever like that, someone would have to spoil it for these two great stars, so why not me? Nevertheless, I still felt terribly nervous until a note was thrust in my hand

just as I was walking on to the table for the grand finale; it was written by my coach, partner, and friend, Jack Carrington. The message read, "If you get a winning position, DON'T think about titles, etc.—just think about how Vana must be feeling. STUDY HIM ALL THE TIME. It's got to be just another tournament in the bag, son!!!" My mind flashed back to 1942 when we made a pact that Jack would help me to win the World Title. All this helped to calm my nerves and gave me the determination to pull through.

JOHNNY LEACH—*Nine By Five.*

Australian Team

It's time Australia was represented in International events and I would send a team of four to represent Australia in next year's International teams event, the Swaythling Cup, selected in this order:—Michael Szabados (N.S.W.), Phil Anderson (N.S.W.), Walter Lowen (Vic.), Mark Dankin (N.S.W.). What chance would we have against international players? This would boil down to one simple issue . . . experience. And apart from Szabados and Lowen our players have none. Our men will not get any better by reading the overseas results in their local papers.

JACK JENNINGS—*Racquet.*

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SCANDINAVIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

On November 19th and 20th the first Scandinavian championships were held at Copenhagen, countries taking part being Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. This event which consisted of Individual and Men's and Women's team championships was organised by a committee of the Nordisk Table Tennis Union under the distinguished patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Knud of Denmark, heir to the throne and brother of the King.

Two of the Danish players taking part are pictured here. Knud Runchel is 32 years old and has played in 17 international matches. His best result is the win in the match against Tokar (Czechoslovakia) in the 1949 World Championships at Stockholm. He is the Danish champion for seasons 1943 and 1948 and is their best player of the last 10 years.

Evy Danielsen is 18 years of age and the 1948 and 1949 Danish Women's champion. International honour first came her way when taking part in the team event of the Scandinavian championships.



KNUD RUNCHEL

W.D.—Persson/Eriksson (Sweden) beat Bergholm/Lindblad (Finland), 3-0.

Mx.D.—Derholm/Persson (Sweden) beat Flisberg/Eriksson (Sweden), 3-1.

These championships were a great success, a notable feature being the number of young players under 20 years that each country had in its team. The average age of the entire Norwegian team was only 17 years. Youngest player being Tom Haugan (Norway) 15 years and Arri Huttunen (Finland) also 15 years.



EVY DANIELSEN

TEAM RESULTS

Scandinavian Cup (Men's teams) | Finlandia Cup (Women's teams)

	pts.		pts.
SWEDEN	6	SWEDEN	6
Denmark	4	Finland	4
Finland	2	Denmark	2
Norway	0	Norway	0

INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

M.S.—*Final.*—Tage Flisberg (Sweden) beat B. Johnsson (Sweden), 3-1.

W.S.—Iris Persson (Sweden) beat Eina Eriksson (Sweden), 3-2.

M.D.—Flisberg/Cederholm (Sweden) beat Jonsson/Johnsson (Sweden), 3-2.

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Down Table-Tennis Avenue . .

THE Editor's last leader article asked some very pertinent questions on an issue of vital importance. That issue is: At what age should a table tennis player be allowed to capitalise on his or her skill?

As Mr. Waite pointed out, varying county associations are divided in their opinions, and judgments, on the point. For instance, one young Yorkshire male player is permitted to play for fees, while a Lancashire girl is debarred from doing so on the score of her age. No doubt there are other anomalies of a similar nature which call for the attention of, and action by, our national authorities.

It is no secret that our London High Priests frown on youngsters getting money from table tennis. Not because they are against players receiving fees, but because they deem teenagers in demand for exhibitions and such tend to become swollen-headed and altogether get fanciful ideas about their abilities at a time when they should be blossoming into maturity.

This is an angle with which I wholeheartedly agree. Too many of our juveniles win one or two tournaments, become fairly well known, are invited to play in exhibitions and to coach, have bats named after them, and so on, and in consequence all too frequently get a false impression of their abilities. These kids feel that they have nothing else to learn, whereas in reality they are only just beginning to make their way.

Such youngsters must be protected against themselves, made to feel that because they've won a cup or two they are not already Barnas, Vanas, Bergmanns or Farkases.

Local authorities are excellent bodies doing great work. In this instance, however, they should be guided by a national ruling. It is up to the Association to say "A player, irrespective of age, may earn fees whenever and wherever possible" or, "No player under the age of 21 (or whatever age they deem a reasonable one) may, under any circumstances, indulge in play for pay." The latter dictum is what is needed.

Youngsters should be debarred from professionalism. It is for the game's good and the eventual welfare of the youngsters themselves, that I wish for a definite ruling preventing professionalism for the immature in body, mind and play.

Mr. D. Holland, of Wallasley, in the "Mail Bag" column of last issue, asked how many of us knew that table tennis was once "graced" with the name "Whiff-Whaff." I wonder if Mr. Holland knows that a primitive form of ping-pong was played over 2,000 years ago in Japan, and that the game was called "Pom-Pom"?



by Sam Kirkwood

"Whiff-Whaff," by the way, was the American monicker for the game when it was played back in the States. "Gossima" was the title given to it in India, where it was introduced by British Army Officers in the 1890's. "Gossima"? Wot!—no alliteration?

I'm a nut. I'm a first-class case for a psychiatrist. I'm sneered at, jibed at, hooted at and made a ripe target for exquisite raspberries. And for why? I'll tell you for why. Because of my appeals for white wear at major tournaments.

This schemozzle beats me. Is my plea for white really so outrageous, or might it be that folk are scared stiff at the thought of being compelled to turn out locking neat and clean for a change? I have my suspicions.

Why do I so earnestly ask that white be worn? Because I want to see the game smartened up. Because I want to see it emerge from the second-rate into a major sport. Because I want to see our more important competitions turned into affairs to which the ordinary public will be attracted and duly impressed—as it isn't at the moment. Out with you, scruffs!

If white is found to be genuinely unsuitable on playing, aesthetic or financial grounds, let's try all-grey or all-blue outfits. But do let's for heaven's sake make a move to smarten ourselves up.

In the meantime I remain a refugee from The Snake Pit. Can you wonder that I dreamt of a White Christmas?

Had a talk with film star Jane Russell, when that comely wench was in town. Tearing my gaze away from the figure that has crossed ten million male eyes I forced myself to concentrate enough to ask Jane about table tennis in Hollywood.

The girl flashed a Kolynos, non-National Health smile at me and told me that Ginger Rogers is the best lady player and Mickey Rooney the best male player in the Californian colony where so many soul-shattering, celluloidal sagas are churned out.

I left the lady with a mind by no means altogether concerned with table tennis. You know how it is, fellas . . .

Johnny Leach's in-and-out form this season has not made him a fancied candidate to retain his world title. The betting boys, in fact, are offering odds of 100-1 against him winning at Budapest, and even so are getting no takers. Johnny definitely is not fancied to retain his crown. And the punters aren't the only people who are already referring to the Pride of Essex as "ex-champ."

If betting is anything to go by, incidentally, then Richard Bergmann is already in Leach's regal shoes. Only 4-1 is given against him. Other hot favourites are Vana, Andreadis, Sido, Soos, and Stipek. On the feminine side, only evens are to be procured for those who wish to wager a tanner that Gizi Farkas turns up trumps for the fourth year in succession.

to lose to Bergmann. A gap of three months and then in the first County match of the new season, he lost to Surrey newcomer, Harry Venner.

It is a record that does not give rise to any optimism, in fact, on the face of it, it is a rather depressing picture.

Is this the picture of a true world champion? To be quite frank, was Leach lucky at Stockholm? Did those tables take the extra zip off the lethal forehand of the American whirlwind, Miles, or have the incredible number of high class matches participated in by the world champion last year, been too much to digest?

Leach can take that title, going in there, as he will, with his two greatest assets unimpaired, his courage and match temperament.

BILL McCAVI

"BALANCE"

Pat. Pend.

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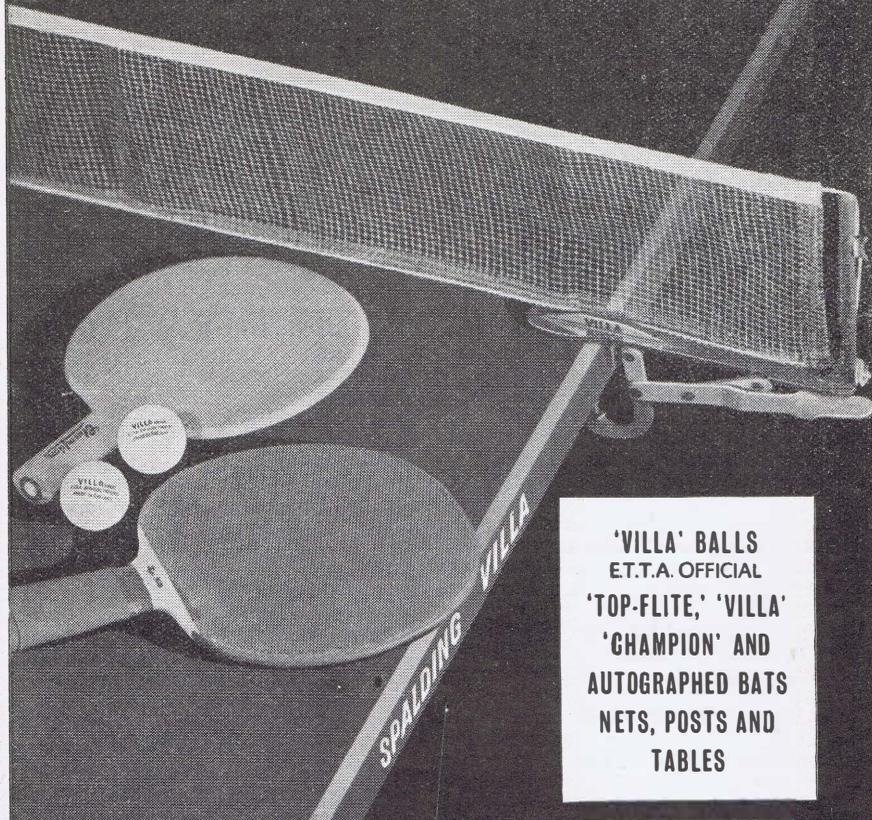
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hooted at and made a ripe target for exquisite raspberries. And for why? I'll tell you for why. Because of my appeals for white wear at major tournaments.

This schemozzle beats me. Is my plea for white really so outrageous, or might it be that folk are scared stiff at the thought of being compelled to turn out looking neat and clean for a change? I have my suspicions.

Why do I so earnestly ask that white be worn? Because I want to see the game smartened up. Because I want to see it emerge from the second-rate into a major sport. Because I want to see our more important competitions turned into affairs to which the ordinary public will be attracted and duly impressed—as it isn't at the moment. Out with you, scruffs!

Can Leach Do It Again?

BUDAPEST, now firmly entrenched as the stronghold of European table tennis, has the privilege of staging this year's world championships, which promises to be an even greater event than the magnificent Stockholm display.

Already rumours as to the capabilities of certain players are seeping through, and although Andreadis, with more power in his punches, and Bergmann who is trudging the long road back, will cause more than a few upsets. Josef Koczian, 24-year-old Hungarian factory hand is the very strong favourite to annexe the world's singles title and in doing so, take up where Victor Barna left off.

But overshadowing this speculation, comes the all-important question, can Leach do it again?

Let us take a look at the record books recording the events held after last year's world championships.

First of all came the English Open, February 14th, Leach reached the third round untroubled and then went out to the Polish veteran, Ehrlich, 11 in the fifth. On February 21st, Leach, in a team representing the Home Counties against the U.S.A., beat Marty Reisman, but lost 2-1 to Miles. A few days later, this time representing England, he again lost to Miles, this time 2-0, and also lost to Reisman, 2-1. Next in the finals of the international tournament arranged by the Manchester *Evening Chronicle*, Leach obtained his revenge over Ehrlich, winning in straight games.

One month later, the world champion reached the finals of the Bucks. Open, only to lose to Bergmann. A gap of three months and then in the first County match of the new season, he lost to Surrey newcomer, Harry Venner.

It is a record that does not give rise to any optimism, in fact, on the face of it, it is a rather depressing picture.

Is this the picture of a true world champion? To be quite frank, was Leach lucky at Stockholm? Did those tables take the extra zip off the lethal forehand of the American whirlwind, Miles, or have the incredible number of high class matches participated in by the world champion last year, been too much to digest?

Leach can take that title, going in there, as he will, with his two greatest assets unimpaired, his courage and match temperament.

BILL McCAYE

World Championships News

BUDAPEST
January 29th to February 5th

LINE UP OF SOME OF THE TEAMS

ENGLAND

Men.—J. Leach, R. Bergmann, A. Simons, N. P. Capt. A. A. Haydon.

Women.—V. Dace, D. Beregi, P. Franks, P. Barnes, N. P. Capt. A. A. Haydon.

WALES

Men.—S. Jones, G. Morgan, J. Davis, N.P. Capt. H. Roy Evans.

Women.—A. G. Bates, Mrs. Roy Evans.

HUNGARY

Men.—Sido, Soos, Koczian, Varkonyi, Jozsef Farkas.

Women.—(To be chosen from) G. Farkas, Karpati, Kiraly, Gyorgy, Mexci and two youngsters, E. Harvasi and E. Sagi.

U.S.A.

Men.—S. Schiff (doubtful), Holzrichter, Barkeley, N.P. Capt. J. McClure.

Women.—R. Moness, M. Shahian, L. Neuberger.

For the first time since 1929 the name of Victor Barna will not be included in the Men's Singles draw. Victor has now definitely decided to give up first-class singles events. However, it is both good and interesting news to hear that he will compete in the veterans event in which the ex-English Swaythling Cup player, A. A. Hayden, will also compete.

Leach is full of confidence and considers himself an improved player to last year at Stockholm. Against this Bergmann sounds none too sure of himself, stating that his six months exhibition tours have slowed down his anticipation and footwork.

EASTERN SUBURBAN OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

ILFORD, NOVEMBER 12th, 1949

SEMI-FINALS

M.S.—J. Carrington beat L. Adams, 24-22, 15-21, 21-14. H. Venner beat R. Sharman, 21-11, 21-15.

FINAL

M.S.—Venner beat Carrington, 20-22, 10-21, 21-19, 21-7, 21-11.

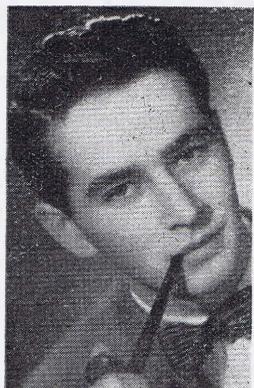
W.S.—Miss E. Stevenson beat Miss J. Roberts, 18-21, 23-21, 21-11.

M.D.—J. Carrington/B. Crouch beat R. Hook/R. J. Mackay, 21-16, 32-30.

W.D.—Miss D. Rowe/Miss M. Marston beat Mrs. P. Milburn/Miss L. Barnes, 21-17, 15-21, 21-16.

Mx.D.—Adams/Miss Barnes beat Mackay/Miss J. Mackay, 21-15, 21-23, 21-14.

Some Table Tennis Stage Acts



by
**Charles
Hayes**

FOR a table tennis stage act to be good the individuals do not have to be ex-world champions, although that qualification is always bound to help. Players who never progressed farther than representing their country have been known to be excellent showmen, while on the other hand players of world-wide repute have been totally lacking in that one essential for the stage—showmanship. Good stage technique can always make up for mediocre tennis, but it never works the other way round. The number of really first-class table tennis acts in the world can be counted on one hand and one of these acts is an interesting one which you may like to hear about.

I refer to the Bellak table tennis act which is composed of Bellak . . . and Bellak alone! His is a most ingenious little show which is a great success on the American vaudeville stage. He serves the ball slowly, runs across to the other side and sends back a high looping shot, then rushes back again to make another high return. Finally he makes a kill shot, much to the amusement of the audience. Anyone who has seen Laslo Bellak will agree that perhaps no other player could put over such a one-man act. He is the greatest exponent of trick shots the world has ever seen, a brilliant player himself, and never happier than when clowning around.

In Australia there is a touring act made up of Michael Szabados and Phil Anderson, and this too is proving successful at the limited number of theatres which Australia has to offer to the variety artist.

While Victor Barna was making his recent extensive tour abroad, his place with Alec Brook was taken by Stephen Boros, himself a one-time member of the famous Hungarian team. I was comper of this new partnership and in view of the fact that Boros had difficult shoes to fill, he did extremely well. We were with the Vic Oliver show all the time and it proved to be great fun. Vic Oliver is no mean table tennis player himself and he always made a point of being on the stage just before we were due on for practice so that he might get a game or two in. I heard Brook and Boros say that with coaching he would easily make the grade as a county player. Brook and Boros are now in South Africa where they will give stage shows until March.

Although Brook is Victor Barna's real partner I would not be at all surprised to see Barna and Bergmann start an act of their own, for after all Alec will be away for some months. Perhaps an even better idea would be for Barna, Bergmann, Vana and Koczian to team up as a table tennis circus similar to the lawn tennis circus consisting of Parker, Kramer, Gonzales and Segura. It would no doubt mean that all four boys would have to sever their connections with the present organisation, but I am sure it would prove to be a successful venture.

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INCREASE SIZE OF TABLE

Greater Opportunities for Tactical Play

— by M. COLLINSON —

THE last World Championships held at Stockholm must have surprised many table tennis fans besides myself and certainly set a poser to those who have been urging a return to a higher net. On the showing of the championships, the net certainly does not want higher—although the results were partly due to slightly slower tables being used.

The devotees of the higher net, and others, say that the top-class standard is lower than pre-war, and since I was only introduced to the game shortly before September, 1939, I shall have to take that as a correct judgement. But in any case, any attempt to improve the standard, whether it is lower or not, is worthwhile.

Almost all the popular sports and games have two parts; the first being the physical skill in ball-control, the second being skill in tactics. Tactical skill is the ability to use the playing skill in such a way as to win a game.

The proportions of these two parts varies with different games, but as a general rule, abundance in one of the parts compensates for what the other part lacks. For instance, at one end of the scale is golf, which, employing no tactics, can easily be played as a solo game. At the other end is chess, which is purely mental strategy—tactics let us say.

Consider the two tennis games. Lawn tennis has a larger proportion of tactical methods than table tennis. This is due partly to the extra lightness of table tennis equipment. This lightness has made ball-control, in the form of spin-play, more prominent than in lawn tennis. One has only to think of the backhand flick-wrist action to realise this. Thus in place of an abundance of tactical methods, we have a great deal of ability in stroke play. In fact, stroke play in table tennis is what makes the game a game.

However, the size of the two games is the deciding factor in the difference between them. Although lawn tennis is primarily tactical, a player can get in an attacking position in the court to reach both short shots and deep volleys, but his attacking is not impregnable and his opponent is constantly seeking to usurp his position and take up the attack himself (for instance, breaking through the opponent's service is held to be an important manoeuvre). We can then say that defensive play is never

resorted to as a tactical method, except when the initiative is lost.

But in table tennis only one player can attack in any rally, and furthermore, defensive tactics often take the game.

Let us consider the progress of a game. At the service, each player has a more or less equal opportunity to attack. The first strokes consist in manoeuvring for a strategic position; the player to retreat will be the one who first loses command of the table. Since the net was lowered, counter-attacking has become possible, and this is useful since it provides another means of resisting an attack.

The main snag to the game is that the table is so small that reactions at close quarters have to be lightning fast, and this makes it difficult to employ any consciously thought-out tactics. Much more use is made of accurate and fast stroke play. In fact, in top-class play, the preliminary jockeying is often cut out, and players start straight away on either attack or defence. This probably accounts for the short rallies sometimes witnessed.

It was with the idea of improving tactical play that the higher net was suggested, but all it can do is to reduce the speed of play, and as it also prevents counter-attacking it can only be a disadvantage.

Now if we, as well as highering the net, also increased the size of the table particularly in width, then in my opinion the advantages which are desired will be available.

Chiselling, such as was seen at the Stockholm Championships, is only possible because of the present size of the table. To add a few inches on the size would encourage and might even demand a more open style of game.

As regards actual sizes, these could only be fixed after sufficient trial, but the following dimensions might provide a starting point—4 in. on to the length, making 9 ft. 4 in., and 9 in on the width, making 5 ft. 9 in. The net height would have to be raised proportionally, say 6½ ins.

The main obstruction to this suggestion at the present time would seem to be the material one of providing new tables or altering existing ones, but I think it is at least worth considering just for the pros and cons of the argument.

To put the matter in a nutshell, the ideal game would be reached when the table size was increased just to the point where it becomes too large to play on.

Acquire a Match Temperament

By RAYMOND CHALLINOR

PROBABLY more games are lost before a match than during one. For it is surprising how many players suffer from nervousness and anxiety, the table tennis equivalent of stagefright, which has an adverse effect on their performance. A person who comes to the table looking as if he's going to have all his teeth extracted stands far less chance than the fellow who is fully at ease and confident, not so much of winning but of doing his best.

For a long while most people have regarded "match temperament" as a thing you have or you have not and about which you can do very little. However, this is far from the case; it's only that the methods employed to irradiate fears and anxieties have rarely been applied to table tennis.

Throughout the long history of the medical profession doctors have subtly suggested to their patients that they are improving, getting better, and, even after the doctor's left, the patient remains in a state of well-being within himself, possibly drinking some medicine, that it may only be coloured water but cures him . . . because the doctor said it would!

All this shows the power of suggestion when administered by one person to another. It was Emile Coué who developed a method of applying it to one's self. He discovered how it was possible just by repeating time after time "Day by day, in every way, I am getting better and better," to improve one's health, moods, etc. Unfortunately the medical profession found that while Coué's very simple method may temporarily relieve pain and remove the symptoms, they eventually re-appear. However, for a short duration—much longer than the length of a table tennis match—they will remain effective. Indeed, one successful football team, whose name I am not allowed to divulge, uses a modified version of the technique I am going to explain.

1. *Learn to relax. Isolate yourself from other spectators and players, find a spot where you're not likely to be disturbed, sit down. Close your eyes, let your body go limp by relaxing every muscle, and try to forget about table tennis and anything else that may enter your thoughts.*

2. *Achieve a state of mind receptive to suggestion. Repeat to yourself "I am breathing more deeply, I am going to sleep, I am losing consciousness, etc." After a minute or so try and open your eyes: only*

when you tell yourself that you can now open them will you be able to do so.

3. *When in a receptive state, i.e., when you are unable to open your eyes, or you can stiffen an arm by suggestion and then only make it normal again by the same method, you can apply whatever suggestion you like. Don't make them negative, e.g., "I'm not going to lose." Better to think "I'm going to play my best," rather than remarks which bring in the question of winning. You may be playing a player who is considerably better than yourself, in which case nothing will prevent you from losing, and your confidence in this technique will be undermined.*

If you do not succeed in mastering this technique to begin with, don't just say it's a hoax, for it can give you confidence that you otherwise would not have. Remember your first attempts at riding a bicycle, swimming, or even playing table tennis, were not particularly successful.

Having learnt how to apply auto-suggestion we can always console ourselves when we lose with the thought that we have developed our limited talents to the fullest extent, for after all few can be a Johnny Leach or Victor Barna.

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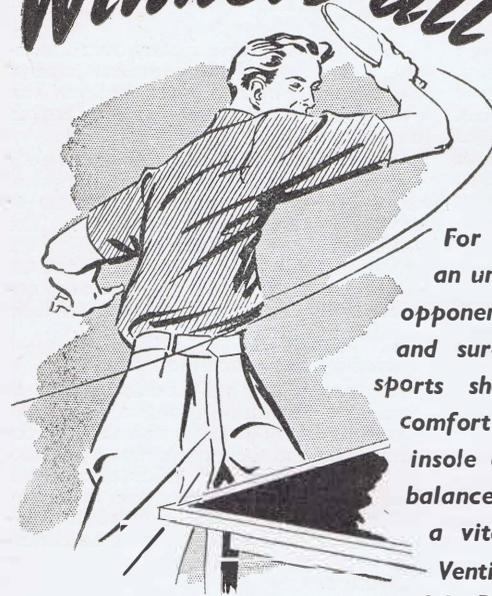
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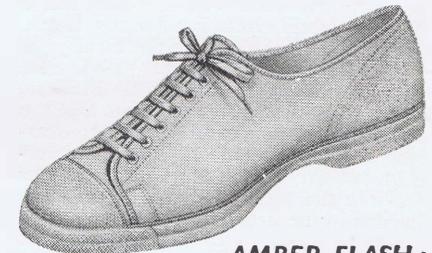


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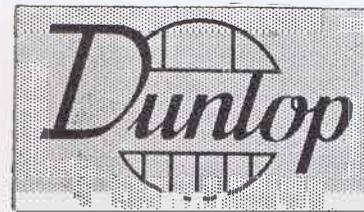
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NATIONAL COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

By STANLEY H. KEMPSTER

THE special challenge match between Middlesex, the Champion County, and the Rest of England, held over from last season, was notable for the fact that it was the first ever match to be staged in all white. From the players' point of view I understand that given good lighting, and assuming that only one table is being used, there is little objection to this change, and I heard no complaints from the players concerned.

In this match Denis Miller justified his selection for the Czechoslovakian tour by defeating two Swaythling Cup players, while Joyce Roberts at one time looked like defeating Peggy Franks but could not maintain that initial advantage she gained. Middlesex did well to win four sets.

First Shock

The Surrey v. Essex match, played at Wimbledon on October 10th, provided the first shock of the new County Championship season when Surrey astounded everybody by dropping Ron Sharman and playing Harry Venner, who made six appearances last season for their Southern division team, and finished with a 75 per cent. average.

The action of the Surrey selectors was fully justified when Venner succeeded in defeating world champion Johnny Leach, playing No. 1 for Essex, in the third game 21-18 after being down at 14-16. He followed this by defeating Bill McCave, 21-14, 21-6, despite the fact that McCave played in bare feet in an attempt to overcome the slippery floor. These two setbacks, however, failed to discourage Essex who won the match 5-4, Leach defeating Crayden in the deciding set.

Warwickshire visited Oldham to meet Lancashire on October 8th, and gained their first victory, defeating them 5-4. Their No. 1, W. Poole, was in brilliant form and beat both Ken Stanley and Ronnie Allcock. Mrs. C. Thompson (Claire Bullock), making her first appearance as a singles player in county matches, defeated Corbillon Cup star, Adele Wood. Lancs. visited London on November 18th and 19th and met Surrey and Middlesex. They lost both these games but on December 17th scored a creditable win of 5-4 over Gloucestershire, Ken Stanley winning both his games, one of them being against England's star, Aubrey Simons.

Middlesex, the County Champions, started the season well when at Bradford on October 29th they defeated Yorkshire

8-1. Following their victory over Lancashire they had a needle match against Essex, and thanks to Joyce Roberts' win over Peggy Franks, were able to remain undefeated.

In the North Midland division an early surprise was caused by the withdrawal of the Cheshire and Lancashire teams on the grounds of finance and travelling. The withdrawal of Cheshire was the more sensational as they were the Northern division champions last season and unsuccessfully challenged Yorkshire for their place in the Premier division.

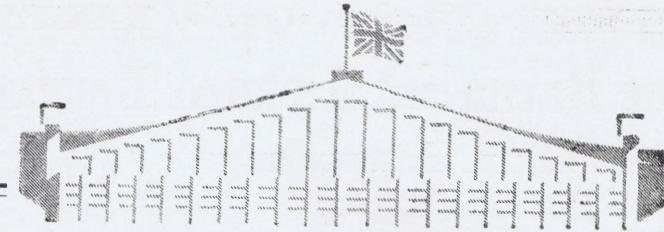
Yorkshire Introduce New Blood

In their match against Lincolnshire at Spalding, Yorkshire introduced a new youngster in M. J. Pitts, who shocked the home team and their supporters by defeating both Sherratt and Runchman and enabled Yorkshire to win the match by the odd set. He, however, failed to maintain this form when they met Leicestershire, in which he was defeated by Burraston.

The Northern division match between Durham and Yorkshire (N. & E. Riding) at Bishop Auckland on October 22nd, proved to be a thrilling affair, and found both teams with four victories to their credit when the final game between Shearer and Jeal was played. Although Yorkshire emerged the victors on this occasion, they lost by the odd set in their match against Northumberland who had previously overwhelmed Cumberland at Carlisle.

In the Home Counties division, Hertfordshire turned out two new men players when visiting Aylesbury to meet Buckinghamshire. They failed, however, to win a set, and it was left to the Hertfordshire girls to reduce the deficiency by winning the three sets in which they appeared. Their form improved the following month, and they succeeded in defeating Bedfordshire 5-4.

A satisfactory solution has been found to enable the extremely keen western county of Devon to participate in the championships. They have joined the Southern division and Kent, Surrey and Hampshire have all agreed to undertake the long journey to Devon and play home and away matches. Sussex found themselves unable to commit themselves to this journey and will act as hosts to Devon in a match in which the victor will collect four points.



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W E M B L E Y

They created a shock in their first match when they overcame the hitherto undefeated Hampshire Corbillon Cup players, Dora Beregi and Joan Crosby are both appearing for Devonshire.

RESULTS UP TO DECEMBER 31st

PREMIER DIVISION

Yorkshire	1	Middlesex	8
Lancashire	4	Warwickshire	5
Surrey	4	Essex	5
Gloucestershire	4	Lancashire	5
Middlesex	5	Essex	4
Surrey	6	Lancashire	5
Yorkshire	3	Gloucestershire	6
Warwickshire	6	Yorkshire	5
Middlesex	7	Lancashire	2
Warwickshire	3	Surrey	6
Gloucestershire	7	Warwickshire	2

NORTH MIDLAND DIVISION

Lincolnshire	4	Yorkshire (W. Riding)	5
Yorkshire	7	Leicestershire	2
Leicestershire	6	Derbyshire	3
Leicestershire	1	Lincolnshire	8
Yorkshire	7	Derbyshire	2
Lincolnshire	9	Leicestershire	0

HOME COUNTIES DIVISION

Buckinghamshire	6	Hertfordshire	3
Bedfordshire	9	Berkshire	0
Hertfordshire	5	Bedfordshire	4
Essex	5	Buckinghamshire	4

NORTHERN DIVISION

Cumberland	0	Northumberland	9
Durham	4	Yorks. (N. & E. Riding)	5
Durham	8	Cumberland	1
Yorkshire	4	Northumberland	5
Northumberland	6	Durham	8
Cumberland	0	Yorkshire	9

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Kent	3	Surrey	6
Devon	6	Hampshire	3
Hampshire	2	Surrey	7
Sussex	8	Kent	1
Kent	1	Devon	8
Devon	4	Surrey	5

EAST ANGLIAN DIVISION

Cambridgeshire	4	Suffolk	5
Middlesex	7	Norfolk	2
Suffolk	0	Middlesex	9
Norfolk	3	Cambridgeshire	6
Cambridgeshire	1	Middlesex	8
Suffolk	3	Norfolk	6

JUNIOR DIVISION

Essex	8	Surrey	1
Surrey	6	Bedfordshire	3
Middlesex	6	Kent	3
Bedfordshire	6	Hertfordshire	3
Middlesex	9	Surrey	0
Kent	5	Essex	4
Essex	2	Middlesex	7
Hertfordshire	1	Kent	8

Victor Barna and Richard Bergmann

By MICHAEL SZABADOS (*Ex-World Champion*)

★

TABLE tennis in Australia this year received a big boost from a tour by two of the best players the sport has ever seen. Their tour was an outstanding success. Everywhere Barna and Bergmann played, it was before packed houses, establishing in most cases new attendance records. Newspapers and radio stations gave an unprecedented amount of publicity to the sport which must recruit a lot of new players to the game.

Both Victor and Richard were in good form at all times during the tour, winning all but two of their matches. The only singles match either lost was when I beat Victor in the City of Melbourne Championships, and in a doubles match at Penrith (N.S.W.), Neville Dunn, one of the best N.S.W. players and myself, beat Barna and Bergmann. In singles Richard Bergmann was undefeated. He lost only three games, two of which I was fortunate enough to win, and the third he lost to the South Australian Champion, John Mehaffey.

Tours like the one just concluded do wonders for the sport in a country like Australia. We need more of them. The days when Australia will compete in the Swaythling Cup are drawing closer, and New Zealand will enter a team this year, which is good news.

It was a great thrill for me to meet and play against Victor Barna again and to meet Richard Bergmann whose name has hardly been out of table tennis overseas. I would like to give you my views of these two great players as I saw them in Australia this year.

Victor Barna

Has not lost much of his touch since I last saw him. He is still the great showman, the great ambassador of table tennis, the most spectacular player in the game.

Thinking back over the 12 years since I last saw him I can only remember that he seems to have lost a forehand kill shot. Apart from this the only change I noticed was that towards the end of a set which is close, he is not as strong or possesses the confidence he did when we last played. The same thing happens to me and I



MICHAEL SZABADOS

thought it was the lack of hand match play that was the cause, but I think now that it must be age. I noticed when I beat him in Melbourne that after I won the first set he did not play his usual game in the second and this gave me a chance to win. Victor is still in wonderful condition and is a great advertisement for the game.

Richard Bergmann

I was very interested to see this player in action, as I have read so much about him. He was just coming to the top when I left Europe and as he still is at the top I was most anxious to see Richard. I think I can sum up his game in one expression. "He is a tiger." I have never known anyone with such a fighting spirit, wonderful

Order Your Copy

Make sure of your next issue of "Table Tennis Review" on sale the first week in March. This issue will be a "WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ISSUE" with extra photographs and will also include Part IV of the Sol Schiff series of articles on "Tactical Play."

anticipation and so light on his feet. He is the greatest defensive player of all time.

Even so I found his style suited me. Although I played Richard many times during the tour I only took two games from him and I went close to winning another few games. Somehow I felt that in 1934 or 1935 his game would not have worried Victor or myself. In those days the best defensive players were Haguenauer (France), Kohn (Austria), Lauterbach (Czech), similar types to Richard, and Victor and myself generally managed these players quite well.

One of the main differences between Barna and Bergmann is that Victor's game is always spectacular and Richard's game is only good to watch if he is opposed to good attacking players. I should imagine that Bergmann would be a most uninteresting player if opposed to players who push and chop only.

For myself I was more than pleased with my form. Although I only beat Victor once, and took two games from Richard it was pleasing to play so well after an absence of 12 years from such class of play. Age has caught up with me

in some respects and this combined with lack of world class opposition has taken its toll. But despite my age I think that with a lot of match practice I could still make some of the younger players of to-day work flat out to beat me. My physical condition was not up to that of Victor or Richard, the conditions in Australia allied to the fact that I have never had to worry about getting into tip-top shape for any matches in Australia has caused me to put on a lot of weight and I would have to take off a stone or two if I ever wanted to play in international matches again.

Another pleasing factor to me was the showing of the local players against Victor and Richard. Their results to the visitors may not have been impressive, but to me, when I think back to 1937 when I first toured Australia and played against pen-grip players of low standard by the dozen, it is pleasing now that we have players who at least look like table tennis players.

From 1937 to to-day (including the war break) has seen a lot accomplished. The work is still being carried on and surely (maybe a little slowly) we are bridging the gap to international standards.

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Table Tennis —

what it costs

ONCE again the Editor has asked me to comment on the recently published accounts of the E.T.T.A. I am only too pleased to oblige as I think that a study of the financial side of the Association's activities should be part of every League Officials' education.

Full marks again to Mr. Vint for his completion of the accounts by September 16th, 1949, which is only 11 weeks after the official year-end. The publishers have also put a spurt on as the accounts were published in the E.T.T.A. Handbook at the end of November. The accounts appear on pages 154-157 inclusive of the Handbook and, in most respects, give detailed information. Owing to lack of space, however, it is not possible to reprint them in full so I have taken the liberty of cutting down where possible and an abridged version is published herewith with the comparative figures for the previous year.

I have shown the rebate paid to County Associations as a deduction from the Affiliation fees instead of an Administration expense as the rebate is dependant upon the fees having been paid. The average fees received is 7s. 6d. per club but I think that the cost of the Handbook of 1s. should be offset against this thus leaving a net receipt from each club of 6s. 6d.

The total cost of administration has fallen from last year and this is mainly due to the resignation of the full time paid secretary during 1948 and he has not been replaced. The administrative costs work out at a little over 6s. 6d. per club and, therefore, absorbs the whole of the net amount received in affiliation fees. The main item included in administration is salaries and travelling and this has accounted for half of the expenditure under this heading. Of the remaining administrative costs, telephones, printing and stationery form the main items and account for a further 31 per cent. of the total. An item of £144 is shown for Office Equipment and Repairs and it may be that this includes some element of Capital Expenditure and is, therefore, a non-recurring item.

The publication of the Handbook has cost £400 due to the fact that each club is provided with a free copy. Other publications have made a profit which has reduced the total loss on publications to £304.

A little more information regarding the cost of the trials would be useful in view of the fact that certain leagues have reported that they were asked to stand the expenses of their junior players who attended and who were eventually chosen to represent their country. The cost of sending our players to the World Championships of £540 is not a lot to pay for a world champion who has more than repaid that amount already by increasing our national prestige.

By TOM BLUNN

(Lancs. T.T.A. Chairman)

I am not surprised to hear that the Europe Cup will not be run this season. This competition cost £361 for our teams to get to the finals and the women only played once. The idea was probably a good one but the E.T.T.A. cannot carry a burden like this every season.

Although there has been an improvement in the cost of running the international matches it still appears to me that a potential source of income is being wasted.

The Wilmott Cup and Rose Bowl continue to lose money in spite of the fact that there was an increase in the number of entries. Once again I suggest that an application be made for an increase in the entry fees.

Returning to the receipts side of the accounts we find that there has been a steady all-round increase which is a true reflection of the increased popularity of the game.

The main item of course is the profit on the English Open and I have stated in previous years that the working balance of the E.T.T.A. is governed by the result of this tournament. A loss of £487 last season has been turned into a profit of £1,371 by a record profit on the English Open. This has put the E.T.T.A. on a sound footing for its entry into the commercial world as a limited company.

This sound position is reflected in the Balance Sheet which is published herewith. There is nothing new in the Balance Sheet that requires commenting upon.

THE ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ended, 30th June, 1949.

EXPENDITURE.		INCOME.			
	1948	1949	1948	1949	
	£	£	£	£	
Administration	1,843	1,956	Affiliation fees	1,913	2,225
Publications	72	304	Registered Players fees	45	71
Dress	95	28	Open Tournament Fees	149	215
Trials	54	74	Ball Rebates	143	387
World Championships	255	540	Shirt Rebates	24	104
Sundry Tours	36	77	Donations	25	18
Open Championships	9	41	English Open Championships (loss)	—270	1,827
Europe Cup Matches	1	361			
International Matches	105	45			
Wilmott Cup	22	35			
Rose Bowl	19	11			
Donations	5	—			
Excess of Income over Expenditure (loss)	—487	1,371			
	£2,029	£4,843		£2,029	£4,843

BALANCE SHEET as at 30th June, 1949.

LIABILITIES		ASSETS.			
	1948	1949	1948	1949	
	£	£	£	£	
<i>Income and Expenditure Account</i>			Cash at Bank		
Balance, July 1st, 1948		321	Deposit Account	245	
Add Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year		1,371	Current Account	1,525	
	321	1,692			
Sundry Creditors and Credit Balances	191	340	Cash in hand	330	1,776
Magazine Fund	50	50	Sundry Debtors and Debit Balances	61	47
Comity Cup Fund	30	30			
	£ 592	£2,112		£ 592	£2,112

The above details have been taken from the Published Accounts of the English Table Tennis Association.

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Extracts from Sol. Schiff's book, "Table Tennis Comes of Age." (Rich & Cowan, 7/6).

PART III

General Measures

SUPPOSE your opponent has no specific weakness? Or suppose, to make things more logical, we have several defensive-minded opponents across the net. What will work for one may not work so well for the other. We must cease formulating specific measures of attack and think about some general measures. The mere fact that our imaginary opponent chops the ball and elects to play defensively gives us a certain advantage. We have a free hand in choosing what tactics to employ.

Now if your opponent has a good defence you can't hit straight through him. He's watching your racket and he's anticipating your straight shots. You must move him about, catch him on the wrong foot, fool him as to the direction of your strokes.

To do this, you have several alternatives at your disposal. You may try a drop shot, make him run in, and then fire the ball past him before he can regain his position again. You may try to fool him by pretending to hit in one direction and at the last moment, by a quick turn of the wrist or of the body, send the ball in another direction. You may try, by varying the amount of spin on the ball, the speed of your drive and its height over the net, to force him into mistiming the shot and giving you a setup.

Change of Direction

To change the direction of your stroke, vary the position of your wrist or of your backswing. Pretend to hit cross court, bring your racket back only slightly, and your shot will go straight down the line. The early contact will turn the trick.

But the best shot to fool the defender is the one which appears to be going straight and ends up by going cross court. Here's the reason.

When you hit a shot straight down the line you use a firm wrist, have your feet pointed in the direction of the shot and your body faced accordingly. Assume that position. Start your swing. Now, just before the point of contact, speed up your stroke. Faster... faster. Your wrist goes through, your shoulder goes through, your arm and racket finishing upwards and pointing across court.



SOL. SCHIFF

Your opponent has seen the preparation of the shot. He has seen the beginning of the swing, and that's all he has seen. You didn't alter the swing or the position of your body. You simply speeded up your stroke, used your wrist, and thus contacted the ball and pulled it through to make the cross-court shot.

The danger in making the shot lies in mistiming it. Practise accelerating your swing until you gain some sort of control over it, even though you swing through fast. Take a chance on this shot if you are having trouble passing a defensive player. He has very little opportunity to anticipate its direction.

Change of Pace

Besides disguising the direction of your strokes and making sudden shifts from corner to corner, there are other ways of making a defensive player's life miserable. Suppose you try to vary the height of your drives. Serve up one that just skims the net and then follow up with a "looper" that has a lot of topspin and travels a couple of feet in the air.

What effect does this have on the defender? Plenty. For shots played with excessive topspin he has to step in. They lose their forward speed quickly and don't come out to his racket. And on those high balls your opponent has to use a different wrist action and make a different swing. He has to, that is, if he's going to keep sending back those low chops. And if he doesn't you force what you want—a setup.

One more thing you can do with your drive to worry your opponent. You can vary the speed and pace of the shot. Send over a slow, looping drive. Then suddenly hit one hard and see what happens.

Even the best defences falter when opposed to a driver who is clever in varying the pace on the ball. This used to be a favourite trick of Victor Barna when he was the undisputed star player of the world. He could send over a gentle shot, with scarcely any pace at all, and then a violent backhand which usually won the point outright. Try this variation of pace on your opponent and watch his surprise.

You can use all these different methods of forcing your opponent into error or of making him offer you a high return without having any shots at your command except a backhand or forehand drive and, of course, a finishing smash to deal with the high return when you get it.

Drop Shot

Now, if you have pretty good control over a drop shot, and if you can work in this drop shot during the course of a rally, it will be even easier for you to win.

Let's see what objectives we have in mind when we use a drop shot. First of all, an exceptionally good drop shot may win the point outright, by catching your opponent unawares and on the wrong foot. Second, the threat of a drop shot will make your opponent play closer in and that in itself will increase the value of your smash. If he could play deeper he might return a hard drive, but because he must beware of a short shot he cannot cover the hard smashes. Third, the drop shot, played properly, will tire out your opponent. In the early stages of a match it is often good policy to wear down your opponent by the use of the drive and the drop shot. Whether you make the point outright or not, you may tire him by running him backwards and forwards, and a tired opponent is easier to deal with than a fresh one.

Use your head when you drop-shot. If your opponent has a good backhand "flick," if he is fast, or if he plays a close-in defence, don't drop-shot as often as otherwise. Get him back far, or on the wrong foot, before you give him the drop shot which, poorly played, might result in a point for him instead of for you. If your opponent has a quick-action forehand, drop-shot to his backhand instead. If he plays deep, you can run him in and out without playing your own drop shot too close to the net and thus running a great risk of missing. If he is a strictly defensive player, without attacking strokes, you may take plenty of time in the execution of the drop shot and the following stroke.

If your opponent is very fast it's good policy to drop-shot him down the centre of the table. You can easily see why. He can run around the sides of the table and

get angled drop shots even though they bounce very near to the net. But a short shot down the centre—one that would bounce twice before reaching the end of the table—makes him bend over a good stretch. The table's in the way, down the centre, and that makes a good drop shot doubly effective and hard to get.

Now, up to this point on tactics we've had you stand up and drive, play on the attack continually, and we've forced your opponent, who has some pretty good attacking strokes of his own and wants a chance to use them, to keep chopping his returns.

Suppose he comes at you with a swell collection of half volleys and topspins. His collection is so good, in fact, that you know you'll be annihilated if you drop back on the defence. He's out to wrest the attack from you. You've got to keep it. What are you going to do? It all depends upon how he tries to seize the drive. First, he's going to try a series of half volleys.

Half-Volleyer

Now the way to drive through a half-volleyer is to hustle him around a bit. Shorten up your arm movement. Favour your backhand drive because it requires less preparation. You have this great advantage over the half-volleyer: the instant after you make your drive he has to put his racket down and make his block return. He can't retreat behind the table and slow up things. So, if you drive him rapidly from side to side, you can usually hurry him into error.

Another trick to try on the half-volleyer, is varying spin. Send him over a hard chop or two, then a series of excessive topspins. He has to adjust the angle of his paddle differently for these different shots, and he is quite likely to miscalculate and give you a set-up.

Driver

Now suppose your opponent doesn't want to half-volley. Suppose he decides to fight you for the drive. Suppose he decides to hit back your service or your topspins. You have already learned how difficult you can make it for him to hit your service successfully. You can feed him short balls just bouncing over the net or fast topspins to various parts of the table.

It's when your opponent decides to chop for a while and pick out a shot to hit back that causes the most trouble. Of course, by going on the defence he gives you a chance to build up a topspin attack that is too severe to be handled. He may not be able to slow you down sufficiently to get in his counter-drive.

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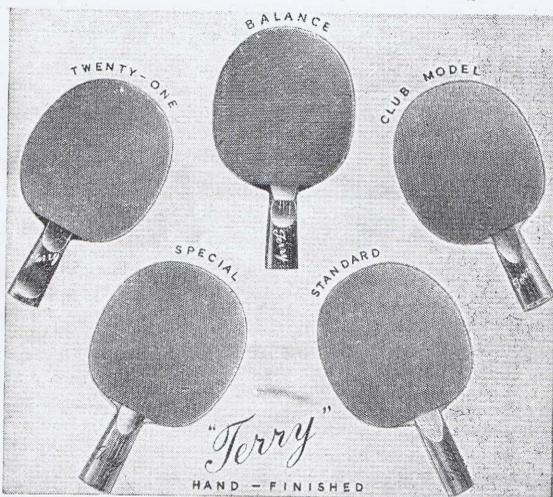
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MAY I CHIP IN ?

ALBERT MONTGOMERY (Liverpool T.T.L.) gives his views on one or two articles which have appeared in *Table Tennis Review*.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS.—I agree that a standard age limit should be set for all people wishing to become Registered (paid) players but I feel that such players should be graded according to their age.

GRADE A.—This would include all players over the age of 25 years and they would be entitled to receive money for exhibitions, coaching of younger players, journalism, and from advertisers for the use of their names in connection with the sale of equipment including "named bats."

GRADE B.—To include players between the ages of 21 and 25 years who would be entitled to receive money for all the above except coaching.

GRADE C.—Up to the age of 21 to receive money for participation in exhibitions only.

I sincerely feel that it is wrong for, say, an unexperienced player under the age of 21 to try to coach others, and this also applies in a slightly lesser degree up to the age of 25. Our game depends upon experience as well as the execution of shots and it is not until the player has had some years at the game that experience comes. At the same time I consider a player under 21 is insufficiently experienced to recommend any particular type of bat. Perhaps I should add that I do not think any player should qualify for professionalism until he has attained the age of 17 years, which I think is young enough.

STANDARDISATION.—While I realise everything is being done to standardise lighting, playing space and conditions generally, there is one small item which I think is important and which has been overlooked—the tension of the net! There is no uniformity at all in this matter. The string or cord used is hardly ever the same and this produces a varying degree of results.

In the case of the steady attacking player balls that touch the top of the net will often fly off to the outer regions of the room. Should a player be of the real "basher" type who swipes out at everything, and should the net cord be broken and the net tied up at each end with bits

of old shoe-laces (as sometimes it is), then the tale is a different one. Before the game is many points old the net begins to loosen up and wilt before the onslaught and though the net may still remain at 6 inches it will often allow a ball to roll over to safety even though it struck the net about 1 inch from the top.

There are two solutions to the problem, (1) Standardise all net cords by inserting a standard cord through the tape and add two small springs, one at each end, between the end of the cord and the vertical support. (2) Introduce a rule which will make all shots touching the net, including services, a net-cord and start the point again.

Many is the time that a vital point has gone the wrong way through a lucky (or unlucky) net-cord. Edge-balls must be allowed to stay at present because, after all, the player may be trying to place the ball near the white lines.

WENDY BLADES.—I was most surprised that the homely, hospitable Yorkshire folk could not manage to find a club willing to accept 13 year old Wendy Blades as a member. I wish she lived in Liverpool. I could name quite a few clubs who would welcome her, young, though she may be.

(Thank you Monty for your interesting views. We are always glad to publish varying opinions. We invite other readers, especially our increasing overseas readers to send in their letters or articles.—Editor.)

Prizes for Letters

We would like to make "May I Chip In?" a regular feature and for all letters printed under this heading we will award prizes valued at the rate of half-a-guinea per column. Senders of other letters printed under "Other Readers Views" will receive consolation prizes. You are invited to have your say on any subject of general interest. Address your envelope to "Reader's Page," The Editor, "Table Tennis Review," 83, Bridge Street, Manchester, 3.

Other Readers' Views . . .

Handicapping System

I am running a singles knock-out competition and there are 16 competitors. The contest is a handicap, the handicaps varying from -8 to +10. There appears to be two systems of scoring:—

(a) We will suppose A is -8 and B is +10, this means B has 18 start over A. If they start at these marks, B has to make 11 to win while A has to make 29. (29 divided by 11 tells us that A has to score 2.6 points for each point scored by B).

(b) Suppose they both start at scratch. B. would have to make 21 to win before A reaches 39. ($39 \div 21 = 1.8$)

If procedure (a) is adopted, it seems to me that A is doubly handicapped in that B only has to make 11 to win. If the method (b) is used, the game is certainly longer but the handicapped A has a more sporting chance to win. Another advantage of the (b) method is that counting minuses for service, as in (a), is not so easy.

A. G. Masters,
51, Bury and Bolton Road,
Radcliffe, Lancs.

The usual system adopted is for the minus score to be added to 21, this giving the score to be reached for a win. The handicapped player then starts at love while his opponent adds the minus figure to his own plus figure and starts from that number.—Editor.

A Last Word on Whites

Many of us take young players to tournaments so that they may see the stars in action. We are able to say, "There is Leach wearing a royal blue shirt." This is surely an easy means of identification as very few players wear England shirts. But to describe him as, "A tall chap in whites . . ." well I ask you chum!

Can you imagine how colourless a world's championship would be without the Czechs' brown windcheaters, the vivid scarlet of Hungary, or the light blue sweaters and silver grey shorts of the French team. Please don't deprive us of colour, there is little enough in every day life as it is.

Another point. Dressing rooms are often small and so overcrowded. (Yes, girls, the men have the same trouble in this respect.) Several sets of clothing are piled next to each other, so can you imagine what a mix-up there would be if everyone had whites! All very annoying if you are in a hurry to catch that last bus.

Geoff. Coulthead,
149, Gibraltar Crescent,
H.M. Naval Base, Singapore.

It's That Man Again

As a Mancunian now residing in Surrey, I took the opportunity of visiting Epsom and Uxbridge to watch Lancashire play Surrey and Middlesex on Friday and Saturday last. An occurrence at the latter match so disgusted me that I cannot refrain from writing to you about it.

At the advertised time of starting, the Lancashire team had not arrived at Uxbridge, but eventually K. Stanley and B. Casofsky turned up and the order of play was re-arranged, K. Stanley playing the first match. Upon the completion of this match Mr. Harrower announced "the Lancs. team has now arrived and Allcock has condescended to play his match." I cannot recall, from a fairly lengthy experience of various sports, both as player and spectator, such an unsporting and disgusting gesture from one in an official position. As this Mr. Harrower left the table a little later I tackled him and he made the surprising (and possibly illuminating) statement that he had been intentionally sarcastic, so I told him that his announcement had disgusted me, it was most unsporting and entirely uncalled for.

When Allcock was due to play his second match Harrower prefaced his announcement with the remarks that earlier in the evening he "had been hard on Allcock who is only a lad and recently became an international, etc., etc." at length. The fact that Harrower deemed it necessary to make this apology is evidence that he realised that my protest was justified. Whether such treatment upsets a young player or not I cannot judge, but the effect on myself, as a spectator, was to induce a feeling of regret that the sport of table tennis permits anyone to hold an executive position who is so obviously unsuitable.

N. Taylor, 310, Coulsdon Road,
Old Coulsdon, Surrey.

Linoleum Floors

Where we have the table tennis the floor is covered with linoleum. Is there any effective covering we can put down suitable for fast table tennis that can be removed when the floor is required for dancing.

Hotel Management, London.
The only thing we can suggest is to cut small square pieces out of the linoleum, just sufficient to enable the table legs to rest on the wooden floor boards. When the floor is used for dancing these small pieces would of course have to be fastened down temporarily. Any other ideas from readers?—Editor.

Readers' Letters—continued.

Ivor Montagu Chips In

May I congratulate your contributor Sam Kirkwood on his discoveries at Alexandra Palace. There are two points I would like to make. First, table tennis is not, as he supposes, a new name beginning to raise its head about 1902, but an older name which ping-pong successfully and other registered names unsuccessfully endeavoured to supersede. There were of course two or three rival associations formed at the height of the battle, which in U.S.A. has not been finally won to this day.

The second point relates to the "Ball Picker-Up." I, too, have never seen the marketed type. As home-made (I made one myself 30 years ago) it consisted of a long bamboo cane with a stout wire ring wedged into one end and bent to nearly a right angle with the handle. The ring was threaded into the hem of a small muslin net, the whole thing on the butterfly net principle but only big enough for about half a dozen butterflies or 2-3 table tennis balls. Across the ring, at a distance from each other, slightly less than the diameter of a ball, we stretched two broad pieces of elastic. When pressed against a ball these elastic bands gave enough to allow the ball to enter the net.

Obviously in a properly fitted T.T. club room such an instrument is much more cumbersome than it is worth, but believe me, for T.T. in a family room, with heavy furniture and granny not wanting to move when the ball went under her armchair, the contraption had definite advantages.

Ivor Montagu,
Bucks Hill, Herts.

Your Season's Diary

1950				
Jan. 19-21	...	...	...	Lancs. Open (Manchester)
Jan. 22	...	...	...	Kent Open
Jan. 23-28	...	...	...	South London Open
Jan. 29	...	...	...	Southampton Open
Jan. 29-Feb. 5	...	...	...	World Championships (Budapest)
Feb. 9-11	...	...	...	North of England (Manchester)
Feb. 13-18	...	...	...	Middlesex (Herga) Open.
Feb. 23-25	...	...	...	Midland Open
Feb. 27-Mar. 4	...	...	...	Surrey Open
Mar. 4	...	...	...	Yorkshire Junior Open
Mar. 4	...	...	...	Cheshire Open (Chester)
Mar. 11	...	...	...	English Open
Mar. 18	...	...	...	West of England
Mar. 25	...	...	...	Grimby Open
April 1-2	...	...	...	Bucks Open
April 8-10	...	...	...	North East England Open
April 12-14 & 17-22	...	...	...	West Middlesex Open
May 1-6	...	...	...	Thameside Open

Tournament Secretaries are asked to send to the Editor a small supply of Entry Forms. Readers will be supplied with these upon application. Please enclose postage.

Ball Retriever

I note that Mr. Sam Kirkwood in his excellent article "A glimpse into the past" in the Nov.-Dec. issue of *Table Tennis Review* writes, in reference to a ball retriever, "Heaven above knows what this contraption consists of, and how it retrieved balls." I can tell him without a trip to heaven.

All it consists of is two flat barrel-shaped springs fixed by a screw to the end of a bamboo cane. I saw it advertised by Gamage's about 15 years ago, and the one I bought at that time is still in regular use—and worth its weight in gold when one's ageing back and expanding waistline makes toe-touching a thing of the past or when playing in a room with a lot of furniture for the ball to roll under.

To retrieve the ball with it one must first get the ball stationary—sometimes a tricky business. But once having succeeded in this, light pressure of the springs on the top of the ball and it is safely in the "barrel" without bending.

A. G. Hayward,
51, Marsh Lane,
Belper, Derby.

Youth Club Age Limit

The age limit for Youth Clubs is 14 years and I request the organisers of these clubs to either start Junior Clubs (12-14 years) or lower the minimum age to 13 years. If this was done, you would not get young players of great promise, such as Wendy Blades of Leeds being unable to find a club for practice purposes.

David Parker,
18, Dickens Avenue,
Sturry Road, Canterbury.

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SHOULDERS TO THE WHEEL, LADIES!

By PEGGY ALLEN

TRAVELLING around in various parts of the country I am constantly surprised at the small part played by women in the administration and organisation of table tennis.

Perhaps I am laying myself open to contradiction here so, before proceeding further, I would like to hand out much praise and our very grateful thanks to that army of silent helpers who receive no lime-light whatever—the wives of our hard-working officials.

These grand women could rightly be called "the silent service." Always in the background, typing, writing, answering innumerable phone calls, they are a constant source of help and encouragement, but they receive neither acknowledgment nor recognition and it's high time we publicised their existence and expressed our thanks for their unselfishness and co-operation.

However, it is not for these women, already playing their part, that I write, but rather the female members of our leagues and clubs. They can give valuable service in lots of different ways and improve either socially or financially their own particular section of the table tennis world.

Why not form an entirely feminine hospitality committee who will be responsible to meet, feed, and generally attend to the comfort of the visiting inter-town or county players? This is a very pressing need. Some officials are woefully slack in these matters and I can quote one instance where a ladies team travelled close on 80 miles for an inter-town match. They were met at the station, escorted to a cafe and left there to their own devices whilst their host returned home for tea, leaving them with instructions to be at the "hall" at 6 p.m. This cafe proved to be full, with a long queue inside and after an unsuccessful search, the visiting team obtained one cup of tea each and the "last piece of cake" close on closing time. This satisfying repast was taken standing up at Marks and Spencer's snack-bar counter.

On the other hand I know that many officials are considerate, but this hospitality job could easily be carried out by a women's committee. After all, hospitality is really their province, isn't it?

Most of the league duties, for example general and divisional secretary, treasurer, press correspondent, etc., can be done as well by women as men. In fact, though I

say it with trepidation, women are often more thorough and painstaking in these roles and quite definitely no less efficient!

So far as the Press is concerned the womenfolk have a much better chance with sports and general editors than the most efficient male, and you might be surprised at the large amount of space conceded and consideration given to a woman sports writer. Believe me, free press publicity of this kind can do wonders for any big match or exhibition you may be organising and it will make a considerable difference to the profit side of your balance sheet when your A.G.M. comes along.

Many juniors are prevented from entering tournaments, where they would obviously gain valuable experience, by the expense involved in staying away from home overnight.

If table tennis folk living in the tournament towns would be willing to take one or two juniors and offer accommodation for one night, many more youngsters would be able to fulfil their desire to gain wider experience through the medium of the open tournament. The families would need to be known and agreed suitable by the tournament officials but surely this would be a small matter entailing little extra work.

Families with their own youthful aspirants would probably be glad to help in this way, knowing that their offspring would receive similar hospitality in other parts of the country.

Invaluable assistance to a league in a shaky financial position can be given by the young married women, together with their female relatives.

Two or three years ago half a dozen "young marrieds" put their heads together to see if they couldn't help to raise their local league from the depths of financial depression. They decided to run small afternoon whist drives once a month in each other's homes, providing the room, afternoon tea, and prizes in turn. There was no outlay and however small the profit, it was all profit with no expenses to be met.

Through these small efforts, supported by players, mothers and friends, a considerable amount was raised.

These are just a few of the ways in which you, as a woman, can help. Do think about it. It's fun playing but there's something very satisfying in being able to help with the organisation, too.

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SOUTH AFRICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

WITH so many English players having settled in South Africa the third National Championships played at Cape Town provided spectators with the best play yet seen in the Union. Reporting the event, a prominent newspaper stated: "Amid scenes unparalleled for an event of this sort, the game of table tennis clearly demonstrated the big following it enjoys in South Africa. Time and time again, the hall, crammed to capacity, echoed to rounds of applause as spectators saw the country's leading exponents in action."

In the men's singles semi-final, Ron Litten, ex-English international, fell to a fellow countryman, Rex Edwards, scores being 21-17, 23-21, 21-11. In the other semi-final, Hymie Sofer, who, it will be remembered, travelled to England for the Wembley World's event taking advantage at the time for the opportunity of receiving coaching from Richard Bergmann, defended his title against a former South African champion, Monty Shotland. Sofer won with scores of 21-15, 21-15, 21-13.

In the final, Sofer was up in the first game, 20-17, but playing a steady defensive game Edwards took the next four points. Hymie Sofer crowded on the pace sending over drive after drive, but the imperturbable Edwards was always there with uncanny anticipation. Final scores in favour of Rex Edwards were: 22-20, 21-13, 21-18.

The ladies' singles was a foregone conclusion and there was hardly any opposition for world-famous, ex-English Corbillon Cup star, Elizabeth Blackburn, who beat M. Kaplan, 21-11, 21-8 in the final. Partnered by Ron Litten in the mixed doubles another title was taken when they beat H. Sofer and Mrs. Rene Patterson in the final. Mrs. Patterson being another settler from England.

A record in gate money was set up for South Africa, the amount of £200 being taken on finals night.

Once something can be done to get over the International T.T. Federations' objection to South Africa's colour bar, Bill Crumley, Chairman of the S.A. T.T. Union, is determined to put his country on the world's T.T. map.

OTHER FINAL RESULTS:

W.D.—E. Blackburn/E. Whittle beat R. Patterson/W. Hawthorne, 13, 15.

M.D.—R. Litten/R. Edwards beat D. Ashley/E. Van Heerden, 21, -10 12



London Diary

WITH the season nearing its half-way mark it is interesting to note the "new" names in and around the London area—some of them being little known until the latter part of last season. Take for instance, LEN ADAMS (W. Ealing and Middlesex), the present Civil Service champion. Len played well throughout last season but showed most improvement during its last few weeks. This season, at the time of writing, he has reached the final of the North Midland Open and the semi-final of both the Birmingham and Eastern Suburban Championships, besides winning, with HARRY VENNER (Surrey) the North Midland Open men's doubles title. Venner will now, of course, be remembered as the first English born player to beat Johnny Leach since Johnny became World Champion besides scoring a great victory when winning the Eastern Suburban men's singles title. BERNARD CROUCH (Middlesex) forced his way further into the limelight last season but has recently improved greatly and carried his doubles game, especially, to great heights. Married life seems to agree with JOYCE ROBERTS (Middlesex), who, since becoming Mrs. "Tony" Miller, has proved that she can now stand up to the best in England. Joyce's international debut cannot now be long delayed, especially after her defeat of Peggy Franks in November.

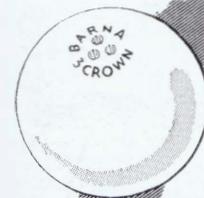
The standard of junior play is higher just now, for several of the leading youngsters have had more than a season's good competitive play. The first names that spring to mind are those of the ROWE twins, who play a great part in brightening up that well known table tennis rendezvous, the West Ealing club and are now regulars for the Middlesex team. Right-handed ROSALIND, a member of the E.T.T.A. Czech touring team, appears to be favouring the American type forehand, reminiscent of Jimmy McClure and Bernard Grimes in their "hey-day" and used more recently to a lesser degree by Martin Reisman and Garrett Nash. The action is that of raising, whilst making a forehand stroke, the non-playing arm towards the body, at the same angle as that of the playing arm, so that if a line were extended upwards from each arm, the two lines

would eventually meet. Rosalind certainly knows how to do it, when to do it and perhaps most important, when not to do it—the snag is that the action hides half of her refreshing young face from the spectators! Left-handed DIANE should be destined for great things, her doubles play being especially masterful for a girl of 16 years. Her forehand drive is similar to that of Vera (Dace) Thomas whom she may well succeed. But Diane has a backhand too! Taking his international selection committee work very seriously, is that great stylist and international of pre-war days, TOMMY SEARS, who is getting around to most of the big tournaments and county games. He has not made a serious comeback since his release from a Japanese P.O.W. camp but could even now probably beat most players outside the international ranks.

Just settling down to life in the forces is the tall young Manhattan club player, ERIC SANTER, a lad capable of both great and foolish things. Maybe his service period will improve Eric's temperament, for he is an unassuming youngster who deserves to get on. Just settling down to life in "civvy street" are RON PARMENTER (Romford) and IVOR JONES (E. London) whose recipe for rehabilitation since their "demob" a couple of months ago can be boiled down to two words—table tennis.

Seen lately at some of the bigger London games has been that grand veteran international A. J. WILMOTT, donor of the "Wilmott Cup." Very few among to-day's T.T. crowds realise that the big man with the square jaw and shock of grey hair is the Wilmott who for many years figured so prominently in the Civil Service Championships and gave his name to the National team championships for men.

The next London tournament is the South London Open, which will be played at the Brotherhood Hall, Knights Road, West Norwood, from 24th to 28th of January. Whilst on the subject of tournaments let us turn our attention to the greatest tournament of all—the World Championships. We wish all our competitors every success in Budapest and hope our London born and bred World Champion "brings it off" again. Good Luck, Johnny!
BILL PARKER



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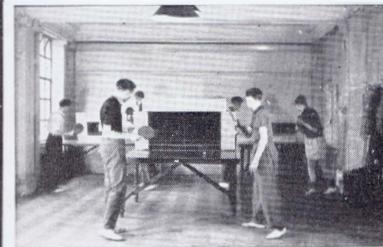
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