

Table

The OFFICIAL ORGAN of the E.T.T.A.

Tennis

VOL. I. No. 8.

AUGUST, 1936.

ONE PENNY.

REGISTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

Table Tennis Problems.

By W. J. POPE, General Secretary, E.T.T.A.

THE rapid development of table tennis during the past five years has presented the organisation with continuous problems. The influx of thousands of new players, the formation of scores of new leagues, the organisation of new open tournaments everywhere, have caused difficulties, chiefly because of the speed of development which has overwhelmed the administration. In addition, the growth of the game in public favour as a spectacle has thrown new responsibilities on the Association, and the arranging of public matches and tournaments, the setting up of relationships with other public organisations, the Press and the B.B.C., has compelled the creation of an organisation run on a modern business basis.

The growth of the game abroad has necessitated more intimate relations with other countries and, as we are the most powerful and influential member in the International Federation, this side of our work has grown to a considerable extent. Other sports have been faced with the same problems, but, generally speaking, growth has been more gradual, and the organisations have been able to adapt themselves, their problems have evolved slowly, and, side by side with the growth of their sport, a business organisation, adequately financed, has been built up.

By contrast with some of these older sports there is in table tennis no autocratic legislative body laying down rules and regulations. As our difficulties surge around us they have to be settled by—ourselves. Every problem is laid before our affiliated membership, and it is my personal opinion that the popularity of the game in this country, and the enthusiasm of its devotees, is due in no small measure to the policy adopted by the Executive Committee in connection with the Association's affairs.

To carry out this policy successfully, however, two things are necessary. Firstly, that all players and officers take a keen and live interest in the pros and cons of the problems and, secondly, that when decisions are arrived at they receive the unanimous support of all responsible members. In order to obtain both these objects it is intended to use the columns of TABLE TENNIS more and more during the coming season.

The chief problem facing us at the moment is the danger to our game itself of the "chiselling" player. Everyone now recognises that danger, but I am asked what new regulations have been adopted for next season? The answer is "none." *There is to be no lower net or lower table.* The rules of the game can only be altered by the I.T.T.F., and as that body will not meet until February, the game will be played during the coming season under present rules. Each country is to try out various proposals, and our Association has appointed a committee to investigate. Messrs. Jaques have supplied

"TABLE TENNIS." VOLUME 2.

An offer to our readers.

We want to make the next volume of our "Mag." a great success. No. 1 will be published on 1st October next. Whilst we do not disdain the sale of individual copies as published, we do want regular subscribers and we want them *now*. For 1s. we send a copy of each issue, on the day of publication, direct to the address of the subscriber. We suggest that most readers will find it more convenient to pay the "bob" now, rather than wait for the publication, find the seller or worry the local official. But the effort to write to us, to buy a postal order, &c., sometimes means that we do not get the order. So we are making our readers an offer. To every League or Club official, or to any individual who sends us 2s subscribers with the 2s shillings, we will send a present of a copy of Mr. Montagu's new book on table tennis, autographed by the author. We will supply order forms on request, but all we want is a list containing the names and addresses of the subscribers with the necessary amount. Mr. Montagu's book costs 2s. 6d.—it is the best book on the game which has ever been published—and it should be in the hands of every "fan." Here is a chance to obtain a handsome present, and the Editorial Board appeals to all our members to get busy.

a table which can be lowered, and extended in width and length; various suggestions are being considered, but if any alterations are decided upon they cannot operate until season 1937-38.

Penalising the "stone-waller?" Here again this will be considered at the next meeting of the I.T.T.F. The E.T.T.A. is considering an experimental local rule for our own tournaments which provides that a limit should be placed on the time taken

for a game, but no decision has yet been arrived at. I feel that the columns of this journal should be utilised for a discussion of this question, as I know many players have strong views. One well-known player suggests that when the ball touches the net the striker should lose the point, and service should be taken behind a line three feet from the end of the table. What do readers think of this?

DRESS.

The Executive Committee have now laid down the rules with regard to dress at open tournaments, and as there appears to be some misapprehension in the public Press on the point, it might be as well to set out the present position.

For men players—rubber shoes (any colour); grey flannel trousers or shorts; sports shirt of *single colour* (not to be light or bright).

For women players—rubber shoes (any colour); sports shirts of *single colour* (not to be light or bright). If a cardigan is used whilst playing it must be the same colour as the shirt, and the only variation from the single colour is that a badge of reasonable size can be worn. No rule was adopted with regard to skirts, shorts or trousers, except that whatever is worn should be a grey colour. The Women's Committee formed to investigate the problem was against the wearing of shorts or trousers, but it was thought best to leave this to individual players.

Tournament Committees are to be asked strictly to carry out the new regulations, and sanction for tournaments will only be given if they are carried out.

THE PAID PLAYERS.

We have now had 12 months' experience of the new rule, and it is proposed to institute regulations for the coming season after consultation with each League and the paid players themselves. The working of the new rule has not been altogether satisfactory; it is suggested that coaches should be definitely authorised and be of a certain standard of excellence; that money prizes should be limited; large betting on matches should be prohibited, and that certain regulations should govern players employed by sports firms.

TRAINING OF PLAYERS.

The Executive Committee have given long and serious consideration to this question. We are concerned with our position in world ranking, which affects the popularity of the game with the general public. If we could only develop a player to win the world championship; if we could only develop teams to win the "Swaythling" and "Corbillon" Cups, what an effect this would have! The game was born in England; we have by far the largest number of players, and we should

TABLE TENNIS PROBLEMS

Continued from previous page.

be "top-dogs." I think the older school of our International players themselves will agree that young players must be found and that they must have mental and physical training for the task. We are limited by financial difficulties and cannot, at present, embark on ambitious schemes, but there are young players of promise in London and the provinces, and I hear regularly of young potential "world-beaters" playing in the Leagues. It is our duty to find them, to test them, and to train them.

The first step has been taken in appointing Messrs. P. E. Bromfield and A. A. Haydon official coaches to the Association. Their services are now available to Leagues, and an official communication will be sent to Secretaries before the season starts. In the meantime I shall be glad to hear of young players who show exceptional promise.

THE "WILMOTT" CUP.

This team competition will be run next season, and a circular is now in the hands of Secretaries of Leagues about it. It is based on the knock-out system, and when the entries are received they will be allocated to zones to avoid long travelling. The competition should create a deal of interest amongst Leagues and, in some cases, will substitute friendly matches casually arranged. A suggestion has been made that the Semi-Finals and Final should be fixed for London during the time the National Championship is held, thus encouraging Leagues concerned to send players who could enter the National at the same time.

I feel that something should be done to help to bring players from various districts to London for our National Championship—entries have for too long been confined, in the main, to players who live in the neighbourhood where it is held, and participation in competition with the best players in England and the world is essential for any ambitious player. Financial difficulties of many players would be overcome if the final rounds of the "Wilmott" Cup could be played in London.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.

The Executive Committee have sanctioned the institution of the proposed National League, and a Committee is now drawing up rules. The idea is to divide the country into areas, with a Division for each, and Leagues would play home and away matches, the top teams at the end of the season playing off for the Championship. Further particulars will be published in the next issue of the Magazine.

THE FOREIGN TOURISTS.

The popularity of the tour of the "Three Hungarian Musketeers" was such last season that it ensured a repeat invitation, and I am pleased to say that arrangements have been made for another tour, which will probably commence on 16th November. An International match, England *v.* Hungary, will be staged in London to open the ball, and it is possible that a part of this match will be broadcast to all stations of the B.B.C.

The National Championships will be again held in London and the Finals will be staged at Wembley, so that a feast of good spectacular table tennis will be provided during the season—"fans" all over the country will have an opportunity of seeing the best players in the world, and of taking their friends to see the modern game.

Mr. Montagu's New Book.

By W. J. POPE.

The publication of a book by Ivor Montagu is an event indeed in the annals of table tennis. This is his second book on the game, and since the first lots of things have happened. Days were when Mr. Montagu's advocacy of table tennis was a voice crying in the wilderness, but now hundreds of thousands worship at the shrine. Mr. Montagu is well qualified to write the book on table tennis. He was the first Chairman of the E.T.T.A. and founded the International Federation in 1926—his was the brains, the enthusiasm, and last, but not least, the pocket responsible for the first World Championships in London. He is the historian of the game, and whilst I know he does not believe in the "Great Man Theory,"

Continued from previous column.

PERSONAL BUT NOT PRIVATE.

And now I want to make an appeal to all our readers, and to table tennis enthusiasts generally, in connection with our official Magazine. It is published for the player, to bring news and information to all interested in the game. It is written by amateurs for amateurs. We have no pretensions to journalistic ability or to be professional publishers. All the work is done voluntarily and our reward is a successful publication. It is no secret that we were disappointed in the response of our friends last season. With our registered membership of approximately 30,000 we should have a circulation of at least 10,000. The price of the Magazine should bring it within the means of every player. For one shilling, a copy of each issue during the season, commencing October, will be posted free to the address of each subscriber. I appeal to each and every one of you, not only to send your "bob," but to get others to do the same. Will you get out lists of names and addresses, collect the shillings, and send them along to us? Secretaries of Leagues and Clubs, will you do this at your Annual Meetings?

We are discussing ambitious plans for making the publication a unique effort. Articles on how to play the game, on how to improve each stroke, will be written by masters of the subject. News from abroad will be contributed by experts. News from the provinces will get due space, dates of tournaments and important fixtures will be published, and every aspect of the game will be dealt with in an interesting manner. The Committee responsible are full of enthusiasm and ready for a very active season, and we want your vigorous support. We also want your criticism, your advice, and your suggestions, but, above all, we want you to treat this Magazine as your Magazine, as our Magazine; it is run in the interests of the game and it can only attain its object with your help.

I am certain that without his personality table tennis would still be in the wilderness. I am equally certain that if, when he was at Cambridge, he had gravitated towards bowls (which by the way might have resulted in more trophies on his sideboard), bowls would now be a world sport, scheduled for the Olympic Games, with Finals at the Wembley Stadium with 90,000 spectators. But, praise be, bowls' loss is our gain.

This book is so comprehensive that it is difficult to do it justice in a short review. *It is the standard work on table tennis*, and will remain so for many years to come. Its scope can be seen from a brief review of some of the subjects covered. The first chapter deals with the History of the Game, and then Mr. Montagu deals with "Material," the table, the ground, net and posts, the ball, racquet, lighting and clothes. In a chapter of 29 pages the author covers the whole ground, and no Club, Tournament Committee or individual playing at home need have any doubts in future as to the best equipment and conditions for play. On the controversial question of varying "grips" he deals with the points scientifically, pro and con is argued—with photographs of every type of grip. Chapter 3 deals with The Laws (first principles, service, scoring and the Doubles Game), chapter 4 with Strokes and Spin (general principles, over-spin and underspin, half-volley, plain hit and drop, exceptional strokes), chapter 5 with Strategy (types of service, footwork, counter to half-volley, counter to drive, counter to underspin, counter to drop). The last chapter deals with International Table Tennis, and the author, who has visited almost every country with which he deals, is the acknowledged expert.

Sixty-five pages are given to advice to players and there are 43 photographs and drawings devoted to the illustration of the various strokes of the game. Mr. Montagu does not claim to teach the player, but he has analysed the technique of each stroke, and the diagrams and strip photographs, together with descriptions of the methods of the masters of the past and present, make this section the "textbook" for all students. Footwork, that most vital asset, is dealt with and illustrated with photographs, as is the Doubles Game in all its variation. Photographs of world champions, from Dr. Jacobi, in 1926, down to Kolar and Miss Ruth Aarons in 1936, complete a volume which should be in the hands of everyone.

Messrs. Pitman are to be congratulated on a very worthy publication: 72 illustrations, 130 pages on fine paper, with cloth cover and illustrated dust-cover, for 2s. 6d.—there should surely be a great rush. The volume can be supplied by the Association—send your money to 64, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1, and it will be sent post free.

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ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS 1936

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Marshall Wins International Tournament at Lane's.

The International Tournament held recently at Lane's London Club, Baker Street, was a great success. It was held primarily to test out the new slate table manufactured by Messrs. Walter Briggs and, secondly, to give the London Internationals a chance to test their own capabilities in midsummer.

Various scratchings owing to holidays were inevitable, but the final line-up included the following players:—G. Marshall and C. Nelson (America), M. Ayub (India), I. Schaterovitz (Latvia), and T. E. Sears, H. J. Hales, Eric Findon, T. Dawn, A. D. Brook (England).

The Hon. Ivor Montagu and Mr. C. Corti Woodcock played in the tournament so as to get first-hand information as to the merits of a slate surface. The non-Internationals playing were M. Marcus, H. H. Bridge, W. Stennett and E. Bubleby.

The surprise of the first round was the defeat of E. Bubleby by C. Nelson. The game was painfully slow at times, but Nelson occasionally came out with a forehand and backhand smash and eventually won by 21—19 in the final game.

H. H. Bridge nearly caused another surprise when leading E. Findon in the last game by 20—16, but found he could not find the necessary punch to break through Findon's defence, and lost after being completely beaten by a forehand smash down his forehand that raised considerable applause.

The second-round matches were of a more interesting nature. W. Stennett proved his claims to International honours by beating A. D. Brook. Brook never really looked like winning, despite the fact that he won one game. Stennett is a greatly improved player who will have to be watched this coming season.

T. E. Sears beat Findon in the last game after an exciting finish. Findon down again 19—16 picked up to lead 20—19 and then dropped the game 23—21.

Marshall, hitting as brilliantly as ever and perhaps slightly better than last season, beat H. J. Hales in comfortable fashion, although Hales retrieved some magnificent stuff.

There is no doubt that all champions will have to watch Marshall when he gets going. In his game with M. Ayub he smashed as hard as Haydon ever knew how and used his head to such an extent that Ayub had all his work cut out to make the score one game all. The third game Marshall shot ahead and stayed there to win by several clear points.

Meanwhile Stennett had turned out again and severely beaten Sears. This was a different Sears to the one we all recognise. He was lethargic and painfully slow on his feet. One could tell before two points had been scored that he was doomed to defeat. This must not, however, rob any of the credit from Stennett, who played cleverly and accurately right through.

The final was contested between Marshall and Stennett. It was quickly over in the American's favour, but Stennett played a gallant game and must feel more than satisfied with the night's play.

His lack of big match experience must go against him in such circumstances, but he gave Marshall a very good game and deserved a better fate. Marshall was not really worried by Stennett and on many occasions smashed clean through his defence with the greatest of ease.

The final arrangements were completed when Marshall had received the congratulations of the other players and a handsome prize from Messrs. Walter Briggs. He thoroughly deserved his success, and we shall see his name on the headlines next season without doubt.

The slate table came in for a lot of discussion, especially amongst the players. Some found they liked it better than the normal wooden surface, but others found no difference. The weight of opinion, however, was that the slate surface did tend to speed up the game because the ball was inclined to "sit up" to be hit, thus giving the attacker a distinct advantage.

Many well-known members of the English Table Tennis Association were present, including:—Hon. Ivor Montagu, Mr. W. J. Pope, Mr. C. Corti Woodcock, Mr. D. Decker, Mr. Charlton, Misses Caplan and Smitz. In all the spectators numbered some 150—200.

The umpiring and organisation of the tournament proper were all that could be desired.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT. Annual Report.

The untiring efforts of the officials and Committee of the Liverpool and District League have resulted in the past season being the greatest in the history of the game in that area—the Merseyside.

As to the numerical side of the question, an increase of four clubs and nine teams was registered. There has been a corresponding increase in the individual membership.

Ennismore, the First Division champions, claim the distinction of being the only club to complete their programme without conceding a point.

Keen competition prevailed in the Second Division when the championship, won by Breckside Co-op., was not decided until their final match had been played and won.

The "Readman" Cup Competition, won by Ennismore, again proved a popular event, and it is a credit to regional teams that four of their number succeeded in reaching the fifth round.

No fewer than 17 representative Inter-League matches were played, and the friendly relationship with other Leagues has consequently strengthened.

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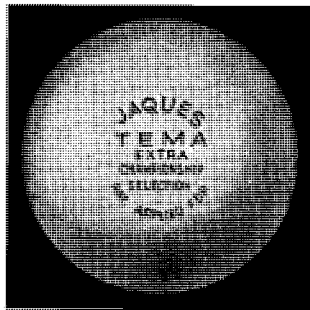
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Mr. Leslie E. Forrest.

The appointment of Mr. Leslie E. Forrest as a permanent Assistant Secretary at the Headquarters of the Association in London was decided upon at the last meeting of the Executive Committee. Mr. Forrest, as Secretary of the Liverpool and District League, was one of the best known and popular officials in the country, and the position of Liverpool as one of the strongholds of the game is almost entirely due to his work. He started the Liverpool League in 1925 with seven clubs and last season it contained 79. He has been a member of the Executive Committee of the E.T.T.A. since its formation, and as an active representative of the National body has been responsible for the formation of many Leagues. The popularity of the Merseyside Open is largely due to his enthusiasm, and he has had a hand in most progressive moves in the north of England. The Association's gain is Liverpool's loss, but table tennis "fans" on Merseyside, whilst regretting his departure, congratulate "Les" and feel sure he will make good in the larger sphere. The Association, in obtaining the services of Mr. Forrest, will have the benefit of his unrivalled knowledge of the game, and affiliated bodies and members generally will benefit by the efficient and whole-hearted ability which Mr. Forrest is able to place at the disposal of the organisation.

THE TABLE TENNIS FILM.

I have just seen a film dealing with table tennis—it is made in Hollywood. It calls a racquet a "paddle," it features a bevy of beautiful maidens in very short shorts, a very athletic Adonis who thinks table tennis easy—but all this is by way of contrast to the serious business of the film which is to put table tennis over as a great game, to explain the shots, to illustrate the fascination of the game from the players' and spectators' standpoint, and this it certainly does. Yes, Sir!

Coleman Clark and Don Seigel, well-known American players, are the stars of the film. They gave a brilliant exhibition of hitting hits, they illustrate the strokes in ordinary play and slow motion, they show chop and spin in slow motion with the answers to these strokes, they do freak shots, knuckle spin service—one shot is taken from underneath a table of glass and you see the action of the ball from this angle—and, generally

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CORRECTION.

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF "TABLE TENNIS" AN ERROR OCCURRED IN THE ADVERTISEMENT OF MESSRS. AYRES, LTD. THEY DO NOT MANUFACTURE THE "HAYDON" BAT ANY MORE.

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speaking, they do the game well, just the sort of show to thrill the "fan."

The bevy of beautiful maidens mentioned above, and the contemptuous Adonis, are used to show the type we know so well—who think the game easy—and they go to the table to "show us how the game should be played." Adonis tries to take a serve from Coleman Clark—it goes up to the ceiling; the next he puts on the floor, the next he misses altogether, and as this is shown slow motion, he looks very comical.

The running commentary is also very well done. Explanations are clear, appreciation of the points of the game is genuine—altogether a very satisfactory affair, and I strongly recommend all our players to see it. It is a "short" and lasts ten minutes.

Now how to get it at your cinemas. It is certain that local cinema managers will book any film of this character if they know there is a demand for it. So if you visit your favourite cinema, ask for the manager, and tell him the number of players in your town who will go to see it with their friends. I feel sure that they will jump to it. Cinema authorities like to know the subjects their patrons might be interested in, and they might not have seen the publicity matter about this particular film. And, finally, tell him that the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures, Ltd., Short Features Dept., 19, Tower Street, London, W.C. 2 (Temple Bar 8444), is the firm responsible.

W. J. P.

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