THE ACHILLES HEEL OF TABLE TENNIS

The amazing and successful metamorphosis of Table Tennis from parlour game to world stadium is because of one reason and one reason only: it has captured mass popular support. Table Tennis, at its best, is a sport of thrills, of spectacle, and high nervous tension; it has the suspense of unpredictability and the shocks of surprise; it demands perfect fitness, mental and physical, and the speed of lightning; it calls for the gallantry, the courtesy of knightly lists. It has all. What other sport has these ingredients that attract support from lesser competitive elements, and while it retains such, it will flourish.

But like the glorious and heroic Achilles it carries from its childhood one vulnerable and mortal spot. The "Achilles Heel" of Table Tennis is variously termed "Pushing," "Chiselling" or "Unpredictable" play! We, who know the game, and can so often find justification for a "chiselling" match, must beware of overlooking the dominating point. We perceive the subtler shadings of the battle of wits and will and technique; we may tend to laud the player who stonewalls his way to bring the deciding game to a victory for our team. We know, in fact, the raison d'être for negative games, and so have tended to tolerate them. But supporters, the audiences who collectively pay for the big matches, are not so tolerant; they have paid to be thrilled, shocked, excited and awed, and like it or not, they are the customers who are always right. You may "sell a pup" once, but you will never sell a litter.

For we have mastered the necessary of ensuring that all matches open to the public are such that will bring "repeat orders." This, in itself, will also solve many local financial problems. How this shall be done is not so easy to decide, but it starts with wise counsel and inspired leadership and calls for an improved technique from the players.

IS THE PATTERN CHANGING?

At the time of the English Open Championships, it is topical for us to look over the record. Since Bromfield won the Men's Singles title in 1924, the title has only once been again held by an Englishman, Richard Bergmann, in 1948.

We believe, however, that the pattern of events is destined for a change. Post-war Table tennis has taken a little while to pick up lost ground, and pre-war giants have continued their interchange of crowns and held with varying success the fierce onslaughts of the young battalions. Nevertheless, the pendulum is swinging again to youth.

Nothing could have been more encouraging than the performance of the Anglo-Swedish Juniors Internationals at Aylesford. In the whole match there was not one example of conceit, bad temper, or giving up. The matches were lively and attractive, and showed a really promising level of tactics and technique. The splendid staging by the Aylesford Paper Mills Sports Club set a mark of excellence on an evening which holds confident promise of a bright future.

The outstanding performance of Lasse Petersson and the generally improved play of the Swedish lads, should clearly show us the necessity of redoubling our work in developing future world-beating players.

Incidentally, we wonder if our present Junior Girls (which include two full internationals) have not justified a tour for themselves, and feel that a matching against senior national ladies' teams would provide valuable match experience at the right level.
England v U.S.A.
at Luton, 5th March
RESULT: ENGLAND WON 9—0
(English players first)
Miss M. Jones beat Mrs. M. Clouther, -15, 19, 21.
M. Thornhill beat G. Barclay, 6, 11.
J. Leach and Miss M. Franks beat J. McClure and Mrs. R. K. Monness, 17, 6.
Miss D. Rowe and Miss R. Rowe beat Miss M. Shahian and Mrs. M. Clouther, 15, 14.
Miss D. Beregi beat Mrs. R. K. Monness, 16, 15.
J. Leach beat J. H. McClure, 16, 15.
Miss M. Franks beat Miss M. Shahian, 13, 17.

England v Wales
at Cheltenham, 20th February
RESULT: ENGLAND WON 9—0
ALTHOUGH England had an easy win, assisted by Richard Bergmann (World Singles Champion), and Aubrey Simons, of Gloucestershire, as captain, it seemed that Wales would win at least two of the sets; but they were thwarted by the fighting ability of the English team.
Rosalind Rowe had a hard tussle with the Welsh Champion, Audrey Bates, who was unlucky to lose the first game at 22-20. When, in the second game, Miss Bates outplayed her opponent to win 21-14, it seemed to the Welsh fans that a victory was in sight, but Rosalind Rowe pulled that little extra out of the bag to win the third game 21-16.

The other occasion when a Welsh win seemed in sight was when Ron Crayden and Brian Bromwell met Michael Jones and Monty Smith. The Welsh pair took the first game 21-17 and were only narrowly defeated in the second game 21-18, but in the third game England won easily 21-9.

B. Bromwell beat M. Jones 15, 16.
R. Crayden beat M. Smith 15, 8.
A. Simons beat S. Jones 15, 17.
R. Bergmann beat W. Sweetland 11, 13.
Miss D. Rowe beat Miss A. Bates 20, 14, 16.
Bromwell and Crayden beat M. Jones and Smith 17, 18, 9.
Bergmann and Simons beat S. Jones and Sweetland 10, 18.
Misses D. and R. Rowe beat Miss J. Beer and Mrs. V. Rowe 17, 15, —15.

Probably the best ladies' doubles pair in the country, Rosalind and Diana Rowe, put up a great display, both in their singles and doubles games. They completely outclassed the Welsh pair, Miss J. Beer and Mrs. V. Rowe, winning easily at 21-7, 21-15.

Aubrey Simons played a captain's game when defeating Stan Jones, 21-15, 21-17, while Brian Bromwell, making his first appearance for England showed good form when beating Michael Jones, 21-15, 21-16.
ENGLAND'S NARROW VICTORY OVER SWEDEN
Lasse Pettersson defeats all English boys
Aylesford, 16th February

by Tommy Sears

The Preliminaries

A SPLENDID hall, superb lighting, an electric scoring machine, exemplary conditions, ample room, and an audience of 500 made the perfect venue for the most exciting junior international yet staged.

The playing of the Swedish Anthem and the breaking of the Swedish flag was preceded by a welcome in English and in Swedish by Mr. W. R. Nichols and Mr. B. Warburton respectively. Col. Reed presented plaques to both teams, and tokens were exchanged between the two non-playing captains, Karl Rabon and myself.

The Match

JIMMY LOWE, with calm deliberation took the first game from ROY GUSTAFSSON, and was leading 11-4 in the second when he was surprised by a stream of winners that took Gustafsson into a lead of 14-12, when Jimmy recovered, to win 21-17.

With England 2 up, Junior Champion, left-handed LASSE PETTERSSON was matched against DEREK BURRIDGE. From the first point both went to the attack, and by first-time hitting and running round his backhand, Derek won the first game. Pettersson was now settling down, and won a bright game with a fine blending of attack and defence. In the third game, he faltered at 20-16, which Derek, to loud applause, evened to 20 all, only to lose.

PETER SMITH, after a first win against Gustafsson, met an inspired opponent in the second game, who outplayed him at his best. The final of this was a desperate affair with the score creeping up point by point to 20-all, and

we hardly dared to breathe. To our horror, Gustafsson got a net cord, but Peter, undismayed and fighting hard won the next 3 points to make the England score 3-1 instead of 2-all. Probably the turning point of the match.

Dennis Rodrigues, in a masterful style the Swedish boy hit through Lowe with comparative ease. Jimmy just wasn’t given a chance to get into action, and his defensive footwork was not quick enough for the speedy drives.

Burridge took JAN HELLGREN comfortably, and Peter Smith went out to meet PETTERSSON determined to stop him taking the whole three, and when he won the first 21-8, we thought that was that. Then the match became really thrilling. Pettersson won the second game 23-21, and apparently becoming even stronger, led Peter 15-11 in the third. Peter played splendidly, used his head and tried for everything, mixing topspin with chop in clever variation. He took the lead at 18-17, and they both fought it out to 20-all, for Pettersson to finally gain the two vital points. Both lads played splendidly, and the Swedish boy deserves high praise for his moral courage and self-control.

SCORES:

J. LOWE (Ashford) lost to L. Pettersson 14, 17; beat R. Gustafsson 18, 15; beat J. Hellgren 9, 15.

P. SMITH (Essex) lost to L. Pettersson 8, 21, 20; beat R. Gustafsson 13, 19, 20; beat J. Hellgren 14, 17.

D. BURRIDGE (Middlesex) lost to L. Pettersson 16, 17, 21; lost to R. Gustafsson 14, 15; beat J. Hellgren 14, 17.

DENMARK, Finland, Norway and Sweden all competed in the first Scandinavian Championships in Copenhagen. Sweden took the titles not only in the team events for Men and for Women, but also all the individual events, but Dr. GUNNAR OLLEN, Vice-Chairman of the I.T.T.F. says:

"We, in Sweden, look forward to the time when we shall be strongly challenged by our neighbours. To bring this about the sooner, we are embarking on a joint 4-nation Coaching Scheme.”


Next year the Scandinavian Championships will be held in Helsinki, Finland.

CUMBERLAND DO WELL

The Swedes encountered unexpectedly tough opposition in their match versus Cumberland at Millom on 17th February.

They won five singles out of six, but T. Edwards (Harrington) nearly scored a second win for Cumberland. He led Pettersson 20-12 in the first game, only to lose to an inspired counter-attack at 23-25, 22-24.

Cumberlands victory came when:

F. E. Downey beat the redoubtible Pettersson 21-19, 22-20.

HERO OF THE EVENING


LANCASHIRE LINES

By STANLEY PROFFITT

Tight-fisted Manchester

THIS month we've got a few "niggles" to explode upon readers. I think it's not far short of a catastrophe. Others consider it disgraceful that Lancashire, such a high-light in the table tennis world, did not send more than two for the Junior International Trials in London.

Maybe the date, in the interim of BILL WORSLEY'S retirement and NORMAN COOK'S accession, had something to do with the tangle. On the other hand, maybe it was lack of interest. Whatever the cause, there was no excuse for the Manchester League, who, with over a 1,000 affiliated members and with full knowledge of the Trials, would not contribute to the expenses of any players.

To my mind this tight-fisted grip on the 'tribute to the expenses of any players' unfairly on the credit side, would have sent down 14-year-old GEOFF PULLER. Geoffrey, an all-round sporting type they had sent, say half a dozen times. He had the knowledge of the Trials, would not consider it disgraceful that he appeared cumbersome. The selection as a reserve was well merited.

Not such a happy picture was presented by PHIL STROLOVICH, a Mancunian invited at the E.T.F.A.'s expense. Phil, on normal form, was an even-money chance of selection. Unfortunately, against the quick-fire attack of his opponents he appeared cumbersome.

A great pity, for only the previous week he had given Jimmy Lowe, the best player on view, a tough struggle in the Lancashire Open Junior Final.

Nevertheless he takes a philosophical view and says: "I've enjoyed every minute of the season and intend to put my back into it during the summer months." Well said, Phil, and if you are willing to take advice from me: a little less weight might do the trick.

(Bruke to our over-the-border friends, B R I A N CARTWRIGHT (Sheffield) who came up on the post. His selection as a reserve was well merited.

"Slide-Rule Efficiency" - BUT

A pet on the back here. The slide-rule efficiency with which Lancashire County Cricket and the Manchester League handled the Yorks experiments by playing the Senior and Junior events on two distinct dates, and indeed, the early rounds, and indeed, the early rounds, and indeed, the early rounds on Thursday and Friday or on Saturday afternoon.

That Tournament Controversy Again

One would not go so far as to say that such a huge entry was accepted purely as a money-spinner. Indeed, the officials, who are their time and services free, are only too pleased to accommodate entries, proud in the knowledge that the tournament is attracting country-wide attention. Thus, the torn-off controversy arises again: Should entries be restricted or tournaments graded?

Yorkshire experimented by playing the Senior and Junior events on two distinct dates, but even this did not quite fill the bill.

Snag is that so few cities are equipped with suitable halls at the right hire price. Consequently the entry is restricted. Even this entails more dates, but even this did not quite fill the bill.

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Oxford draw at Cambridge

The annual Table Tennis match between Oxford and Cambridge celebrated its coming of age by making a public debut in the Corn Exchange, Cambridge, on Saturday, February 11th.

It was a thrilling evening for varsity fans. The interval score was 4 wins to a jubilant Oxford and only 1 win to Cambridge. Their first doubles pair, Burrows and King, produced the surprise of the evening by beating the strong Oxford combination of Hurst and Gilbert. This inspired Cambridge to further endeavour and to finally round off the evening with a draw of five wins all.

Scores (Cambridge first):

P. J. Burrows (Trinity) beat J. Hurst (University) 16, 17, 16; lost to S. W. Gilbert (Wadham) 18, 19.

G. E. King (Trinity) lost to J. Hurst 15, 13, 15; lost to S. W. Gilbert 19, 12, 13.

N. T. Roderick (Caius) lost to W. P. Wolf (New) 14, 13, 14; beat D. W. Tyler (Trinity) 18, 12, 14.

S. G. Whitehall (Christ's) beat W. P. Wolf 21, 14; beat D. W. Tyler 22, 16, 14.

Doubles: Burrows/King beat Hurst/Gilbert 20, 12; Holmes/Roderick beat Wolf/McHugo 18, 15.

"We'll soon get used to it."

[With acknowledgements to "The Sporting Record."]
Although Johnny Leach retained his title his form was only a shade short of the previous year's, the only surprise in the Men's event being the win over Maurice Bergl by young Colin Russell in the first round. Ron Sharmahman had difficulty in disposing of Eric Marsden and Jackie Head, on his way to the Final. In the doubles Leo Thompson and Jimmy Lowe scored a creditable win over K. Beamish and P. Smith, who had previously disposed of the Hurlock/Head combination.

In his semi-final with Ron Sharmah, Ken Craige showed that he is rapidly regaining his old confidence, while Michael Thornhill proved too lively for Dennis Miller. The Final between Sharmah and Thornhill proved to be a battle of wits, interesting but not spectacular.

Semi-Finals:

Finals
M.S. Thornhill beat Sharmah 15 13, 18, 15.
L.S. R. Rowe beat D. Rowe 12, 12, 18, 16.
M.D. Sharman/R. Rowe beat Craigie/D. Rowe 12, 18, 14.
D. Rowe/R. Rowe beat P. Cantor/P. Piper 11, 7.
M.D. Sharman/Craigie beat Thompson 18 13, 17, 24.
Junior Boys J. Lowe beat D. Burridge 16, 8.
Junior Girls D. Spooner beat S. Smith 10, 19.

The Surrey Open
at Epsom Municipal Baths, 1st-4th March, 1950

Excellent conditions rewarded the 540 entrants in this tourney and inspired a good standard of play. Results went very much "according to the book," but three young ladies made a special impression.

Fifteen-year-old Doreen Spooner reached the women's senior final and won the first game from international Joyce (Roberts) Miller.

Doreen, however, was herself beaten in the junior singles by her Ashford rival, Sheila Smith. Sheila, mainly a defensive player, summoned up a defensive game and well-chosen sallies. He beat Burridge (19, 15) and made Jimmy Lowe work hard in the final.

The Open Junior Doubles gave us the strange sight of two boys playing together. "Blind dates" are rather fun—and no seeding!

Three More for Rosalind
Middlesex (Herga) Open
February 13th-18th, 1950

By AUDREY FOWLER

Middlesex players shared all titles in the Middlesex (Herga) Open held at the Herga Lawn Tennis Club, Harrow. The entries had to be limited to 290 which included 58 Juniors. Despite the lack of rain-back, play reached a high standard, the only surprise in the Men's singles being the win over Maurice Bergl by young Colin Russell in the first round. Ron Sharmahman had difficulty in disposing of Eric Marsden and Jackie Head, on his way to the Final. In the doubles Leo Thompson and Jimmy Lowe scored a creditable win over K. Beamish and P. Smith, who had previously disposed of the Hurlock/Head combination.

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The Midland Open
at Birmingham, 24th-25th February, 1950

Evidence of the keen following built up by the Birmingham Association was seen when 650 people crowded into the Indoor Sports Stadium for the "Midland open” finals.

Dennis Walker (Ashbourne) usually beats at least one good man per tournament. This time it was Wally Poole, in spite of the latter’s recent run of success.

The ladies’ play was not very inspiring; the junior boys, however, gave the crowd ample compensation. Maurice Leach, of Cheltenham, impressed everyone by his compact defensive game and well-chosen sallies. He beat Burridge (19, 15) and made Jimmy Lowe work hard in the final.

The Open Junior Doubles gave us the strange sight of two boys playing together. "Blind dates" are rather fun—and no seeding!
A JUNIORS ONLY TOURNAMENT

A LARGE entry is expected for the Yorkshire Junior Open Championships to be held at Brightlington, near Bradford, on March 4th, 1950. The finals are to be staged at the Mechanics' Institute, Bradford. Several well-known Northern Internationals, together with local players are to complete the programme with an exhibition.

The Mechanics' Institute, Bradford, is a concert hall capable of seating some 700 spectators on ground floor and balcony. In recent years it has not been possible to obtain a renewal of the dramatic licence thus making the Institute more readily available for the presentation of sporting events. Realising the glorious opportunity, the Bradford Association caused an extension to the stage to be constructed, which enables table tennis to be played in first-class conditions. The expense incurred seems to have been justified in that the Mechanics' institute is gaining recognition as the venue for all important table tennis events.

Kennedy in form

YORKSHIRE were no match for Surrey in the premier division match played at Pontefract on January 21st last. Brian Kennedy, however, played well enough to deserve a victory over Crayden and there was little to choose between Carrington and Kennedy. A husband and wife combination is always an added attraction particularly when a high standard of play is attained, such as the Carrington's provided. The Bishops of Hull are a Yorkshire combination which promises to develop into a partnership of marked success.

Graded Internationals?

Is it easier to become an international player when one lives nearer E.T.T.A. headquarters than Yorkshire? This question was frequently asked after the Yorkshire—Essex match at Bradford on February 4th. New international Brunwell scraped home against Britton by the narrowest of narrow margins, lost fairly easily to Brian Kennedy and was on the losing side in the mixed doubles to a scratch combination. McCave looked to be easily the best player in the Essex side. I think international status could be graded, thus enabling the E.T.T.A. to recognise many table tennis players who at the moment seem to be "out of sight and out of mind."

A win over Lincolnshire on February 18th at Huddersfield will give Yorkshire the Midland Division Championship. This is particularly satisfactory when one considers that the Premier Division team of the future is to be built from the young players trained in the Midland nursery. It cannot be denied, however, that there is a big gap between the divisions and, more markedly, between North and South. The need for readily accessible coaching on a national scale is quite definitely indicated.

Something Missing

WANTED an additional copy of the January issue of the official magazine, I visited in Bradford, two railway bookstalls and several sports outfitters, but met with no success. In some cases the reply was "never 'eard of it!" I did notice one copy of a rival publication. It seems to me that the publicity department of the official magazine has lots of virgin territory to explore.

"Come to the North, Jim Edwards"

ALTHOUGH many people were disappointed that Johnny Leach failed to retain his World Title, Bergmann's victory was a popular one and illustrates so vividly, that all important quality of determination. We would, however, like to see these stars more frequently in Yorkshire, without having to resort to expense which we can ill afford. Bergmann and other famous players would do a power of good to the game if perhaps a little less discrimination were shown in deciding which tournament is to have the magnetic attraction of their entry.

To the famous radio star it is often said, "Come home, Jim Edwards." We say to these retiring stars, "Come North and grace our tables."

Hail to thee, Dick Bergmann, For thou art truly great, Your patience is rewarded The year you had to wait. They said your game was ended, Too slow and lacked a kill, The Critics are confounded. Their judgments set at nil. They also serve who stand and wait, Thus the saying goes. But you gave of your very best, And vanquished mighty foes. Naturalised or natural born It matters not a jot, A forehand drive is still a drive, A shot remains a shot. Pay tribute to this working man, Let all hold out a hand, A toast to Richard Bergmann who Brought honour to our land.

HOW TO RANK YOUR LEAGUE TEAM

A Suggestion . . . by W. C. WINTER

For the second match, rank players on their previous performances. After the second match they would thereafter be selected on their performances in the two previous matches. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Ties</th>
<th>Games Played</th>
<th>Games Won</th>
<th>Games Lost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
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The team for the next match would therefore be ranked C, B, A and D.
Two Memorable Quarter-Finals

FROM THE 1949-50 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Another Bergmann v. Vana Classic

BERGMANN v. VANA is always a classic. Always the best match of a tournament. Technically it is easy to describe.

It was 80 minutes of perfect control, with Vana playing slow-rolls and push-shots punctuated by short spells of deep baseline attack.

Bergmann's game was to retrieve everything, chopping more heavily than he does against other opponents and always looking out for faulty dropshots which he would try to smash first time past Vana.

The only variation in Bergmann's game was to indulge in short spells of slow topspin lifting. Surprisingly, Vana invariably chopped these back when one would have expected him to smash the odd one or two into Bergmann's body in order to destroy the latter's confidence in this rather cheeky form of return.

Both men were splendidly fit and apparently unperturbed throughout the struggle. Vana has slowed down slightly which now makes Bergmann the faster mover.

Only twice in the long struggle was Bergmann beaten by a drop-shot. Vana kept his brow cool with eau-de-cologne; Richard bathed his wrists and temple with water occasionally.

For the first time in their 14 years' rivalry, Vana did not stake everything in his attack. Instead he showed that at last he appreciated that these Bergmann matches were tests of character and nerve (their skills being precisely equal although of different style).

So we saw Vana, "The Electric Man," playing a cliche deliberately, to show Bergmann that the attacker could wait as long as the defender, and conserve his strength ready for short spells of obliteration-biting.

It so nearly worked. Vana, by the fifth game, had certainly tamed Bergmann in the psychological duel. Never has the resilient Richard looked so desperate as when Vana held on to his 1, 2, or 3-point lead right up to 18-14. But in taming Richard, Vana had tamed himself also. Eighty minutes chess concentration had dulled his great attacking instinct, and when danger threatened he could not put the pressure on.

What was in Bergmann's mind at 14-15 down? Just hope; no plan. Hope never leaves him. Had he not pulled up in the 4th game from 13-15 to 19-15?

At 18-20 in this deciding match Bergmann hit furiously. Only Vana could possibly have got such shots back. By trying three smash kills in succession, 18-20, Vana a point, 20-19, So what did Richard do? Why he tried three smash kills again, and this time he didn't miss, because he just must not miss. That's Bergmann.

There was much sympathy for Bo Vana, because of his unlucky finals record last year, and his perfect table tennis manner and sportsmanship.

Richard, too, is perfection in this respect.

I sum up. Richard Bergmann was like a boxer losing on points, who realised that a knock-out in the last round can save him. A boxer, did I say? A fighter, I mean.

Benningwood, Coventry, suggests that the E.T.T.A. publish a Table Tennis Diary. What about it, fellow fans?

S.A. Welcomes Litten

"You, wish we could get a few more converts, old man," said the "Queen Mary on 15th March. They're Oft Again!

"Quickened his game even more, and the gods of chance smilingly rewarded him out at 21-16: Two games all. Haguenauer, and won the next two games at 14 each, Johnny up 2/2. By the fourth game, the Frenchman had his second wind and Johnny was strained by the pace. He might have rested awhile by pushing to Haguenauer's backhand, and given a surprise value to his hitting. But Johnny attacked, and Haguenauer just grabbed a lead to pull out at 21-16. Two games all.

In the fifth and final game, there was no sign of weakening from either, no sign of nerves, no change in tactics, no losing of force. They reached 9 a all together, and then Haguenauer drew ahead to 14-9, and things looked bad. But from hidden reserves, Johnny quickened his game even more, and the gods of chance smilingly rewarded him with 3 edge balls!

Point by point they fought it out, 17-18, 18-17, in the do-or-die deciding match, Johnny forcing a terrific race. Then suddenly two easy ones from Johnny, and zip, the score is 18-20. With the energy of a first set point, Johnny was just superb, it seemed as though he would win even yet. A point brilliantly earned, 19-20!? No—Haguenauer got back in a return which clipped the sideline: untakeable.

Thus the crown which rests so heavily on the head was lifted off in favour of a fine sportsman and a great fighter.

SA. Welcomes Litten

Hymie Sofer, who was over here during the 1948 World Championships, writes from Pretoria, South Africa:

"In your December issue, you imply that Ron Litten since his arrival in South Africa has claimed to have won "unwanted" matches. Well, have known Ron ever since he arrived and at no time has he ever claimed to have ever been to Europe, never mind won table tennis championships there. He has never told claim to any titles which he has not won, and all his statements re his table tennis career in England have been of a very modest nature."
"OFFICIAL Photographer to "Table Tennis"."

I wonder what sort of picture that conjures for you: a flowing-haired individual wearing an orange shirt, green slacks and sandals? Or a little man in a bowler hat peering nervously about from behind a pair of battered spectacles? To clear up any misapprehensions, the Editor has been persuaded to publish a photo of his picture producer and from personal experience I can assure you that he doesn’t wear a bowler hat, even when not playing table tennis.

I suppose you owe some explanation for starting on such a personal note. Well I would rather write as a T.T. fanatic who takes photographs than as a T.T. photographer who has to work for the local "rag," who operates for the local "rag," who operates for the local "rag," who operates for the local "rag." To clear up any misapprehensions, the Editor has been persuaded to publish a photo of his picture producer and from personal experience I can assure you that he doesn’t wear a bowler hat, even when not playing table tennis.

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**Table Talk from Budapest**

**Sur-Prizes**

In one respect certainly, the Budapest Championships were the best ever: in the matter of trophies. In almost every case, handsome prizes for "keeps" were awarded to winners, in addition to the trophies returnable at the end of a year. (How short a year seems to a World Champion!)

Another innovation was the provision of prizes for the semi-finalists of all events. It was a complete surprise to our Swytihing Cup team when they were called out to receive medals as runners-up in Group B.

**All On Edge**

**WHEN** you score your first point with a nice kill in the centre of the table, it is disconcerting to hear the umpire call "Edge." But we soon found that in Hungary, every game starts with an "edge," this being the pronunciation of egy (meaning "one.").

Six is called "hot" and ten "tiz." The English girls, starved of their traditional beverage, were always vulnerable when the score reached 10–6, and the umpire announced, "Tea's Hot!"

**Those Regulations**

"**WATCH YOUR STEP**" they told us before we left home, "the police in these foreign countries are terribly strict." Outside the Hotel Astoria, for the whole time of our stay, a car was parked, resplendent in the traffic lights and neatly stationed against the "No Parking" sign!

It takes three days to get the precious grey card which permits its owner to cross the Russian Zone from Vienna to Budapest—and the grey card was still safe—under our pillow!

**The Good Excuses Department**

A CITIZEN of one of the more romantic countries explained his 3–0 defeat. "Ah, it was so unfortunate. My opponent was a good player, but when I was losing 0–2, a so-beautiful lady came to sit by the table and so—I have no chance any more."

Ladies, Beware!

**TALKING** of so-beautiful ladies, one of them gave the crowd a short-lived sensation.

"You know Szabados, of course?" we asked. "Oh yes, sure!" was the reply, "I been there often."

**High and Low**

there were many misgivings about the lighting. Only three lights per table, all central, giving much lower candlepower in the defensive corners than we are accustomed to in an average county match here.

The lights were slung rather high, 10ft. from the table, not from the floor. This was so that they should not obstruct the view of the spectators "up in the gods."

But they still weren't high enough for one young lady, who lodged a formal complaint that they did not allow her to play her normal style.

Remind me to send her name to Gilbert Marshall for His Higher Net Reform League.

**One of the Impressions**

**A Special Postmark celebrating the World Championships**

---

**Delaying Tactics or Push as Push Can**

The superior skill of the continental girls in pushing or waiting play has often lost our British girls many a game.

Audrey Bates, Welsh International, playing against Madame Delay, of France, was losing 12–18 in the second game. She settled down to pushing play, at which her opponent is an expert, and won that game 22–20!

"I learned something by entering that consolation singles. I learned how to "push" when in trouble. It was worth the 12 Forints entry fee!"

**The Andreadis Overarm Stroke**

While the mixed party including French, Poles, Austrians and Czechs, were walking through the ruined buildings of Old Buda, on the hill overlooking the Danube, a friendly snow-fight developed.

The energetic young Austrian lassie, Linda Werth (who informed us that we could call her "Mickey Mouse"), quietly found her way up to the battlements. From there she conducted a private war, attacking both sides impartially with high-level bombing.

She was herself outflanked by Ivan Andreadis. With the air of an intervening god, he sent just one enormous snowball sailing 25 yards through the air in a typical Andreadis curve. It caught "Mickey Mouse" clean in the whiskers.

The great man wiped his hands, acknowledged the applause, and murmured: "I never throw another one. I've retired!"

**Bold Facts**

During this same ramble we looked in on the famous hot-water swimming baths on Margareta Island. Through the steam we saw Hungarian championship aspirants training most diligently, and in most impressive style.

A Hungarian whispered that habitue's of these baths were inclined to lose their hair rather quickly. Szabados and Bellak, he said, spent hours in the water here..., and just look at them!

We were still thinking this over sceptically when along came Adrian Haydon, the England captain.

"Oh, I remember these baths," he said. "Had quite a few swims in there, pre-war." We took a quick look at the skipper's scalp—and said nowt!
County Championships

MIDDLESEX WIN TRIPLE CROWN

Yorkshire faced with several challengers for Premier Division place

AFTER a struggle made more exciting by the overwhelming 8-1 win of Gloucestershire over Surrey, Middlesex won the Premier Division title on a games average over Essex, who had little difficulty in beating Gloucestershire in the key match, in which victory for Gloucestershire by a convincing margin would have secured them the championships. As Middlesex also won both the Junior and East Anglian Divisions, in each case without dropping a point, they became triple champions.

At the other end of the Premier Division table are Yorkshire, wooden spoonists for the third successive season. It will be recalled that last season Yorkshire were challenged by Cheshire for a place in the Premier Division title on games average over Essex, who had little difficulty in winning by a convincing margin, and would have secured the championship if Middlesex slipped up; but they didn't. In fact, they beat Bedfordshire and Herefordshire both by 9-0, themselves, to finish comfortably winners. Kent, however, still retain the services of their leading youngster for next season, whereas the whole of the Middlesex team will be over age, Kent must therefore start strong favourites.

In the other two matches played, Essex recorded two good wins, 8-1 over Herefordshire and 7-2 over Bedfordshire, to finish in third position.

NORTHERN DIVISION

Northumberland finished their programme in a blaze of glory, beating Durham 8-1 and Yorkshire 7-2, to win the divisional championship for the first time. In the only other match played, Cumberland proved no match for Durham, although in this instance 4 of the 9 matches went to 3 before they lost 9-0. A reply is at present awaited from Northumberland as to whether they wish to challenge for the Premier Division.

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Surrey have still to play their return match with Devonshire, and the table below will show just how important this match is. The two counties could hardly have fought a closer battle.

One of the features of this section has been the comparative fall of Hampshire, although no one can say they have had the best of luck. (Continued at foot of page 11)
THE SPIRITS OF THE GAME

"Come round to the hospital and play me a game of table tennis," invited my new medical student friend, a redheaded young man named Steve. "We'll have a little something on it, if you like." I liked. Modest though I am, I can't help feeling that table tennis is my game. I may not be a Bergmann, or a Johnnie Leach, or an Aubrey Simons, but well...

The table was in a large, empty room next to the pathological laboratory—empty, that is, but for about two dozen glass cases on the walls. I hadn't time to look at them before we started playing.

"Each set of five games, half-a-crown a set?" Steve suggested.

"Five shillings, if you like," I said grandly.

"Right. Play for service." It was as I expected. He was a pretty good player, but... I won the first two games 21-13, 21-8. As we were changing ends for the next game Steve gave his bat a Banna flick towards one of the cases.

"Ever seen anything like that?" he inquired. I never had. "That" looked like a piece of purple rubber. Horrible.

"Owner of that lung was a heavy pipe smoker," said Steve. "Used to get through an ounce a day. That's the result. What's your tobacco consumption?"

"A-about an ounce a day," I faltered.

Steve looked grave. He won the next three games and the first set. But I set my teeth, pulled myself together, and had the second set in my sights. Then Steve insisted on showing me the finer points of a liver that had come to a shocking end through too close an association with whisky. I like whisky. I lost the set.

I lost the third to an overloaded stomach, the fourth to a fatty heart, and the fifth to the queerest looking pair of kidneys you ever saw.

As I left I sadly asked: "Do you ever lose at this game?"


COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS—Cont.

During last month they lost to Surrey, Kent and Devonshire, all by the same narrow margin, 4-5. Kent were particularly pleased to record their first victory; new player Etheridge had a lot to do with this.

Other results during the month were: Sussex 4, Surrey 5; Kent 2, Hampshire 7.

**SCORES:**

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EAST ANGLIAN DIVISION

Chief interest in this division centred in who was to be runners-up to Middlesex, and this honour fell to Cambridgeshire, who made certain with a narrow 5-4 win over Norfolk. The return of Thurston from the Forces, and the continued improvement in young Cornwell's play have turned Cambridge into quite a force.

Ingham's shock pen-grip and half-volley, and was no doubt satisfied to defeat him in two games. He encountered Runchman in brilliant defensive mood, and had to pull out some spectacular winners in order to clinch the third game at 18.

EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD J. A. Thurston provided the surprise and the weightiest influence on the issue by winning his three matches with the loss of only one game, to Ingham. A little more reserved in stroke-play than his mates, Thurston chopped and moved to the ball very efficiently, punishing the loose ball just as effectively. At the end of a close game he had the knack of sorting out the right ball and annexing the important points.

To the unconcealed delight of the public, the unassuming Albert Hall turned out for this one after eighteen months of retirement.

FINISHING AT THE FOOT: Other results: Suffolk 2, Middlesex 7; Norfolk 1, Middlesex 8.

**HOME COUNTIES DIVISION**

Essex 2nds finished unbeaten in this section, but not before they had two narrow squeaks against Bucks and Beds. Actually a weakened Essex team did extremely well to beat Bedfordshire 5-4, after being 4-3 behind at one stage. With the score 4 all Langner beat Ironmonger by the extraordinary scores 20-22, 21-19, 21-14, 21-12.

The Andersons took the third game at 18. Eighteen-year-old J. A. Thurston repeated the surprise and the weightiest influence on the issue by winning his three matches with the loss of only one game, to Ingham. A little more reserved in stroke-play than his mates, Thurston chopped and moved to the ball very efficiently, punishing the loose ball just as effectively.

At the end of a close game he had the knack of sorting out the right ball and annexing the important points.

McEntee beat Ironmonger by his set and a poor second rubbers did not do justice to the hard fight each one gave.

Ken Craigie, the English International and Middlesex representative, pleased with some crisply played opposition and lively all-round tactics. Yet at times he was troubled by Ingham's shock pen-grip and half-volley, and was no doubt satisfied to defeat him in two games. He encountered Runchman in brilliant defensive mood, and had to pull out some spectacular winners in order to clinch the third game at 18.

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it is hoped next month to review individual players' performances.
Since Budapest, there has been a revival of the old chiselling controversy; some saw the Bergmann-Soos final have criticised the tactics employed by the finalists. Others have been equally outspoken in condemning the rules and conditions of play which led world-class players to adopt purely defensive tactics in these critical matches.

It should be emphasised that no one criticises the conduct or sportmanship of either player. Indeed, Richard Bergmann has received widespread praise in this respect, and also for the determination and power of concentration which he displayed throughout the tournament.

**THE CRITIC**

Below is a resume of an extemporary broadcast interview between C. Corti Woodcock (pictured on left) and Howard Marshall.

**HOWARD MARSHALL:** In the studio tonight we have Mr. Corti Woodcock, a past Chairman of the E.T.T.A. and donor of the World's Singles championship trophy, who has just returned from the World Table Tennis Championships at Budapest. Now Corti, what were your impressions?

**CORTI WOODCOCK:** Well, Howard, I collected a great number of impressions. In general, the cold, the high cost of living, and the warmth of our welcome. As regards the tournament, the excellence of the organization, the noisy partisanship of the crowd, the efforts of the squads of interpreters to cope with a dozen languages, and the slow tables. As you know, the World's Singles title was brought back to this country — the third year running — and we have it by Richard, though not a naturalised Englishman. But my own vivid recollection is of our defending champion, Johnny Leach. He was magnificent — as glorious in defeat as Bergmann was not-so-glorious in victory.

**H. M.** Can you explain that a little more? I gather there's something behind your remark—something probably of a rather controversial nature?

**C. W.** Yes, Howard, I expect it will be regarded as controversial. It's just my own personal opinion, of course, but I feel strongly that Johnny showed the quality and spirit one expects of a worthy world champion; and Richard did not. Even though he lost, we were immensely proud of Johnny when Haguenauer, the Frenchman, unexpectedly beat him in the fourth round.

He'd beaten Haguenauer several times recently, but this time the French boy really played above himself and with great tenacity. Some of us thought it would have paid Johnny better to have quietened down when he led by 2 games to 1. But not a bit of it. No time-limit nonsense for Johnny! Even in the last few points of the decisive game he was still hitting out bravely, with all the defiance of a Cockney during the blitz or London.

**H. M.** That's grand. But what do you mean by Bergmann being "not so glorious in victory"?'

**C. W.** Well, Richard Bergmann went out to play that Final against the Hungarian, Soos, at 11.13 p.m. and it lasted until nearly 1 o'clock in the morning. Now, a best-of-five match usually takes 30 to 40 minutes, yet Soos didn't make his first score from an attacking stroke until the 48th minute after the match started.

**H. M.** Was there any special reason for this performance?

**C. W.** Yes, there was. For one thing, the patriotic element. The crowd got very excited and wanted their man Soos to be satisfied with all the defiance of a Cockney during the blitz or London.

**H. M.** I see, but in many other sports, the players' attitude towards the game, that final, reduced it to a farce. For a man to strive to win a World title by trying to snatch a lead of a point or two and then sit back on his heels and play pat-ball to win on the time-limit rule, is not my idea of sport.

**BERGMANN'S OWN WORDS**

The opportunity to avenge my lamentable defeat (time limit) at the hands of Soos on the occasion of last year's championships at Stockholm was eagerly welcomed by me. Play at first produced negative tactics, not least caused by the peculiar surface of the table, which greatly favoured defence. Try as I might, I could not get my attack going, and finally gave it up as a bad job. The attempt cost me the first game, but the process of attrition continued, and with two games down (and the game, Soos must watch the clock. And then, the finalists themselves were scared of each other and didn't dare to attack. They just waited for the other to make a mistake and were content to keep the ball safely in play.

**CARRINGTON COMMENTS**

Though this match was naturally not everybody's dish, to the objective and serious student of the game it was an enthralling battle.

**IVOR MONTAGU REVIEWS THE MATCH**

(Reprinted from the English Championships Programme)

Bergmann said, "Could they do but push? In both the first two games, after terrific many-stroke battles, Soos got an early lead. Bergmann couldn't only catch up and, fast as his hit is, Soos would get it back. In the third, again Soos led. But two up and 3-0, he became venturesome. Richard led for the first time in the match, 4-3. This was the turning point, and cost Soos the title. Now Soos must force the game, Soos must watch the clock. And force he did, not so hard a hit as Richard, but with infinite variety, and Richard running to keep the ball in play.

Usually between giants, for all the fireworks, nothing is decisive till around seventeen. In this match, the first three or four points of each game decided, the rest each time was the victim struggling in octopus toils.

Richard recovered his title, almost on his feet, flat with exhaustion, after a final which was one of the most interesting and exciting ever played—though certainly not the most beautiful—and after a personal display, throughout the tournament, of single-minded and good-humoured concentration.
WORLD CHAMPION

FROM THE BERGMANN RECORD

LUCK OR LEGEND?—Jack Carrington Sums Up

WHAT happens to Bergmann's opponents? TURNOFSKY, a first-class Czech hitter, winning 11-4, in the fifth game, finished nowhere.
VANA, a World Champion, winning 18-14 in the fifth. Finished with 18.
SOOS, two games up in the final, by chopping and placing and feinting. Starts the third game as a flashy attacker and ends up as all flashy attackers do against Bergmann—dizzled out.

What's the explanation? "Bergmann fights so hard," they say.
"What of it? Don't you fight; doesn't Vana, doesn't Soos, doesn't anybody fight when they're 14-18 down?"
"Richard's defence is so good," they say. So it is, but how did these others get their leads of 18-14, etc.
Bergmann luck, say some. But every champion admits it needs luck to win.

And mark you, Richard has very little luck in the way of edge-balls, or net-cords. The margin on his returns is too big for those accidents.
It must just be that from long habit, 14-18 or 15-19 sounds like a winning score to him.

Richard himself calls it "instinct." "I just feel that the other chap isn't sure of himself," he says.

"That's good enough for me," said I, so he started shouting all over the place; "Floh, Floh!" (which means "flea" in German) and presently a diminutive figure appeared from between the tables.

I was rather embarrassed because I am 6 foot 2 inches tall and there was a frail boy of 15 who looked like 12, but very intelligent. I felt rather sorry for him at first, because he had really to jump about like a flea in order to get to and away from the ball, but somehow he always managed to get it back.

In the end he did beat me just as Flussmann had predicted and at the time I felt rather silly to get beaten by a little boy of this size. But a few years later that little boy won the world's championship and to-day I can proudly tell anyone who cares to listen that I played Richard Bergmann and although he won, I made "The Flea" hop around.
**Time for a Change urges**

**IVOR EYLES**
Gloucester T.T.A. Secretary

Alice in Wonderland Tangle!

OTHER than finding a County team for the Championships and organizing the County Tournament, I am quite convinced that County bodies are of little use under the present constitution. We are overdue for an overhaul of the organisation and a straightening out of the Alice-in-Wonderland-like tangle. We need better consideration from the E.T.T.A.

Right now, before the Annual Meeting, I most strongly urge county administrators to think out these things most carefully.

**Ignorance is NOT Bliss**

POINT 1 of my big grouses is that the “powers that be” ignore the county body when calling upon selection or trials, etc. Often the first I hear that one of my players has been selected by the E.T.T.A. is from the player himself or by reading it in the newspaper. How can an organiser arrange matches, etc., when he can never be certain if his players will be available? It won’t do, E.T.T.A. Counties should be the first to be advised.

The Most Ridiculous Rigmarole of All

POINT 2. E.T.T.A. Rules 4 to 6 require a league to be first affiliated to the E.T.T.A. before it can affiliate to its county. This procedure ought to be reversed. I find it a positive hindrance to my arguments and efforts. There are hundreds of players and organisations willing to join the county association but who are not interested in a remote E.T.T.A. nor prepared to go to the trouble of approaching them.

Even if they do affiliate, then comes the most ridiculous rigamarole of all! The County Secretary has to work out and agree with the E.T.T.A. the number of clubs and additional teams in each of its leagues, in order to claim the rebate. Thus money passes from league to E.T.T.A.; some more passes from league to county; then the county has to run after some of that which has already been paid to the E.T.T.A.

How very much simpler for all concerned if any league merely paid one composite fee to the county, who, in turn, deducted its own fees and the rebate, and finally sent one cheque to cover all affiliated members of the county.

**Minorities in Power**

POINT 3. Now look over Rule 11 dealing with the General Council. A County is allowed one representative on the Council, but each league, is allowed 1, 2 or 3 according to its size. This means that it is possible for minorities in a county area to overrule a majority decision of a County Executive. This applies not only for nominations for the Council, but also to such other business as the Council may transact.

I suggest a collective line of election should replace this: (a) Leagues nominate their representatives to the County Executive; (b) County Executives nominate their representatives to the General Council; (c) General Council (as at present) nominate representatives to the National Executive Committee.

Thus voting papers would be sent only to the County body who would cast the votes for the whole of its membership, so that on this and all points it would be the democratic vote of the county in keeping with the duly recorded decision.

**Money is the Root of Good**

POINT 5. When county administration becomes weak or inefficient, the structure collapses, and cracks with E.T.T.A. officials suggest that they are somewhat apprehensive about there being suddenopyright by county officials. Criticism of honorary officials, whose goodwill cannot be questioned, may on occasions be helpful, but it also tends to be injudicious. Paid officials, on the other hand, must deliver the goods. As a parallel illustration, payment to exhibitio:n players promotes the highest standards of exhibition play with increased benefit to everyone concerned.

Organise, then, in a business-like manner. First, a paid and full-time Secretary and staff at the E.T.T.A. followed by paid County Secretaries, or even Area Secretaries, similar to the Area Organiser of the G.P.I.R. I do feel that the higher level of table tennis in this country is substantially due to some players beginning to make a living out of the game.

I am convinced that a few highly successful English Opens, plus others in the Provinces, would provide a sound nucleus for a fund to be devoted to such development as I have visualised.

**BELIEVE a thing is never so well done but that it could be done better. Consequently, I just love honest criticism with the guts to say what they honestly believe to be in the interest of the game.**

**Under good administration, “bad rebels” would never prosper. Nevertheless, just as even the best of boilers must have their safety-valves, so even in the best of counties, I must strongly uphold the right of individual league administrators to have direct access to the E. T. T. A. It is the foundation of our success.**

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Mar. 17-18 ... West of England (JBS, JGS) Palace Hotel, Torquay ... ... T. I. Gill, "Ellington," Shirburn Road, Torquay, Devon.

Mar. 25 ... Grimsby Open Pier Pavilion, Cleethorpes ... ... J. Browne, 331, Hainton Avenue, Grimsby, Lincs.

Mar. 25 ... "Daily Mirror" Y.M.C.A., Romford, Essex ... Do. Birmingham: Indoor Sports Stadium ... M. Goldstein, 415, Moseley Road, Birmingham, 14.

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Apl. 1 ... JUNIOR INTER-NATIONAL MATCH : Wales v. Eng.

Apl. 1-2 ... Bucks. Open (JBS, Community Centre, Slough ... L. Thompson, "Auchmead," The Avenue, Braysbury, Bucks.

Apl. 8-10 ... N.E. England Open Scarborough ... ... S. Waller, 2, Sidney Street, Scarborough.


Apl. 17-22 ... "FOCUS ON TABLE TENNIS" and "Daily Mirror" Semi-Finals with International Invitation Tourney


May 1-6 ... Thameside Open Hydro Hall, Plaistow ... L. R. Norminton, 31, Acacia Avenue, Romford, Essex.

"SOME LATER LANDMARKS" left out—no room!

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