BRITAIN'S No. 1's HELEN ELLIOT (Scotland) SHIRLEY JONES (Wales) and ANN HAYDON (England) admire the cups at the Sussex 'Open'

VICTOR BARNABY writes on SPONGE
JOHNNY LEACH introduces THE SANDWICH
HELP FOR HUNGARIANS

"TABLE TENNIS" has no intention of mixing politics with sport. They are two entirely separate fields and we are concerned only with the sport angle. However, like the rest of the world, recent events in Hungary are uppermost in our minds.

I am not concerned with the rights or wrongs of the trouble here, but all those who know the close ties between the English and Hungarian players over a period of 30 years have special reason for deep distress over the unfortunate events which have taken place in that unhappy land.

Fortunately, to the best of our knowledge, the Hungarian team were not directly involved, being out of the country. Their position is somewhat obscure. Some of the players may wish to return home; others may wish to join that endless stream of refugees and seek a new life elsewhere, possibly here.

It is not for us to influence them either way, but any that do come to this country can be assured of a warm welcome, judging by letters and phone calls I have received.

Many players in this country have no doubt already decided to contribute to one or other of the funds set up for Hungarian Relief.

It is not the desire of the E.T.T.A. to compete with this in any way, but if any players or Associations desire to show sympathy by contributing more directly to our table tennis friends and will send funds to the English Table Tennis Association, 214, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London W.C.2, clearly marked "HUNGARY," the E.T.T.A. will do its utmost to ensure that as these are forwarded they will be earmarked for this purpose.

STREAMLINING NEEDED

How many times at County Championship matches have you heard, "Oh dear, I can't wait to see the end or I shall miss my last train (or bus)"? How often have you also heard, "We must have bigger 'gates'"?

Many times, I'll wager. Yet with a little thought from the administrators these comments need never again be uttered.

For a larger following county matches must finish earlier. This would save those who rely on public transport having to depart without knowing the result.

The present programme of ten matches is obviously too long, for the finish is often 11 p.m. or even later. I suggest streamlining to eight matches. But the problem arises, where do we cut?

I feel that it is the men's singles that should go under the guillotine. Take off the third strings, leaving a fully representative programme of four men's singles, one women's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles.

The relegated member would have the incentive of having to fight to regain his place. Such a cut would almost certainly go unnoticed by the public, who in any case would prefer quality to quantity.

And to bring the public back there must be more publicity. Sports Editors are not so keen to give space to a meeting which ends too late for them to publish the results.

So the whole problem appears to revolve around an earlier finish.

Officials must take some action quickly otherwise table tennis is going to lose even more ground.

HARRISON EDWARDS.
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS — STOCKHOLM. The 24th World
Championships will be held in Stockholm, Sweden from March 7 to
March 15, 1957.

Details have now been received as to the cost per head of travel and
stay in Stockholm for the period of the Championships — in the region
of £65 to £70 per person.

This price has been calculated on the basis of hotel accommoda-
tion in Stockholm and the travel to Stockholm.

It has been advised that possibly the best and cheapest method of
travel would be by air from England to Leuchars (by train) to
Stockholm and on these facts the above estimate of cost has been
calculated.

Any member interested in making the trip should write to the Admini-
strative Secretary of the E.T.T.A., 214, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar
Square, W.C.2, by December 31, 1956, as shortly after that date arrange-
ments will be made. Any player wishing to take part should also advise the
Administrative Secretary accordingly.

ENGLISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS, 1957. As already reported
these Championships will take place on April 2 to 6, 1957. Arrangements
have been made to stage this event at Manor Place Baths, London, S.E.17
on April 2 and 3, and at the Empire Pool and Sports Arena, Wembley, Middlesex, on April 5 and
6, 1957.

A communication has been sent to all Leagues giving details of special
price rates for the finals of these Championships at Wembley and
reductions are being made in all the
higher priced tickets on both April.

It is early days to know who is likely to
take part, but, it will be noted
that the Championships are to be held very shortly after the World
Championships in Stockholm and it is known that many foreign players,
including those from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, France, Japan and
Roumania, are considering the idea of attending the English Open on their
way home.

Clubs are advised to communicate ticket requirements to their League
Secretaries without delay. In the event of the demand for any particu-
lar price being in excess of the number available then a proportion-
ate allocation will be made.

OFFICIAL HANDBOOK. The Official Handbook for season 1956/57
is now being dispatched to all Leagues. We are most grateful to the
printers for their whole hearted co-
operation in enabling the Handbook to be out early in the season.

SERVICE LAW. It is thought desirable to draw attention to the
present Service Law under which all
matches are to be played. This Law
(No. 10 in the Laws of Table Tennis
as adopted by the Inter-nation Table Tennis Federation) reads:—
A Good Service — The service shall begin by the server projecting
the ball by hand only, without im-
pairing spin, up into the air. The
ball shall then be struck so that it
touch first the server’s court and
then, passing directly over, or round
the net, touch the striker-out’s
court. The free hand, while in con-
tact with the ball in service, shaU
be open, with the fingers together,
and the ball resting on the palm without being cupped or
pinched in any way by the fingers. At the moment of the impact of the racket on the ball in service, the
latter shall be behind the end line
of the server’s court and between an
imaginary continuation of the side
lines.

Appendix to Laws: Knotty Points.
6. "Open hand" in Service: Physical Disability. Strict observa-
tion of the prescribed method of service may be waived where the
Umpire is notified, before play
begins, the compliance by the player in question is prevented by physical
disability.

VICTOR BARN AWARD. At
the annual challenge match between
the Champion County and The Rest
of England, Miss A. S. Haydon was
presented with the Victor Barna Award. The award was presented by
Victor Barna himself, the first time
the donor has had the chance of
making the presentation personally.

CLUB COMPETITIONS. Many of
our members are writing in asking
for permission to run Club Com-
petitions and the total number re-
ceived to date during this season is
76.

This is most gratifying and it is
hoped that many more of our Clubs
will return the BLUE Card to the
E.T.T.A. Office, 214, Grand Build-
ings, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2, stating
that they wish to have permission to
stage such a Competition.

The Competitions can take one of
15 different types, singles and doubles,
all of which are noted on the BLUE
card.

If your Club has not run a Com-
petition then ask your Secretary to
organise one; alternatively, if your
Secretary does not know the details of how the Competitions work then
please ask him/her to write to the
E.T.T.A. straightaway.

Each Competition helps to gather
further finance in the World Cham-
pionships Travelling Expenses Fund
which will doubtless be needed when
our players next have to travel to
Asia to compete in the World
Championships.

TEAM SELECTION: v. Belgium
(Junior Mixed) November 12, 1956,
at Herne Bay. P. Cole (Suffolk),
A. Piddock (Kent), J. G. Woodforde
(Somerset), Miss A. Jacobs (Kent).
Non-playing captain, J. Carrington
(Essex).

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E.C.4. (FLEet Street 9993).

HARRY VENNER
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MITCHAM, SURREY.
HARRY SPIERS, the life-begins-at-41 player, has pushed his way back into the Birmingham team after a break of 18 years.

Remember Harry? Last season he snaffled the English Open veterans' title, and very soon had several other titles dangling from his belt.

The veteran sponge-bat merchant was beating most of the leading Birmingham men but, apart from veteran frolics, the selectors turned a blind eye.

Harry kicked off this season by beating Roy Moseley, Ken Burton and Johnny Harrison in the trials but there was still no call to city duty.

But it couldn't last. The Birmingham men opened the season by scraping a 5-5 draw with West Bromwich in a Midland League tussle. Then they won only two of the six men's singles at stake when they met Bristol in the Western League, and finally hit rock bottom by losing 5-1 to Leicester in the first round of the Wilmott Cup.

So the selectors gave in . . . they sent for Harry. Coming in for the Midland League clash with Gloucester, he won both his singles, and helped his team to a 7-3 success.

Next came the Midland League tussle with Leicester, and Harry again helped his side to a 7-3 victory. Sweet revenge for that Wilmott Cup defeat.

Odd point. Harry beat Rugby's George Tsow to take the men's singles title in the Woodfield (Wolverhampton) tournament, but was beaten in the veteran final, losing to 17st. Frank Harris, the bulky Wolverhampton Electricity player.

Harry may be 41, but he's certainly not finished yet.

There's another Haydon looming up on the table tennis horizon. He is Paul Haydon, and he's only 11. Paul is one of Tommy Haydon's sons, and might well follow in his cousin Ann's footsteps.

Spare a thought . . . Stan Higgins (Railways) and Ron Grainger (City) have "hung up" their table tennis bats for good. Both have been told by their doctors—"No more TT for you!"

Watch that swing! Hugh Boyle.

---

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NO MORE LOSS OF YOUR TEMPER . . .
NO MORE LOOKING LIKE A TRAMP AT THE TABLE

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LOOK FOR THE TABLE TENNIS BAT MOTIF

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*Three*
Honeymoon Table Tennis

by Elsie Carrington

I WONDER how many people can claim to have played table tennis the day after their wedding day? And how many can claim to have played in County Trials on the very first day of their honeymoon?

This surely must be a record for Margaret Bennett (now Mrs. Dodd) of Woolwich, who was married on September 15 and on the morning of September 16 was playing in the Kent County Trials.

As a result of these trials, she was ranked No. 4 in the County. "I didn't play all that well," she told me, and added, with a twinkle in her eye, "my mind was not on the game." She drove alone all the way from Edinburgh to Hastings for the Sussex Open—and this, mark you, when she hadn't driven for four years!

However, being a true Scot, she pressed on undaunted, and eventually found herself in the wilds of Surrey! However, as you can imagine, the journey was not an uneventful one. Helen had been routed by the A.A. to by-pass London, but she had a feeling that she had gone off her reue when she suddenly found herself in St. Leonards-on-Sea staging to pocket any loose balls that happen to fall through!

I longed to get on my feet and could get around to all the tournaments, I am sure she could go far.

Julie represented the Home Counties in the match against Belgium and then stayed on to act as a "score twiddler" in the International matches against Belgium and Germany. I felt (and maybe she did, too) that she should have been playing in these International matches. Instead, she cheerfully scored for and supported the "luckier" members of the England team.

Helen Elliot for the longest drive to Hove by Elsie Carrington

I have been to Herne Bay for the Kent Junior tournament this year the English and Kent Junior Championships. What a sight, too! Doves of little bodies dashing around; some scrambling for tables for a knock-up; some "knocking-up" in the foyer across the floor; and some squatting patiently under the seat staging to pocket any loose balls that happen to fall through!

Handy Hints

On arrival, all competitors for this tournament were handed a printed sheet, compiled by Mr. George White, the Referee, entitled "A Note to the Young Player." This gave helpful hints for the newcomers on how to behave in tournaments and, from what I saw, it really did help them. Some of the "old hands" might have read it with profit.

I was most impressed with Julie Johnson, of Ramsgate, in this tournament. What a lovely storming game she plays, and what fight!

Her game against M'Selle Feraud, of France, was the best girls' match I saw in the whole tournament, and really had the spectators on their feet. She lost very narrowly in the third game, but showed such aggression and determination that I couldn't help feeling what a pity it is that she lives in such an isolated part of the country.

If only she lived nearer to London and could get around to all the tournaments, I am sure she could go far.

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Quotation from a National Sunday Newspaper: "Miss Elliot, using the new 'sandwich' sponge bat, lost to Miss Haydon in the final of the Birmingham Open, Miss Haydon was using the 'orthodox sponge.'"

I suppose the good, old-fashioned pimpled rubber is now unorthodox?

Latest recruit to the ever-growing band of table tennis mothers is Pam Mortimer, the attractive Birmingham international.

Pam, in private life Mrs. Alan Lake, wife of Evening Dispatch Table Tennis Correspondent, gave birth to a son last month.

Alan tells me that Pam is now out of hospital and that both her and baby Kelvin are now doing fine.

Thought for the Month

Are you SURE you thanked that person who obligingly gave you that "knock" last week?

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Five
HAPPY NEWS for followers that Hungarian stars Sido (and his wife), Szepesi, Foldi, Berczik, Gizi Farkas and Eva Koczian are safe and sound outside their own country. Gizi and Gyetvai are, of course, reigning English Open singles champions. The Hungarians were in Vienna for the Austrian Open when the fighting in Budapest broke out.

After the tournament the party travelled on to Yugoslavia for the championships in that country. Gizi, wife of Honved football club star Mikael Lantos, stayed behind in Vienna. Gyetvai, who wanted to make his way back to Hungary, did not go with his compatriots to play in the Swiss Open.

Following their stay in Switzerland, the Magyars embarked on a tour of West Germany and Belgium.

There is a possibility that they may come to England, maybe for exhibitions, but, understandably, their plans are by no means definite. Whatever they do, we wish them the best of good luck.

Berczik won the Yugoslav singles. He used, so I'm told, a funny sponge bat and wrought havoc with it. In the final he met Andreadis, whom he led 12–0 in the first game! Berczik beat Ivan easily in three straight.

The young Hungarian was given a much harder fight in the semi-finals, when veteran Czech star Tokar had a 2–0 lead before succumbing 3–2.

Berczik, incidentally, won the Austrian title, beating Stipek in the final.

Eva Koczian beat Angelica Rozeanu in the women's final—the second time in recent years she has scored over the great Romanian player.

In a Paris v Zagreb match, played prior to the Yugoslav Open, Hagneauer proved what a resilient “old man” he is by winning all his three matches, his victims including Vogrinic. Dolinar did not compete in this inter-city match or the national meeting.

Knowing that her parents were in Budapest during the bitter fighting, Suzie Barna had a most worrying time. Great was her relief, and Victor's, when she eventually received word from her folk that though their home was a little battered they were safe.

In the Pan-Arab Team Tournament, played before the Suez troubles, Egypt won both the men's and women's events and came out with an unblemished record. Six teams competed in the men's section—Egypt (five wins), Lebanon (four), Syria (three), Jordan (two), Palestine (one) and Sudan (nil).

United States players all but made a clean sweep of the titles at the Canadian Open played in Toronto. Bob Gusikoff beat Harry Hershkowitz in the final of the men's singles. —17, —15, 15, 10, after beating Johnny Somael in the semi-finals, 15, —19, 10, —15, 14. In the other semi Hershkowitz defeated M. Ralston 15, 10, —19, 12. Other finals results: Women's Singles—Mildred Shahian beat Leah Neuberger 17, 15; Men's Doubles—Max Marinko (Canada) and Sol Schiff beat Somael and Gusikoff —10, 18, 14, 19; Women's Doubles—Miss Shahian and Mrs. Neuberger beat Miss J. Kaptins and Miss J. Jessop 11, 7, 9; Mixed Doubles—Schiff and Mrs. Neuberger beat Van de Walle and Miss Shahian 18, 20, 15.

Erwin Klein, reigning singles champion, did not defend his title, and...
A Sandwich with Punch

by JOHNNY LEACH

THE SPONGE BAT, successfully introduced into World Championship play in 1952 by Satoh, of Japan, has revolutionised the game of table tennis. Year by year, the search for new bat surfaces capable of producing still weirder spins, and more devastating speed, has intensified, until a situation has been reached where the destination of world titles would appear to depend more on "Who has the best gimmick this time?" than "Who is the best player?"

Whether or not freak bats have actually impeded the progress of the game is, I know, a debatable point. Personally, however, as one of the few diehards who have remained faithful to the orthodox pimpled rubber bat, I have for long nursed the hope that the International Federation would ultimately decide to ban all other forms of equipment.

Surely everyone must agree that pimpled rubber permits the fullest measure of ball control and all-round stroke play, and thus produces the most spectacular and enjoyable form of table tennis?

Unfortunately, a new rule to standardise equipment has not been forthcoming, and seems as far away as ever. In the meantime, orthodox players are at a disadvantage in top-class play, because the variety of "weapons" used against them is so numerous that, in the course of any one tournament, they are called upon to make frequent adjustments to their technique and timing.

For this reason I have joined in the search for a new bat surface, though my particular aim has been to find one that would give me the penetration of sponge and yet still permit accurate ball control.

I have been experimenting with many different types of bat surfaces, and quite the beset that I have found for dealing with the sponge menace is the "2-in-1 Sandwich" bat, with which I have been practising in recent weeks.

The playing surface of this bat is normal pimpled rubber, but this is bonded to a thin layer of sponge, which forms the "meat" in the sandwich, and this is in turn bonded to the plywood of the racket.

Don't misunderstand me. This is not a bat for the lazy player, or for one who lacks a thorough grounding in all the strokes. It is no easy "winner," which is what I like about it, but in the hand of the advanced all-round player it could lead to a higher standard of play than we have ever seen before.

Besides giving added spin and penetration in attack, it appears that this bat is capable of neutralising any type of spin an opponent is likely to produce.

What's more, it is no more difficult to get used to than it is to "break in" a new bat of the normal type. You don't have to change your style or timing, unless you favour a very fast model, in which case only a slight adjustment of strokes is necessary.

In this case, in attack or defence, the follow-through of the playing arm must be more forward than upward, while when pushing over the table it is necessary to get the bat under the ball and follow through with a decided upward movement of the arm.

Through this new bat we could see, in time, the return of good, all-round table tennis. What's more, the sponge bat, as we know it, could become extinct within two seasons.

What of the pimpled rubber bat—does this mean that its days are numbered, too? No! The hard rubber-surfaced bat will never die out, because it is indispensable while learning ball control and basic strokes.
"Penholders"—Ancient and Modern

By JACK CARRINGTON
(Hon. Director of Coaching, E.T.T.A.)

The early heroes of table tennis were nearly all "penholder" players, and in the big revival after the first world war, "tennis-grip" players were a small minority.

From about 1928 to 1952, "penholder" players had little further success in the international class (as we in Europe knew it) and Coaches everywhere had settled down to teaching the lawn-tennis style, confident that it was the most efficient, as well as the most attractive and satisfying technique.

Since then the impressive success of the Japanese and other Asian players has re-awakened interest in the so-called "penholder" grip, and raises such questions as the following:

Do all Japanese play pen-holder? No, there are thousands who support the "shake-hands" grip; the present woman World Champion is a "shake-hander"; and after last season's Tokyo World Championships the Japanese team trainer was quoted in the Press as saying that they must seriously consider converting to tennis style, taking warning from their near-defeats by the Rumanians and the thrashings administered by the lordly Andreadis.

How much of this is Oriental "so-sorry" modesty, who can tell? It does suggest that the penholder technique is far from being entrenched in the Japanese game.

* * *

Are the Asiatics good, then, because of their penholder style, or in spite of it? We can plainly see that Asiatics play more agile, indeed acrobatic, than others. They combine quicker reactions, with ready relaxation, and appear to have an excellent match-play philosophy. Enough, many experts say, to make them champions, whatever style they choose.

At the time when "shake-hands" eclipsed "penholder," the advent of pimpled rubber may have assisted the revolution. If it did, is the advent of "sponge" going to assist a counter-revolution, i.e., back to penholder?

The "shake-hands" style has one important psychological advantage—it does resemble "tennis on the table"; moreover the all-round style endears the game to a vast number of players of the type who like to let the ball do the work for them.

It is more fun to play, to learn, and to teach.

These are strong enough reasons, I think, to ensure the predominance of the tennis style in numbers at least. As to the contribution of "sponge" to this matter, I will touch upon this in my next article.

But if you are solely interested in

"IT'S NOT CRICKET"

SAYS JACK

Whatever support may be advanced for the superiority of penholder style (and the arguments are not negligible), I do not think there was any conscious choice of style in the early days.

Two factors contributed largely to the adoption of "penholder" style. First the fact that CRICKET was more deeply established in the male sporting mind than LAWN TENNIS—secondly that in the early unorganised days, almost all learners started on a narrow row table.

As a reminder of this, observe the ease with which a tall player can operate as a "penholder". Obviously to a 7 foot man, a 5 foot baseline is relatively narrow. The spread of lawn tennis and the greater effectiveness of the chop strokes, which it allowed, brought about a widespread revolution of style except in relatively isolated centres such as the Far East and South America.

RESULTS will you become an international or the majority (or more surely) by playing "penholder" fashion? Improbable. I should say, if you are a European. The odds are against you, but you can try it. Because the odds are against you, a Coach can hardly commend the penholder style to you—it is a decision you must make for yourself.

What IS a "penholder" player? Disregarding variations of the finger contacts, and the set of the wrist, the marks of the "penholder" are: (a) the head of the blade is usually hanging downwards and (b) only one face of the blade is used for all strokes.

The original penholder technique shows a similarity to cricket doctrine, viz., the foundation stroke is the Straight Drive, clean through the ball, with only a small degree of lift. Directional variations come easily; a normal straight approach but with the blade deflected to right or left on contact.

Drop-shots were easily produced by feinting the normal strong approach, then converting to a lose-fingered half-volley or contact.

Preparation of stroke was easy, the single working face of the bat being kept permanently square to the expected approach of the ball.

Most penholders covered both sides by adopting a square footwork stance; others used high speed footwork to run round the ball on the backhand corner. Some amazingly ingenious block-shots, over-arm hooks, and under-arm looping shots were developed to cover the penholders' natural difficulties on the "back-hand" side.

The Japanese lack the height and reach to use the older penholder technique comfortably. However, by accepting an uncomfortable (to Western minds) degree of footwork and body-roll, they have compensated for this disadvantage.

Have the Japanese consciously or otherwise modified the old technique? They are in fact, using penholder grip, i.e., single face of the bat meeting all balls, with the Western technique, i.e., looping strokes, based on top-spin curves, with a healthy respect for the short chop-stroke on the back-hand side as a means of manoeuvre.

The leading Japanese use a forehand attacking swing almost identical to our orthodox styles, i.e., bat starting low, bat-head accelerating upwards on contact, and finishing freely above the hand. (Old style penholders kept the bat-head down throughout).

To change direction the Japanese mostly adjust their footwork rather than the blade angle. This is a feature of the tennis technique too.

On backhand side many Japanese now take left foot back; as the tennis style trend is now towards a shallower approach of the ball, the footwork of the two schools is approaching identity.

ABANDON SET GRIP

East and West are meeting again—it all points towards a future Championship technique of—

Squash stance, very supple trunk turning; very supple arm muscles, capable of producing both tennis style chops and topspins, and nearer the body, near-penholder pushes, slices, and counter-drives, with either side of the bat.

To cope with all styles and all kinds of rubbers, I think, we shall have to abandon the idea of an absolutely set grip, which already restricts most players.

Will I go to see this kind of table tennis? Well, that's my last question.
JAPS FOR WEMBLEY

by Stan Kempster

THE news that the Japanese have decided to send a team over for this season's English Open Championships will be received with delight by the many thousands of followers of table tennis who have so little opportunity to watch their extraordinary skill.

Few will have forgotten their last appearance here in the 1954 World Championships when they carried off both the Swaythling and Corbillon Cups and the men's singles and were runners up in the women's singles and the mixed doubles.

The finals at Wembley on April 5 and 6 promise to be as exciting as those memorable final games in the World Championships.

AND HUNGARIANS?

In addition to the Japanese the French will be in attendance, as usual, and it is hoped that the Hungarians will also be able to be present.

This year the preliminary rounds will be held at Manor Place Baths, a much more accessible venue than the Wembley Restaurant and one that will provide better playing conditions with an overall view of all the tables from the gallery.

THREE SESSIONS

Each day will, as usual, be divided into three sessions; approximate times from 9.30 a.m. to 12.45 p.m., 2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. onwards, finishing not later than 10.30 p.m.

The preliminary rounds will be played from Tuesday, April 2 to Thursday, April 4, at Manor Place Baths, transferring to the Empire Pool at Wembley for the final rounds on Friday and Saturday, April 5 and 6.

Preliminary arrangements suggest that at least the first two rounds of the men's singles will be completed by Tuesday evening so indications are that visitors and spectators on the first evening will have the opportunity of seeing the majority of the male stars in action.

This season, the omission of the junior events, which were organized as a separate tournament last month, eases the programme and should encourage more junior entrants for the senior events. In previous years juniors, who entered both junior and senior events, sometimes found their playing programme a little crowded; this possibility is now avoided.

ONE DAY

A point of interest to the older players is that the veterans' events will be confined to Saturday, the preliminary rounds being played during the morning session.

Preliminary details indicate that this season's English Open will be very much an "open" event. So make a note of the dates now.

MANOR PLACE BATHS, LONDON — APRIL 2 — 4.

EMPIRE POOL, WEMBLEY — APRIL 5 and 6.

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NINE

English “Open” 1956-57
DID someone say that the girls were backward in coming forward? He should have been present at St. Bride's Institute, London, on October 27, when we had well over 200 competitors of under 15 years competing for places in the Eagle and Girl Tournament Finals. Not only was there a marked improvement in the general standard of play, but the enthusiasm and determination with which these young ladies fought their ties was something of an eye-opener.

The All-Britain Finals in the Girls' Senior (over 13) event are going to provide us with a battle royal. Any one of five, who have already reached this stage, could pull off the title. I would not like to have to pick the winner from Ann Charnam (Birmingham), Mary Shannon (South London), Carol Bagshaw (North London), Jean Shallcross (Manchester) and Betty Kinsley (Leeds). And we've still to hear from Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Nottingham and Liverpool!

Mary Shannon was our under-13 champion last year, and, though not 13 until next February, she was debarred by a new rule from competing again in the same event. Playing as a "senior" she came up against such formidable opposition as Sheila Benton's twins, by contrast, Livesey won the final against 14-year-old Stanley Martin from Crook, County Durham, fairly comfortably. Two 12-year-old boys, who gained nearly all their experience against "dad" at home, contested the Leeds Junior final, Martin Wilson, of Rotherham, getting the better of Lester Christie, of Leeds, in two straight.

WASTING NO TIME

As a matter of interest, Kathleen Beal and Sheila Benton (beaten by Mary Shannon in the semi-final and final, respectively) did not reach their home until after 9 p.m., but went straight round to the club to practise and try to iron out the faults that had caused their defeat.

Carol Bagshaw, a junior finalist last year, also earned a place in the Senior finals by defeating Helen Fereday in the North London Area final, Carol, who was 13 last August, is a new member of the West Ealing club, where she has had some help from Diane Rowe. Her 15-year-old brother Anthony was a competitor in this year's Eagle tournament, and her sisters Christine (aged 8) and Corinne (aged 7) both threaten to enter next time!

The All-Britain Finals in the Girls' Seniors (over 13) event are going to provide us with a battle royal. Any one of five, who have already reached this stage, could pull off the title. I would not like to have to pick the winner from Ann Charnam (Birmingham), Mary Shannon (South London), Carol Bagshaw (North London), Jean Shallcross (Manchester) and Betty Kinsley (Leeds). And we've still to hear from Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Nottingham and Liverpool!

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There can be no doubt that 14-year-old Betty Kinsley, of Hull, is a great star in the making. Already current holder of the West Cheshire Open under-15 Singles and Doubles, and the Hull Girls' and Ladies' titles, she entered the "Girl" Tournament for the first time at Leeds, on November 17, and swept through to a most impressive victory. After crushing her early round opponents by scores of 21-4 and 21-3, she defeated Margaret Bradnum, the reigning Leeds champion and "News of the World" Girl of the Year, 21-9, 21-16 in the final.

Betty, who learnt to play two years ago at her school, Aithorpe High, has all the strokes, and a forehand drive which is one of the hardest we have seen from any girl or boy in this tournament so far.

Elizabeth Hall, after winning what she described as "the hardest game I've ever had," against Judith Camp, went on to beat the Walters twins of Hull, first Gloria, and then Michael Dainty, the reigning champion, in a really delightful game, then fought a semi-final tie against Barry Aveyard which could hardly have been closer (21-17, 22-24, 21-19). By contrast, Livesey won the final against 14-year-old Stanley Martin from Crook, County Durham, fairly comfortably.

Two 12-year-old boys, who gained nearly all their experience against "dad" at home, contested the Leeds Junior final, Martin Wilson, of Rotherham, getting the better of Lester Christie, of Leeds, in two straight.

AREA RESULTS

North London (October 27)
Girls' Senior: CAROL BAGSHAW bt Helen Fereday 21-17, 21-15.
South London (October 27)
Girls' Senior: MARY SHANNON bt Sheila Benton 21-16, 21-17.
Leeds (November 17)
Boys' Senior: GEORGE LIVESSEY bt Stanley Martin 21-12, 21-14.
Boys' Junior: MARTIN WILSON bt Lester Christie 21-9, 21-14.
Girls' Senior: BETTY KINSELY bt Margaret Bradnum 21-9, 21-16.
Girls' Junior: ELIZABETH HALL bt Madeline Walters 21-9, 21-10.

Girls Show The Way

by Kenneth Wheeler

Helen Fereday and her twin sister Margaret played-off their own eliminating series to decide which of them should represent the family in the Girl Tournament, and Helen (who won) did extremely well until meeting her mistress in the polished Carol Bagshaw.

London Junior event winners were 12-year-old HILDE BRAUTIGAM, who has vastly improved since taking lessons from Jack Carrington, and 10-year-old PAULINE MARTIN, who has been coached by Barbara Milbank at the Albion Club. Every match that young Pauline played was a battle, but in each one she somehow managed to fire the last shot.

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Girls' Junior: ELIZABETH HALL bt Madeline Walters 21-9, 21-10.
ARISING from my series of instructional articles appearing in the Daily Mail last month, I received a number of letters asking why teachers always seem to concentrate on giving advice to their opponents, and never to sponge-players themselves. The question is a fair one, and the answer should not be too difficult.

First of all, to understand my answer better, let me say that every type of sponge behaves differently. For example, the thin sponge used by the Japanese is nothing like the thick type manufactured in Sweden, and it follows, therefore, that playing techniques differ widely according to the material employed.

Did I say "playing technique"? Well, maybe I am thinking chiefly of the Japs (whose thin sponge allows more ball control) and of the many who knew quite a lot about playing technique before changing over to pimpled rubber.

Mark my words: the new generation, the youngsters who are now beginning their playing careers with sponge, will never get to know much about the finer points of the game, for the simple reason they won't need to.

Understandably, they want to score winners as quickly as they can— with the first hit, if possible. They know from the start that sponge is an attacking weapon, and they soon discover that anyone who tries to cultivate a defensive game, is fooling himself.

However, I am not trying to stop you playing with sponge. Go ahead, by all means, and good luck to you. My point is that to bash a ball, you don't need to learn how to chop, to acquire fighting-spirit, and so on.

More than once I have found myself in an embarrassing situation when coaching sponge players and attempting to teach them the intricacies of table tennis. It is difficult to know how to improve their game because, as I have said before, sponges behave so differently that almost the only advice I can give, is to play and practice as much as possible. For them, the most important thing lies, not in stroke production, but in mastering the "feel" of the ball— that is to say, how much or how little force they have to put into their strokes.

B A T T O B A L L

When a sponge player defends, usually he just puts his bat to the ball (that's why the harder you hit, the faster the ball comes back). Therefore, what he has to learn is how much he should "give"— something which is quite unteachable. The player must find out for himself, and the only way is practice and more practice.

The same goes for attack. With one kind of sponge you hit more flatly or with more force than another type. Just how flat, or how hard, are questions which only practice can answer.

It may be that if I tell you how to handle a sponge player, he too will gain, by knowing what he's up against. Firstly, a really strong chop with plenty of "bile," is necessary— not only when defending but especially to prevent him from attacking strongly. I call it "over-the-table-chop," which only a few know and use.

Secondly, some sort of a backhand can be most handy. When a sponger puts a few hard chops into the net, he will go more and more under the ball, and is liable to put up sitters close to the net. These sitters are difficult to kill forehanded but are quite easy with a backhand.

Third and last, but by no means least, there is variation of pace. As I have mentioned, sponge users have to rely very much on the "feel" of the ball; so, when you hit the important thing is not how hard, but how consistently and with what variation of speed. Your plan must be to make your opponent lose his touch, and with it, his confidence.

I hope that these few tips will help not only those who prefer to stick to "pimples," but to the neglected spongers.

OXFORD SEEK VARSITY WIN

CAMBRIDGE University's supremacy in the post-war series of Inter-Varsity matches with Oxford looks to be in jeopardy this season. They have lost some of last year's team which trounced Oxford 7-3, and consequently will have a much weaker side.

The Dark Blues, on the other hand, are lucky in that they can choose between the whole of last season's team, who are still in residence, and also two very experienced freshmen, Norman Dombey (Magdalens), a former Middlesex junior player, and Stephen Geoghegan (St. John's), a former Cambridge man.

Oxford are at present two rubbers ahead in this series, but are determined to narrow the gap, judging by their opening match of the season, when they beat Reading University by 9-1.

Their fixture list includes a total of over 20 first team matches—more than ever before. The Varsity match is at Oxford on February 27.

Cambridge, you have been warned!
Our Juniors not good enough

says "Onlooker"

It is difficult to become enthusiastic when reviewing a programme of four matches which resulted in two defeats and two draws. Had the International Selectors delayed the choice of teams until after current form was known it is possible that one loss could have been saved, and one draw turned into a win. Nevertheless nothing could have saved the crushing 11-1 defeat for the hands of the young Germans.

Don't forget that, with the sole exception of the 13-year-old Jean Harrower, all the Germans were younger than our players. Indeed, young Wolfgang Prandke, who made such a big impression on English observers, has four further seasons as a Junior, whilst Ursel Ehebrecht has three and Heide Dauphin and Gregor Schwabing each have two further years. Let us face up to it: Our Juniors are just not good enough.

FRENCH NEWCOMER

To take the matches in the order that they were played. Perhaps the biggest disappointment was to lose to France at Eastbourne on November 8. Arrangements for the match were good, except the very late start, which meant playing on until after 11 o'clock. Most of the matches were very close, except that Annia Fouquet was not up to the standard of the other players. To counteract this, the French produced a new girl, Monique Feraud, who looked a complete收盘.

With a shade more luck, and a little more experience, Tony Piddock could have won both his singles against young Prandke and give them every encouragement. So much is obvious. But... anything be done? Your guess is as good as mine.

ENGLAND 4, FRANCE 6.—P. Cole (Suffolk) beat J. Sautereau 21-19, 8-21, 21-19; lost to J. Helaine 13-21, 17-21, A. Piddock (Kent) lost to Sautereau 21-18, 15-21, 20-22; lost to Helaine 21-19, 12-21, 17-21, Cole and Piddock beat Helaine and Sautereau 21-14, 20-22, 21-11, Miss J. Harrower (Middlesex) lost to Miss A. Fouquet 21-14, 21-12; lost to Miss M. Feraud 15-21, 21-17, 14-21, Miss S. Hession (Essex) lost to Miss Fouquet 21-15, 21-17; lost to Miss Feraud 21-12, 19-21; Miss S. Hession and Miss Feraud lost to Miss Fouquet and Miss Feraud 21-14, 18-21.

ENGLAND 1, GERMANY 11.—P. Cole lost to P. Czuchowski 17-21, 21-15, 15-21; lost to G. Schwabing 15-21, 17-21; C. Deaton (Derbyshire) lost to Czuchowski 15-21, 19-21; lost to Schwabing 9-21, 11-21, D. Grant (Ile of Wight) lost to W. Prandke 13-21, 30-32, Cole and Deaton lost to Czuchowski and Prandke 15-21, 19-21; Miss J. Harrower lost to Miss U. Ehebrecht 16-17 (time limit), 20-18 (time limit) 20-22; lost to Miss H. Dauphin 19-21, 16-21, Miss L. Bowen (Cheshire) lost to Miss Dauphin 17-21, 12-21; Miss Ehebrecht lost 21-15, 21-19, Miss S. Heaston lost to Miss J. Mason 17-21, 9-21, Miss Bow and Miss Harrower lost to Miss Dauphin and Miss Mason 9-21, 10-21.

ENGLAND 4, BELGIUM 4.—P. Cole lost to A. Valentin 18-21, 21-11, 19-21; lost to L. Schwaing 21-14, 20-22, 18-21, A. Piddock beat Valentin 16-21, 21-9, 21-6; beat Derboven 21-18, 21-19; J. G. Woodford (Somerset) lost to V. Derboven 10-21, 21-12, 14-21 Cole and Piddock beat Valentin and Derboven 23-21, 21-8; Miss A. Jacobs (Kent) beat Miss T. van Overloop 21-17, 10-21, 21-9. Woodford and Miss Jacobs lost to Derboven and Miss van Overloop 17-21, 16-21.

HOME COUNTIES 5, BELGIAN CADETS 5.—R. King (Middlesex) lost to K. Van den Eede 9-21, 21-9, 20-22; lost P. Julines 17-21, 21-16, 21-15; beat A. Mathonet 21-11, 21-12, H. Molloy (Essex) beat Van den Eede 21-9, 21-15; lost to Julines 21-13, 19-21, 8-21; lost to Mathonet 22-24, 21-12, 19-21, D. White (Bedfordshire) lost to Van den Eede 21-19, 18-21, 20-22; lost to Julines 11-21, 19-21; beat Mathonet 13-21, 21-16, 21-19, Miss J. Johnson (Kent) beat Miss T. van Overloop 21-12, 25-23.

Thirteen
English Junior Open

Germans Sweep the Board
by Conrad Jaschke

ANYONE straying by chance into the Pier Pavilion at Herne Bay on November 11, could have been forgiven for thinking that in progress were the German, and not the English Junior Championships. Not only did the Germans take all 5 titles, but out of a total of 16 finals places, no less than 12 were occupied by their team of three boys and three girls.

Let me add that, in my view, none of their boys even remotely approached the standard of such pastDOUGLAS BLOY

German juniors as Erich Arndt or Dieter Kohler, and the failure of our players to get amongst the titles looks even sadder.

Were our players, then, less talented than the contingents from Belgium, France and Germany? In my opinion, the answer to that is “definitely not.” Boys such as Peter Cole (Suffolk) or Tony Piddock (Kent), showed every bit as much ability as did their German counter-parts. The great difference was that the Germans, ably led and advised by their captain Herr Karl Morhard, were playing to a plan, while our boys did not know how to use their abilities to best advantage in a tight corner.

As for the girls, I think that taking age into consideration, 13-year-old Jean Harrower (Middlesex), though not showing her very best form needed only that extra experience, for which there is no substitute, to do very much better.

In the Boys Singles, Peter Cole was perhaps England’s chief hope, but he fell to W. Prandke, the “baby” of the German party, in the fourth round, after a great fighting display. England junior Colin Deaton (Derbyshire) fell to David Parry of Wales in round 2, while J. Woodforde, another England junior, lost to Germany’s P. Czichowski in round 3.

In the quarter-final, England’s last three representatives, Ray King (Middlesex), Tony Piddock (Kent), and Douglas Bloy (Kent) — who had surprisingly beaten D. Butterworth (Lancs.) and Derek Grant (Hants.) — went out to foreign opposition. King put up the strongest opposition by taking a game off Schwaning. Piddock, like Cole, played a very polished game and showed excellent temperament, but J. Sautereau (France) just beat him.

Prandke lost to Schwaning in a semi-final, but this 12-year-old left-hander has great potential. He is a miniature of Konny Freundorfer, on whose style he has so obviously modelled himself. Czichowski defeated Schwaning in the final.

In the Girls Singles, English hopes centred on 13-year-old Jean Harrower (Middlesex), but after defeating Belgian Tilly van Overloop, Jean could find no answer to German junior champion Ursel Ehebrecht in the semi-final.

Miss Ehebrecht, a stone-waller, was prepared to go on pushing back every ball till the cows came home. Jean, who possesses a not inconsiderable forehand kill, is nevertheless essentially a defensive player. On this occasion, her forehand simply never got going, nor was luck with her.

Torn between the desire to have a go and break up her opponent’s pushing game, and the knowledge that she was very unlikely to beat the un-ruffled German by hitting which was rather erratic on this occasion, Jean never showed anything like her best form.

It was left to Heide Dauphin, to overcome the baby-faced, but iron-willed, Miss Ehebrecht’s defence.

Apart from Miss Harrower, who, I predict, will win this title well before she is 17, first-class performances were put up by Barbara Peisley (Berks.) and Julie Johnson (Kent). Miss Peisley defeated Shelagh Hession (Essex) and gave Miss Ehebrecht a hard game, while Miss Johnson could, with a little more luck, have beaten the French No. 1, M. Feraud. Then Margaret Hicks (Middlesex), played the game of her life against Miss Dauphin.

In the Boys Doubles, home honours went to the Welsh pair C. Arkell/D. Parry, and to Ireland’s T. Caffrey, a most promising young player. Cole/Piddock were eliminated by Caffrey/Schwaning in the second round, and this was the end of English hopes in the event.

The Kent pair Ann Jacobs/Julie Johnson, in the Girls Doubles, were the only English players to reach a final, by virtue of a sterling win over Harrower/Hession, who had a good win over the French pair in Round 2.

Fourteen
Lorna Bown (Cheshire) / Ann Stevens (Essex) were an attractive pair to watch, but they could make no impression on the eventual winners, H. Dauphin / I. Muser in the semi-final.

To sum up: We have the junior talent, in abundance. We also provide many opportunities in this country, for juniors to play in matches and tournaments. What we do not teach our juniors, however (except in individual cases, the results of which can be seen in such players as Jean Harrower and Ann Haydon, players whose progress is watched and to whom expert advice and coaching are available at all times), is the knowledge how to use their talent to best advantage. The great need today is individual coaching, for world champions cannot be mass-produced. Given the chances, I feel certain that English juniors will not lag behind.

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**RESULTS**

**Boys Singles. Round 4:** W. Prandke (Germany) beat P. Cole (Buckfold), A. Valentim (Bolton) beat B. Thomps (London), G. Schwangau (Germany) beat J. Helaine (France), R. King (Mddx) beat H. Mullow (Essex), A. Piddock (Kent) beat I. Charlton (Wilde), J. Sautereau (France) beat J. Mangham (Burnley), D. Bloy (Kent) beat D. Butterworth (London), P. Chichowski (Germany) beat V. Deonme (Belgium).

**Quarter-finals:** Sautereau beat Piddock 18, 18; Chichowski beat Bloy 16, 16; Prandke beat Valentine —19, 4, 18; Schwangau beat King 9, —10, 11.

**Semi-finals:** Chichowski beat Sautereau 17, 15; Schwangau beat Prandke —12, 16, 12.

**Final:** CZICHOWSKI beat Schwangau 19, 17.

**Girls Singles. Quarter-finals:** H. Dauphin (Germany) beat M. Hicks (Mddx) 19, 18; M. Feraud (France) beat J. Johnstone (Kent) 18, —14, 16; U. Ehebrecht (Germany) beat R. Peales (Rocks) 18, 20; J. Harrower (Mddx) beat T. van Overloop (Belgium) 18, 16.

**Semi-finals:** Dauphin beat Feraud —15, 15, 11; Ehebrecht beat Harrower 17, 8.

**Final:** DAUPHIN beat Ehebrecht 20, 16.

**Boys Doubles. Quarter-finals:** T. Caffrey (Ireland) and G. Schwangau (Germany) beat C. Gosling and G. Robbins (Mddx) 18, 15; C. Arkell and D. Parry (Wales) beat A. Valentim and H. van den Ende —20, 11, 15; J. Helaine and R. Sautereau beat D. Bloy and I. Muser (Kent) 14, 19; P. Chichowski and W. Prandke (Germany) beat E. Dobby and E. King (Mddx) 12, 13.

**Semi-finals:** Caffrey and Schwangau beat Arkell and Parry 13, —16, 11; Chichowski and Prandke beat Helaine and Sautereau 16, 16.

**Final:** CZICHOWSKI and PRANDKE beat Caffrey and Schwangau 10, 12.

**Girls Doubles. Quarter-finals:** H. Dauphin and I. Muser (Germany) beat M. Ashby (Kent) and U. Ehebrecht; E. Bown (Cheshire) and A. Stevens (Essex) beat W. Threlfall and J. Wilson, F. Prince; T. Atkins and A. Jacobs and J. Johnson (Kent) beat J. Pitcher and M. Hicks (Mddx) 19, 15; H. Dauphin and Miss Simon beat M. Feraud and A. Fouquet (France), J. Harrower (Mddx) and S. Hessel (Essex) beat M. Feraud and A. Pouquet (France).

**Semi-finals:** Dauphin and Johnson beat Bown and Stevens 9, 9; Jacobs and Johnson beat Harrower and Hession —12, 10, 17.

**Final:** DAUPHIN and MUSKET BEAT Jacobs and Johnson 14, 18.

**Mixed Doubles. Final:** CZICHOWSKI and Miss DAUPHIN beat Prandke and Miss Ehebrecht 19, 15.

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**COMMENT ON THE ENGLISH JUNIOR "OPEN"**

by Leo Thompson

I ATTENDED the English Junior Open at Herne Bay and soon realised we were hopelessly outclassed by the Germans. They are very young, but terrific, and the boys even better than Frundorfer as a junior.

Having taken English Juniors to Germany, I had some idea as to why it was, but as juniors were faring so badly I decided to study their play very carefully. I had several of my pupils taking part, and it shook me to see them beaten so badly.

I can state definitely that the Germans are far more disciplined than the English. When a German youngster is called by a Senior, he almost falls over himself to obey, and must do everything that he is told to do. For instance, when he needs coaching the most,

I find that the pupil who pays for his coaching is always the most attentive and eager, because he wants to get his money's worth.

To remedy the matter, I say that firstly the pupils have got to put more into practice and do what they are told, or not be coached at all.

Secondly, I blame the E.T.T.A., because they only do a flea bite of the coaching necessary. We have an Honorary Director of Coaching, and I contend that he should have several regional coaches working under him. They in turn should have other coaches working under them, and it should be the Directors job to ensure that the whole country is adequately covered.

I maintain that this should be done almost voluntarily.

Next a basic form of coaching should be laid down, and the Senior coaches should get together under a strong chairman and do this.

Lastly, why is the promising youngster dropped after he has passed the junior stage? To my mind, this is the difference for him, when he needs coaching the most.

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Kent Junior "Open"

Elaborate precautions were taken, following last year's late finish, to ensure that there was no recurrence this time, in the combined English and Kent Junior Open Championships. From a one-day event, the championships were transformed into a two-day affair, thus allowing for a very much increased entry.

Strangely enough, the combined English and Kent event attracted less entries than last year's Kent Junior Open, thus making an early finish on both days not only possible, but unavoidable!

German players again collected most of the titles in the other age groups.

**UNDER 13 KENT EVENTS**

**Boys Singles:** W. Prandke (Germany) beat D. Grant (Hants) 18, 7.

**Girls Singles:** U. Ehebrecht (Germany) beat J. Harrower (Mddx) 16, —10, 11.

**Boys Doubles:** P. van den Ende and A. Valentim (Hedon) beat T. Caffrey (Ireland) and A. Matheson —17, 14, 11.

**Girls Doubles:** Ehebrecht and Harrower beat K. Beal and S. Benton (Kent) 8, 9.

**Mixed Doubles:** Prandke and Miss Ehebrecht beat C. Gosling and Miss Harrower —16, 6, 21.

**UNDER 15 KENT EVENTS**

**Boys Singles:** T. Caffrey (Ireland) beat C. Bloy (Kent) 14, 12.

**Boys Singles:** M. Shannon (Worchester Park) beat C. Bagshaw (Cheeungton) 10, 12.

**Boys Doubles:** N. Ives and H. Ratcliffe (Herts) beat T. Caffrey and T. Atkins (London).

**Girls Doubles:** Bagshaw and Shannon beat H. Haanipag (London) and K. Prather (Kent) 11, 11.

Fifteen
AROUND THE LEAGUES

The Cambs. League is thriving with its six divisions (a record) and much competition is being displayed. In the first division the four main aspirants, namely: Wesley, New Chesterton Institute, Y.M.C.A. and Telephones are indulging in a great struggle although Y.M.C.A. are faltering somewhat just lately. Telephones are offering a strong challenge with the assistance of Norman Brand who is making a welcome return to Cambridge table tennis and is now striking form. John Cornwall is playing well and is as yet unbeaten.

Norman South is the new secretary of the Ely and District League and it is incidentally, a member of the all-conquering Ely City soccer team who have played so well in the F.A. Cup. South was a former Cambs. Junior champion. The March and District League is very ambitious and are very eager to have coaching sessions from Cambridgeshire players. Ray Fox, their secretary, is no mean player himself.

Wellington and District League decided at their annual meeting not to affiliate to the English Table Tennis Association this season.

The South London League have decided to try out a new venue—Bermondsey Baths—for their Open tournament on February 4–9. The date which coincides with the London Business Houses Open and the closing championship and league prices to juniors for the open and closed championship are offered.

Newcomers Goonhavern and Blue Hills Club (Perranporth) bring the total entries for the Truro and District League up to eight.

With Arnold Powning, the Cornish champion, available for some fixtures, the Truro team should do well in the county league.

Norwich League committee believe their championships would be more popular if they took the form of an all day session instead of four separate evenings. They hope to find out by issuing competitors at this year's championships (December 9–15) a form asking them to state their preference.

All titles, with the exception of the boys' singles won by Laurie Landry for the third successive year, changed hands in the Wembley and Harrow League championships at R.A.F., Stanmore Park, on November 10 and 11.

Alan Rhodes, now using a sandwich bat, regained the men's singles which he won in 1951–2–3. He beat Landry in the final 21–12, 19–21, 21–17. Rhodes also won the mixed doubles with Miss J. Brooks.

Margaret Fry won the women's singles, beating Miss M. Stafford 21–13, 21–16. Miss Stafford had the consolation of winning the women's doubles with Miss J. Williams.

Alan Lindsay and Ian Redfearn won the men's doubles.

Birmingham Central, winners of Division I BIRMINGHAM LEAGUE since 1946 and ten times winners of "M" and "B" K.O. Cup, are struggling at the bottom of both the 5-a-side and 3-a-side leagues. With Bob Mackay still out of action with an injured knee, Maurice Krie retired, Monty Mothadi concentrating on squash rackets, and Howard Walton now living in London, Central are experimenting with a young and inexperienced side who have yet to reach the heights of their predecessors.

Rising costs of halls threaten the future of the Sussex "closed" championships. They will be staged by Brighton and District League this season—possibly February 17th—but a financial loss appears inevitable.

Llandudno and District, probably the largest league in North Wales, have high hopes for Colin Thomas, regarded as their best junior. He is making great strides under the watchful eye of Stan Shore, who devotes much of his time to coaching the youngsters.

Guernsey have invited LEICESTER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, the Midland U.A.U. champions, for a five-days tour in January. The invitation is a direct outcome of a holiday in Guernsey by Neville Shorrich, one of the College side's top players.

At the last meeting of the BURNE­moor T.T.A. Committee it was de­cided that Mr. L. Taylor and Mr. G. A. Simons of 5705 Club be suspended for four weeks until the next meeting of the committee at which both players were ordered to attend.

Mr. Taylor admitted that he had contravened the Association rules by playing in two matches in one week. Mr. Simons was the captain of the 5705 Club "B" team, which was fined the maximum of £5.

Y.M.C.A., who run five teams in the Sunderland League, have been greatly impressed by recent performances of 12-year-old F. Johnson, member of their "C" team, which heads the Second Division. He looks like following in the footsteps of A. Warren and E. Taylor, the respective junior champions of Durham County and Sunderland.

Tweedside Old Boys have been expelled and fined a total of £1 12s. 6d. by Sutton and District League. This "get tough" decision was taken because the Old Boys had failed to pay subscriptions, failed to confirm matches, and also played unregistered members.

West Wilt's stage (the first-ever Wiltshire "closed" championships) at Trowbridge on February 9.

Suzie holds the baby

Victor and Suzie Barna at the christening of their godson Thomas Arthur Lawton. With them are the proud parents, Tommy and Gay Lawton, and their daughter Carol.
Gloucestershire ban sponge

I HOPE readers will forgive me if most of these notes revolve round the highly controversial topic of sponge. While other sports use standard equipment and in table tennis we lay down the size and height of table and height of net, nothing has been done about the bat.

It can be of any material or size, with the result that they range anything from three inches thick sponge, to the sandwich of sponge and rubber, and of course the orthodox rubber.

Consequently there is growing opinion that instead of producing a champion racket, 100 per cent. fit with a brain and execution of shots in advance of the rest, the tendency is to produce a champion racket. To the general public, what few who now attend matches, players are becoming like a lot of puppets at a sideshow.

PIONEERING

Faced with this problem, and with no National policy, Gloucestershire have decided to be the Pioneers and to lead the country towards standardisation of the bat.

To this end the County Executive at their last meeting approved the following resolution put forward by Dennis Andrews, of the Bristol Association, and seconded by Alan Haines, of Gloucester:

"In a serious and sincere endeavour to regain and maintain the rapidly decreasing interest of the general public in Table Tennis as a spectator, and in a further endeavour to recapture the artistry and skill so long associated with the game, the Executive Committee of the Gloucestershire Table Tennis Association shall direct the Selection Committee NOT to consider for selection to any Gloucestershire County team a player who uses any bat covering than normalimpled rubber."

This to take effect from season 1957-8. Furthermore a resolution must be tabled and forwarded to the E.T.T.A. defining the Laws of the game covering rackets, words to this effect in which we hope supported by the rest of the Country will then be fought out at the next Congress of the I.T.T.F., but if not securing the agreement of the I.T.T.F., but if not securing the agreement of the I.T.T.F., the Executive Committee shall consider up to a successful conclusion."

Turning to county news, Congratulations to the team on their splendid win over Surrey. To humble the Champions 7-3 was no mean effort and we look forward with confidence to our next match with Yorkshire.

Changes in the side, which did so well against Surrey, included the recall of Bob Griffin, now fit and well, the resignation of Roy Morley in the mixed doubles, and the inclusion of Joan Collier in the women's doubles.

The only match in the County League saw Cirencester easily defeat Stroud 8-2. D. Morris and B. Archer both being unbeaten for Cirencester.

Congratulation to Cirencester chairman George Green on his recent wedding. We wish both him and his wife every happiness, but it was with regret that we heard of his transfer to Brighton for business reasons. Cirencester and the County will miss him.

Now for a more serious note. Readers will no doubt have heard of the tragic accident which has fallen on popular Bristol player Maurice Darbey in the recent parcel bomb outrage. Darbey now lies seriously ill in hospital and having lost one eye, may lose the sight of the other.

The Bristol Association have quickly rallied round and launched an appeal on behalf of Maurice, his wife and family, all of whom were injured. Donations of any amount will be welcomed by the Hon. Treasurer of the Appeal's Fund, Mr. Ron Milsted, Vice-Chairman of the Bristol Association, at 37, Woodside Road, Downend, Bristol. Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed to "THE MAURICE DARBEY FUND.

Ivor Eyles.

DERBY NOTES

DERBYSHIRE made a fine start in the National County Championships beating Northamptonshire 8-2. Young Colin Deaton playing in his first County match won both his singles matches.

In the Midland League, Derby Ladies form has been disappointing, losing 9-1 to Nottingham after taking both West Bromwich and Coventry to 6-4 before losing. Barbara Webster had a poor night against Notts which reflected upon her team-mates and inspired her opponents.

The Intermediates did well holding Notts to a draw when Lockett and Stills were not available. David Stills has now reported for his National Service, and will be missed in this team.

In the Derby League, Div. 1, Mechanics 1st are the only unbeaten side, followed by Y.M. I with one loss, and St. Andrews with two defeats. The game of the month in this Division was St. Andrews v. Y.M. I with the highlight of the match the clash of Yallop and Hallsworth. Yallop kept up his natural attack throughout three hard fought games, and his passing shots, considering the quality of Hallsworth's defence, were a joy to watch. Ron had the luck at the end with an edge ball to make the score 18-20 in his favour, and a missed forehand gave him the game. Y.M. were 4-1 in the lead and finally took the match 5-4, all credit to St. Andrews for a gallant but unavailing effort.

R.A.F. "A" are doing well in their bid to win Div. 5, 4 and 3 in successive years; at the moment they are 2nd in the table.

Derby Co-op. C.Y. Guild lost all their team players, but nothing daunted, they established their own headquarters for the first time in three years, and with a team new to competition they are now at the top of Div. 6, undefeated after five matches.

Pleased to report that Ivan Scholes is now out and about after a long illness. Rolls Royce 1st without his aid are near the foot of the table and wish him a quick recovery.

Walter Reeves.
KENT NOTES

HAVING successfully survived what has been described by one newspaper as "the biggest week-end of junior table tennis yet seen in this country," I think we may well give the stage this month to our junior players.

Following up my notes of last month, Tony Piddock certainly justified his selection for international honours. His good performance against France failed better against Belgium where he won his two singles and his doubles.

Also in the team that opposed Belgium was another Kent player, Ann Jacobs, of Sittingbourne, who won her singles matches.

Thus the Kent portion of the England side was responsible for four out of five wins!

Julie Johnson also had a most successful week-end. In the Kent junior team that met Germany she defeated the German girl champion, Ursel Ehebrecht, 21-16, 21-11; against a Belgium side she beat Van Overloop 21-12, 25-23, and in the English junior girls' doubles, partnered by Ann Jacobs, beat the fancied pair, Jean Harrower and Shelagh Hesston to become the only English players to reach a final. Unfortunately, they met their match in the two German girls, Ursel Ehebrecht and Heide Dauphin, losing 14-21, 18-21.

The Kent boys and girls, who have not yet reached county standard, also did well. It is difficult to pick out the most outstanding performance but will quote a few.

There was our diminutive little veteran, Kay Stokes, of Folkestone, who at the age of nine, was making her third appearance in the Juniors championships. Also from Folkestone were the Boy brothers, Clive, the younger, reached the final of the under 13's boys' singles. Where he lost to the Irish lad Caffrey, while Douglas, after knocking out such players as Derek Grant, D. Butterworth and J. Redmond, finally succumbed to German Czichowski in the quarter-final of the main boys' singles.

Yes, we can certainly be proud of our lads and lasses in Kent. We shall not be waiting for county players for many years to come.

Perhaps I might be excused for saying a word in praise of the girls of my own club, the Crescent, whose neat red shirts were conspicuous throughout the championships. They certainly did not let the club down! Glennis Corden figured in three semi-finals; Karen Prothero reached the under 13's girls' doubles final; and little Susan Mitchell, at ten, the second youngest competitor, put up a brave show in the under 13's single although she has only a couple of months' experience.

Then, of course, there was Ann Jacobs, whom the Crescent Club is proud to claim as a member. But why didn't you sport the red shirt, Ann? Now a word of thanks to the grown-ups who made the championships possible—Charles Wyles, who saw that the foreign visitors were well looked after; the Referee George White and his staunch supporters Bill Lewis and Geoff Oxley, Kent officials Mr. and Mrs. Betts, Mr. Trew, Mr. Jaschke, Ron Heridge, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Revell, and our helpers from the other counties, Frank Bateman (Essex), Harry Edwards (Middlesex) and Bill Goldfinch (Sussex).

The championships were a great success. What if most of the trophies did go out of the country? We must make sure that they are all won back next year.

What of next year? Will the National Championships again be coupled with the Kent Championships, returned to Wembley, or staged entirely separate? That remains to be seen, but next month I hope to elaborate upon this subject.

Meanwhile, it would be very helpful if I had the views of anyone concerned, players, parents or officials. We might then be able to form some estimate of the general opinion.

Jimmy Mannooch.

SUFFOLK NEWS

ALTHOUGH the 7-3 defeat of Suffolk by Berks at Reading is virtually a large sized nail in the coffin of the East Anglian 2nd Division hopes, the lads and lasses in green are far from disconsolate. Many lessons were learned from this match and the fresh faces the opposition provided. After several seasons of meeting the same team it was, indeed, refreshing to meet these new laces and the new styles seen in the opposition ranks.

A word about the hospitality of the Berkshire Association would not go amiss. It is very worthy of our sincere thanks and gratitude, and the evening, in all its aspects, is one which we in Suffolk will recall with pleasure in the days ahead.

After the match Pam Farrett was awarded her County Senior Badge and it is, I think, worth a mention that it was the 14th senior badge awarded since Suffolk first played in the N.C.C. eight seasons ago. Of those 14 badges only four have been awarded to the ladies, Pam is the first Ipswich girl to earn this award and the third Ipswich player.

To date there have been 11 awards of the Suffolk Junior Badge since the Junior team first played in the N.C.C. three seasons ago. Of these five have been girls—three from Ipswich.

The badge is awarded after five appearances. The qualifications of a player are always a cause for discussion. Some organisations award it after one appearance, some after three. Others award it upon merit. Without entering into all the pros and cons the Suffolk angle is that the five appearances presents the badge from being cheaply earned. On the other hand if a player is good enough to play five times he or she is fully deserving of the honour. No doubt there are arguments against this but that is the Suffolk viewpoint.

The four zones of the Suffolk Club Championships will soon be getting underway. Zoning is employed to restrict travel in the early stages and swell the entry. Players of County Team status are exempt until the inter-zone stage when they come in with the qualifiers from the four zones. The inter-zones are played off on one day at one venue and the finalists appear at finals night—this season to be played at St. Margaret's Institute, Lowestoft.

This venue recalls the scenes of the last County Finals in Lowestoft four years ago when the Great Flood caused the last event of the evening—the men's singles—to be abandoned. But this time, there will be a happier ending.

A.E.D.
WESTERN COUNTIES BULLETIN

STAN JONES, the Welsh International, found himself in an unevaluable position when making his come-back to town matches after an absence of two years. It was left to him to save a point for Newport when they met their near neighbours, Cardiff, in the First Division.

With only one game to play, Newport, were trailing 4-5 and the final result depended entirely on the last event. Jones rose to the occasion and showed great determination but was beaten after a hard struggle by Alan Thomas 20-22, 18-21.

At one stage in this match Cardiff were leading 4-1 but good victories by Mrs. Cartwright, Brian Everson and Mrs. Barton enabled Newport to level at 4-4.

Bristol looked anything but runners-up for the first division wooden spoon – a title they held at the end of last season – when they beat Bath without conceding a game. They showed even better form when they recently held Birmingham to a 5-3 draw.

Despite this runaway score it was a good match, with six of the ties went to three games.

The toughest of these games was the meeting between Roger Haydon and David House. After losing the first set 23, 21-19.

Relegated West Wilts were heavily defeated by Bristol to the tune of 8-2 in the Second Division. Their only victories being registered by J. Lindsay and A. Alexander.

However they showed a little of the confidence acquired from a season in the higher grade when they beat Taunton 6-4. Lindsay clinched the two points with six of the ties went to three games.

The New Rule of the Essex Leagues

WITH the Chelmsford League covering an extensive area, with many outlying villages, team transport has always been a major problem. However, this is now being overcome. Car-owning supporters have agreed to pool their transport to take players to away matches.

So far this system has been most successful, and we only hope that it will not be forcibly scuttled due to the sunken ships in the Suez Canal. If it can still continue during petrol rationing, maybe some other clubs will see the green light.

Essex were well represented at Herne Bay in the Kent and English Junior championships. Hugh Molloy (Southend), who played for the Home Counties against the Belgian “under 15’s” did well to beat Parry, the Welsh No. 1, in the English, and Shelagh Hession (Romford) gave a good display in reaching the semi-final of the mixed and girls’ doubles.

The Billericay League are now running Saturday afternoon coaching sessions at Stock. These, it is hoped, will produce some more juniors like Tommy Caldwell and Libbie Wells.

Ken Peircey (Romford) has just returned from a tournament in Austria, in which he took part in the Austrian Open in Vienna and an invitation tournament at Innsbruck.

Barbara Milbank has withdrawn from top-class play for the present. The reason for her temporary retirement is more pleasant.

HERTFORDSHIRE NEWS

THE County scheme for scholarships for junior girls announced in the October issue of the magazine is still open and girls wishing to have trials should send a postcard to G. R. Harrower, 68, Gloucester Road, New Barnet, Herts.

The number of scholarships to be won is now to be increased to three, thanks to a generous gift from Letchworth player and official Eddie Cobb.

The date of the trials will be decided at the next Committee meeting and they will probably be held during the school holidays in early January.

The draw for the first round of the Club Knock-Out Tournament is as follows:

MEN: - Hoddesdon or De Havillands v St. Albans ‘A’; West Watford v Glenn; St. Albans ‘B’ v Marlowes Baptist; Oxhey Hall ‘B’ v Waverley; Bartlett Social v Stevenage Club; Warner Lane v Oxhey Hall ‘A’; Coopers Recreation v I.C.I.; McAlpine v St. Albans ‘C’.

LADIES: - I.C.I. v Grove; Letchworth TTC v LMR Audit; Oxhey Hall and Welwyn Garden City TTC receive byes.

The first matches in the County Inter-league Championship have not brought any surprises and Watford ‘A’ with two big victories look as though they intend to carry off the title once again.

Results: - Watford ‘A’ 9, Welwyn Garden City 1; St. Albans ‘A’ 8, Stevenage 2; Letchworth 4, Bishop’s Stortford 6; Cheshunt 0, Watford ‘A’ 10; Stevenage 4, Letchworth 6. Fixtures for period ending December 22nd are: - Stevenage v Bishop’s Stortford; Watford ‘B’ v Waterford; Watford ‘A’ v Welwyn Garden City v St. Albans; Hertford v Cheshunt; JUNIOR DIVISION - Watford v Letchworth; Letchworth v St. Albans.

The Letchworth Invitation Tournament has again attracted a large entry including County Champion Maurice Williams and County players Glenn Bebb and Tom Moriaty. Tony Rogers not in the County team at this time but is a seeded number two behind Maurice Williams.

The Letchworth Table Tennis Association is organising the tournament for the first time, in the past it has been a Letchworth Table Tennis Club event.

Table tennis is becoming ever more popular in the Stevenage New Town area. With five new clubs having been formed and another awaiting premises to be completed shortly the town appears full of fresh talent. There are indications of an open Stevenage and District League being formed next season. The only league in the town at the moment is an Inter-Works organisation. Many table tennis followers in the area hope that the Inter-Works League will open its doors to allcomers and become the district league. It is felt that such a move would benefit the sport, and that the inter-works league would be a sound basis for a bigger and more powerful organisation.

Dennis M. Williams

Nineteen
THE sponge bat controversy is raging throughout Yorkshire at present. People are not sure whether to keep sticking to rubber or to return to sponge, and the Yorkshire County Board has had to give advice to the various clubs. It has even been suggested that Yorkshire drop both Kennedy and Dove in favour of open style men with rubber bats.

Alan Thompson, the county's non-playing captain, considers this an unrealistic outlook. He says: "Sponge does not enhance the game. You've got to play to win and if our best men use sponge they must still be played."

I am not a supporter of sponge but in fairness I should record that the entertaining set of the Roses match at Sheffield was the all-sponge battle between Kennedy and Ron Allcock when the ball flipped from bat to bat at lightning speed. Ron won the first game and led 17-14 in the second. Brian, most unhappy throughout, hung on, and took the set by 17-21, 21-19, 21-13.

Brian Disagrees

Would have won more easily with rubber. Brian told me afterwards: "I'd been playing with a rubber bat but I probably would have lost." But would he?

Ray Hinchliff thrashed Allcock in two straightforward sets with rubber.

Mind you, Ray is having his best season so far. His biggest triumph was taking the Yorkshire Open title from Kennedy in a very close final after Brian had led 19-17 in the third.

There have been some unexpected results in the Inter-League competition. Bradford suffered their heaviest defeat (1-9 against Huddersfield "B") -- and that one set came from the only Bradfordian with sponge, Eric Murgatroyd.

Now Bradford county men Maurice Pitts and Sonny Forrest have decided to look at sponge, too. Maurice, by the way, had an admirable win over Ray Dove in the reserve that day.

Bradford also lost 3-7 to Barnsley, whereas Leeds only drew 5-5 with Halifax but beat Hull 9-2. One of the county's best-known women players, Marjorie Litchfield, was beaten in the latter match by 14-year-old Betty Kinsley, mentioned as a promising player in Yorkshire Notes.

Sheffield supplied the biggest shock of all by drawing against Huddersfield's top trio without the help of Dove. Maurice Simpson again -- beat Hinchliff and Ronnie Ridge beat Stuart Delaware.

Sheffield League are celebrating their Silver Jubilee this season. Having already staged the Open and Roses match they will have the South Yorkshire Open in the New Year and have arranged an all-star exhibition for 21 March which it is hoped will feature Bergmann, Leach and Ann Haydon.

Back to Roses battles. The Premier Division win was Yorkshire's biggest over Lancashire. Yet they lost the first set of the new-look Open and Roses match they hoped will feature Bergmann, Leach and Pullar.

The juniors completed the "double" with a 7-1 triumph at Scarborough. In the boys' doubles local lad John Moorehouse and newcomer Graham Lynch (Sheffield) lost the first five points but won, 21-8, 21-18.

Malcolm Hartley.

CAMBRIDGBHIRE NOTES

HEARTENED by the City's success over Boston in the first round of the England Cup, Cambridge are full for their forthcoming fixtures in the Southern League. By the time this appears the home match will have been played and we hope with success.

John Thurston, whose knee injury has cast a temporary halt to his activities, tells me that he hopes to be fit again soon after Christmas. A fit Thurston, one of the most consistent of the two. However if Miss Lynn continues to show improvements, the final analysis of the interprovincial contest shows that Ulster won 3, drew 1; Munster won 1, dropped 1; Leinster won 3, dropped 1. Ulster beat Connaught and Munster beat Connaught 2-0 and Munster 18-2, so the stage was then set for the long awaited 10-0 over Boston in the first round of the England Cup. The juniors completed the "double" with a 7-1 victory at Scarborough. In the boys' doubles local lad John Moorehouse and newcomer Graham Lynch (Sheffield) lost the first five points but won, 21-8, 21-18.

Malcolm Hartley.

IRISH SCENE

HIGHLIGHT of the Irish season to date was the quadrangular interprovincial contest on November 9 and 10. This year, for the first time ever, it was held in Dublin, and the Leinster Branch of the I.T.A. deserve great credit for the manner in which it was staged.

They hired the new Badminton Hall at Terenure, installed electric lighting and seating accommodation, and with four tables in action it was a most smoothly and efficiently run event.

It was fitting in an atmosphere such as this, and playing on their home ground, so to speak, that Leinster should share the honours jointly with Ulster for a year, each province to hold the trophy for six months.

BUILDING UP

Ulster had beaten Connaught and Munster 20-0, whilst Leinster beat Connaught 20-0 and Munster 18-2, so the stage was then set for the long awaited battle between the two leading provinces at the final session on Saturday night.

The large attendance certainly got full value for their money, because, after a thrilling finale, the final score read Ulster (bolters) 10, Leinster 10.

Many thought that this would be Leinster's year, as their players, Clarkin, W. Pappin, T. Taylor, D. Mahoney and the Misses Owens and Fearon were in top form following a week of severe practice under the coaching of English International Derek Burridge. But Ulster evidently had other ideas, for they recovered from a 2-0 deficit in the early stages to take the initiative and hold the odds match until the closing stages.

The swinging point in their favour was the defeat of Sean Clarkin by "Hoppy" O'Prey, though it must be admitted that Clarkin was far from his best on this occasion.

This win gave Ulster the tonic they needed, and when Deirdre Fearon unexpectedly dropped both her singles, Leinster were fighting with their backs to the wall.

It was then that Wesley Pappin proved himself the hero of the night, for against O'Prey he hurled his usual erratic attack and waited for the right ball to hit, with the result that he defeated O'Prey in one of the most tense matches I have seen. Pappin then went on, in spite of suffering from a severe attack of cramp, to completely annihilate Colin Senior and give Leinster the draw they deserved.

The only player to go right through the tournament undefeated was Leinster's Miss Joy Owens, who in fact, did not drop a single set.

The final analysis of the interprovincial contest shows that Ulster won 3, drew 1; Leinster won 3, drew 1; Munster won 1, lost 3; and Connaught lost all four. Many considered that Miss J. Lynn was unlucky not to get her cap against England last month following her really first class displays in the inter-provincials, but Miss Fearon is definitely the more consistent of the two. However if Miss Lynn continues to show improvement her day cannot be far removed.

On the final night of the interprovincial contest Miss O'Prey, with Miss Joy Owens, was presented with the Rhanboy and Eleanora McKee Cups respectively for being the outstanding man and woman players of last season.

S. Dignam
SCOTLAND SPEAKING

At the Annual General Meeting of the Scottish T.T.A. it was decided to run a Women's Inter-League Championship in the current season on the same lines as the men's competition. It was agreed that any registered woman player shall be eligible even if she is already a member of a team in the men's competition. Response so far has been good, and it seems likely that the following will compete: Edinburgh; West of Scotland; Dundee; Dunfermline; Elgin and Lanarkshire.

Pressure of business cost Scotland the services of Victor Garland (Aberdeen) and Tom Gilmour (Dundee) in the international match against England last month. Both were among the original selection, but had to "cry off." A difficult situation has developed over a date for the match against Wales, proposed for the week following the Welsh encounter with Ireland, and immediately preceding the World Championship. The Welsh Association asked for a change. Another date, however, begins to seem unobtainable.

Needless to say Miss Elliot has also been runner-up for the singles, and is a former holder of the mixed doubles with Victor Barna. She has held Irish and Welsh titles and last season won the women's and mixed doubles in the Dutch "Open" and was losing finalist in both the women's singles and doubles at the Belgium "Open."

It was back in 1943 that Helen had her first introduction to table tennis which only gave her an enviable sports career but also a husband. She married her coach, Bob Dykes, now secretary of the Scottish T.T.A., in 1949.

For much of her career, Helen worked as a hospital receptionist, sacrificing her summer holidays in short periods throughout the year, occupied by travelling to tournaments. The stress of staying at the top arises not only from the constant struggle to maintain peak form but also from the heavy strain of the tournament itinerary, with its days of missed meals, irregular cups of tea and nights of half sleep in trains and buses.

Undoubtedly Helen says "The game teaches you to take it; you must have a sense of humour."

Helen has the reputation of never having been known to say "No" when asked to do a spot of coaching. No wonder she laughed when I asked what her hobbies were "Table Tennis," was the terse reply.

The simple fact is that Helen has devoted her life to table tennis. Here is the invincible enthusiasm of the perfectionist, expressed by the characteristic eagerness in play and the familiar lines of the set jaw. She is a paragon of determination.

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RESULTS

Open Singles


Women's Singles

Semi-final: Miss H. HOULISTON (Edinburgh) bt. Miss N. Williams (Elgin) 21-14, 21-10, 17-21, 21-17, 21-18.

Final: Miss HOULISTON bt. Miss Black 21-17, 21-14, 21-18.

Open Doubles


Gordon Walker.

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Twenty-one
A HUNDRED per cent. record in the Second Division (West) of the National Counties Championship is a good enough start to Glamorgan's fight to regain the Premier Division, but it has to be admitted that we've had two comparatively easy matches up to now.

Against Worcestershire we won 9–1, and against Dorset, in Cardiff, we didn't even drop a game.

The team for the latter match was picked the same as against Worcestershire, but owing to a misunderstanding, the reserve, Bernard Dimascio, had to play instead of Norman Parker. No-one was greatly troubled by the inexperienced, but nevertheless, keen Dorset players.

On the Saturday previous, John Simonson and Betty Gray again took the honours at the second American tournament. John had a few anxious moments before he won through, and his final play off, again against Louis Devereux, saw the latter leading in the third, only to lose control and allow the Port Talbot "sponger" to sneak home 22–20, 13–21, 21–19.

John's semi-final victim was Bernard Dimascio, who put up a disappointing show against him.

In Simonson's group, Narduzzo was his nearest rival, but Baul Evans looked to be playing well. Michael Jones sparkled, then faded, and Donald Norris was well out of touch.

PLAY-OFF

Dimascio qualified by virtue of a play-off victory against Brian Everson in his group. Bernard lost a match to Alan Morris, and Brian lost one to Bernard. The play-off was marred by Brian pulling a muscle, an accident which seemed to upset Dimascio as much as it did his opponent.

Alan Morris and David Bird were next best in this Group.

In Group C, Louis Devereux nearly spoiled his chances right away, by losing to Alan Lewis. But his nearest rival was Trevor Jones and Stan Jones cancelled each other out, Trevor going down to Pat Crowley and Stan losing to Trevor.

There were some surprises in Group D, where Norman Parker lost to both Ken Pittard and Alan Thomas. Alan beat Ken also, and thus qualified to meet Louis Devereux. This was a hard game which Louis won 21–17, 22–20, Alan not being able to resist some risky hits at the crucial stages.

Bets Gray came through without a great deal of difficulty in the women's section, beating Audrey Bates to win group A, and then defeating Shirley Jones, the group B winner.

Both Audrey and Shirley started off on the right lines against Betty's "sandwich" bat, but couldn't keep it up, though Shirley did better than on the last occasion.

Margaret Cotton had quite a good record in group A, while Greta Dimascio was Shirley Jones' biggest rival in group B. Lilian Coombe again played well, but Audrey (Coombes) Jones was right off form.

The latter's poor display seemed to give Cardiff a good chance of beating Swansea in the first clash between these two women's teams in the Welsh League.

FIGHTING WIN

Margaret Cotton and Jean Boor ought to have taken four games off Audrey and Elsie Davenport, and with Audrey Bates beating Shirley Jones to gain that important point, this should have been Cardiff's match. But Audrey Jones came fighting back to win both her games. So once more Swansea have the edge on Cardiff, with Public Services and Newport showing much improvement.

In Division 1, Ebbw Vale, weakest with Donald Norris, managed to get him for their game with Newport, and created a sensation by winning 5–4 !

This leaves Swansea, the Champions, and Cardiff, as most likely contenders for the Championship, with Mumbles, if they can field their best side, challengers. Aberdare and Barry are a bit too strong in the first clash between these two women's teams in the English League.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE “CLOSED” CHAMPIONSHIPS

Seven titles changed hands in the Gloucestershire "Closed" Championships which attracted an entry of 250 at the Montpellier Pavilion, Cheltenham, on November 3.

Aubrey Simons took the men's singles, giving a great display with wins over Roy Morley, Bob Griffin, and Bryan Merritt.

The big surprise was the triumph of Shirley Hotchkins in the women's singles, who included among her victims Terry Pomroy (Spokes) and the defending champion Shirley Davis.

FULL RESULTS

Men's Singles: A. W. C. SIMONS (Bristol) beat B. Merritt (Gloucester) 21–18, 21–15.

Men's Doubles: R. E. GRIFFIN and F. CROWYS (Cheltenham) beat B. Morley and Merritt (Gloucester) 21–19, 21–17.

Women's Singles: SHIRLEY HOPCHICKS (Gloucester) beat Shirley Davis (Chester) 21–18, 15–21, 21–19.

Women's Doubles: JEAN DANIO and SHIRLEY GOULD (Bristol) beat Betty Jackson and Shirley Hotchkins (Gloucester) 21–22, 21–15, 21–17.

Mens Doubles: SHIRLEY DAVIS and GRIFFIN beat John and Terry Spokes (Bristol) 21–10, 21–8.


Junior Girls Singles: LESLEY THORNE (Gloucester) beat Mary Eyles (Bristol) 21–10, 21–15.


Under 15 Singles: M. WHITE (Cheltenham) beat D. Lockwood (Bristol) 21–13, 21–18.

Veterans' Singles: S. YARDE (Gloucester) beat F. Brooks (Bristol) 21–18, 12–21, 21–19.
## FIxtURE ENGAGEMENTS

In the Open Tournaments below, events shown in the column are additional to M.S., W.S., M.D., W.D., and X.D., in every case. The closing date for entries is shown in brackets after the title, Suitable entries are inserted in this diary without charge but all organisers should send information to The Editor at the earliest date possible.

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<th>Extra Events</th>
<th>Organising Secretary</th>
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<td>Dec. 10-15</td>
<td>Middlesex (Herga) Open (Nov. 19)</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>Mr. P. France, 53, Rickmansworth Road, Pinner, Middlesex.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herga L.T. Club</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Courfield Avenue, Harrow.</td>
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<td>16-22</td>
<td>N.W. Kent Open (Nov. 19)</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>Mr. L. Pickering, 187, Bedonwell Road, Bexleyheath, Kent.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Barnehurst Residents' Club,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>152a, Parkside Avenue, Barnehurst, Kent.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Yorkshire Junior Open (Dec. 26)</td>
<td>X.S.</td>
<td>Mr. J. Hancock, 73, Lady Pitt Lane, Leeds 11.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Madeley Street Baths,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(under 15)</td>
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<td>Hessie Road, Hull.</td>
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<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>WALES v. ENGLAND (Mixed Seniors)</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>Mrs. N. Roy Evans, 1, Llwyn-y-Grant Road, Cyncoed, Cardiff.</td>
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<td>18-19</td>
<td>Welsh Open (Jan. 7)</td>
<td>G.S.</td>
<td>Mr. R. D. Renshaw, 7, Luna Croft, Gleadless, Sheffield, 12.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>South Yorkshire Open (Jan. 11)</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>Mr. D. Sheppard, 721, Portswood Road, Portswood, Southampton.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Somme Barracks, Glossop Road, Sheffield 10.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Southampton Open (Jan. 6)</td>
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<td>Royal Pier Pavilion, Southampton.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-26</td>
<td>Irish Open</td>
<td>J.X.S.</td>
<td>Mr. F. Betts, 88, Surrenden Road, Folkestone.</td>
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<td>26-27</td>
<td>Kent Open (Jan. 5)</td>
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<td>Marine Gardens Pavilion, Folkestone.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Lancashire Open</td>
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<td></td>
<td>De Havilland Works Canteen, Lostock,</td>
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<td>G. Brown, 2 up, 126, Adamswell Street, Springburn, Glasgow, N.1.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bolton.</td>
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<td>Feb. 1-2</td>
<td>West of Scotland (Jan. 14)</td>
<td>J.S.</td>
<td>Mr. M. Goldstein, 415, Moseley Road, Birmingham, 12.</td>
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<td>Palace of Arts.</td>
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<td>Bellahoustown Park, Glasgow.</td>
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<td>1-2</td>
<td>Midland Open</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>Mrs. E. G. Johnston, 141, Ingram Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Friends' Institute</td>
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<td></td>
<td>220, Moseley Road,</td>
<td>G.S.</td>
<td>Mr. E. B. Crofts, 2, Ashwood Villas, Banks Avenue, Pontefract.</td>
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<td>Birmingham, 12.</td>
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<td>Grange Road Baths,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grange Road, Bemorse, S.E.1.</td>
<td>G.S.</td>
<td>Mr. C. T. Dean, 67, Osmond Gardens, Wallington, Surrey.</td>
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<td>Pontefract Open (Jan. 28)</td>
<td>Y.X.S.</td>
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<td>Pontefract.</td>
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<td>11-16</td>
<td>Surrey Open (Jan. 26)</td>
<td>I.S.G.</td>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Riddick, 29, Thorney Hedge Road, Chiswick, W.4.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Public Baths,</td>
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<td>London Road, Mitcham.</td>
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<td>23-24</td>
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<td>March 2</td>
<td>West Middlesex Open (Feb. 9)</td>
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<td>Mervyn Road,</td>
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<td>Ealing, W.13.</td>
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Twenty-three
COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS ROUND UP by CONRAD JASCHKE

GLOUCESTER FORGE AHEAD

This is not going to be Surrey's year... but it could be Gloucester-
shire's. They beat Surrey - the champions' second defeat - to go to the
top of the Division. The match at Sutton, Surrey started off well when Tony Miller opened with a clear-cut win over R. Morley, but Aubrey Simons and Brian Merrett
were in top form for Gloucester, and collected two singles wins apiece.

Unranked Miss Davis beat Gloucester's day when she beat England No. 3 Jean Head, and two doubles wing made it 7–3 to the visitors.

It seems Surrey selects their fixtures with the best of intentions, for their second defeat came in a match in which they were confident of win over neighbours Lancashire.

The match, played before a near-capacity crowd at Woolwich, produced some very long games, with Andy Slater and Mr. Head losing their 365 a game, on five tables. Yes, even on Christmas Day... Our George Cooprest keeps open.

In Division II (West), it's Glamorgan and Devon, true to form, and with the time this appears in print, these two will have met, and unless they draw, the championship issue in this division should be the first to be decided. Yet, after last year's defeat of Glamorgan by Staffs., who would predict anything?

Buckinghamshire, with county secretary Leo Thompson doing an excellent job of encouraging new players to tour, showed some great performances, but whose fighting spirit can be an example to many.

Yorkshire followed their victory over the champions by a run-away win over neighbours Lancashire. Winning the first tie seems to be an unnecessary task for Yorks who are now in the hands of the leaders, and must be firm favourites to retain the title.

VENNER RESTED

Surrey No. 1 Harry Venner, has been off-colour this season, and has asked to be rested. The Surrey selectors have taken this opportunity to bestow upon Tony Miller, No. 1 position in the team... a well earned honour for a player who has lost his form.

Kent's hopes of retaining premier status were not enhanced by their 7–3 defeat at the hands of Essex.

From the Midland Division comes a wrap over my knuckles... deserved, too. Northants lost 1–9 to Worcestershire, not 3–7 as stated. In his report on all his county's matches, Yorks, pointed out honest Northants treasurer C. A. Spencer who, incidentally, is the only official to have supplied me with a full match report on all his county's matches. Seems that when Northants lost 3–7 to Worcestershire (it really was 3–7 this time!), Worcestershire's young player J. Bell adopted tactics which had the effect of exhausting the patience of Northants' players. However, defence paid this time, and Bell contributed two singles wins to his side's victory.

May I end on a different note? It appears that the fines and postponement fees charges by N.C.C. secretary Ivor Eyles are not exactly popular with counties. This is understandable. But I would point out that Mr. Eyles is merely carrying out the implicit instructions given him by the General Council of the N.C.C., on which all counties are represented.

He has no option but to impose these fines and fees, whatever he personally may think of it, and in the circumstances I don't think abusive letters addressed to him meet the case. If the rules are not popular, they can be changed at the next A.G.M. — and I gather Mr. Eyles would not be unhappy about that.

Incidentally, N.C.C. handbooks can still be obtained from Mr. Eyles, at 2s. 6d. per dozen. Some counties do not appear to know about this, so here is your chance if you want to distribute this very informative booklet in your area.
Letters to the Editor

BERGMANN REPLIES TO BARN

In the October issue of Table Tennis, Victor Barna wrote an article on balls which, in the main, was excellent. However, to my references to myself and would like to clarify these points.

1. When rejecting 24 boxes of balls in Tokyo, I did not find a good one after Mr. Montagu's intervention. I finally chose the best pill of a very bad lot.

Victor's comments on my ball-testing method. When pressing the ball with the forefinger and thumb available out of the table, I do not test four or five times at different spots of the ball, turning it round again and again.

Because of the general demand for three-mark, best grade T.T. balls, I believe that since the war selection of the best in the world.

I have developed an unusual sense of selection which proves me right at least 199 times in 200. When in doubt, I additionally play a few rallies with the selected ball.

Selected in precisely the same manner before 1939 and I then found a much higher percentage of good balls than I do today.

Because of the general demand for three-mark, best grade T.T. balls, I believe that since the war selection of pills by distributing firms for three-mark stamping has become much more lenient. It is my personal opinion that this is so because firms are competing constantly from among ourselves the surface the following advantages seem sensible than a half-miler running nothing but quarter miles in preparation for an important race.

After all, very few players really kick up a row about it and distributors think: "Well, I don't apply my best three or five times at different spots of the ball, turning it round again and again.

The financial side of tournaments would remain approximately the same with an entry fee roughly equal to the present cost of three events.

Assuming an entry of 200 men and 100 women with four and a half hours play on each of five evenings and Saturday afternoon on ten tables, the players would get for their money a minimum of three best of five matches (in groups of four) which should attract more of the club players who are likely to be eliminated in the first round of current tournaments.

In doubles tournaments it would be possible under the same conditions to play in groups of five a minimum of four best of five matches.

Finals would consist of the semi-finals onwards to the final. The present cost of three events.

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BIRMINGHAM “OPEN”  
by A. BACKHOUSE

In the battle of the sponges at the Birmingham Open on November 16—17, chief honours went to Ann Haydon who repeated last year’s triumph of carrying off the triple crown. With so much sponge in action spectacular rallies were the exception, but to their credit the contestants refrained from “chiselling,” and the large crowd went home feeling well satisfied with what they had seen.

Len Adams surprised everyone by taking the Men’s Singles title in a match against Alan Rhodes that fluctuated from one extreme to the other. In the first game Adams contained Rhodes’ attack without difficulty, but in the second he fell completely to pieces and found himself trailing 1—15 at one stage. However, Len pulled himself together in the final game, and despite a great recovery by Rhodes, who levelled at 20 all and led 22—21, went on to record a well-earned victory.

In conclusion a word of praise for the organisers. A prompt start to the finals and a 9.30 p.m. finish is a sure way of retaining the interest of the paying customers.


Women’s Singles: Semi-finals: Miss A. HAYDON bt Miss A. Bates 21—16, 21—18; Miss H. ELLIOT bt Miss M. Jones (Gloucs. 21—11, 21—11.

Final: Miss HAYDON bt Miss Elliot 21—16, 21—19.


Final: ADAMS and BURRIDGE bt Rhodes and Jones 21—14, 21—17.

Women’s Doubles: Semi-finals: Miss ELLIOT and Miss HAYDON bt Miss B. Keye and Miss H. Egerton 21—17, 21—19, 21—17.

Final: Miss ELLIOT and Miss HAYDON bt Miss Bates and Miss Rowe 21—9, 21—10.


Final: BURRIDGE and Miss HAYDON bt Carrington and Miss Elliot 21—19, 21—19.


Final: DONNELLY bt Jones 21—19, 21—19.


Final: Miss CHARMAN bt Miss Wall 21—14, 21—18.


NORFOLK CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS

FINALS RESULTS

Men’s Singles: S. LOONG bt A. Hipperson 21—17, 21—17, 21—15.

Women’s Singles: Mrs. E. ALLEN bt Mrs. H. Ewles 21—11, 21—19.


Women’s Doubles: Mrs. Ewles and Mrs. ALLEN bt Mrs. M. Harrison and Mrs. H. Bates 21—16, 21—18.

Mixed Doubles: C. MOORE and Mrs. R. BAKER bt D. Clutton and Mrs. Allen 21—19, 21—19, 21—16.


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Twenty-six
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

“OPEN”

By GEOFF. HARROWER

The first quarter provided the opportunity for Ray Dorking to be the shock maker in chief. Wins over Brian Kennedy (21–17, 15–21, 21–18) and Alan Rhodes (21–11, 21–16), took him to the quarter final, where, unfortunately for him, he could make nothing of Lou Laza’s sponge and spins. Still, a good performance to beat Brian and Alan.

Nothing spectacular in the second quarter. Derek Burridge just scraping home against Tony Miller 21–18, 14–21, 28–26. It was alleged that 20 minutes was well passed during the advantage points in the final game. Another Middlesex man, Michael Thornhill, through in the third quarter by beating Ken Craigie (21–13, 17–21, 22–20), and Jackie Head (21–14, 21–16).

The bottom quarter did not work out according to form. Before he played Bobby Stevens told me he wasn’t at all fit: a number of competitors felt he was too fit! After David House had turned in another fine performance to beat Len Adams (21–19, 21–12), Stevens beat Harry Venner 22–20, 21–13, and House 21–18, 21–10.

Stevens went on to give a brilliant display against Thornhill in the semi-final. It says much for Thornhill’s determination and “ball sense” that he won through to Rhodes (21–11, 21–16), took him to the quarter final. Stevens beat Harry Venner 22–20, 21–13, and House 21–18, 21–10.

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**SOUTH OF ENGLAND**

**“OPEN” CHAMPIONSHIPS**

*Croydon, November 22–24*

WITH places in the Swaythling Cup team open to those players who are (a) reasonably young, and (b) run into form at the right moment, Alan Rhodes staked a claim for consideration by a decisive win in the men’s singles (writes Geoff Harrower). His only serious opponent was Derek Burridge, in the quarter final, Alan winning 21–13, 14–21, 21–18. The final against Harry Venner was a massacre, while Laurie Landry had been beaten with a little to spare in the semi.

Earlier, one of Rhodes’ many rivals for the Swaythling Cup was damaging his chances—Michael Thornhill losing to Bannerjee in the fifth round (15–21, 21–19, 21–17). Young Landry did well to beat Bannerjee 15–21, 21–10, 21–17 in the quarter final.

Peter Skerratt made one of his all too rare excursions from Lincolnshire to easily defeat Redfearn and Harrison, after young Ian had secured a splendid win over Jackie Head (13–21, 21–9, 24–22). Venner then beat Skerratt in three games, to enter the semi-final, where he beat Craigie in an uninteresting match.

I was not sure whether Harry was afraid of Ken’s sponge bat, or whether Ken hasn’t mastered it himself—anyhow, it didn’t make a good game to watch (the opinions of an England Selector who spoke to me were unprintable!)

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**RESULTS**

| Men’s Singles | Semi-finals | A. RHODES (Middlesex) bt L. Landry (Middlesex) 21-18, 21-15; H. VENNER (Surrey) bt K. Craigie (Surrey) 21-17, 21-19. |
| Men’s Doubles | Semi-finals | L. ADAMS and D. BURRIDGE (Middlesex) bt R. Crowden and J. Head (Surrey) 22-24, 22-20, 21-14; M. THORNHILL (Middlesex) and R. RAYBOULD (Essex) bt Craigie and Rhodes 21-10, 19-21, 21-14. |
| Women’s Singles | Semi-finals | Miss H. ELLIOT (Scotland) bt Miss M. Fry (Middlesex) 14-21, 22-20, 21-11; Miss J. ROOK (Surrey) bt Miss J. Fielder (Kent) 21-17, 21-15. |
| Women’s Doubles | Semi-finals | Miss ELLIOT bt Miss Rook 21-14, 21-16. |
| Mixed Doubles | Semi-finals | L. ADAMS and Miss FRY bt Mrs. J. Head and Miss M. Piper (Surrey) 21-16, 21-12; Miss Y. BAKER (Essex) and Miss B. ISAACS (Surrey) bt Miss Rook and Miss Fielder 21-18, 21-18. |
| Mixed Doubles | Final | Miss ELLIOT and Miss FRY bt Miss Baker and Miss Isaacs 21-16, 21-16. |

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