

How to Play Lawn Tennis.

FOREHAND and BACKHAND DRIVING.

By S. POWELL BLACKMORE

(Author of "Lawn Tennis Up-to-date" in Cassell's Magazine.)

In the previous article we traversed many of the elementary rules which are generally recognized and accepted by the good-class player as almost inseparable from effective stroke play off the ground. Thus we made some little study of the value of the correct footwork in lawn tennis, and advantages of a full swing of the racket and the imperative necessity of accurately timing the actual hit. Here, therefore, we may usefully proceed to a scrutiny of the methods of the world's champions; we may attempt to penetrate the secrets which govern their wonderful speed and stroke, and maybe we shall see how far any average player can improve his game by earnest endeavour to follow in their footsteps.

Every ambitious player must strive hard to attain some measure of skill in driving the tennis ball off the ground. He should cultivate a fast drive and must become as confident in handling the back-hand drive as he feels sure of the fore-hand ball.

Given a good playing surface the young player, if he displays dogged persistency and will concentrate upon every stroke, can acquire a hard, accurate drive in three or four years. A few years ago I should have been held up to general ridicule for such a statement. To-day, however, the modern youngsters, and more especially the Continental boys and girls, are demonstrating daily that, given the necessary pluck, this promise is liberally true. The old school's teaching said: "Learn to get the ball over the net; perhaps the other fellows will miss it." The up-to-date youngster says: "Smite the ball hard; hustle your opponent every time." So, before the war, we believed that the acquisition of a drive meant ten years' hard work and a rich father; to-day we know of a score of young Continental players who, by hitting hard and always, can now produce first-class drives and tremendous punch with only three or four years' spare-time practice—and no private means.

The plain fact of the matter is that lawn tennis in other countries is speeding up tremendously every year, and English players are not keeping step with this advance. We are still relying upon the methods and the moods which produced our types of steady base-line players, and in consequence, England is now lagging far behind in the international struggle for supremacy on the courts. Sometimes I wonder whether modern tennis has not gone beyond us; whether as a race we have the

suade you that super-tight stringing is a tad. Quote him William Johnston: "I go for a racket with thin gut and one as tightly strung as I can get it done. Tight stringing is essential to make the fastest returns."

Let us analyze Johnston's epoch-making forehand drive. First we may watch his footwork—he is lithe and quick as a bantam-weight boxer in the ring—it is one outward manifestation of an alert mind. Often we see him in an expectant, crouching attitude, ready to spring into the sideways position at a moment's warning. Suppleness, too, is the keynote of his racket work. The racket swings easily in the hand; obviously it is only lightly held by the fingers. Then comes the moment for the drive. In a fraction of a second he is round into the sideways position, feet planted wide apart, knees bent, left shoulder pointing well towards the net. Simultaneously, with a loose, supple movement, the racket is swung far back horizontally, and there it is poised for a moment. Then as the ball comes up from the ground and reaches waist height Johnston with a full, loose swing brings the racket horizontally sweeping forwards on to the ball at the top of the bound, and as he does so he throws all his weight forward into the actual hit. "I strike the ball," says Johnston, "when it reaches a point slightly behind my left foot." And the point where the ball is actually struck is of vital importance—an inch makes all the difference to the success of the drive.

Finally, he declares, the secret of the power he gets into his forehand shot lies in the transference of body weight at the moment of hitting the ball; it is due to the fact that nearly his whole weight is behind the stroke. "At the moment of striking the ball I am throwing my weight from the right to the left foot." In this stroke the racket arm swings back bent at the elbow; the one thing to strive for is suppleness. Then, in the swing forward, the elbow straightens at the moment of impact and the driving power comes almost wholly from the shoulder. On no account should the forearm through be consciously checked; the racket should, in the cross-court drive, finish well behind the right arm. In all the main essentials of this drive, especially as regards his warning against tightly gripping the racket—for that produces a stiffish ungainly swing—Andre Gobert offers very similar advice to William Johnston. Finally, keep well away from the ball sideways, but get on to the ball quickly once it has bounced. First learn to hit at the top of the bound, later when more proficient cultivate the drive off a rising ball. (To be continued.)

Here and There.

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DIED AT HARTFORD, U.S.A.—Mr. David Bentley received a message Saturday from his sister informing him that his brother William had passed away on Friday at Hartford Conn., U.S.A.

FINAL MEETING.—As will be noted per advertisement, the Regatta Committee are requested to attend a final meeting, which will be held in the T.A. Armoury tomorrow (Tuesday) evening, for the purpose of settling up and adjusting all matters in connection with the 1922 Aquatic Sports.

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Remarkable Feature at The Nickel To-night.

BEAUTIFUL CLOTHES DISPLAYED IN "THE OTHER WOMAN."

One of the most successful artists upon the silver-sheet to-day is Jane Novak, an important member of the all-star cast of "The Other Woman," the newest J. L. Frothingham Production, Hodkinson released, which is at the Nickel Theatre to-night. Miss Novak is a radiant beautiful blonde, possessed of the histrionic ability to a rare degree, and has been seen in many successful picture production in the past which called for the displaying of all her infinite talent. She is perhaps best remembered for her splendid work in support of William S. Hart in such pictures as "The Tiger Man," "Selfish Yates," and "Wagon Tracks," and she also registered most successfully in Marshall Neilan's production "The River's End." Not only as an emotional artist of rare ability is Miss Novak famous, but she has won for herself the reputation of being one of the best-dressed girls on the screen. She is never garish nor loud in her costumes, manages to impress one with her absolute knowledge of "how to dress." While most of her past pictures have given her but little opportunity of displaying beautiful clothes, the role which is hers in "The Other Woman" permits of the wearing of many charming frocks, an opportunity of which Miss Novak has taken the fullest advantage, and as a result a rare treat is promised the feminine patrons of the Nickel Theatre when Miss Novak and her co-workers brighten the screen here to-night and to-morrow night.

Personal.

Mr. F. Johnson of the Biological Department of the Geological Survey, Ottawa, who has been here the past few days pursuing studies and making collections for his Department, has succeeded in making a most interesting collection of marine and fresh water life, ranging from almost microscopic plankton to codfish. He expressed great surprise at the number and variety so far exhibited. From here he proceeds to various points as far as Port aux Basques. He will publish an account of his studies here which will be of very great interest to science.

Is Leaving Country.

Mr. M. Nikosey, Auctioneer, informs us to-day that it is his intention to sell by auction all his goods and property in St. John's and leave this country for good and all. Mr. Nikosey, like many other respectable Syrians in St. John's deeply resents the attack that has been made upon him by a city weekly paper and feels that in the face of such persecution it is impossible for him to continue to do business here any longer. He has been in this country for 24 years and considers himself a Newfoundlander, having worked up a respectable business and brought up his children here. His goods valued at about \$8,000 will be put up at auction, the sale continuing every afternoon and evening. After disposing of his goods, he will sell his house on the Higher Levels; his furniture and all other holdings and no reasonable price will be refused. In taking leave of this country, Mr. Nikosey is thankful to God and to Newfoundland that he is taking with him a good family that he has reared here, and before his departure he will tell the whole story of his 24 years sojourn here and the story of his ten years on Bell Island and the reason why he left the island. He feels that unjust comment has grievously hurt his character and the characters of his fellow countrymen here and thinks it hardly fair that because there is one black sheep in a flock, the whole flock should thereby be condemned. No one should miss the sale that is to be held, as everything will be sacrificed.—adv.

Wedding Bells.

FORWARD-FRENCH.

At the home of Mrs. N. Forward, Carbonara, a quiet but pretty wedding took place at 4 o'clock, Wednesday afternoon 23rd inst., when Miss Annie E. Forward of Carbonara and Mr. W. French, son of Mr. Robert French of Harbor Grace were united in hymens bonds. Rev. W.B. Bugden officiating. To the strains of the wedding march which was played by Miss May Noseworthy the bride entered the room leaning on the arm of Mr. Robert Fraize, who performed the duties of father of the bride. The bride was prettily attired in a dress of navy blue with hat to match. Miss C.V. Forward of Carbonara, acted as bridesmaid and the groom was ably supported by Mr. Warren Goodwin, of Harbor Grace. After supper was served, when the usual toasts were engaged in, and the health of the bride and groom duly honored, the happy couple motored to Bay Roberts, where the honeymoon was spent. The bride was the recipient of many presents, the groom's gift being a cheque. It is the sincere wish of their many friends that happiness will be theirs, as they voyage along over the Matrimonial Sea.

Hr. Grace Aug. 25th. 1922.

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