



How to Play Lawn Tennis.

SIMPLE LESSONS FOR SPEEDY PROGRESS.

By S. POWELL BLACKMORE (Author of "Lawn Tennis Up-to-date," in Cassell's Magazine).

SECRETS OF GOOD TIMING.

Good timing concerns the question of when to hit the ball so as to obtain the best possible results. In other words, where the ball must be, in relation to the striker. In the ground strokes, that is, in the forehand and backhand drives, the player should strike the ball (having previously got himself into the sideways stance), approximately half-way through the complete swing forward.

But before considering the sport in a little closer detail, I must emphasize a falling all too common. The beginner is apt to get much too close to the ball, he thus robs himself of freedom for the full swing of the arm and racket. How often does one see the novice rush straight at the ball, get immediately behind it, bump the net, and then make a cramped and futile underhand scooping push at the ball. Keep well away from the ball, in an excellent position, your hitting powers depend on its observance. In forehand drives the arm should be fully extended and the elbow should, as far as possible, be in a horizontal line with the ball. On the backhand most players advise the bent arm with the elbow kept well in to the side, so that this side it is not necessary to be quite so far away sideways from the ball. Shoulders below shoulder height, you should be made with the bent elbow, but these balls must be hit well in front of the body. The volleyed ball should never be allowed to get sideways on to the player, as in the forehand drive off the ground.

CORRECTING "HEAVY" BALLS.

In the drive I said hit half-way through the swing. Let me be a bit more explicit. Take for example the forehand drive straight down the line. The foot should be facing the line, the head well apart. Your head will be turned towards the net watching the approaching ball. It strikes the ground some feet ahead of you; your weight is mainly on the right foot and your racket has been swung well over your object must be to transfer your weight on to the left foot simultaneously as you swing forward to the racket. In the perfect drive the racket will strike the ball when your weight is just arriving on your left foot, when you are, in consequence, leaning well forward towards the net, and the ball, with your body in the position, will be just opposite the buckle of your belt and some three or four inches inside (away from the net) the toe of your left shoe. After the actual impact the weight of the body should continue to go forward, and your right foot will, most probably, swing off the ground and come forward with the momentum of the weight transference and full follow-through of the racket-arm.

In the backhand drive the general principle is the same, only the ball is struck opposite the front or right toe for the straight shot; for the cross-court drive it is hit just before it reaches the toe of your right shoe. The great bug-bear of nearly all beginners is late timing, especially on the backhand. If the ball is timed correctly it flies off the strings of the racket and the impact offers no strain on the wrist. Some days a player falls as if he were hitting cricket balls; he can get no speed into his shot and generally feels pretty impatient. Late timing—that is the cause; and if only the reader will remember this when in court, and when he encounters a particularly "heavy" ball, he can correct the fault at once by starting the swing back and the swing forward a little earlier.

I understand in a synopsis to include in this article a few brief remarks about how to anticipate an opponent's return. Heaven alone can account for such folly! In Dreamland, sometimes, during the summer tournament season, when lawn tennis seems to get mixed up with the dinner from the grape fruit to the savoury, I have the power of unfailing prevision. I know the direction of my opponent's every return. But such a power is consistent only with Dreamland. If it could be definitely cultivated it would kill lawn tennis. But think of the experience! Of having an inspired period on the centre court at Wimbledon, against an Overseas World-beater, when one knew beforehand to the fraction of an inch where the ball could be intercepted at the net! Why, the very suggestion makes one breathless. The greatest player the world has ever known would be a veritable child, utterly ignorant in the hands of such prevision. I make no claims to unfold such a secret. To embark upon a search for it would indicate madness more than a quest for synthetic gold.

Nevertheless, there are a number of well-known principles followed by experienced match players which, even if they are in the indication of one's opponent's returns, are, indeed, a help towards putting one at the least disadvantage in countering the ball when the direction is revealed. In the first place, the beginner should have a base, at most two bases from which he should conduct operations, and to which he should return after making his stroke. Beginners, untaught—and few have lessons from the very beginning, more's the pity—proceed along the line that one must learn to hit a ball off the ground before trying to volley. It is putting the cart before the horse—although it is recommended in many of the obsolete books. The first thing a player tries his hand at is service delivery. Well, isn't that a volley—and one of the most difficult varieties of the volley too?

Anyhow, the practice is to hit the ball over from the back of the court—that is the usual beginning. Well, in a single with this sort of practice you should regard one spot as your base—a point, say, a yard behind the centre of the base-line. Supposing your opponent has sent a drive out to the right-hand corner, and you run across and return the ball quite nicely to his right-hand line. You are pleased with the effort—the beginner's usual frame of mind—so you stand still and admire the shot! Indeed you are quite elated, and not a little surprised when your opponent reaches the ball and plays

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it down your back-hand line—quite probably a soft, scoopy return falling near the service line. It beats you. And why? Simply because you have not anticipated any return at all. Instead of standing still and admiring your fine shot you should have run for your base. By so doing you would have been moving in the direction of the next ball, and then it would have been easily within your reach. Never stand still; most beginners try shots to alternate sides. Therefore, in running towards your centre base you will generally, not always perhaps, be moving towards your opponent's return.

When we come to consider the tactics of a class of player a little more ambitious, we have to consider the case of an opponent who is clever enough to notice that you are always returning, after your shot, to your centre base. This fellow will try and score by putting his shot back to the spot from which you are running. And at the first successful attempt he is likely to score the point outright. Subsequently, if you are wise, you will be on the look out for this return.

Then again examine and analyse your opponent's strokes. Notice that most beginners incline towards the cross-court return. A shot to his forehand will probably be returned to your forehand; a ball to his backhand generally means a reply to your left side.

Here I may profitably urge that the beginner cannot start to practise the volleying strokes too soon. His early attempts will, I know, convince him that his scoring capabilities are stronger when he remains at the back of the court. But he must, if he has a spark of tennis ambition in him, persevere and persevere! So I want to help this tyro at volleying. There is a golden rule for net play: Always cover the straight shot. In other words, while at the net keep opposite the ball. In doing this the volleyer is covering the expanse of net across which the ball is most likely to travel in its return.

The Originator of Krupps

In Essen, in Rhenish Prussia, revered as a priceless relic, may still be seen the one-story house in which Friedrich Krupp died on August 1, 1826. He had nothing to leave to his children but his forging plant, and the secret of making cast steel, discovered too late for him to profit by it. But his son Alfred inherited his father's clever brain and stout heart, and although for some years the entire staff consisted of the youthful Alfred and two workmen, it had, by 1822, grown to a dozen, including his younger brothers, and ten years later following the invention of a special roll for manufacturing, to a hundred men. Then came a turn of the tide so threatening that Hermann Krupp and his younger brother left in despair to seek their fortune elsewhere. Alfred only set his teeth still more resolutely until at last he conquered. It was a proud day for the unknown German when the Sheffield Masters gazed open-mouthed at the great Exhibition of 1861, at a superb cast steel ingot weighing two and a quarter tons, with a six-pounder cannon, also of cast steel by its side. The name of Krupp was soon in all mouths, while the following year brought the discovery of a method of manufacturing weldless railway tyres, and such a flood of orders to Essen that the Krupp works were quickly recognized as the largest and most important in North Germany. The growing triumph came when, at the London Exhibition of 1862, the Essen works displayed an ingot nine feet high, four feet in diameter and 21 tons in weight. The way was now clear to a fortune, for the cannon which wrought such havoc in the Prussian war of 1861 were of Essen manufacture. So superior in deadliness were they to all others, that Napoleon sent an order for 300 Krupp guns, which was politely declined. Alfred Krupp said that his guns were for his country, not for his country's possible enemies. Each year saw the Krupp works grow, despite all setbacks, and when Alfred Krupp died he was employing an army of 20,000 workmen, while his modest original forge has given birth to a vast town. Under his son's rule—Friedrich Alfred—the Krupp Kingdom spread its boundaries wider and wider. There are now branch works at Annen, Westphalia and at Gruson, near Magdeburg, where armour plate turrets are manufactured, blast-furnaces at Reinhausen, Duisburg, Neuwerk, and Engen, collieries and mines almost everywhere, while the firm owns railways and a fleet of ocean-going steamers. The owner of these vast concerns is now his eldest daughter, who in 1906 married a young German diplomat, Gustav Hohenhausen. It is now the biggest private industrial concern in the world, with a reserve fund of \$20,000,000 and an annual income of a million and a half. During the recent war Krupp supplied practically all the armaments used by the German army.

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If your intention is to follow up a shot to the net, then play the straight shot, because the straight line is your shortest path to the net position. In my next article I propose to review the methods of some of the world's champions; to try and elucidate the secrets of hard hitting. We shall proceed to a more analytical review of the various strokes, and when each may be the most effective. With the aid of some diagrams I shall try to show the value of various passing shots to counter the aggressive volleyer.

Two negroes at New York were continually bragging about their ability as long-distance swimmers, and a steamboat man got up a match. The man who swam the longest distance was to receive five dollars. The Alabama Whale immediately stripped on the dock, but the Human Steamboat said he had some business and would return in a few minutes. The Whale swam around for twenty minutes for exercise, and by that time the Human Steamboat returned. He wore a pair of swimming trunks and had a sheet-iron cooking stove strapped on his back. Tied round his neck were a dozen packages, containing bread, flour, bacon, and other eatables. The Whale gazed at his opponent in amazement. "What you 'vittles?" demanded the Human Steamboat. "Vittles fo' what?" asked the Whale. "Don't you ask me fo' nothing on the way o'ah," warned the Steamboat. "Mah fust stop in London."

His lordship had engaged a new butler, and a week later the man had to announce the guests at a ball. "Mr. N. Jimjams, Mrs. Jimjams, and Miss Jimjams!" called out the butler. "This got on his lordship's nerves," "James," he said, "pray be more brief when you announce the next arrivals." The next people to arrive on the scene were Mr. Crown, Mrs. Crown, and Master Crown. The butler waved his hand to indicate which direction they should take, at the same time calling out: "Fifteen bob!"

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Flying Kings and Queens

Royal aeroplanes are fast becoming the rage. Many of the monarchs of Europe and the East not only use flying machines to enable them to fill important engagements, but are acquiring private machines of special pattern and elaborate designs which, in many cases, they pilot themselves. The King of Spain set the fashion last autumn, when he acquired a French machine for his personal use. The King and Queen of the Belgians have long been known as enthusiastic aviators, and they used to fly backwards and forwards constantly to visit their children in England during the war.

The Queen of the Belgians has just accepted from the Aircraft Disposal Company a two-seater Bristol aeroplane for her own use, and intends to pilot it herself. This is similar to the machine used by King Albert since 1920—except

that instead of being finished in dark colours, it is decorated throughout in silver. The King has a private aerodrome near Brussels. Aviation as a hobby makes a strong appeal to several of the younger rulers of Indian Native States. A wonderful machine has been built for the

Thakur of Morvi, in Western India, which unites Oriental luxury with the latest achievements of Western science. Never before has an aeroplane been so luxuriously furnished. Pictures and mirrors decorate the cabin, the floor is covered with the unrivalled carpets of the East, and the windows draped with rich curtains. It sounds like a modern and improved version of the flying carpet in the "Arabian Nights."

The Indian Government is interested in the development of aviation in the country, and has obtained the assistance of the Home Government in its plans. One hundred aeroplanes have recently been sent out for distribution among the various States. The Maharajah of Bharatpur, who is a noted sportsman—his activities ranging from duck-shooting to tent-pegging on a Rolls-Royce—has taken up the new sport, and is devoting himself to his hobby in the most thorough-going manner.

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