

REPORT TO MEMBERS

OF THE

AMERICAN PADDLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 1, 1936.

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Now that the season in platform paddle tennis is about to start it seemed worth while to review the events of the past season and to discuss our plans for the next.

The membership of our Association, which started in November, 1934 with three clubs, has now grown to eight, as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Field Club of Greenwich, Conn. |) | |
| Fox Meadow Tennis Club, Scarsdale, N. Y. |) | Charter Members |
| Manursing Island Club, Rye, N. Y. |) | |
| Tremont Place Paddle Tennis Club, Orange, N. J. | | |
| Ardsley Country Club, Ardsley on Hudson, N. Y. | | |
| Bronxville Field Club, Bronxville, N. Y. | | |
| American Yacht Club, Rye, N. Y. | | |
| Amackassin Tennis Club, Yonkers, N. Y. | | |

The principal activities of the Association have been as follows:

(1) The conduct of championship tournaments open to members of clubs belonging to the Association, and to other paddle tennis players on invitation.

(2) The development of an improved backstop, and serving as a clearing house among members for improvements in court or equipment (as for example, the new sanded platform surface).

(3) Publicity for platform paddle tennis, including a nation-wide broadcast through the courtesy of John Tunis, various newspaper and magazine articles, exhibitions for sports writers, etc.

(4) The production of an illustrated circular on Platform Paddle Tennis which has been widely distributed among tennis clubs and among those interested in paddle tennis.

(5) Aid to individuals and clubs interested in putting up platforms.

1. CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS

Five successful tournaments were held, drawing an entry list considerably greater than that of the previous year. These were in general charge of L. H. Welling, Chairman of the Tournament Committee, who was assisted by Kenneth Ward and Warren A. Ransom at Rye, F. M. Hampton at Greenwich, and W. L. Barclay, Jr. and F. S. Blanchard at Scarsdale.

THE RESULTS OF THE TOURNAMENTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

| <u>DATE OF START</u> | <u>TOURNAMENT</u> | <u>PLACE</u> | <u>WINNERS</u> | <u>RUNNERS UP</u> |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Dec. 7, 1935 | Women's Singles <i>4/30 2/6 scars</i> | Manursing Is. Club, Rye, N. Y. | Mrs. T. E. Beck Score 9-7, 7-5 | Mrs. H.B. Eaton |
| Dec. 14, 1935 | Men's Singles <i>1/30 man for scars</i> | Manursing Is. Club, Rye, N.Y. | C. E. Grafmueller Score 6-3, 6-2, 6-0 | R. G. Newell |
| Jan. 18, 1936 | Women's Doubles <i>3/13 green</i> | Field Club Greenwich, Conn. | Mrs. H. B. Eaton Mrs. P. S. Fuller Score 8-10, 6-1, 6-3 | Mrs. P. S. Bush Mrs. Wm. Wilson |
| Feb. 22, 1936 | Mixed Doubles <i>2/27 man green</i> | Fox Meadow T.C. Scarsdale, N. Y. | Mr. and Mrs. C. M. O'Hearn Score 6-3, 6-4 | Mr. and Mrs. P. S. Fuller |
| Mar. 21, 1936 | Men's Doubles <i>3/20 scars</i> | Field Club Greenwich, Conn. | Harold D. Holmes R. G. Newell Score 3-6, 8-6, 4-6 9-7, 15-13 | F.S. Blanchard E. Gatchell |

The finals of the Men's doubles was the longest match in the history of paddle tennis, as well as one of the most exciting. The winners had match point thirteen times before finally winning. Couch and Kilmarx, champions of 1935, showed fine sportsmanship in entering this tournament, though one of them was hobbling around with a bad knee and the other with a sprained ankle. Entries in the tournaments came from Scarsdale, Rye, Greenwich, New Rochelle, Yonkers, White Plains, Ardsley on Hudson, Darien, Orange and Englewood.

It is planned this season to hold all of the doubles tournaments later in the season, probably in late February or March, and the singles somewhat earlier than that. Announcements of definite dates will be sent out later by the Tournament Committee.

2. IMPROVED BACKSTOPS AND COURT SURFACE

(1) The rule allowing the ball to be taken off the backstop has proved very popular, but it has been felt of great importance to the future of the game to develop a backstop which would provide for more accurate bounces without increasing the expense materially or changing the essential features of the game. Accordingly the Association has been working on this problem, and a greatly improved backstop has been developed, thanks to the cooperation of D. K. Evans of Scarsdale who designed one for the Cogswell court. Thanks also to the cooperation of H. B. Eaton of the Church E. Gates Co. of N. Y. another similar backstop, without the bar for adjusting tension, has been worked out and installed on one of the portable courts of the Fox Meadow Tennis Club of Scarsdale. A description of the Evans type of backstop is appended to this report. While the new backstops are a little more expensive to install than the former type they are strongly recommended for all new championship courts and for existing courts requiring new backstops. Those who have played on courts with the new backstops are unanimously of the opinion that the game is considerably improved thereby. The chief features of these backstops are as follows:

(a) The uprights at the ends of the platform are set back from the wire mesh so that the ball cannot strike against the uprights and rebound unevenly.

(b) A method is provided (in the Evans backstop) for keeping the wire mesh tight and at uniform tension.

(2) An improved court surface has been developed at the Tremont Place court in Orange, thanks to the research of Richard Grant, H. Pease and others. This is accomplished by sprinkling about 40 pounds of fine beach sand on the platform as it is painted and while the paint is wet. This gives a less slippery surface, enabling the court to be played upon even when slightly damp or soon after a rain. It also eliminates glare on a bright day. In view of the enthusiastic comments of our Orange members on this type of surface it is recommended for the consideration of our other members when painting their courts in the fall.

(3) Width of platform recommended for new courts is 30 feet instead of 28 feet. The wider courts have proved more satisfactory, especially with the use of high bouncing cut services.

3. PUBLICITY

On November 21, 1935, John Tunis, the noted sports writer conducted a broadcast on paddle tennis through the N. B. C. nation-wide hook-up. He was aided by Chas. M. O'Hearn, Frederick E. Allen and F. S. Blanchard - all of whom spoke on various phases of the game. This resulted in many inquiries and 50 or 60 letters from all over the country.

Articles on paddle tennis appeared in the N. Y. Sun several times, in Esquire, the New York Times, N. Y. Herald Tribune, World Telegram, Boston Transcript, Newark Evening News, Vassar Miscellany News, Scarsdale Inquirer (many times), Sporting Goods Dealer and the All Sports Record Book. Recently a short account appeared in the October, 1936 Reader's Digest based on a particularly good article by George Trevor which appeared in the Sun on Jan. 25, 1936. Other articles have undoubtedly appeared in local papers which have not come to the writer's attention.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of Kenneth Ward in enlisting the interest of leading sports writers' a successful exhibition of paddle tennis was held in Scarsdale in January, 1936. This resulted in some of the articles referred to above and brought many favorable comments on the game.

4. ILLUSTRATED CIRCULAR ON PLATFORM PADDLE TENNIS

A very attractive circular was produced through the courtesy of Williams and Saylor of New York, at no expense to the Association. About 800 copies have been distributed among those inquiring about the game, to members of the Eastern Lawn Tennis Association, to sports dealers, and among members of the Association. About 100 copies are still available.

5. RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES.

The number of inquiries about platform paddle tennis has greatly increased during 1936. These have all been taken care of by the Association and many new courts have resulted.

The officers of the Association welcome inquiries and suggestions from members and from all others interested in Platform Paddle Tennis.

Additional copies of this report are available to members if desired -- as well as a limited supply of copies of last year's illustrated circular.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

by F. S. Blanchard
President.

Address -- 214 Church St., New York City.

(Tel. WOrth 2-2200)

MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS:-

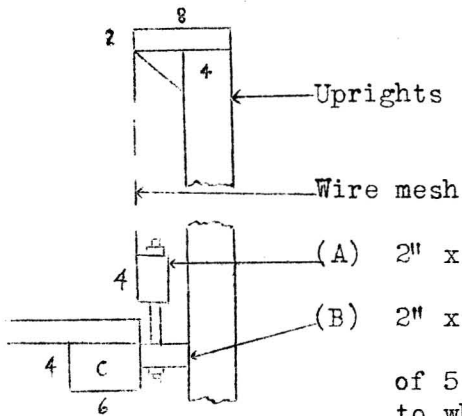
Fessenden S. Blanchard, Pres. and Secy. (Fox Meadow T. C.)
Harold D. Holmes, Vice-Pres. (Tremont Place P. T. C.)
Lindsay H. Welling, Treas. (ex-officio)
Foster M. Hampton (Field Club of Greenwich)
Stuart R. Stevenson (Ardsley Country Club)
Victor F. Hockmeyer (Bronxville Field Club)
Paul G. Theband (American Yacht Club)
R. W. Cauchois (Amackassin Tennis Club)
Kenneth Ward (Manursing Is. Club)
John C. Ten Eyck, Jr.

OFFICES OF ASSOCIATION:

Since John C. Ten Eyck, Jr. called the first meeting which resulted in the founding of the American Paddle Tennis Association in Nov. 1934, he has very kindly allowed the Association to maintain its headquarters at his office at 80 John Street. As he is now planning to move his offices uptown, and as most of the members of the Board are downtown, it is planned to use the above address instead, - which is the address of the Secretary.

EVANS BACKSTOP (for ends of platform only)

Developed by D. K. Evans on the court of
J. K. Cogswell, Scarsdale, N. Y.



- (A) 2" x 4" for fastening lower end of wire mesh
- (B) 2" x 4" (a) sets back and holds uprights
(b) fastening for bolts set at intervals
of 5 feet, which hold lower side of adjustable 2 x 4 (A)
to which wire mesh is attached.
- (C) 4" x 6" supporting end of platform.

Set all except corner uprights 4" back from end of platform - inserting 2" x 4" between 4" x 6" (C), supporting end of platform, and uprights. Use horizontal bar 8" x 2" across top of uprights - projecting inwards with supporting triangular blocks. Carry wire mesh on inside downward from this bar to a 2" x 4" (A) which should hang with narrow side up an inch or two above edge of platform, when wire mesh fastened to it has been tightened. This 2" x 4" (A) is fastened by means of long bolts to another 2" x 4" (B), as indicated above.

By tightening these bolts the 2" x 4" (A) is pulled downwards and the wire mesh tightened as required. The wire mesh, which runs vertically in 6 foot widths, is laced tightly together with wire, and fastened with staples to the corner posts.

One inch mesh chicken wire is recommended, as it will last longer and give a more accurate bounce than 1-1/2" mesh. However, the latter is less expensive and has proved fairly satisfactory on a number of courts. 16 gauge wire is better than the lighter 20 gauge, as it wears longer. It is however, often difficult to obtain and expensive. It is also more difficult to handle - particularly on portable courts, so that the 20 gauge has been found more practicable on many courts, including all of the portable ones.

NOTE:- A backstop for portable courts developed by the Church E. Gates Co. of New York is similar to the above except that there is no bar for adjusting the tension - the wire mesh being fastened directly to the ends of the platform. This backstop is cheaper and easier to install on a portable court, where the wire can be stretched one section at a time. This backstop uses 1-1/2" mesh and 20 gauge.

REPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PADDLE TENNIS
ASSOCIATION - OCTOBER 20, 1938.

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With a new paddle tennis season about to start it seems worth while to review the events of the past season and the progress of the game to date.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION

The American Paddle Tennis Association started in November, 1934 with three clubs as charter members. The present membership consists of eleven clubs as follows:

MEMBER CLUBS

Field Club, Greenwich, Conn. *
Manursing Island Club, Rye, N. Y. *
Fox Meadow Tennis Club, Scarsdale, N. Y. *
Tremont Pl. Paddle Tennis Club, Orange, N. J.
Ardsley Country Club, Ardsley-on-Hudson, N. Y.
Bronxville Field Club, Bronxville, N. Y.
American Yacht Club, Rye, N. Y.
Amackassin Tennis Club, Yonkers, N. Y.
The Paddle Tennis Club of New Canaan, Conn.
The Englewood Club, Englewood, N. J.
The Weeburn Country Club, Darien, Conn.

* Charter Members.

During the 1937-38 season three new clubs were added and it is expected that several more clubs who have recently installed courts will apply for membership during the coming season.

Membership in the Association is open to clubs having one or more paddle tennis platforms and approved by the membership committee and Board of Governors of the Association. Each club is entitled to one or more representatives on the Board of Governors, which meets annually on the last Friday in October. An Executive Committee of three acts for the Board between the annual meetings. Regardless of the number of representatives on the Board, each club is entitled to as many votes as it has paddle tennis court installations and annual dues are paid on this basis, being \$5.00 minimum per club plus \$1.00 for each court. (NOTE: Courts belonging to club members may be considered club installations in considering the number of votes on the Board of Governors to which a club is entitled. The same basis is used for dues as for voting.)

The Association has three main committees, in addition to the Executive Committee:-

- (1) Tournament Committee
- (2) Rules and Equipment Committee
- (3) Publicity Committee

ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The principal activities of the Association are as follows:

(1) The conduct of championship tournaments open to members of clubs belonging to the Association and sometimes, if there is room, to other paddle tennis players on invitation. In addition the Association sponsors sectional tournaments, or aids in the conduct of invitation tournaments where desired.

(2) The improvement and standardization of paddle tennis platforms and equipment. In this connection the Association serves as a clearing house among members for ideas as to improvements in courts or equipment. It also maintains close contact with the makers of courts and equipment for this purpose.

(3) The furnishing of aid to individuals and clubs interested in putting up paddle tennis platforms.

(4) Furnishing and arranging for paddle tennis publicity to aid in the development of the game.

1. CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS.

During the 1937-38 season three championship tournaments were held, with results as follows:-

| <u>Date of Start</u> | <u>Tournament</u> | <u>Place</u> | <u>Winners</u> | <u>Runners-up</u> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <u>Jan. 26</u> <u>1938</u> | <u>Women's</u> <u>Doubles</u> | <u>Fox Meadow</u> <u>T.C. Scarsdale, N. Y.</u> | <u>Mrs. T. E. Beck</u> <u>Mrs. C. H. Walker</u> Score 9-7, 6-3 | <u>Mrs. P. S. Fuller</u> <u>Mrs. C. M. O'Hearn</u> |
| <u>Feb. 12</u> <u>1938</u> | <u>Mixed</u> <u>Doubles</u> | <u>Field Club</u> <u>Greenwich, Conn.</u> | <u>Mr. & Mrs.</u> <u>C. M. O'Hearn</u> Score 6-2, 6-2 | <u>Mr. C. E. Grafmueller</u> <u>Mrs. Edward Selden</u> |
| <u>Mar. 5</u> <u>1938</u> | <u>Men's</u> <u>Doubles</u> | <u>Fox Meadow</u> <u>T.C., Scarsdale, N. Y.</u> | <u>C. M. O'Hearn</u> <u>J. N. Hynson</u> Score 6-8, 6-2 | <u>A. K. Eaton</u> <u>D. White</u> 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 |

Entries in these tournaments reached a peak in Association history. The singles tournaments were omitted, on account of the much greater interest in doubles and the fact that the demand for courts in most of the clubs gives very little opportunity for singles play. Instead, a sectional, class B, tournament was sponsored in New Jersey and a number of special tournaments were run by member clubs.

The men's doubles tournament was featured by the upset of the second seeded team of C. E. Grafmueller and James Landauer of Scarsdale by the much improved Englewood team of Benjamin P. Tichnor and W. Reinmund, who then went on to the semi-finals. The champions, O'Hearn and Hynson, who had had an easy time in the finals the year before, were severely pressed in the finals by A. K. Eaton and D. White who came rapidly to the forefront during the past season. In the mixed doubles the young team of Sally Childress and Keith Eaton, Jr. gave the champion O'Hearn team their hardest match. Miss Childress with her sister, Mrs. Moore, also did well in the women's doubles against the finalists, Mrs. Fuller and Mrs. O'Hearn.

The tournament committee of the Association during 1938 consisted of K. B. Ward (Chairman) of Mamursing Island Club, H. D. Holmes of Tremont Place Paddle Tennis Club, and L. H. Welling.

The women's doubles tournament was run by the following committee: Mrs. P. S. Fuller (Chairman), Mrs. C. P. Couch, Jr. and Mrs. C. M. O'Hearn.

W. L. Barclay, Jr. and F. S. Blanchard ran the men's doubles, and Douglas Bomeisler the mixed doubles.

The tournament committee for the 1938-39 season will announce later the schedule for the coming season.

2. COURTS AND EQUIPMENT

The improved backstop (with the uprights set back from the wiring and the adjustable tension bars) has now become standard for all new courts and several old courts have changed to the new backstops. It has now been definitely established that the wiring used at the ends of the platform should be one inch mesh in order to provide satisfactory bounces off the backstop (1½ inch mesh has proved too large) 18 gauge wire has proved satisfactory for the thickness of the wire. For some of the latest courts the side wiring has been set up on the same principal as the new backstops. This is an improvement but is not considered nearly so necessary as at the ends. Players who have once used the new backstops have found the improvement in the game so great that they are seldom satisfied to go back to the old variety. It is hoped that squash players who may like to get out doors on week ends will try out the new backstops and note the improvement.

The sanding of court surfaces has now been definitely proved a success. It greatly increases the number of days on which paddle tennis can be successfully played. About 100 pounds of fine sea sand is sprinkled on the platform during painting, while the paint is wet - sprinkling it section by section as the platform is painted.

The present standard dimensions of the platform are 60' x 30', with the backstops 12' high. The height of the net at the center should be 2 ft. 10 inches and at the side posts 3 ft. 1 inch. The rules of play are similar to those of tennis except that only one serve is allowed and a ball may be taken off the back or side wiring after it has first hit inside the court.

Standard courts approved by the Association and embodying all the latest improvements may be obtained as follows:

Plans and specifications (\$10.00) for permanent court to be erected by local carpenters from J. K. Cogswell, residence 105 Old Army Road, Scarsdale, N. Y.
business 65 Worth Street, New York, N. Y.
(Tel. Walker 5-8080)

Portable platforms - delivered and erected complete from Gates Sports Platform Co.
Oak Pt. Avenue and Barry Street, Bronx, New York.
(Tel. Intervale 9-2592)

Platforms - (permanent or portable) erection undertaken and supervised from the Paddle Tennis Co., 17 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y.
(Tel. Murray Hill 2-2679) Plans are also sold.

Paddles, balls, nets, etc. are also furnished by the Paddle Tennis Co. and sold through leading sporting goods store.

PUBLICITY.

A number of magazines and newspapers have carried articles about paddle tennis. A very interesting scrap book containing pictures and articles is

maintained by the Secretary and is usually on display at leading tournaments throughout the season. During the past year one of our most interesting events was a series of exhibition matches at the Fox Meadow Tennis Club in which leading squash tennis players joined with paddle tennis players in exploring the possibilities of paddle tennis. Harry Wolff, Rowland B. Haines, Philip Moore and Earl Fink - the squash stars - all expressed keen interest in the game and two of them later played in the men's double championship and made very good showings. Mr. Haines has now become associated with the Paddle Tennis Co. and will undoubtedly prove a great aid in the development of the game with his wide circle of friends and high standing in the sports world.

GROWTH OF THE GAME

This has gone on steadily and at an increasing pace each year. It is no longer possible to keep account of the new courts which are going up, but we continue to hear of new clubs and private individuals who are building courts and the Association is constantly being asked for advice on this matter. Scarsdale, N. Y. continues to have the largest number of courts with 26 in all, including 6 at the Fox Meadow Tennis Club. The Manursing Island Club of Rye will have the largest number of courts of any club when it adds the two proposed new courts to its present 6 courts. Greenwich, Conn. is second to Scarsdale in number of courts, with over 15. New Jersey has now become an important center of the game, with Englewood leading in the number of courts but not exceeding Orange in the enthusiasm and ability of its players.

In addition to the rapidly growing number of courts around New York, the game is spreading throughout the country, with courts in or near Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Dan River, Virginia, Los Angeles, etc. Miss Lumb, the English squash racquets champion and Wightman cup tennis player, has put up a court in England. A court has gone up in Nova Scotia which proved a great success last summer, for with its sanded surface, it could be played upon in foggy weather and light rain, while tennis was impossible. An inquiry has even been received from Natal, South Africa, and plans have been sent there.

Additional copies of this report are available to interested members, as are copies of the printed and illustrated circular on "Platform Paddle Tennis."

FESSENDEN S. BLANCHARD
President and Secretary
214 Church Street,
New York, N.Y.

October 20, 1938.