

REPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PADDLE  
TENNIS ASSOCIATION -- OCTOBER 27, 1939

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The American Paddle Tennis Association, with its annual meeting on October 27, 1939, completes its first five years of existence. It was organized in November, 1934, with a charter membership of three clubs. Its major purpose, as stated in the charter, was "to promote and make more enjoyable the game of paddle tennis."

The Association has had a steady, healthy growth and its membership now numbers fifteen clubs, with several more expected to join shortly. During the past year the Association has had more inquiries from clubs and individuals interested in paddle tennis than ever before in its history, and many new paddle tennis platforms have been erected. The number of yacht, beach, and tennis clubs who have taken up paddle tennis is an indication of a wider appreciation of its possibilities for making clubs "year round" organizations. Paddle tennis has kept many clubs active all winter, greatly increasing their value to members.

The following clubs are now members of the American Paddle Tennis Association, listed in the order of their admission:

Field Club, Greenwich, Conn. \*  
Fox Meadow Tennis Club, Scarsdale, N. Y. \*  
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 Paddle Tennis Club of New Canaan, Conn.  
The Englewood Club, Englewood, N. J.  
The Weeburn Country Club, Darien, Conn.  
Stamford Yacht Club, Stamford, Conn.  
Oxridge Hunt Club, Darien, Conn.  
Richmond County Tennis Club, Staten Island, N. Y.  
Englewood Field Club, Englewood, N. J.

\* Charter Members.

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.

TOURNAMENTS

The season started on December 10, 1933, with a men's doubles invitation tournament at the Manursing Island Club, in which between sixty and seventy members of clubs belonging to the Association played. Kenneth Ward, who managed the tournament, arranged that no two members of the same club could play together. This resulted in a most enjoyable scramble among club members and ended in a surprising victory for Sidney B. Wood, former Wimbledon tennis champion, who was playing paddle tennis for the first time, and Donald White of Scarsdale -- one of the runners-up in the 1938 men's doubles championship. Wood enjoyed the game immensely and the speed with which he picked it up was a revelation. Mrs. Wood said later that her husband had done some guessing on the way home as to what tennis players would prove to be the best at paddle tennis. He placed Mako high on the list, partly because of his quick reactions at the net.

It is hoped that another similar tournament will be conducted in the coming season and Mr. Ward informs us that one is in prospect.

The regular championship tournaments of the Association were held as follows:-

<u>Date of Start</u>	<u>Tournament</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Runners-up</u>
<u>Jan. 25 1939</u>	<u>Women's Doubles</u>	<u>Fox Meadow T.C. Scarsdale, N.Y.</u>	Mrs. T.E. Beck Mrs. C.H. Walker Score 9-7, 6-3	Mrs. P.S. Fuller Mrs. C.M. O'Hearn
<u>Feb. 18 1939</u>	<u>Mixed Doubles</u>	<u>Field Club Greenwich, Conn.</u>	Mr. & Mrs. T. E. Beck Score 8-6, 3-6, 6-4	Donald White Mrs. Oscar Moore
<u>March 4 1939</u>	<u>Men's Doubles</u>	<u>Englewood Club Englewood, N.J. (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> of the draw played several rounds in Scarsdale)</u>	C.D. Couch Jr. S.D. Kilmarx Score 6-3, 6-2, 5-7, 6-3	J.N. Hynson C.M. O'Hearn

In every one of these tournaments entries exceeded all previous records. Forty-two teams entered the mixed doubles tournament and about the same number fought it out in the men's doubles. Mrs. Beck was a double winner. The men's doubles was featured by the come-back of Couch and Kilmarx, who had won the first championship of the Association five years before. Among the entries were a number of athletes well known in other fields, all of whom did extremely well in paddle tennis. Sidney Wood went through to the semi-finals with Witherbe Black as his partner, and gave Couch and Kilmarx, the champions, a hard battle. Wood's playing at the net and his backhand ground strokes were a treat to the gallery, but the steadiness and experience of the champions prevailed. Earl Fink and Rowland B. Haines, former national squash tennis champions, Ben Ticknor, Arthur Huguley, and Charley O'Hearn, former football stars, and many other past and present athletes made fine showings. O'Hearn, as all paddle tennis players know, has a tournament record which has not yet been equalled.

In addition to the above regular tournaments a number of informal matches were held between some of the member clubs. These proved to be very good fun both to the participants and to the gallery.

The Tournament Committee of the Association under C. M. O'Hearn as Chairman, did a fine job. Edward H. Brooke of Englewood, who acted as manager and host of the men's doubles tournament did a particularly good job under trying conditions of rain and snow. Mrs. C. K. Eaton of Scarsdale proved a "find" as a conductor of the mixed doubles tournament, and Mrs. C. M. O'Hearn did splendidly in running the women's doubles, aided by an efficient committee.

The championship tournaments of the 1939-40 season are expected to start as follows:-

Jan. 24, 1940 -- Women's Doubles  
 Feb. 17, 1940 -- Mixed Doubles  
 March 9, 1940 -- Men's Doubles

A further detailed notice will be sent out later by the Tournament Committee.

#### COURTS, EQUIPMENT, AND RULES

The improved backstops (with the uprights set back from the wiring and the adjustable tension bars) have now become standard for all new courts and many old courts have changed over to these backstops. One inch mesh wiring at the ends of the courts and one or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch mesh at the sides is recommended for all courts. The sanding of court surfaces is also strongly urged, as it will practically eliminate the "skidding" of balls and players on damp days, if properly done (with at least 100 lbs. of fine sea sand sprinkled on the platform, section by section, as it is painted). All member clubs are urged, as soon as practicable, to modernize their backstops and playing surface as above, if they have not already done so. It will greatly increase the enjoyment of the game.

As will be remembered, the 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 in two respects:- (1) only one serve is allowed; (2) the ball may be taken off the back or side wiring after it has first hit inside the court.

Clubs are urged to remind their members that the foot fault rule is the same as in tennis. The anxiety of players to get to the net has made foot faulting so prevalent as to call for united action by our member clubs in correcting the situation.

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

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

Portable platforms - delivered and erected complete from Gates Sports Platform Co.  
 Oak Pt. Avenue and Barry Street, Bronx, N. Y.  
 (Tel. Dayton 9-7783)

Paddles, balls, nets, etc. are furnished by the Paddle Tennis Co.,  
 277 Fifth Avenue, New York  
 (Tel. Murray Hill 6-8932)

Also by leading sporting goods stores. Mr. Smith of Alex Taylor and Co., 22 E. 42 Street, New York, is especially familiar with the requirements of paddle tennis. Be sure to ask for equipment for the outdoor paddle tennis platform game.

#### PUBLICITY

The Association has been active in keeping paddle tennis before leading sports writers. J. P. Allen of the New York Sun has been especially helpful to paddle tennis, with several fine articles in the past season - including two commenting on Sidney Wood's entry into paddle tennis. Kenneth Ward, as Chairman of the Publicity Committee has done an especially good publicity job.

#### GROWTH OF THE GAME

As paddle tennis veterans may remember, the present form of the game began in Scarsdale in November 1928. For several years its growth was slow. In the last few years the game has gone ahead rapidly, with Scarsdale still leading in the number of courts, (now 28), Greenwich second, and Englewood, which has come forward rapidly, third. It is impossible now for the Association to keep an account of all of the courts which go up during each year. Some of the more recent ones include courts for Saint Mary's School of Peekskill, the Round Hill Club of Greenwich, the Bedford Golf and Tennis Club, the Knollwood Club of White Plains, the Saddle and Cycle Club of Chicago, the Woodway Country Club of Stamford, the Knickerbocker Country Club of Tenafly, N. J., the Indian Harbor Yacht Club of Greenwich, the Stamford Yacht Club, the Devon Yacht Club of East Hampton, L. I., the Orange Lawn Tennis Club (which is erecting a second up-to-date court), and many others. Dr. George Gallup is expected shortly to take a poll of the growth of paddle tennis sentiment, for he has recently built a court. Arthur Murray is probably complaining about the sanding of his paddle tennis court, which ruins it for dancing purposes. Thomas W. Lamont and J. M. Hancock are among many other well known men who have erected courts. Besides courts too many to mention in the suburban area of New York City, the game has spread to such widely scattered places as Atlantic City, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Danville, Virginia, Ottawa, Illinois, Danboro, Pennsylvania, Paoli, Pennsylvania, Narragansett, Rhode Island, Martha's Vinyard, Mass., Bennington, Vermont, South Portland, Maine, Perrysburg, Ohio, Los Angeles, California, and many other places. England has one or two courts at least and plans have even been sent to South Africa in response to an inquiry of the Association.

Based on the number of finished courts or plans sold reported by the agencies now handling these courts and allowing for duplicate or home-made courts built without the purchase of plans, it is probably fair to estimate that there are at least 500 paddle tennis platforms in the country. (This does not include many thousands of children's courts laid out on playgrounds, and city streets, where the original playground form of the game is played on small sized courts, with low nets, and no backstops) If we estimate a conservative average of twenty players per platform court, we probably have at least 10,000 playing the adult form of the game in which our Association is interested. The game has come a long way and developed greatly in the technique of play since it started on the Cogswell court in Scarsdale over ten years ago.

It will be appreciated if members will pass along to the Secretary inquiries regarding courts, rules, etc. Additional copies of this report are available to those interested, as are copies of the illustrated circular on "Platform Paddle Tennis". Inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, American Paddle Tennis Association, 214 Church Street, New York, New York. (Tel. Worth 2-2200).

HAROLD D. HOLMES,

President.