

Badminton for Schools

Jake Downey

This book is dedicated to all those enthusiastic and dedicated teachers who work so hard to organize and develop badminton in the schools

Published by Jake Downey 2003

First published in Great Britain by PELHAM BOOKS LTD
52 Bedford Square London we 1 B 3EF 1978

Copyright (c) Jake Downey 1978

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Copyright owner

Figures 11-15, 17, 18, 91, 92 and 93-96 are reproduced from *Teach Your Child Badminton* by Jake Downey, published by Lepus Books.

ISBN 0 7207 1094 4

Filmset in Great Britain by Northumberland Press Ltd, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear Printed by Hollen Street Press and bound by Dorstel Press, Harlow

Contents

List of Plates	7	iii. The defensive strokes	89
Acknowledgements	9	iv. More defensive moves	93
Foreword	10	v. The forecourt strokes	95
Preface	11	A summary of the singles game	103
How to Use this Book	13	Practices in singles	106
1 Introduction	15	4 The Doubles Game	114
Why play badminton?	15	Doubles tactics	115
History and development of the game	17	Practices in doubles	122
Getting ready to play	18	Mixed doubles	127
Equipment	18	5 Fitness	131
The court	21	What is fitness?	131
A brief description of the game	21	Training for badminton	133
The Laws of Badminton	24	Training in badminton	135
2 Learning to Play	31	6 Behaviour	139
The grips	33	7 Tournament Play	143
The basic stances	39	8 Opportunities within the ESBA	145
The strokes	42	9 The Teacher	149
Movement	51	Introduction	149
3 The Singles Game	55	Teaching the game	150
The moves in the game	56	Organizing competitive badminton	157
The serves	66	General information about the game	159
The strokes	69		
i. The forehand attacking strokes	85		
ii. The backhand attacking strokes			

	<i>page</i>		
1 Ray Stevens	16	33-39 The backhand clear	48-9
2-3 The forehand grip	34	40 Derek Talbot and Ray Stevens	55
4-5 The backhand grip	35	41-44 The high serve	59
6-7 The advanced backhand grip	36	45-49 The low serve	62-3
8-9 The multi-purpose grip, top view	37	50 Margaret Lockwood	64
10 Grip for the forehand net stroke	38	51-52 Receiving the serve	67
11 Grip for the backhand net stroke	38	53 Forehand preparation	68
12-13 The attacking stance, front view	40	54 Backhand preparation	68
14-15 The defensive stance, front view	41	55 Diagonal relationship with the shuttle – forehand side	68
16 Net stroke – racket above wrist	43	56 Diagonal relationship with the shuttle – backhand side	68
17 Net stroke – racket below wrist	43	57 Position for the round-the-head smash	77
18 Attack position	44	58-64 Performing the round-the-head smash	78-9
19 Preparation for net stroke	44	65 Vertical jump smash	81
20 Preparation for a strong hit, front view	45	66 Side jump smash	81
21 Preparation for a strong hit, side view	45	67-69 The drive	84-5
22-32 The forehand smash	46-7	70 Impact point for the backhand smash	87
		71-74 The block to the smash	90-1
		75-79 The lunge	96-7
		80 Forehand spinner	100

81	Backhand spinner	101	85-87	The backhand serve	121
82	Meeting the shuttle early	102	88	Mike Tredgett and Nora Gardner <i>v.</i> Derek Talbot and Gillian Gilks	130
83	Meeting the shuttle late	102			
84	David Eddy and partner (out of picture) <i>v.</i> Mike Tredgett and Ray Stevens	114			

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to the following: Gillian Clark and Steve Wassell, the 1976 All England Under-15 champions, who worked so hard during the photographic session; the management of the Alton Sports Centre, who willingly provided the facilities for the photography; Joanna Smith for assistance with the typing.

My grateful thanks also to photo-grapher Louis Ross, whose care and concern reflects much insight into and enthusiasm for the game and results in such excellent photographs.

Foreword

The executive of the English Schools' Badminton Association approve and recommend *Badminton* for Schools. Such approval and recommendation is not given without a great deal of examination of the contents of and ideas expressed in the book.

Jake Downey is a 'thinking' coach who has a lot of experience at coaching at all levels. He was coach to the Uber Cup Team in 1970-72, 1974-75 and coached the England Youth squad in 1976. He has coached international players on a personal basis. In particular Gillian Gilks, Margaret Lockwood, Paul Whetnall and Ray Stevens are players who have benefited from his help. It is obvious to anyone reading this and other books he has written, that the author has an analytical mind. The results of his analysis of the game of badminton are presented fully in this book.

'Practice makes perfect' is in common usage, but might not the saying be improved by prefacing it by the word 'intelligent'? This book contains a feast of intelligent practices which, if followed assiduously by the reader, will help in the production of better badminton players.

One of the aims of the English Schools' Badminton Association is to raise the standard of junior badminton in the country. This book will do much to help to achieve that aim.

Allon Horrocks
Coaching Director,
English Schools' Badminton Association

Preface

I welcome the opportunity to write this book on behalf of the English Schools' Badminton Association. I can introduce you to, and help you to learn, a great game.

I began to play whilst at school in Manchester and gained much enjoyment from the practice evenings and matches against other schools. In those days there was no association to look after the promotion and organization of the game in the schools: play was restricted to the senior members of the school and then only if there was a teacher enthusiastic enough to manage the club. Only a few schools in Manchester played the game and against these we would play in keen but friendly competition. Outside school I, like many others, had to pursue my interest in the game without help. This meant that I had to practise to reach a standard in order to be accepted as a member of a league club. Consequently all my spare time was spent watching good players whenever possible. I practised with anyone who would spend time with me and spent many hours at home in practice. I used to hit the shuttle up and down, against the wall or serve into the fruit bowl across the room. The game had caught my interest and enthusiasm.

Years later, as a physical education teacher in London, I persuaded a number of schools to meet and form the London Schools' Badminton Association in 1962. We developed and became affiliated to the Badminton Association of England in 1964. During that period, in various parts of the country, schools' badminton was beginning to develop into more formal organizations. Eventually, mainly due to the initiative of the Cumberland Schools' Association, the English Schools' Badminton Association came into existence.

By this time I had moved into other areas of education and had begun to coach at a youth centre in London. With my experience there, and the ideas which I developed, I gained the chance to coach the England Uber Cup team of 1972 and from that time continued to coach England players. Many of the present England players - Ray Stevens, Kevin Jolly, Margaret Lockwood, Nora Perry, Barbara Sutton and Paula Kilvington - learned the game at school and a number of these actually came up through the ESBA. They started at school and ended up playing for England; I started at school and ended up coaching England players and teams. During that journey we all learned a great deal about the game and how to play it; above all, we learned to value the game for the enjoyment we derived from it.

The ESBA provides you with the opportunity to make a similar journey. You can travel to the final destination, which may be to play for England or become world champion; or you can get off at any stop along the way. But whatever your particular destination, you can be certain that you will enjoy every moment of your journey.

The purpose of this book is to provide you with the knowledge necessary to travel successfully.

Jake Downey

How to Use this Book

The obvious intention of this book is that you should learn about the game of badminton. Like most games, the more you play and become involved, the more you learn. This is partly the fascination of playing an interesting game.

There is much to write about badminton. This book does not include all that it is possible to say about the game, but what it does say should be sufficient to give you a good insight into the game.

This book is basically for reference. You will not want to read it all at once: rather it is for 'dipping into'. If you want to know about the smash, tactics in singles, fitness, tournaments, etc., then refer to the section that deals with your interest. I think that you will find most of your questions can be answered. This book tries to cater for all ages and standards of play in schools' badminton. A learner will not require as much information, or understand as much, as a schools' tournament player. You should try to learn as much as your understanding and ability allows. In time you will be able to master all the aspects of the game. The different sections of the book are described very briefly below, and advice is given about their use.

1 Introduction

Learners must read this section. It provides a general account of the game, advises on equipment, explains how to begin, and states the laws of the game. All players will need to refer to the laws.

2 Learning to play

This section is important both for learners and advanced players. It provides many new and interesting ideas about modern badminton, particularly with reference to the grips and different stances. It also explains the basic structure of the game and offers instruction and advice based on new developments. It is important to understand this section in order to appreciate fully the discussion of the singles game.

3 The singles game

This presents a detailed account of singles as an attacking game, and explains how to become a very proficient singles player. All players will find it easy to understand, but it is not easy for all players to perform some of the skills discussed. However, read through this section and pick out what you require for your game at the time.

4 The doubles game

This gives an account of basic doubles play, but with more emphasis than usual on attack in doubles. There are numerous practices to help you to develop your attacking play. All players should read this to grasp the general idea of the strokes to use and the positional play to adopt. The section on mixed doubles gives a brief idea of the game and sets out the role of the boy and the girl player in mixed doubles.

5 Fitness

This is of practical interest to the serious player who wants to play competitive badminton, and should be of general interest to all players simply to clarify what is involved in fitness and provide you with some guidelines.

6 Behaviour

All players should read this section. Behaviour is an important part of your game if you want to enjoy it fully. Some discussion of behaviour and some guidelines are offered for your consideration.

7 Tournament play

Some general guidelines and advice for the serious player.

8 Opportunities within the ESBA

This section informs you of the opportunities available to you within the Schools' Badminton Association. All players should read this and then ask their school badminton teacher for further details.

9 The teacher

This is written for the teacher and is of practical value only for him or her. However, it can be read by any enthusiast for general interest.

The value of this book will be determined on the court, where the ideas, suggestions, advice and instructions provided should work successfully. It is difficult to cater for any particular individual in book form, for we all differ. Do not be too inflexible in following the book: be prepared to modify the ideas to suit your particular style of play. In doing so you will be acting in accordance with the spirit of the book, which has been written for independent thinkers.

Note: Throughout the book it is assumed that the reader is a right-handed player. Left-handed players should adapt the techniques accordingly.

Introduction

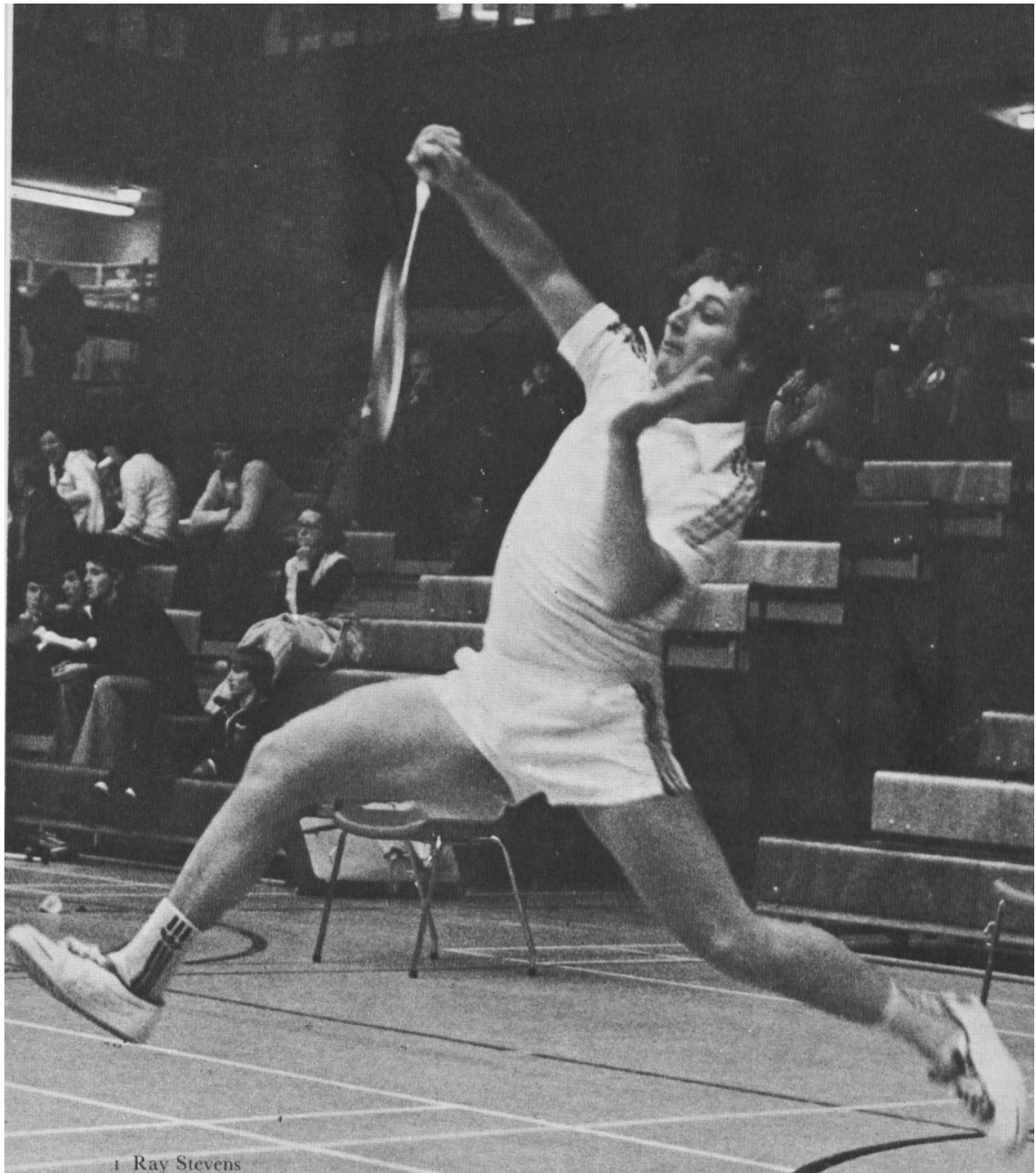
Why play badminton?

Badminton is a game which is very easy to learn. You can soon acquire sufficient skill to hit the shuttle across the net and play a rally with a friend. The shuttlecock is so designed that it will slow down and float in the air. Earlier success at maintaining long rallies can therefore be achieved - and hence more enjoyment - than in other racket sports such as tennis or squash. It is possible to play a game from the start.

As you improve with practice and play, other reasons for the popularity of the game soon become apparent. There is the opportunity to perform a large range of movements - sprints, leaps, lunges, twists, turns, stretches and hitting actions - which require strength, endurance, speed and flexibility, and the ability to hit the shuttle softly or powerfully. The sheer pleasure of the variety of movement has appeal for the player. The game involves a challenge. To play well requires practice; a player has to give some thought to his game and do some physical work. There is also the challenge of an opponent. To win the game you must defeat an opponent. The game becomes a battle of wits as the players test their skill and intelligence against each other. Herein lies the interest; for the way in which one player outwits the other can raise difficulties and present problems which must be solved during the game.

There is also the enjoyment which derives from the fact that it is only a game, and as such is a part of sport. We participate in sport for our enjoyment - for fun. Even though the point of a game is to try to win it, the reason for playing it in the first instance is also because as a game it provides enjoyment. A player will take his game seriously and do his best to win, otherwise it would hardly be worth playing; but the result is not the most important issue. What matters more is that the players have a good game and a challenging contest. The result is simply an indication that the game is concluded and that one player is the winner according to the rules. One player was better at the game of badminton on that occasion. However, as in all sport, the loser lives to fight another day. He can go away, think about how he lost and do something about it. He can try to improve his game and return to challenge that opponent again.

Badminton is a recreational game. The large range of physical movement in an enjoyable activity exercises the body and gives you the feeling of fitness and wellbeing so essential for good health. It is a social game. It provides an opportunity for boys and girls to join together in competition. The game depends on skill and intelligence as well as strength and so boys and girls can compete against each other at singles and doubles in practice, and mixed doubles in competition. Outside school most play takes place in badminton clubs. Here it is possible to meet people and to develop new friendships arising out of a common interest in badminton.



1 Ray Stevens

It is a competitive game, and for the keen competitor there is the enjoyment and challenge of organized competition. The ESBA and the BA of E organize competitive badminton at many levels and for different age-groups, and there is considerable opportunity for serious players to compete at higher levels and so derive more enjoyment and interest from the game.

Finally, badminton is also a spectator game. There is a lot of good and entertaining badminton to watch, for the game is expanding rapidly and is shown increasingly on television. In addition, international and top county players can be seen in many of the tournaments held around the country and in inter-county matches. The aspiring player therefore has the chance to study top players in action and to learn from them. You will discover that the more you become interested in the game the more you will find it has to offer you.

History and development of the game

There is some uncertainty about when the game began. Its name comes from the estate of the Duke of Beaufort at Badminton in Gloucestershire, where in 1873 some army officers on leave from India first amused themselves by playing a game with rackets and a shuttlecock. Gradually the game developed and was played in different forms in various countries. As it became more popular and the players more skilful, so it became more complex and rules were inevitably required. In Karachi in 1877 the first set of rules was devised, but the game was also developing in other areas of the world and a generally acceptable set of rules became essential. In 1893 the Badminton Association of England (BA of E) was formed and a standard set of the *Laws of Badminton* was published. In 1934 the International Badminton Federation (IBF) was formed, which comprises the associations of most of the countries which play badminton.

The first All England Championships were held in 1899. These take place annually and have developed to the stage when players from all over the world come to England to compete. Until 1977 these were considered to be the unofficial world championships and it is regarded as a great privilege to take part in them. The official World Championships were inaugurated in 1977 at Malmo in Sweden, and these will be held every three years. The other major championships are the Commonwealth Games, every four years, and the European Championships, every two years. There are also two major team championships held every three years - the Thomas Cup for men and Uber Cup for ladies. In addition, each year England play a number of friendly international matches.

English players rank high in world badminton. In recent years the ladies have won or contested the final of almost every major individual championship in singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Such players as Gillian Gilks, Margaret Lockwood, Sue Whetnall, Margaret Boxall and Nora Perry have achieved a tremendous reputation for English badminton with their successes. The men are also highly respected at the international level and in recent years players such as Paul Whetnall, Ray Stevens, Derek Talbot, David Eddy, Mike Tredgett and Elliot Stuart have achieved some notable successes at singles and doubles. The men and ladies combined team won the European Championships in 1972 and 1974.

As more young players are taught in the schools, and take the opportunity to develop their interest and standard of play in the competitions available, England's prospects for the future would appear to be very bright.

In 1965 the English Schools' Badminton Association (ESBA) was formed, due to the enterprise of the Cumberland Schools' Association and teachers from three other counties. Today almost all the areas in England are covered by a schools' association affiliated to the ESBA. The ESBA works closely with the parent body, the BA of E, but is responsible for its own development and management.

Badminton is thus a rapidly developing sport which is carefully organized and administered to give you every chance to play and gain full enjoyment from the game whatever level you aspire to.

Getting ready to play

Here I discuss the equipment and clothing you require to play the game, and also describe the court areas, how to score and the laws of the game.

Equipment

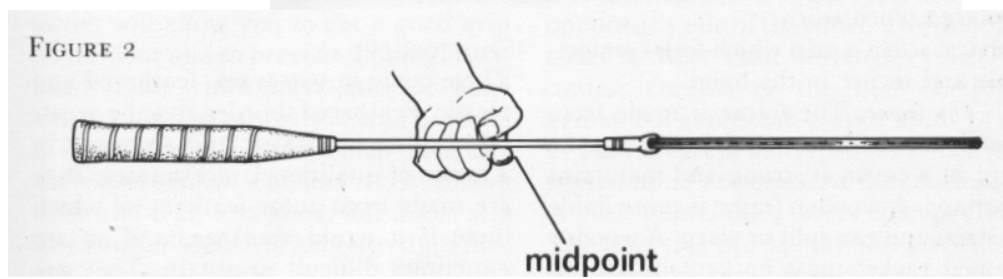
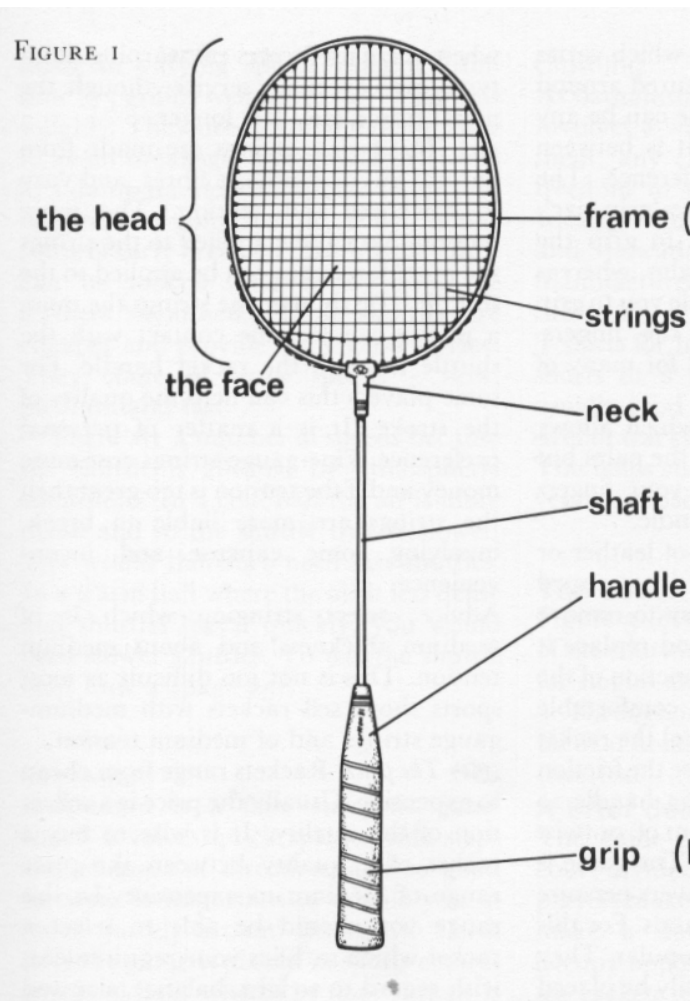
It is a wise policy to consider the equipment you buy, for the quality of your play depends partly on the equipment you use.

The racket

Modern badminton is a fast game which requires much arm and hand work and rapid movement of the racket head. A badly designed racket can spoil your game. A racket should be reliable and easy to control. If you are to make a sound choice then you ought to know something about the racket. Study Figure 1 and then I will explain how to choose a racket.

(1) *The weight.* There are no rules stating how much a racket must weigh. A light racket requires less strength and is easier to control than a heavy one. Advice: choose a racket which is between medium and light weight.

(ii) *The balance.* This is very important. A racket can be light or heavy in the head or evenly balanced. A racket which is light in the head is easier to control than a racket which is 'head heavy'. Test for balance by resting the racket on your finger at a point midway between the head and the handle. The head goes up if it is light and down if heavy. (See Figure 2.) Advice: choose a racket which is evenly balanced or slightly lighter in the head.



(iii) *The handle.* The handle, which varies in thickness, is usually measured around the circumference. A handle can be any thickness, though usually it is between 3 and 5 inches in circumference. The measurement is described as 'grip size'. A large grip requires you to grip the handle mainly with your palm, whereas a small grip size would enable you to grip the handle mainly with the fingers. Finger control is important for many of the strokes in the game.

Advice: select a grip size which allows you to grip the handle with the palm but also allows you to spread your fingers comfortably around the handle.

(iv) *The grip.* This is made of leather or towelling material which is wrapped around the handle. It is easy to remove the grip from the handle and replace it with a different type. The function of the grip is to make it easy and comfortable to hold the racket and control the racket head. It also serves to increase the friction between your hand and the handle so that the racket doesn't slip out of, or twist in, your hand during play. The game is very energetic and some players perspire easily, particularly in the hands. For this reason towelling grips are popular. They are self adhesive and can easily be placed around an existing leather grip and replaced when worn.

Advice: select a grip which feels comfortable and secure in the hand.

(v) *The frame.* Modern frames are made from very strong light materials. The full range can be seen in most sports shops

(vi) *The strings.* Strings are made from natural gut or synthetic fibres, and vary in thickness and tension. The more tension that can be applied to the strings the more force that can be applied to the shuttle. The thinner the strings the more a player can feel the contact with the shuttle through the racket handle. For some players this can help the quality of the stroke. It is a matter of personal preference. Fine-gauge strings cost more money and if the tension is too great then the strings are more liable to break, involving some expense and inconvenience.

Advice: select stringing which is of medium thickness and about medium tension. This is not too difficult as most sports shops sell rackets with medium-gauge strings and of medium tension.

(vii) *The price.* Rackets range from cheap to expensive. Usually the price is a reflection of the quality. It is wise to buy a racket of a quality between the price range of medium to expensive. In this range you should be able to select a racket which satisfies your requirements with regard to weight, balance, size and type of grip, and strings.

Shuttlecocks

These come in two types, feathered and plastic. Feathered shuttles give the greatest pleasure in playing and are made in a range of qualities. They are made in varying speeds

ranging from slow (73 grains weight) to fast (85 grains weight). They need careful looking after to avoid breakage, and should be stored in a damp humid atmosphere to prevent the feathers going brittle, which is one cause of early breakage. During play they can be looked after by keeping the feathers smoothed. Plastic shuttles are cheaper and provide quite good service. They come in three speeds - slow, medium and fast.

There are a number of speeds because the shuttle is affected by atmospheric conditions. In a cold hall the air is more dense and so the shuttle travels slower. You would therefore need fast shuttles. In a warm hall where the air is less dense and shuttles travel quickly, you would need slower shuttles. To test the shuttle read Law 4 (page 25).

Footwear

Badminton is a fast, energetic game which involves quick sprints, side steps and changes of direction, and so good footwear is important to enable you to move quickly around the court. These days the game is played in sports centres or school halls where the floor surface is often quite smooth. You require shoes which will allow you to get a good grip on the floor and so prevent slipping. Flat-soled shoes which have lines or holes indented in the rubber sole and made of a slightly soft rubber which increases friction are ideal. The feet receive much wear and tear, so a good, soft insole and comfortable socks will help to reduce this, and prevent blisters.

Clothing

As badminton is a very active game and involves a wide range of physical movement, any clothing worn should allow freedom to move and be comfortable. Nowadays clothes are specially manufactured for badminton. A good substitute is white football shorts and T shirts for boys. Girls can wear athletic shorts or a skirt and a T shirt. It is usually good policy to wear a warm pullover or tracksuit before and after playing. This helps you warm up quickly and prevents you becoming cold after the game.

The court

Figure 3 (overleaf) shows two diagrams of the court which show the way it is used for singles and doubles. Throughout the book I will refer to the tactical areas of the court as in Figure 4 (overleaf).

A brief description of the game

The game is played on a rectangular court divided into halves by a net. Two players make a singles game: four players make a doubles game. The players occupy opposite halves of the court, and use rackets to hit the shuttle over the net so that it hits the ground on the opponent's side of the court. The doubles court is wider than the singles court. A contest consists of the best of three games. All games are played up to 15 or 21 points, except ladies' singles which are played up to 11 points. At the conclusion of each game, the players change ends. The laws (see pp. 24-30) will give more details of the procedure during play.

FIGURE 3

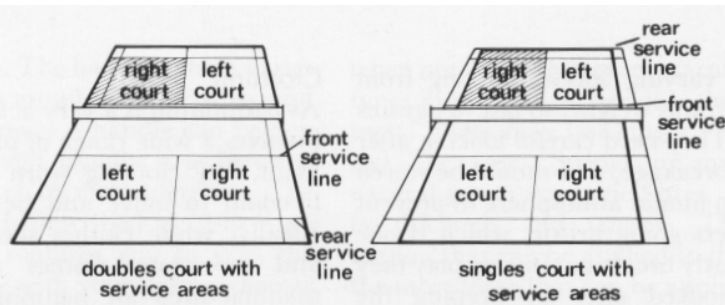
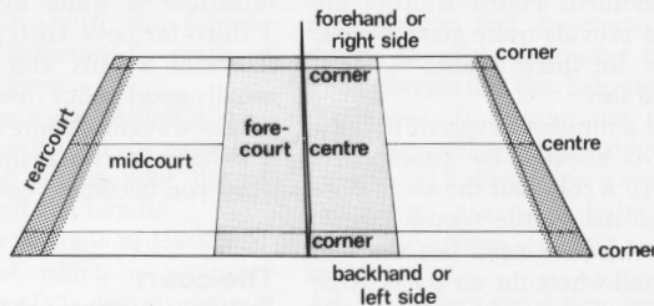


FIGURE 4



Beginning the game

To begin a game the players toss. The side which wins the toss has the option of (a) serving first; Or (b) not serving first; Or (c) choosing ends. The side which serves the shuttle is known as the serving side. The side which receives the shuttle is known as the receiving side.

Scoring

Only the serving side can add points to the score, and therefore each side tries to win the service. A point is won during play if a player hits the shuttle to the ground on the opponent's side of the court, Or if the opponent is unable to return the shuttle into play. Though a point is gained only if it has been won by the serving side, if the receiving side wins the rally the score remains the same but the receiving side now has the service. It becomes known as the serving side and has the opportunity to serve and add points to its score. In doubles play, the receiving side has to win two rallies before it gains possession of the service.

Order of service:

The singles game (Figure 5)

The game is played by two players, A and B. The game begins with the score at love-all (0-0).

- 1 A has won the toss and serves first, from his right service court diagonally opposite to B.
- 2 A wins the first point. The score becomes 1-0 to A.
- 3 A moves to the left service court to serve diagonally opposite to B. (The receiver must stand diagonally to the server.)
- 4 A wins the point. The score becomes 2-0. A moves once again to his right service court to serve diagonally opposite to B.

- 5 *B* wins the next point and so wins the service. The score remains the same.
- 6 *B* now serves from his right service court diagonally opposite to *A*.
- 7 *B* wins the point. The score becomes 1-2. (The score of the server is always stated first.)

It follows that the players stand in the service court related to the score. If the server's score is an even number, then the players stand in their right service courts. If the server's score is an odd number the players stand in the left service courts.

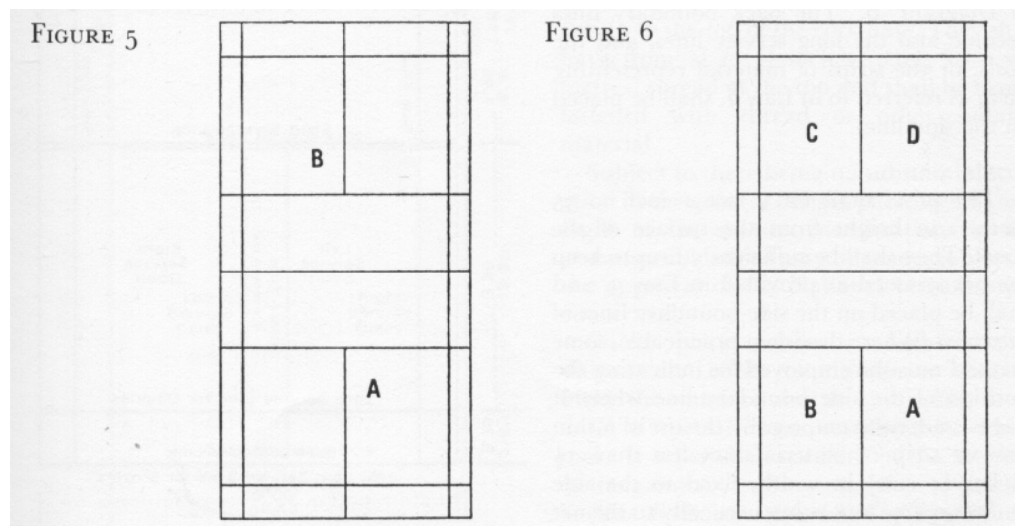
The doubles game (Figure 6)

This is slightly more complicated, but the principles of changing the service court as a point is won remains the same. At the beginning of the game only one player of the serving side is allowed to serve. He continues to serve until he loses the serve to the other side. From then on both players on each side have a turn to serve when their side is in possession of the service. The service always begins from the right court.

- 1 *A* serves diagonally opposite to *C*. The serving side wins the point and the score becomes 1-0.
- 2 *A* moves to his left court and serves diagonally opposite to *D*.
- 3 He continues to serve from one player to another until that serve is lost. If *A* was serving to *D* before he lost the serve, then he must remain in that court to receive service until his side once more gains possession of the service.

Whatever the state of the score, only the serving side may change from one court to the other, in order to serve in turn to each player of the opposing side. The players on the receiving side must remain in the courts they occupied before they lost the service.

This is a simple explanation. A more detailed account of the order of serving may be referred to in the laws of the game given overleaf.



The Laws of Badminton

As revised in the year 1939 and adopted by the International Badminton Federation. Subsequently revised up-to-date. (as in 1978 when this book was first published)

Court

1.

(a) The Court shall be laid out as in the following Diagram 'A' (except in the case provided for in paragraph (b) of this Law) and to the measurements there shown, and shall be defined preferably by white or yellow lines or, if this is not possible, by other easily distinguishable lines, 1-1/2 inches (4 cms) wide.

In marking the court, the width (1 -1/2 inches) (4 cms) of the centre lines shall be equally divided between the right and left service courts; the width ; 12 inches each) (4 cms each) of the short service line and the long service line shall fall within the 13 foot (3.96 metres') measurement given as the length of the service court; and the width (i -1/2 inches each) (4 cms each) of all other boundary lines shall fall within the measurements given.

(b) Where space does not permit of the marking out of a court for doubles, a court may be marked out for singles only as shown in Diagram 'B.' The back boundary lines become also the long service lines, and the posts, or the strips of material representing them as referred to in Law 2, shall be placed on the side lines.

Posts

2. The posts shall be 5 feet 1 inch (1.55 metres) in height from the surface of the court. They shall be sufficiently firm to keep the net strained as provided in Law 3, and shall be placed on the side boundary lines of the court. Where this is not practicable, some method must be employed for indicating the position of the side boundary line where it passes under the net, e.g. by the use of a thin post or strip of material, not less than 1 1/2 inches (4 cms) in width, fixed to the side boundary line and rising vertically to the net cord.

Where this is in use on a court marked for doubles it shall be placed on the boundary line of the doubles court irrespective of whether singles or doubles are being played.

Net

3. The net shall be made of fine natural cord Or artificial fibre of a dark colour and even thickness not exceeding 5 / 8 H to 3/4-inch (t.5 to 2 CMS) mesh. It shall be firmly stretched from post to post, and shall be 2 feet 6 inches (0.76 metres) in depth. The top of the net shall be 5 feet (1.524 metres) in height from the floor at the centre, and 5 feet i inch (1.55 metres) at the posts, and shall be edged with a 3 inch (75 mms) white tape doubled and supported by a cord or cable run through the tape and strained over and flush with the top of the posts.

Shuttle

4. A shuttle shall weigh from 73 to 85 grains (4.73 to 5.50 grammes) and shall have from 14 to 16 feathers fixed in a cork, 1 inch to 1-1/8 inches (0.025 to 0.028 metres) in dia-meter. The feathers shall be from 2-1/2 to 2-3/4 inches 0.064 to 0.070 metres) in length from the tip to the top of the cork base. They shall have from 2-1/8 to 2-1/2 inches (0.054 to 0.064 metres) spread at the top and shall be firmly fastened with thread or other suitable material.

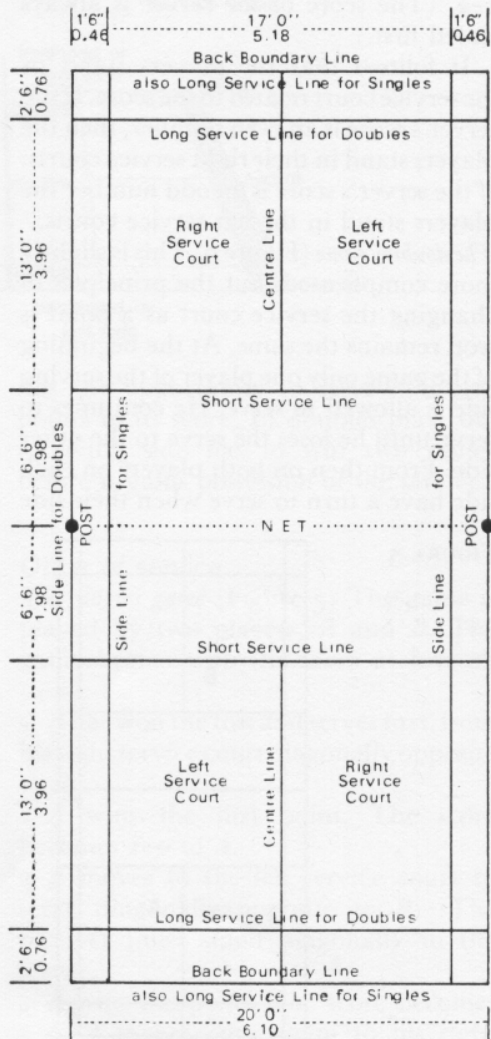
Subject to there being no substantial variation in the general design, pace, weight and flight of the shuttle, modifications in the above specifications may be made, subject to the approval Of the National Organization concerned,

(a) in places where atmospheric conditions, due either to altitude or climate, make the standard shuttle unsuitable; Or

(h) if special circumstances exist which make it otherwise expedient in the interests Of the game.

Diagonal measurement of half court:
29 ft 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. or 9.061 metres.
(from post to back boundary line).

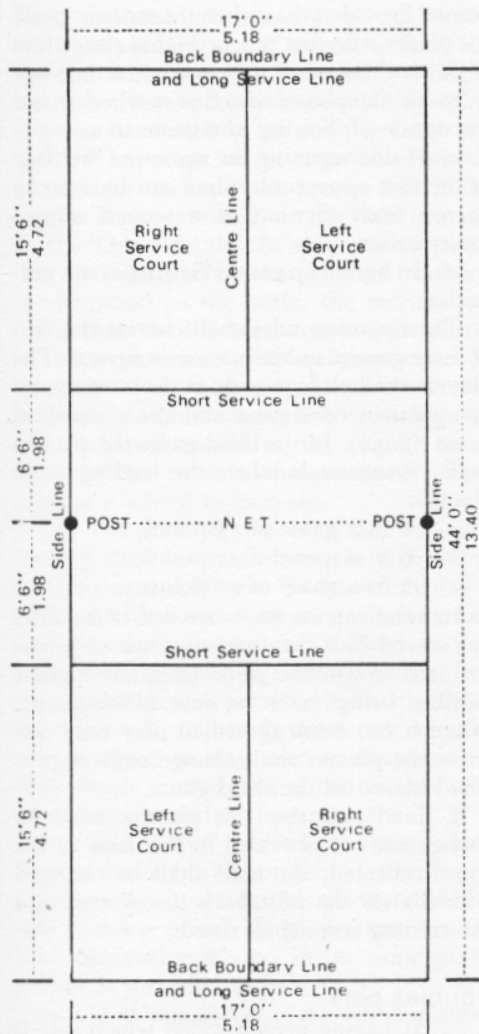
DIAGRAM A



Measurements are quoted in feet (') and inches (") and in metres.

Diagonal measurement of full court:
 47 ft 2 in. or 14.366 metres.
 Diagonal measurement of half court:
 27 ft 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. or 8.469 metres.
 (from post to back boundary line).

DIAGRAM B



Measurements are quoted in feet (') and inches (") and in metres.

(The Badminton Association of England has approved the use of modified - e.g. nylon, plastic, etc. - shuttles for play in England.)

A shuttle shall be deemed to be of correct pace if, when a player of average strength strikes it with a full underhand stroke from a spot immediately above one back boundary line in a line parallel to the side lines, and at an upward angle, it falls not less than 1 foot (0.30 metres) and not more than 2 feet 6 inches (0.76 metres) short of the other back boundary line.

Players

5. (a) The word 'Player' applies to all those taking part in a game.

(b) The game shall be played, in the case of the doubles game, by two players a side, and in the case of the singles game, by one player a side.

(c) The side for the time being having the right to serve shall be called the 'In' side, and the opposing side shall be called the 'Out' side.

The toss

6. Before commencing play the opposing sides shall toss, and the side winning the toss shall have the option of:

(a) Serving first; or

(b) Not serving first; or

(c) Choosing ends.

The side losing the toss shall then have choice of any alternative remaining.

Scoring

7. (a) The doubles and men's singles game consists of 15 or '21 points, as may be arranged. Provided that in a game of 15 points, when the score is 13-all, the side which first reached 13 has the option of 'Setting' the game to 5, and that when the score is 14-all, the side which first reached 14 has the option of 'Setting' the game to 3. After the game has been 'Set' the score is called 'Love All', and the side which first scores 5 or 3 points, according as the game has been 'Set' at 13- or 14-all, wins the game. In either case the claim to 'Set' the game must be made before the next service is delivered after the score has reached 13-all or 14-all. Provided also that in a game of 21 points the same method of scoring be adopted, substituting 19 and 20 for 13 and 14.

(b) The ladies' singles game consists of 11 points. Provided that when the score is '9-all' the player who first reached 9 has the option of 'Setting' the game to 3, and when the score is '10-all' the player who first reached 10 has the option of 'Setting' the game to 2.

(c) A side rejecting the option of 'Setting' at the first opportunity shall not be thereby barred from 'Setting' if a second opportunity arises.

(d) In handicap games 'Setting' is not permitted.

8. The opposing sides shall contest the best of three games, unless otherwise agreed. The players shall change ends at the commencement of the second game and also of the third game (if any). In the third game the players shall change ends when the leading score reaches:

(a) 8 in a game of 15 points;

(b) 6 in a game of 11 points;

(c) 11 in a game of 21 points;

or, in handicap events, when one of the sides has scored half the total number of points required to win the game (the next highest number being taken in case of fractions). When it has been agreed to play only one game the players shall change ends as provided above for the third game.

If, inadvertently, the players omit to change ends as provided in this Law at the score indicated, the ends shall be changed immediately the mistake is discovered, and the existing score shall stand.

Doubles play

9. (a) It having been decided which side is to have the first service, the player in the right-hand service court of that side commences the game by serving to the player in the service court diagonally opposite. If the latter player returns the shuttle before it touches the ground it is to be returned by one of the 'In' side, and then returned by one of the 'Out' side, and so on, until a fault is made or the shuttle ceases to be 'In Play.' (*Vide* paragraph (b).) If a fault is made by the 'In' side, its right to continue serving is lost, as only one player on the side beginning a game is entitled to do so (*vide* Law 11), and the opponent in the right-hand service court then becomes the server; but if the service is not returned, or the fault is made by the 'Out' side, the 'In' side scores a point. The 'In' side players then change from one service court to the other, the service now being from the left-hand court to the player in the service court diagonally opposite. So long as a side remains 'In', service is delivered alternately from each service court into the one diagonally opposite, the change being made by the 'In' side when, and only when, a point is added to its score.

(b) The first service of a side in each innings shall be made from the right-hand service court. A 'Service' is delivered as soon as the shuttle is struck by the server's racket. The shuttle is thereafter 'In Play' until it touches the ground, or until a fault or 'Let' occurs, or except as provided in Law 19. After the service is delivered, the server and the player served to may take up any positions they choose on their side of the net, irrespective of any boundary lines.

10. The player served to may alone receive the service, but should the shuttle touch, or be struck by, his partner the 'In' side scores a point. No player may receive two consecutive services in the same game, except as provided in Law 12.

11. Only one player of the side beginning a game shall be entitled to serve in its first innings. In all subsequent innings each partner shall have the right, and they shall serve consecutively. The side winning a game shall always serve first in the next game, but either of the winners may serve and either of the losers may receive the service.

12. If a player serves out of turn, or from the wrong service court (owing to a mistake as to the service court from which service is at the time being in order), and *his side wins the rally*, it shall be a 'Let', provided that such 'Let' be claimed and allowed, or ordered by the umpire before the next succeeding service is delivered.

If a player of the 'Out' side standing in the wrong service court is prepared to receive the service when it is delivered, and *his side wins the rally*, it shall be a 'Let', provided that such 'Let' be claimed and allowed, or ordered by the umpire, before the next succeeding service is delivered.

If in either of the above cases the side at fault *loses the rally*, the mistake shall stand and the players' positions shall not be corrected.

Should a player inadvertently change sides when he should not do so, and the mistake not be discovered until after the next succeeding service has been delivered, the mistake shall stand, and a 'Let' cannot be claimed or allowed, and the players' positions shall not be corrected.

Singles play

13. In singles Laws 9 and 12 hold good, except that:

(a) The players shall serve from and receive service in their respective right-hand service courts only when the server's score is 0 or an even number of points in the game, the service being delivered from and received in their respective left-hand service courts when the server's score is an odd number of points. Setting does not affect this sequence.

(b) Both players shall change service courts after each point has been scored.

Faults

14. A fault made by a player of the side which is 'In' puts the server out; if made by a player whose side is 'Out', it counts a point to the 'In' side.

It is a fault:

(a) If in serving, (i) the shuttle at the instant of being struck be higher than the server's waist, or (ii) if at the instant of the shuttle being struck the shaft of the racket be not pointing in a downward direction to such an extent that the whole of the head of the racket is discernably below the whole of the server's hand holding the racket.

(b) If, in serving, the shuttle does not pass over the net, or falls into the wrong service court (i.e., into the one not diagonally opposite to the server), or falls short of the short service line, or beyond the long service line, or outside the side boundary lines of the service court into which service is in order.

(c) If the server's feet are not in the service court from which service is at the time being in order, or if the feet of the player receiving the service are not in the service court diagonally opposite until the service is delivered. (*Vide* Law 16.)

(d) If before or during the delivery of the service any player makes preliminary feints or otherwise intentionally baulks his opponent, or if any player deliberately delays serving the shuttle or in getting ready to receive it so as to obtain an unfair advantage.

(e) If either in service or play, the shuttle falls outside the boundaries of the court, or passes through or under the net, or fails to pass the net, or touches the roof or side walls, or the person or dress of a player. (A shuttle falling on a line shall be deemed to have fallen in the court or service court of which such line is a boundary.)

(f) If the shuttle 'In Play' be struck before it crosses to the striker's side of the net. (The striker may, however, follow the shuttle over the net with his racket in the course of his stroke.)

(g) If, when the shuttle is 'In Play', a player touches the net or its supports with racket, person or dress.

(h) If the shuttle be held on the racket (i.e. caught or slung) during the execution of a stroke; or if the shuttle be hit twice in succession by the same player with two strokes; or if the shuttle be hit by a player and his partner successively.

(i) If, in play, a player strikes the shuttle (unless he thereby makes a good return) or is struck by it, whether he is standing within or outside the boundaries of the court.

(j) If a player obstructs an opponent.

(k) If law 16 be transgressed.

General

15. The server may not serve till his opponent is ready, but the opponent shall be deemed to be ready if a return of the service be attempted.

16. The server and the player served to must stand within the limits of their respective service courts (as bounded by the short and long service, the centre, and side lines), and some part of both feet of these players must remain in contact with the surface of the court in a stationary position until the service is delivered. A foot on or touching a line in the case of either the server or the receiver shall be held to be outside his service court. (*Vide* Law 14 (c).) The respective partners may take up any position, provided they do not unsight or otherwise obstruct an opponent.

17. (a) If, in the course of service or rally, the shuttle touches and passes over the net, the stroke is not invalidated thereby. It is a good return if the shuttle having passed out-side either post drop on or within the boundary lines of the opposite court. A 'Let' may be given by the umpire for any unforeseen or accidental hindrance.

(b) *If, in service, or during a rally, a shuttle after passing over the net, is caught in or on the net, it is a 'Let'.*

(c) If the receiver is faulted for moving before the service is delivered, or for not being within the correct service court, in accordance with Laws 14 (c) or 16, and at the same time the server is also faulted for a service infringement, it shall be a 'Let'.

(d) When a 'Let' occurs, the play since the last service shall not count, and the player who served shall serve again, except when Law 12 is applicable.

18. If the server, in attempting to serve, misses the shuttle, it is not a fault; but if the shuttle be touched by the racket, a service is thereby delivered.

19. *If, when in play, the shuttle strikes the net and remains suspended there, or strikes the net and falls towards the surface of the court on the striker's side of the net, or hits the surface outside the court and an opponent then touches the net or shuttle with his racket or person, there is no penalty, as the shuttle is not then in play.*

20. If a player has a chance of striking the shuttle in a downward direction when quite near the net, his opponent must not put up his racket near the net on the chance of the shuttle rebounding from it. This is obstruction within the meaning of Law 14 (j) .

A player may, however, hold up his racket to protect his face from being hit if he does not thereby balk his opponent.

21. It shall be the duty of the umpire to call 'Fault' or 'Let' should either occur, without appeal being made by the players, and to give his decision on any appeal regarding a point in dispute, if made before the next service; and also to appoint linesmen and service judges at his discretion. The umpire's decision shall be final, but he shall uphold the decision of a linesman or service judge. This shall not preclude the umpire also from faulting the server or receiver. Where, however, a referee is appointed, an appeal shall lie to him from the decision of an umpire on questions of law only.

Continuous play

22. Play shall be continuous from the first service until the match be concluded; except that

(a) in the International Badminton Championship and in the Ladies' International Badminton Championship there shall be allowed an interval not exceeding five minutes between the second and third games of a match;

(b) in countries where conditions render it desirable, there shall be allowed, subject to the previously published approval of the National Organization concerned, an interval not exceeding five minutes between the second and third games of a match, in singles or doubles, or both; and

(c) when necessitated by circumstances not within the control of the players, the umpire may suspend play for such a period as he may consider necessary. If play be suspended the existing score shall stand and play be resumed from that point. Under no circumstances shall play be suspended to enable a player to recover his strength or wind, or to receive instruction or advice. Except in the case of an interval provided for above, no player shall be allowed to receive advice during a match or to leave the court until the match be concluded without the umpire's consent. The umpire shall be the sole judge of any suspension of play and he shall have the right to disqualify an offender.

(The Badminton Association of England has sanctioned that there may be an interval not exceeding five minutes between the second and third games only in matches in International Fixtures in England, subject to the agreement of the opponents.)

Interpretations

1. Any movement or conduct by the server that has the effect of breaking the continuity of service after the server and receiver have taken their positions to serve and to receive the service is a preliminary feint. For example, a server who, after having taken up his position to serve, delays hitting the shuttle for so long as to be unfair to the receiver, is guilty of such conduct.

(Vide Law 14 (d)).

2. It is obstruction if a player invade an opponent's court with racket or person in any degree except as permitted in Law 14 (f). . *(Vide Law 14 (j)).*

3. Where necessary on account of the structure of a building, the local Badminton Authority may, subject to the right of veto of its National Organization, make bye-laws dealing with cases in which a shuttle touches an obstruction.

2 Learning to Play

A form of badminton can be played at a very simple level - with one player simply hitting the shuttle over the net to the other. When the rally breaks down the shuttle is picked up and play begins as before. The rallies can continue in this way until the players agree to end the game. This can be quite enjoyable and indeed many players begin this way. But eventually just rallying may become too easy and a player will want to learn more and make some progress towards becoming a better player.

As you are reading this book I imagine that is your intention to become a better player. To become better you must improve your performance in a number of ways. There is, firstly, successful performance in terms of the result: whether you win or lose. There is, secondly, good performance in terms of how you play. You can play well and lose, just as you can play badly and win. More often than not, though, if you can play well you will increase your chances of winning - of giving a successful performance.

There are three main areas involved in playing well: skill, fitness and attitude. These will be dealt with at different stages of the book. I think you will agree from your experience of other games and other players that if you are skilful and reasonably fit and have the right sort of attitude to a game, then you should be quite successful and get a lot of enjoyment from it.

I want to spend some time talking about skill. At your age this is the most important aspect of the game.

To become skilful you must learn the *skills* of the game and *games skill* (the knowledge of when to use your skills). The skills of badminton are the *strokes* and the *movement* about the court. The strokes involve the *technique* of hitting the shuttle e.g., the smash, the serve. The movement involves the technique of moving about the court to position yourself in balance to hit the shuttle with most effect. This is the area where good footwork, posture and carriage are important.

As you begin to move around the court easily and hit the shuttle skilfully from various parts of your court to various parts of your opponent's court, you will begin to concentrate more on ways of defeating your opponent. You will begin to use your strokes as *moves* designed to outwit your opponent and to create a situation in which you can win the rally. At this stage you are using *tactics* which immediately make the game more exciting and interesting. Below is an example of simple tactics.

FIGURE 7a

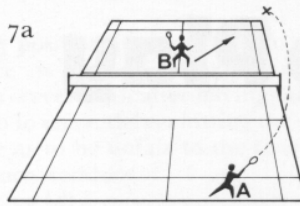


FIGURE 7a

- 1 B has cleared to A's rear court.
- 2 B defends for the smash.
- 3 A clears to B's backhand rear court, knowing B has a weak backhand.
- 4 B moves to play a backhand.

FIGURE 7b

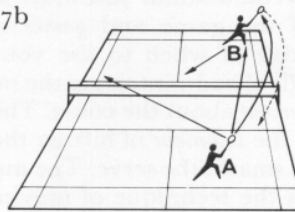


Figure 7b

- 1 A moves towards the midcourt to anticipate the weak clear.
- 2 B clears and rushes back to his mid-court to defend.
- 3 A can
 - (i) smash or drop cross-court to the open space;
 - (ii) smash to the back-hand and wrongfoot B;
 - (iii) clear high to the backhand and get a weaker return.

For the good player and the keen spectator the attraction of badminton is not only in its power and grace of movement but also in its chess-like qualities. To watch two good players in action, each trying to outwit the other by various means, is like watching a dynamic game of chess. One player attacks, the opponent defends and counter-attacks, and so on until one player hits the winner. The game is a battle between two opponents who present each other with a problem. The problem is how to over-come the opponent and win the battle. You have to think intelligently to solve the problem, for your opponent is also trying to win the battle. You are helped in this battle by the strokes you possess. The more strokes you possess the more ways you have of solving the problem. However, these only solve the problem if used as moves at the right time. A player with less strokes will have less moves to make and so fewer solutions to the problem. This may mean that he has less chance of defeating his opponent. However, because a stroke is only as good as the result it achieves, it doesn't follow that a player with many strokes will always use them wisely as moves to win the game.

If you have less strokes than your opponent and use them effectively to overcome the problems presented by him, then you can still win. Victory is the prize for good tactical play. But as victory and defeat are never for all time and the loser lives to fight another day, a fresh battle can always take place at some future date.

In one sense to be involved in a battle is to be involved in a fight. This is a good description of badminton because it is a hitting game which involves the delivery of 'blows' to an opponent. Instead of hitting your opponent, you hit the shuttle. There is no physical contact with your opponent. No one gets hurt. The racket is the weapon that delivers the blow. It is a light strong weapon, which you can use to apply more or less force with a minimum of strength and movement.

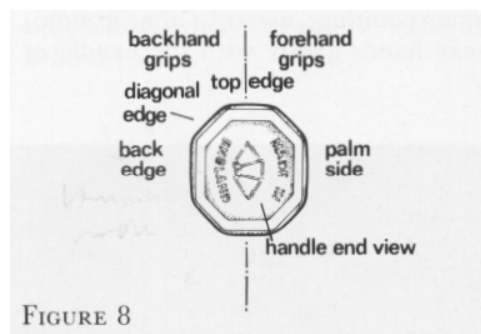
To 'see' the game in this way is quite important, for you must always be ready during the game to deliver a 'blow' or defend against a 'blow'. You must be ready to attack the shuttle whenever possible. You should take an attacking stance and hold your racket as a weapon in a way that allows you to attack.

Plates 12 and 13 show the player in an attacking stance, with the racket ready in the attack position. The stance is alert, right foot slightly forwards (prepared to step forwards and hit off the right foot) and the racket head pointing upwards ready to hit the shuttle downwards.

This brief description of the game will give you some ideas of what is involved in playing it. Some of the features, for example the strokes, tactics, movement and attacking stance, are common to both singles and doubles. For that reason it will be worth looking at the common features involved in Skill before we study the singles and the doubles game in detail. I will explain them now and you can refer back to them whenever necessary as you read the book.

The grips

The purpose of the different types of grip you use is to give you control of the racket head and face. A racket has two identical faces: the forehand face, when the shuttle is hit as if with the palm-side of the hand; and the backhand face, when the shuttle is hit as if with the back of the hand. See Figure 8.

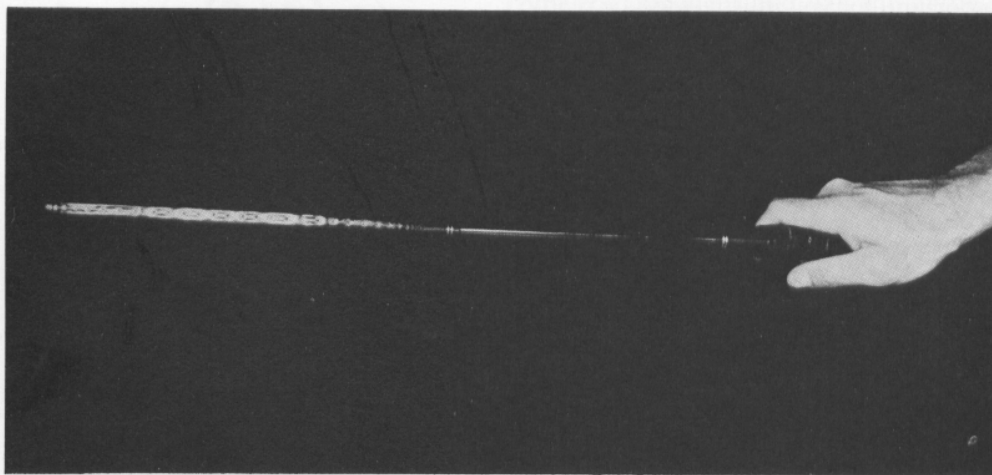


You will find that during play you will have to hit the shuttle from various spaces around the body, i.e. in front of you, at the sides, above your head and sometimes from the space behind you. These positions require a change of grip to control the racket face and guide the direction of the shuttle. As the modern racket is very light and requires much finger control, the important rule to remember is never to grip the handle too tightly. Below are some methods of holding the racket.

The basic forehand grip

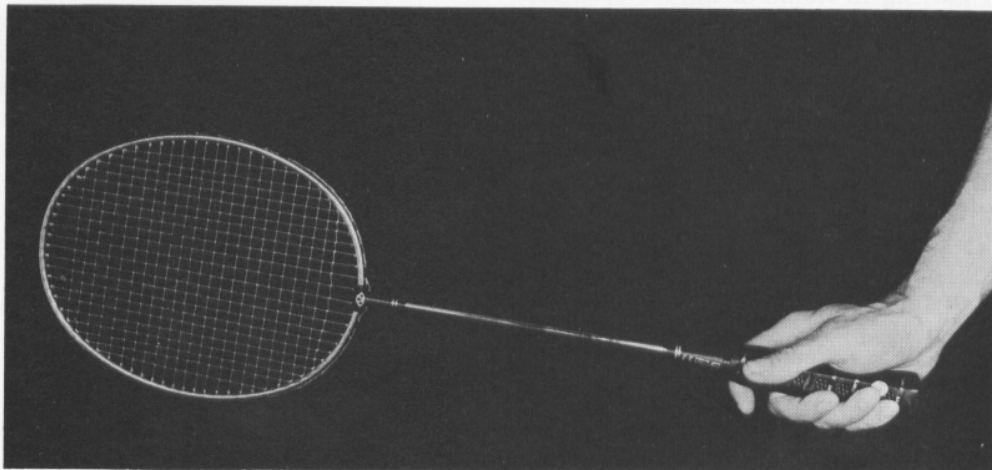
This is a very basic grip and is used for most strokes on the right side of the body. *Method 1.* Hold the racket by the neck in the left hand. Place the palm of the right hand flat on the strings of the racket. Slide the palm down the racket until the heel of the palm meets the bottom of the handle. Close the fingers and thumb gently round the handle. This is the forehand grip.

Method 2. Hold the racket by the neck in the left hand. Hold it in front of you with the head of the racket pointing forwards and the side edge of the racket frame pointing towards the ground. Shake hands gently with the handle of the racket. This is the forehand grip. The fingers can be spread out to allow a more comfortable grip. The more the handle is held in the fingers and not the fist, the greater is the control over the racket face (see Plates 2 and 3).



2 Above The forehand grip, top view

3 Below The forehand grip, side view

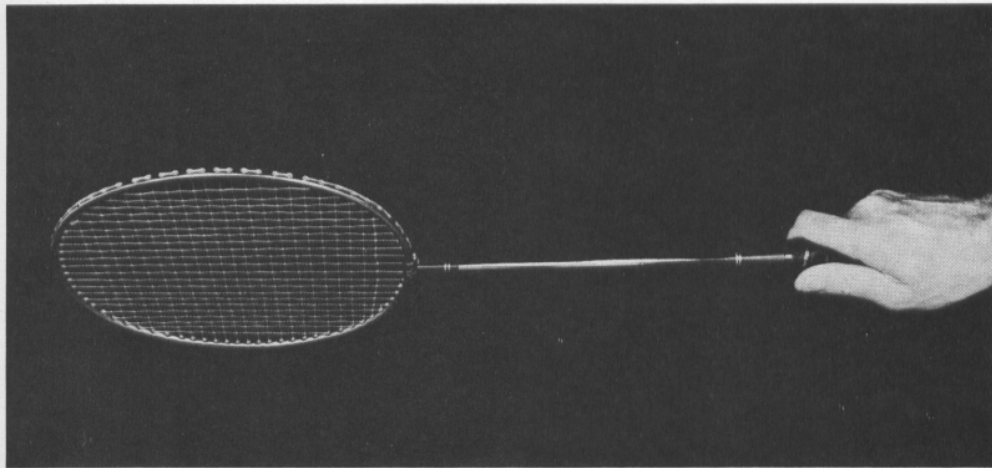


The backhand grips

There are two backhand grips, each very effective in certain situations.

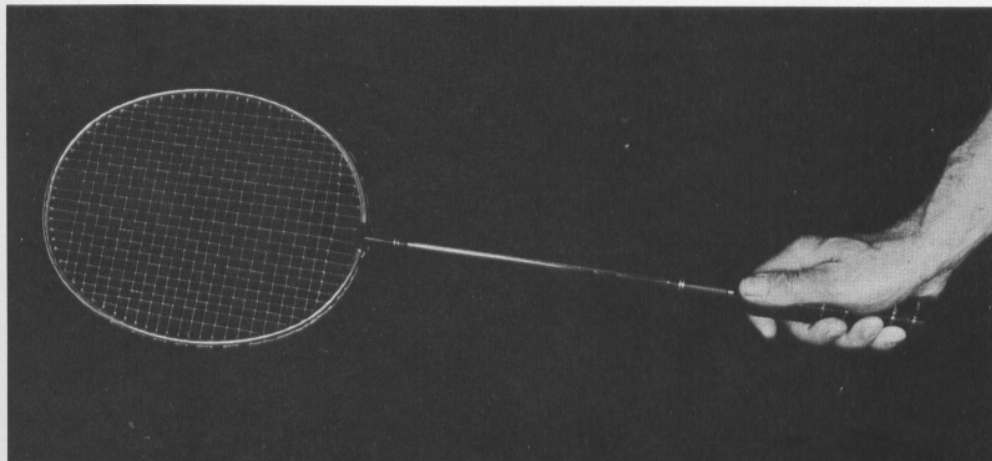
The basic backhand grip

This is useful for strokes played in front of the body when the shuttle is above net height and at the side of you in high or low positions. It is not so good for defensive backhand strokes or backhand over-head clears when the shuttle is slightly behind you.



4 *Above* The backhand grip, top view

5 *Below* The backhand grip, side view

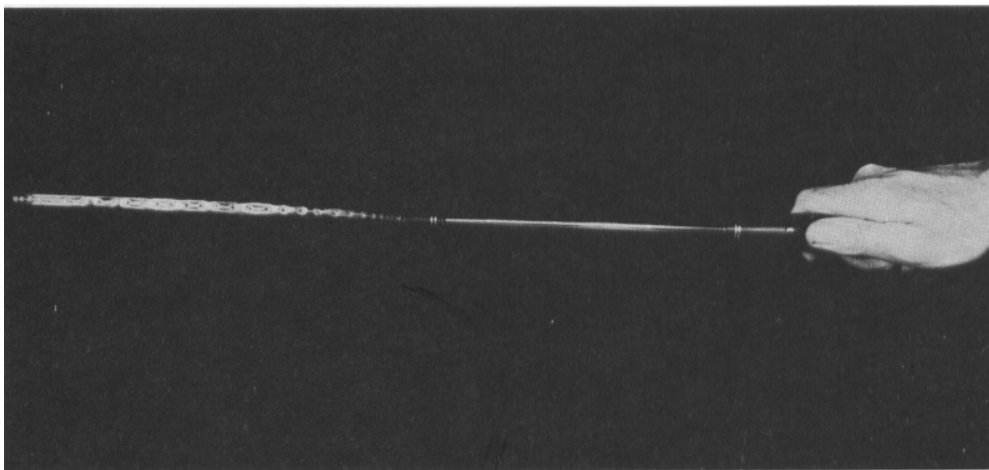


Method. Hold the racket in the forehand grip. Relax the grip and move your hand over the top edge of the handle until the thumb lies flat along the back edge (see Plates 4 and 5). The weight and strength of the thumb is now directly behind the backhand face of the racket.

The advanced backhand grip

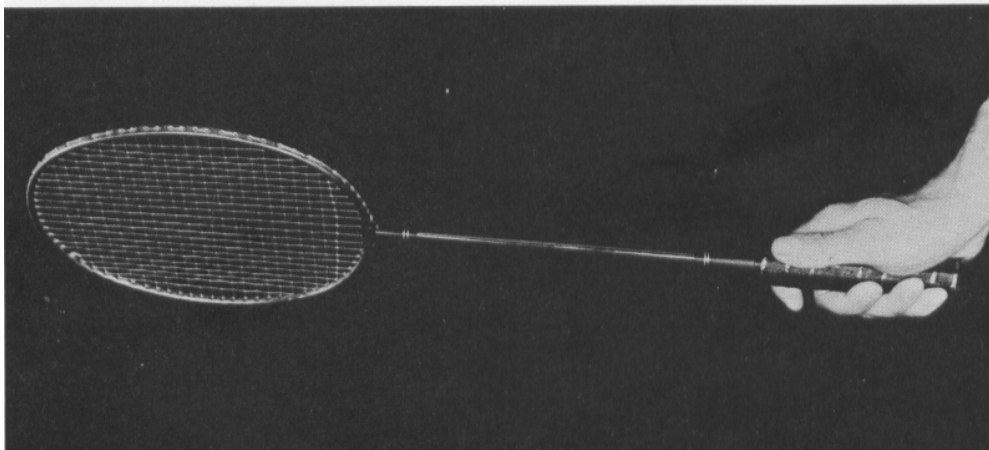
This grip is used to hit shuttles that get past you and into the space behind your body on the backhand side. It gives greater control of the racket head and face in this position and is effective for both the backhand clear and the backhand smash. It allows you to hit the shuttle accurately with control and power from the space behind your body.

Method. Hold the racket handle in the basic forehand grip. Now move your thumb until it rests flat along the top edge of the handle. Adjust your fingers until the grip feels comfortable (see Plates 6 and 7). This grip may feel strange at first, but with practice you will soon get used to it and be able to hit shuttles easily.



6 Above The advanced backhand grip, top view

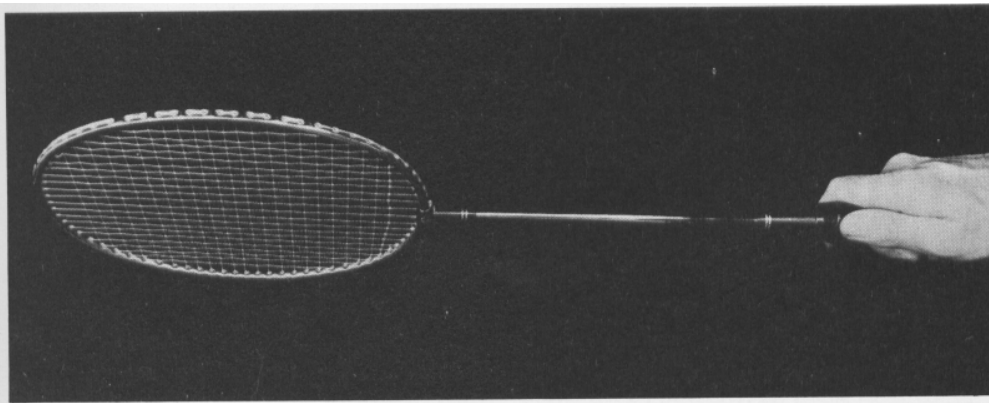
7 Below The advanced backhand grip, side view



The multi-purpose grip

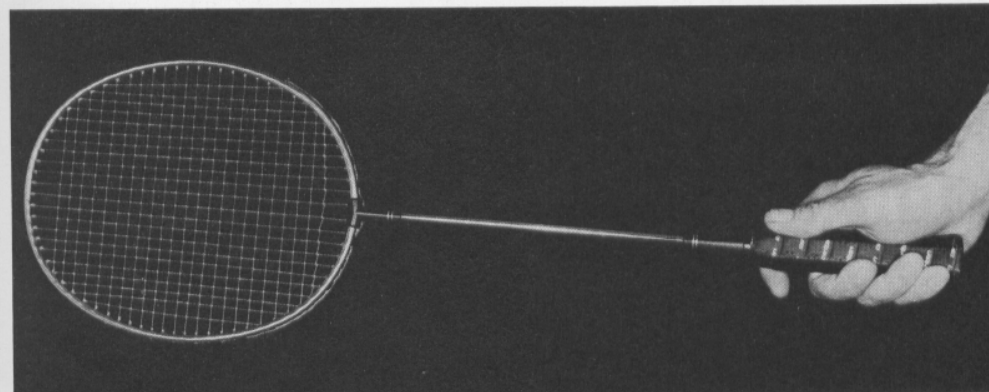
This grip is similar to the backhand grip and is one which is used by most of the top players in the game.

With this grip you can hold the racket handle easily in the fingers and make greater use of the thumb to give control of the racket face and head for a large range of strokes (see Plates 8 and 9) you can hit shuttles in front and behind you on the right and left sides. It is useful for all strokes except the normal forehand smash for which you must change to the basic forehand grip. It is especially useful for net play when you have to reach forwards to hit the shuttle near the top of the net. In this situation you require a gentle grip with more finger control, the handle being gripped mainly by the fingers and thumb with the fingers spread out to give more delicate control (see Plates 10 and 11).

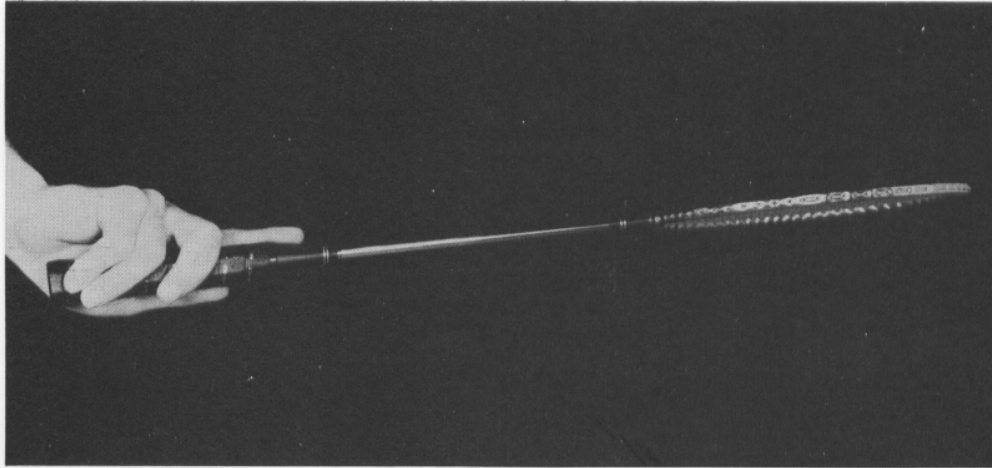


8 Above The multi-purpose grip, top view

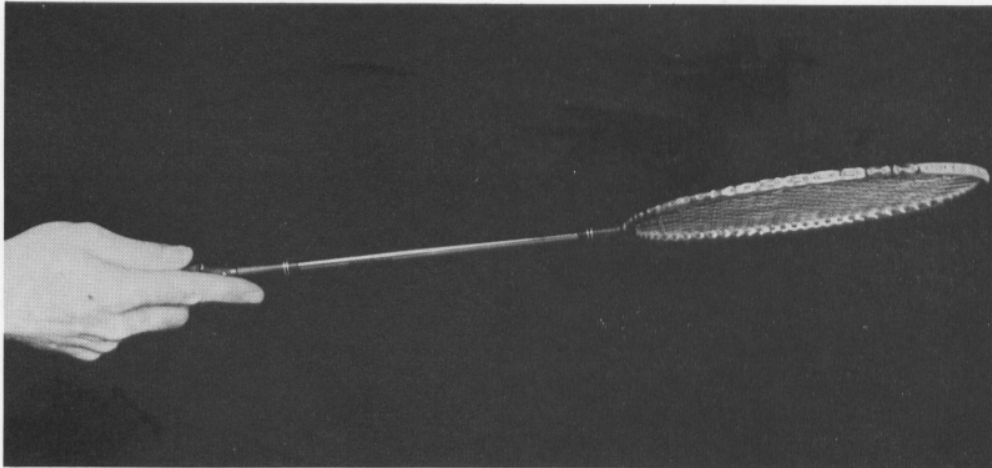
9 Below The multi-purpose grip, side view



10 Grip for the forehand net stroke



11 Grip for the backhand net stroke



NOTE: *Correction. Plate 10 is the grip for the backhand netstroke and plate 11 is the grip for the forehand net stroke*

Method 1. Hold the handle in the basic forehand grip. Relax the grip and move your hand over the top of the handle until the thumb rests along the diagonal edge of the racket. Now grip the handle gently.

Method 2. Hold the racket by the neck in the left hand. Point the head away from you and position the face so it lies horizontal. Now grip the handle from the side with your right hand. The thumb rests along the diagonal edge and the fingers spread out comfortably below the handle.

Practices for the grips

It is important that you learn to control the racket head and the racket face in all situations. To do this you must become familiar with the various ways of holding the racket - the grips. There are several methods of practice.

(i) Hold the handle in your hand and simply change from one grip to another using your fingers and thumb to move the handle around in your hand. It is almost like practising finger exercises on the piano. You must get to know your racket handle well, until you know exactly where your hand is positioned on it at all times.

(ii) Hold the handle and then spin the racket in your hand and stop at a particular grip.

(iii) Play shadow badminton and hit imaginary shuttles from different positions around your body. Change your grip to the correct one for the particular stroke you are performing.

Regular practice in this way will be helpful for when you go on to the court. Once on the court, experiment with different grips for different strokes and positions from which you hit the shuttle. Then decide what is the best grip for you in a particular situation. Although particular grips will be suggested for strokes (in the section on strokes), you may still vary your grip slightly to suit your own style of play. Regular practice will help you to make your choice.

In general you must be prepared to change your grip or vary it slightly according to your position and according to where you want to hit the shuttle. *There is no one best grip.* The best grip for you is the one that gives you control of the racket face and the racket head. *The value of a grip is determined by the success it achieves in a particular situation.*

The basic stances

During a game, whether in singles or doubles, you will be mainly in your mid-court. From the midcourt you will travel to various parts of the rest of the court to hit the shuttle, returning to the mid-court ready to repeat the process. This is the usual pattern. In the midcourt your stance will depend on whether you are likely to be defending or attacking which will itself depend on the sort of situation you have created for yourself when you played your last stroke. When you are on the attack you take up the attacking stance. When you are on the defensive you take up the defensive stance.

The attacking stance

Stand upright with a straight back in the centre of the midcourt. Place the feet about shoulder-width apart, with the right foot ahead of the left. Bend the knees and take the weight on the balls of the feet.

of the feet. Hold the racket at a comfortable distance in front of you with the racket head pointing upwards. Use the multi-purpose grip. The racket is held ready as a weapon, to deliver a 'blow' to the shuttle. This is the attacking stance. (See Plates 12 and 13.)

In this position you are ready to lunge forwards like a fencer, to attack shuttles in the forecourt or leap sideways to smash the shuttle.

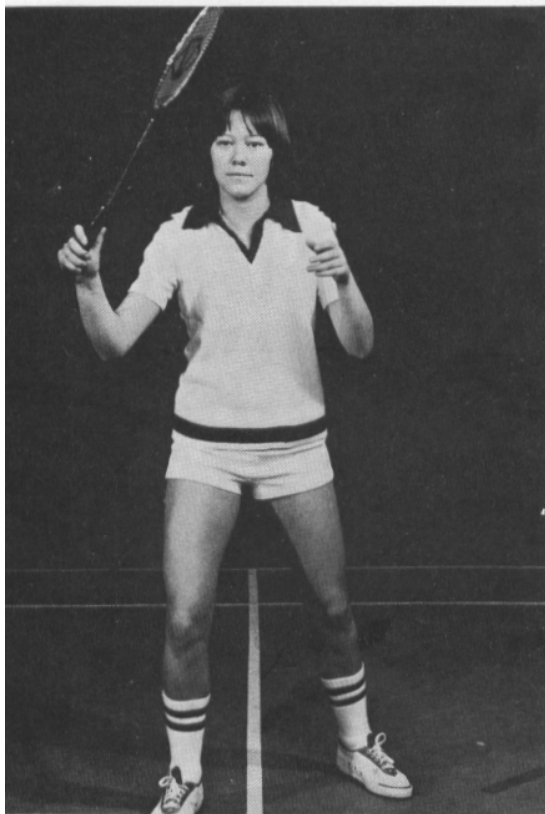
During a game always adopt this stance when you are on the attack. In addition turn slightly to face directly at your opponent. If he is in his forehand court, face that way, and vice versa in the backhand court.

The defensive stance

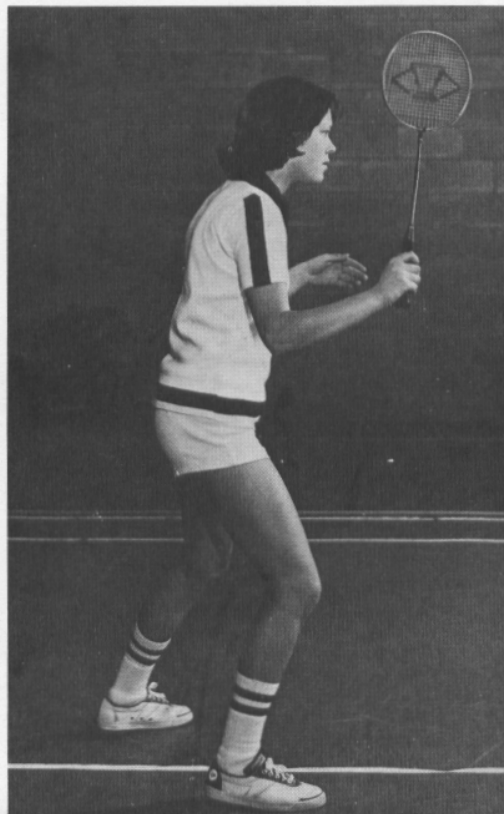
This stance is taken up if you think that your opponent is about to smash. The smash is directed at the midcourt and can be hit towards the centre or the sides. Consequently you must be ready to travel or stretch sideways quickly to hit the shuttle and either block the smash or clear it high to your opponent's court.

Hold the racket a comfortable distance in front of you with the racket head pointing upwards, and use the multi-purpose grip. Stand upright with a straight back and then place the feet a comfortable distance apart. Flex the knees almost into a sitting position. Keep your back straight and lean slightly forwards so that you are balanced on the balls of your feet. (See Plates 14 and 15.)

12 The attacking stance, front view



13 The attacking stance, side view



During a game take up this stance when defending and always face directly at your opponent, square on to his smash. In this way you are like the goalkeeper who positions himself to save a shot at goal. In badminton we call this position 'dividing the angle of return' or 'facing down the funnel'. See Figures 9a and 9b.

The word 'funnel' is used to describe the relative position of one player to another. It is customary to speak of 'dividing the angle' of the possible re-turns of your opponent, i.e. for those shots which would pass you on the right and left sides. However, badminton is a dimensional game and the shuttle can be hit above you as well as to the left and right. After hitting the shuttle you should at all times try to position yourself square on to your opponent whilst moving into position. You would then appear to be looking down a 'funnel' and, like a goalkeeper, you must attempt to cover all the possible space to prevent the shuttle getting past you.

FIGURE 9a

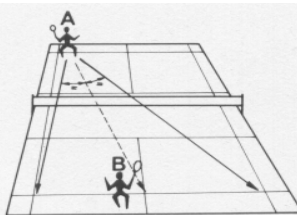
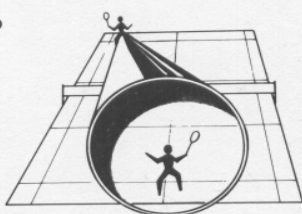
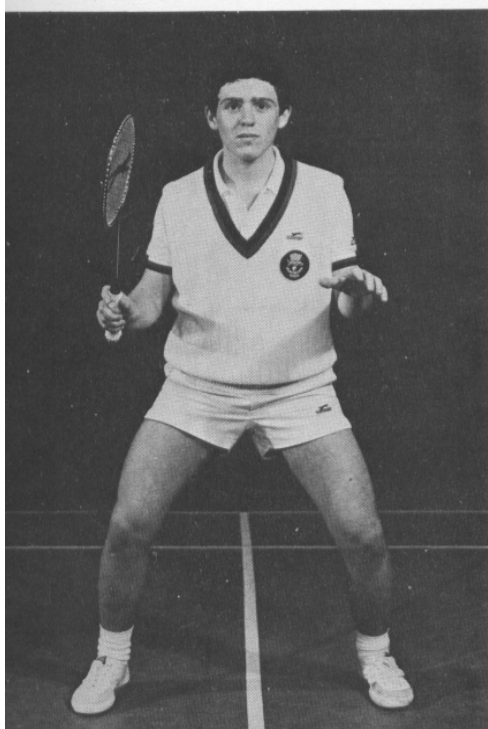


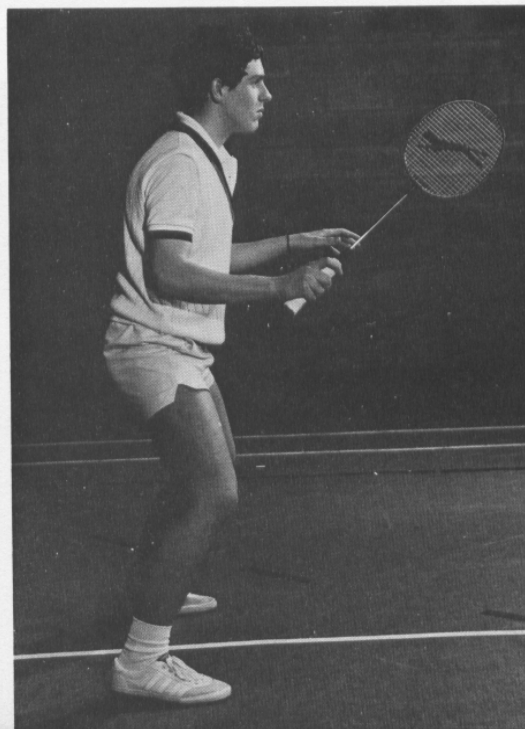
FIGURE 9b



14 The defensive stance, front view

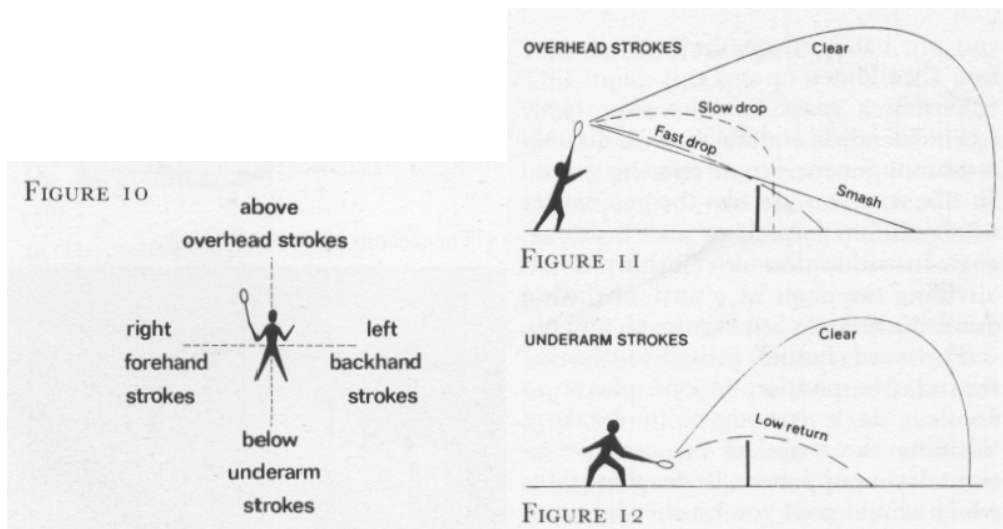


15 The defensive stance, side view



The strokes

Each stroke has a name which provides a description of it and tells you two facts: firstly, from where the shuttle is hit (see Figure 10); secondly, the pathway the

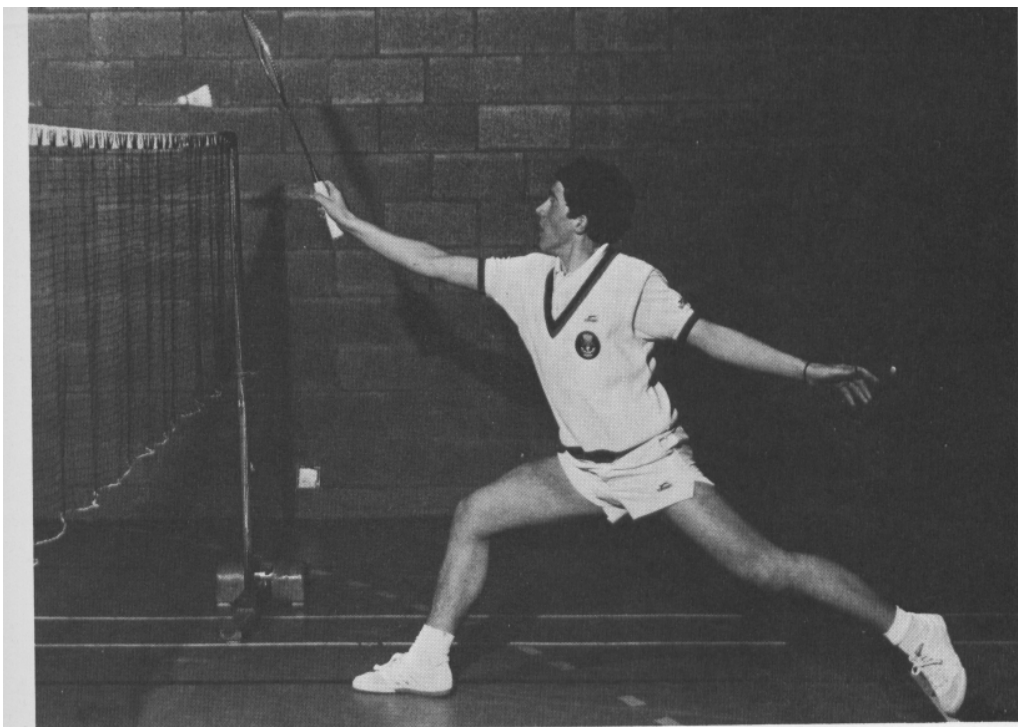


shuttle follows (see Figures 11 and 12). With the aid of Figure 10 it is easy to describe the strokes. For example, a shuttle hit from above the head would be described as an overhead stroke; one hit from the right side would be called a forehand stroke. These are partial descriptions only. A shuttle hit from overhead on the right side would be called an overhead forehand stroke. On this principle you can work out the names of the other strokes.

In addition you want to know about the pathway of the shuttle. It is now possible to provide a full description of the stroke, i.e. an overhead forehand clear, or an overhead backhand drop-shot. Most players do not provide a full description of the stroke. Often, when describing the tactics used in a game, players give an incomplete description of the stroke. They talk simply about a 'clear' or a 'smash'. This is because when they think of a stroke as a move in the game they are usually more concerned to emphasize where the shuttle was hit to rather than the place from where it was hit.

The performance of a stroke

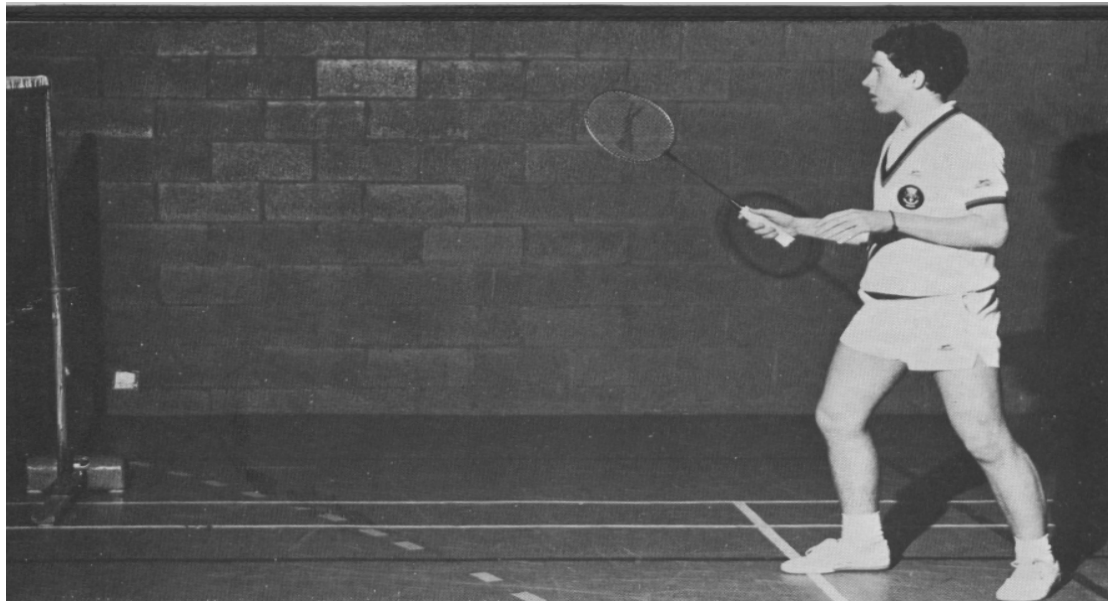
Common to all strokes is the fact that each one involves a cycle of movement, which begins from the attack position (racket held in front of you as a weapon) and returns there. This cycle can be described in terms of a preparation, hit and recovery.



16 *Above* Net stroke – racket above wrist

17 *Below* Net stroke – racket below wrist



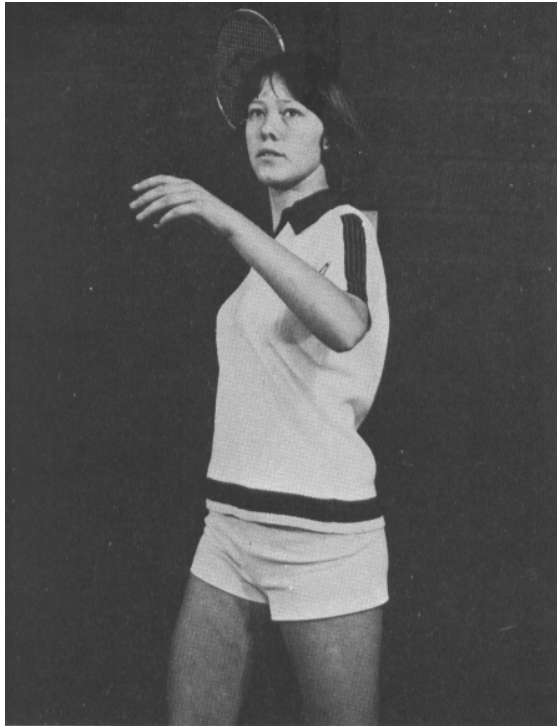


18 Above Attack position

19 Below Preparation for net stroke

(i) *The preparation.* From the attack position you must take the racket head back ready to hit the shuttle. How much you take it back depends on how hard you want to hit and where the shuttle is. When the shuttle is in front of you near the net you need only move your hand to take the racket head back enough. Simply tilt your hand towards you. See Plates 18 and 19. If the shuttle is above your head or high to one side you must take it back much further, ready to hit the shuttle very hard. In this case you would simply twist your shoulders, take your arm back and tilt the thumb-side of your hand towards you. (See Plates 20 and 21.)





20 Preparation for a strong hit, front view



21 Preparation for a strong hit, side view

(ii) *The hit.* Now you are ready to hit the shuttle, the racket head can be *thrown* forwards to hit the shuttle. Throw the racket head forwards in an upward, sideways or downward direction, according to the position of the shuttle in the court. A strong hit requires you to accelerate the racket head forwards very quickly. A gentle hit will require a relatively slower movement forwards. So from the preparation you simply hit the shuttle with more or less force in the direction you want it to go.

(iii) *The recovery.* On most forehand strokes the racket head will naturally continue forwards after hitting the shuttle. This is because on the forehand side the natural structure of your body causes your arm to *hit through* the shuttle. On most backhand strokes the natural structure of your body allows you to check the forward movement of the racket head after hitting the shuttle. On backhand strokes, particularly high ones, you will tend to *hit at* the shuttle and restrict the follow through of the racket head. But in either case you must recover quickly after the hit and return to the attack position.

Study the cycle of movement in the forehand smash and backhand clear strokes illustrated in the plates on the next two pages.

Practice for a stroke

It is advisable to develop good stroke habits if you want to become a better player, which means you should always perform the cycle of movement for good stroke production, as good players even when playing at speed. This is something you can practise at home as well as on the court.

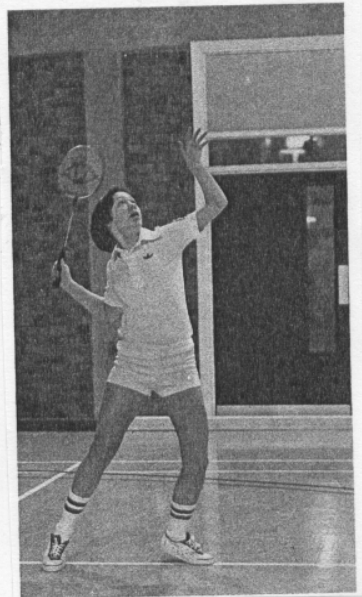
The forehand smash



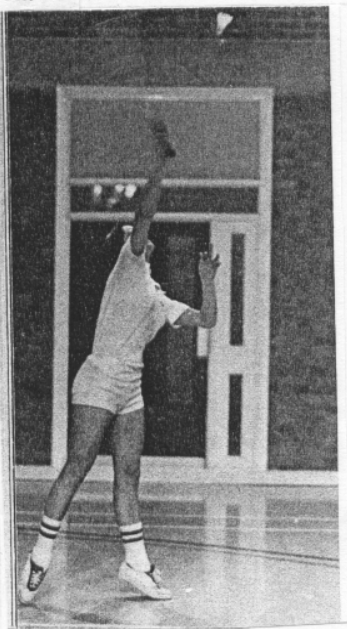
22 Attack position



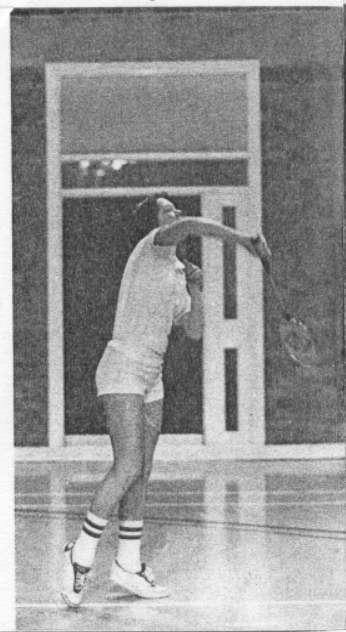
Preparation



Hit



Follow-through

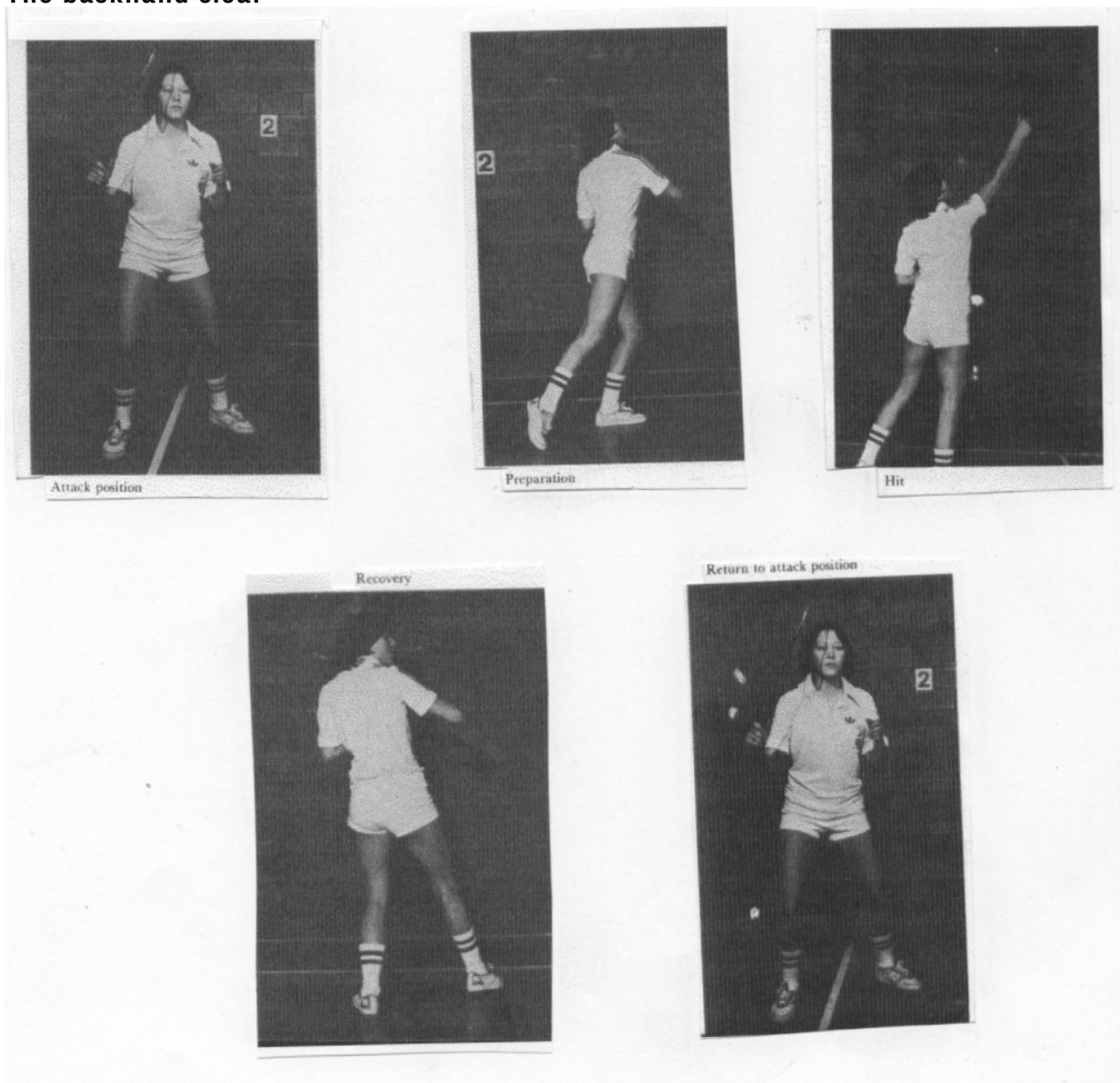


Recovery



At home, select a stroke for practice. Hold the racket in the attack position and deliver a 'blow' to an imaginary 'shuttle'. Each time start from and return to the attack position. Gradually you can add strokes until you can perform a range of strokes, making sure that you return to the attack position after each one. If your ceiling is too low, kneel upright and practise overhead and side strokes from that position on the forehand and hand sides.

The backhand clear



On court, practise with a friend. Select a stroke, for example, the overhead forehand clear and ask your friend to hit the shuttle high above your head.

Hold the racket in the attack position and perform the preparation, hit and recovery to the attack position each time you hit the shuttle. You can do this one stroke at a time or play a continuous rally. Regular practice in this way will soon make you proficient in stroke production and always alert and ready to hit the shuttle.

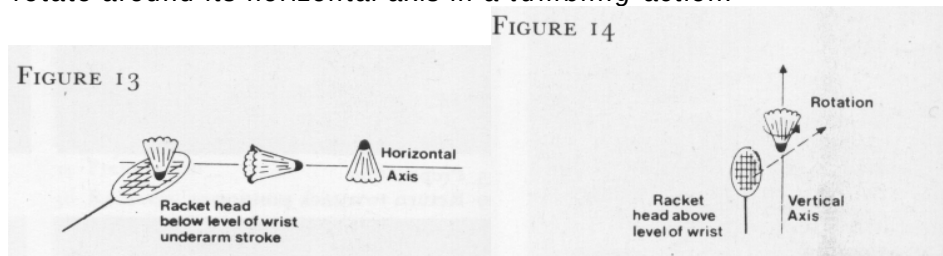
Variations in hitting the shuttle

Whichever stroke you use, each one involves the application of force to the shuttle by the racket head. You can impart more or less force to the shuttle by giving it a strong or gentle blow. This would usually involve a quick or slow movement of the racket head. There are a number of different ways of applying force to the shuttle which apply to all strokes. They are very easy to use and can be practised immediately. They are:

- (a) stroke-through strokes,
- (b) glancing--blow strokes,
- (c) impact strokes and
- (d) sponge strokes.

The 'stroke-through' stroke. You hit the shuttle with the face of the racket square on to the shuttle, at right angles to the pathway of the shuttle; then allow the racket head to continue facing the shuttle during the follow through until the arm recovers naturally to the attack position. The stroke is very smooth and tends to exaggerate the follow-through. Examples are the underarm and overhead forehand clears, the power smash and the slow drop shot.

The 'glancing-blow' stroke. As you hit the shuttle the force is diverted slightly so that the racket head gives the shuttle a glancing blow. The face of the racket hits across the line of the shuttle and instead of giving the shuttle a full blow it gives it a less forceful, or glancing, blow. This sort of stroke is used in both table-tennis and tennis to put spin on the ball. Take a shuttle and hold it by the feathers in the left hand. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip. Now hit the shuttle gently across its bottom with the racket face moving from either right to left or left to right (see Figure 13). This action caused the shuttle to rotate around its horizontal axis in a *tumbling* action.



Repeat this action with the racket head pointing upwards and hit the shuttle with the face across the side of the base. This causes the shuttle to rotate around its vertical axis in a *spinning* action (see Figure 14).

We describe the glancing-blow strokes when played in overhead positions as 'cutting' or 'slicing' the shuttle. I will refer to the 'sliced smash' or the 'cut drop' or 'spin' shot at the net. These terms simply indicate that the shuttle has been given a glancing blow. The stroke is deceptive for you can appear to be giving the shuttle a strong blow, and without slowing down the racket head speed give the shuttle a glancing blow. Consequently the shuttle travels a shorter distance than your opponent expects and may cause him to make a poor return. In addition, because the shuttle stays on the strings briefly as the racket face travels across the base, you will have more control of the shuttle. The action is particularly useful for net shots and the low serve. All good players use a certain amount of 'glancing-blow' action in their stroke production. Experiment with this and you will improve your game.

The 'impact' stroke. In the impact stroke the racket head hits the shuttle and stops sharply at the point of impact. There is very little, if any, follow-through. The head rebounds from the point of impact. This technique is very useful for shuttles in high or low positions on the backhand side and in the forecourt at the net. The technique makes it very easy to *hit* at the shuttle and perform clears and smashes from the backhand side.

The 'sponge' stroke. This description is used to refer to the act of taking some of the speed away from the oncoming shuttle. It is similar to catching a ball. When you catch a hard ball you meet it with your hands and 'give' with the ball to absorb some of the force, which, as you will appreciate, is very necessary with a hard ball. In badminton it is sometimes necessary to take some of the force from a shuttle which has been smashed and slow it down. You can then play a controlled return to the forecourt. The racket must 'give' slightly to absorb the force through the strings. Ask your partner to smash at your backhand or forehand. Place your racket face in line with the oncoming shuttle and allow the racket face to 'give' slightly as the shuttle strikes the face. Regular practice in this way will soon give you the control necessary. These few variations are useful to improve your control for in fact every stroke involves one of these variations in hitting the shuttle. Experiment in practice and develop your control and expertise.

Movement

During a game you travel to different parts of the court to hit the shuttle. Ideally you should travel and arrive in a balanced position. Sometimes it is necessary to jump to hit the shuttle or travel so quickly that you must hit whilst out of balance. Then you must regain your balance as quickly as possible for the next move. To move well about the court requires a good sense of balance and good footwork. A player with these qualities is usually quick and light on his feet and has a good posture on court.

You will realize that to hit the shuttle not only involves a cycle of preparation, hit and recovery, but also good footwork and balance. If these are joined together they add up to a *sequence of movement*. The sequence of movement for any stroke usually begins from the attacking or defensive stance in the midcourt.

From this position you will travel whilst preparing for the hit, arrive, balance, hit, recover and return towards the mid-court. This should take place as one continuous sequence of movement. During a rally you will perform many such sequences.

Learning how to move

While it is possible to learn certain footwork patterns, this can become rather complicated and confusing. Usually if you obey several basic rules the move-ment will look after itself.

Rule 1. Always start from the correct position.

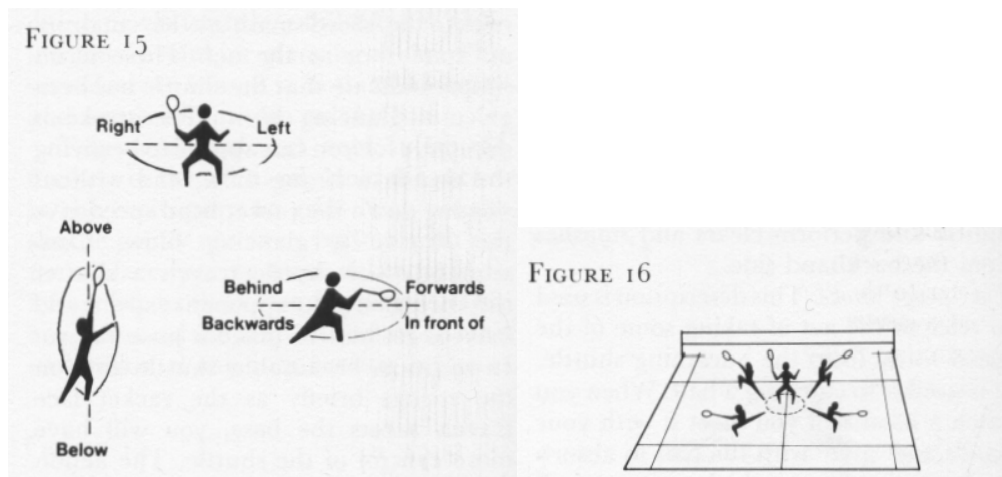
That is, hold the racket in the attack position and begin from an attacking or defensive stance according to the situation you are in.

Rule 2. Keep the shuttle in front of your shoulders.

Ideally you want to keep the shuttle in front of your whole body. However, this is not always possible during a game. The shuttle may be hit over your head to the rearcourt, and even though you travel quickly backwards you may still find that you cannot get your feet behind the shuttle. However, your spine can arch backwards and this will enable you to lean back and get your shoulders behind the shuttle. Often you may even have to leap backwards and arch your spine whilst you are in flight. Once the shuttle is level with your shoulders you will find it possible to hit it with the racket head.

Rule 3. Move to hit the shuttle as early as possible.

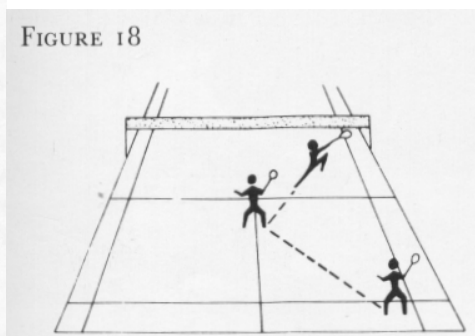
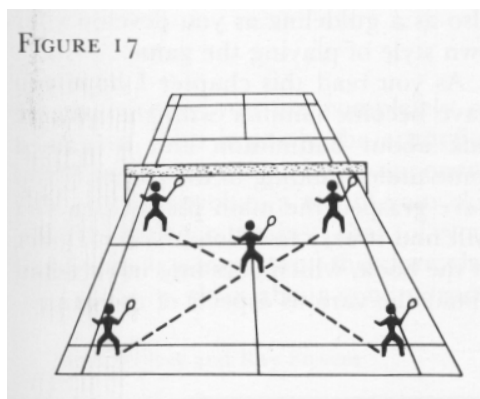
"There are several factors involved when you move to hit the shuttle as early as possible. Before you can hit the shuttle it must be within your hitting area (see Figure 15).



The hitting area is the space around your body and is bounded by the limits of your reach. As the shuttle flies to various parts of the court you must travel quickly to meet it so that it falls within your hitting area. There are a number of ways of meeting the shuttle early:

(a) *Extend your hitting area.* You can do this by reaching out towards the shuttle. A large step onto your right foot, called the lunge, will enable you to extend your hitting area quite a long way around the midcourt (see Figure 16).

(b) *Move your hitting area.* You simply move your hitting area by travelling towards the shuttle (see Figure 17). Make sure that you have your right foot forward in the forecourt as you hit the shuttle.



(c) *Combine travelling and extension.* Sometimes you may not have time to travel all the way to meet the shuttle. It might be quicker to move your hitting area and then extend it to hit the shuttle. For example, you may smash the shuttle from the rearcourt and begin to travel to the midcourt, and then quickly extend your hitting area by lunging towards the net to hit the shuttle (see Figure 18).

(d) *Jump.* It may be necessary to extend your hitting area upwards. This may require you either to leap upwards from the midcourt to the sides or to travel and leap upwards.

The advantage of hitting the shuttle early, particularly in the forecourt and midcourt, is that you can attack and hit it steeply downwards for a winner. In addition you can speed up the game and reduce the time that your opponent has to recover and make his next move.

Practices for movement

Footwork and balance

- i. Rally with your partner and practise ways of arriving in a balanced position to hit the shuttle.
- ii. Travel to the hitting position and hit the shuttle with the body in balance whilst
 - (a) the feet are moving during the stroke or
 - (b) the feet are stationary during the stroke.
- iii. A game: each player begins with 10 lives. A life is lost if the feet move during a stroke.

Hitting the shuttle early. Rally with your partner and practise hitting the shuttle early by extending or moving your hitting area. Extend by lunging or jumping. Do this in the rearcourt, midcourt and forecourt.

Comment. It is very important during a game that you always recover quickly, ready to travel into position to make the next move. If you do have to jump, stretch or travel quickly and find yourself off balance, then recover quickly and return towards the midcourt with the racket ready in the attack position. A player who is in balance can move easily and quickly to the various parts of the court to hit the shuttle.

As you practise remember the basic rules.

Rule 1. Start from the correct position.

Rule 2. Keep the shuttle in front of the shoulders.

Rule 3. Move to hit the shuttle early. Do this and you will soon begin to move easily around the court and adopt that footwork which enables you to follow the rules in your own way.

Summary

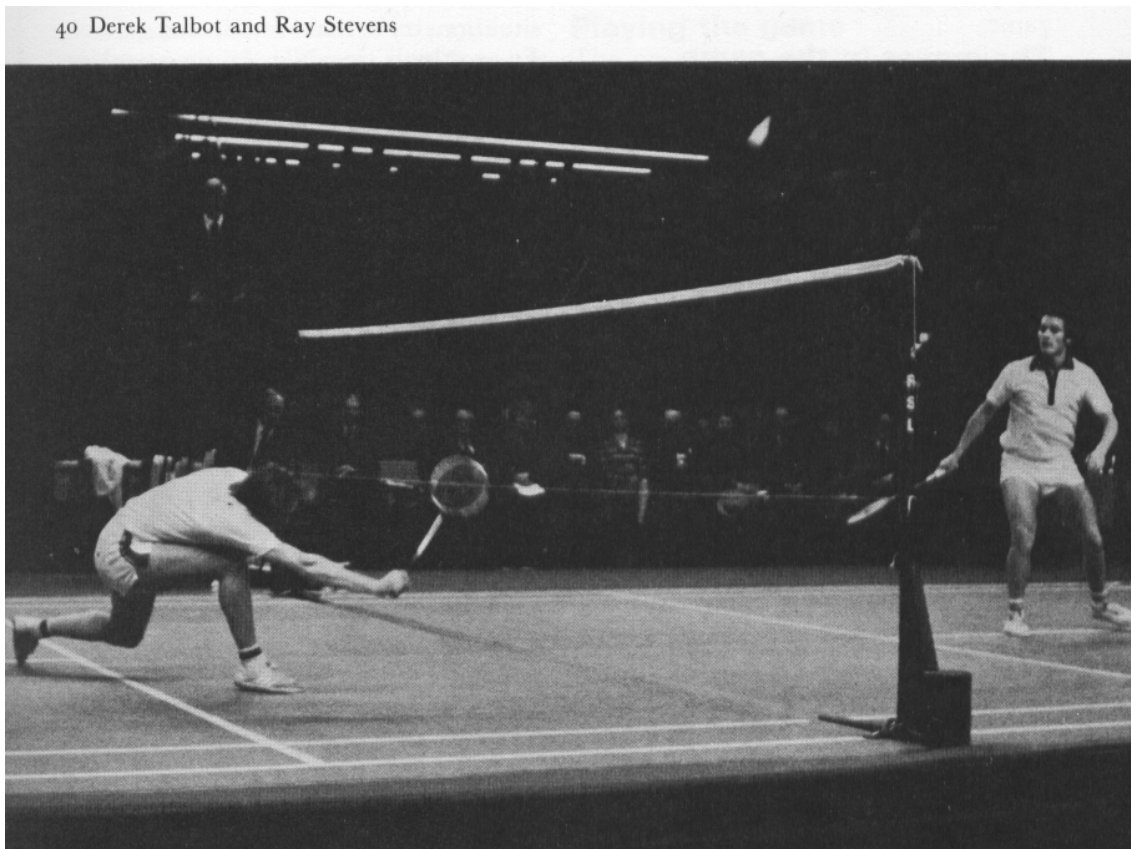
In this chapter I have tried to explain all the features involved in playing the game. These features include a description of the kind of game badminton is, the grips, the attacking and defensive stances, the cycle of movement common to all strokes and, finally, the movement involved in keeping the shuttle in front of you and in hitting it early. This information is very general but also very important. It can be used for reference and also as a guideline as you develop your own style of playing the game.

As you read this chapter I hope you have become familiar with the way we talk about badminton and so gained some understanding of the game. If you have grasped the main points then you will find it easy to follow the remainder of the book, which goes into more detail about the various aspects of the game.

3 The Singles Game

In singles play you are completely on your own. This is partly the attraction of the game: just you and your opponent. The contest involves a test of your skill and intelligence against that of your opponent. It is important, therefore, that you are very clear about your purpose when you step on to the court. Your aim, obviously, is to defeat your opponent and win the game. What you need to know now is how to achieve that aim. What sort of strokes and tactics must you use to win the game?

Basically you must try to hit the shuttle to the floor in your opponent's court



and prevent him from hitting the shuttle to the floor in your court. All the moves you make are executed with this intention in mind. There are other ways of winning, for example, if your opponent fails to return the shuttle over the net or hits it out of court. But rather than relying on him hitting it out, it is better to ensure that he fails to return it into your court. One way is to hit a certain winner by hitting it to his floor.

To do this you must be able to perform the various strokes which are used as moves in the game. We must therefore look at a stroke not so much for its own sake but for its function, the purpose it serves as a move in the game.

The moves in the game

At any time during a game you will be in a certain situation, depending on the height of the shuttle in some part of the court. A shuttle which is high in the rearcourt presents a different situation for you than one which is low in the forecourt. Each time you hit the shuttle you make a move which alters the present situation and creates a new situation for both you and your opponent. What you want to make sure of is that any situation you create is to your advantage.. For example, it would not be a very sensible move to play a high floating drop shot to the forecourt with your opponent waiting to smash it to the ground. A move more to your advantage would be to clear it over his head to his rearcourt.

Obviously there are times when the advantage lies with your opponent. Somehow you have to get out of that situation and create one to your advantage, and for this you will have to rely on your skill in hitting the shuttle and moving about the court. If you are not very skilful then you will find it difficult both to get out of awkward situations and to create them to your advantage. If a move is to be to your advantage then it must have some end in view. You are going to benefit from that move in some way. It must increase your chances of winning the rally. Since badminton is like a battle and your racket is a weapon to deliver 'blows', you must attack your opponent. By attacking you can hit scoring 'blows', which either hit the shuttle to the ground or make it difficult for him to return it. So at all times, even in a difficult defensive situation, try to make an attacking move. Even a high clear can be an attacking move if you can use it eventually to create a situation in which you can hit a scoring blow. This is what I would describe as using your moves based on *the principle of attack*. Implied here is that a move is good if it helps to create a situation to your advantage. Whenever you play, even as you learn more about the game and acquire more strokes, remember this principle. To become a good and a successful player you must defeat your opponents. This requires both skill and intelligence, which emphasizes the point that a stroke is only of value as a move in the game and a good move is one which is based on the principle of attack. Let us now move on to the strokes. We will examine them in detail and see how they can be used as moves in the game. Each stroke will be described with reference to the following information.

The stroke - a description of the stroke.

The situation - describes the positions occupied by you and your opponent and states what you intend to do.

The move - states the move and the reasons for the move.

Performing the stroke - explains how to do the stroke.

Opponent's possible replies - states what he can do in the situation which your move has created.

Recovery - explains what you should do after making your move in order to cover your opponent's possible replies.

Practices for the stroke - gives you some ways of improving your strokes.

A conditioned game - explains how you can practise the stroke in a game.

The moves in the different situations are determined by the position of the shuttle in the court. The shuttle is in a *high position* when it is above net height and can be hit in a downward direction. It is in a *low position* when below net height and must be hit in an upward direction. These positions will range from very low (near the ground) to very high (the highest point you can reach to hit the shuttle). Midway between these two, at about net height, the shuttle can be hit horizontally neither up nor down.

The basic situations, shown in Figure 19, are:

Rearcourt situations. The moves are made from high or low positions at the sides and centre of the rearcourt.

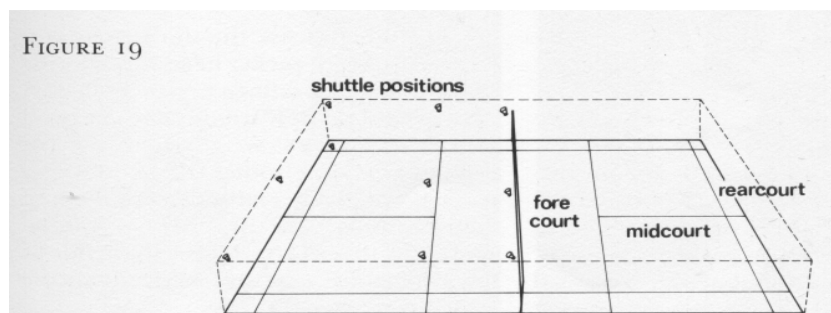
Midcourt situations. The moves are made from high and low positions at the sides and centre of the midcourt.

Forecourt situations. The moves are made from the sides and centre. The shuttle position will be:

- (a) clearly above net height,
- (b) just above or below the top of the net or
- (c) near the ground.

Playing the game

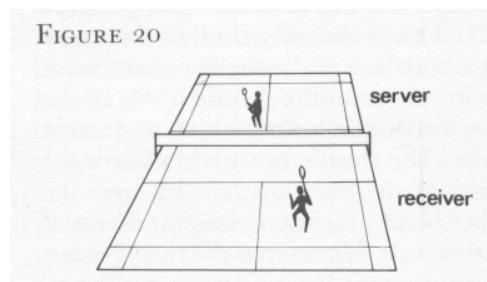
The opening move of the game is the serve. This is the only time in the game when both you and your opponent must remain still until the shuttle is hit. In the serve the shuttle is hit with an underarm stroke. The shuttle must be below waist height at the moment it is hit and the racket head must be below the hand of the server. It follows that the shuttle must travel upwards before it crosses the net.



There are three basic types of serve:

1. The high serve
2. The low serve
3. The flick serve.

As your opponent does not know which type of serve he is to receive, he usually adopts a position in his service court which will enable him to move to any one of them. The serve must be hit upwards and so he takes up a midcourt attacking stance with the left foot forwards and positions himself in the centre of his service court and faces you. You must hit the shuttle upwards from a low position. So you stand in your midcourt ready to assume a midcourt defensive or attacking stance after your serve. Look at Figure 20, which shows your positions for the serve.



Now I will examine each serve in turn and discuss what is involved.

The serves

1 The high serve (plates 41-44 next page)

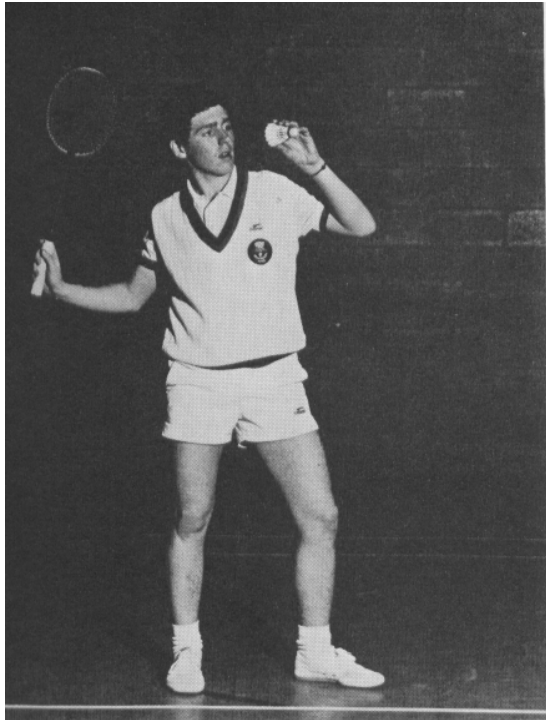
A good high serve has length and height. The shuttle should drop vertically to land on the back line of the rear court close to the side or centre.

The situation. Your opponent is balanced and ready to attack the serve knowing that you must hit the shuttle upwards. You stand in the midcourt close to the centre line ready to serve.

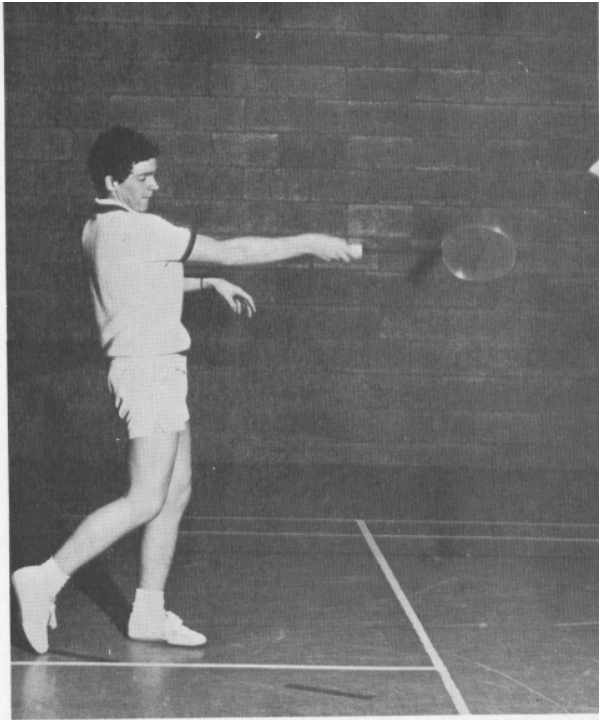
The move. You decide that you want to move him to his rear court. This will take him further from the net and make it more difficult to hit a winner. It will also take him away from his centre and create space for you in his court. You serve high.

Performing the high serve

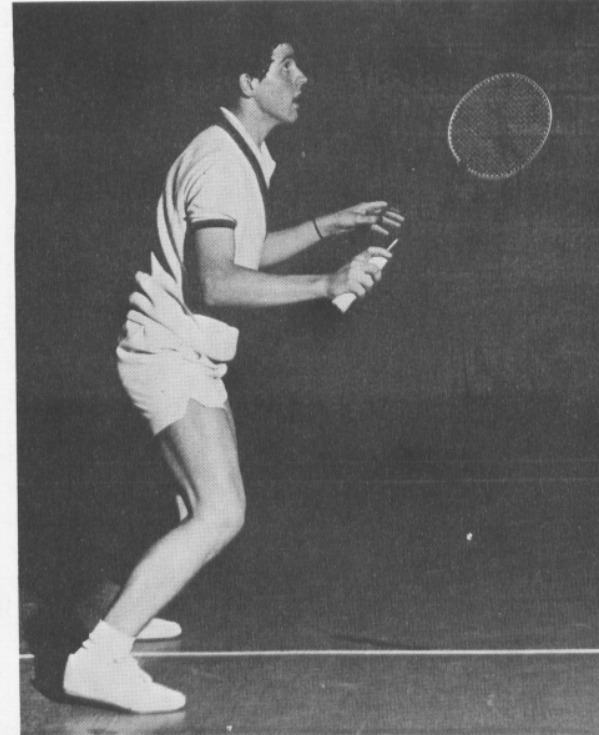
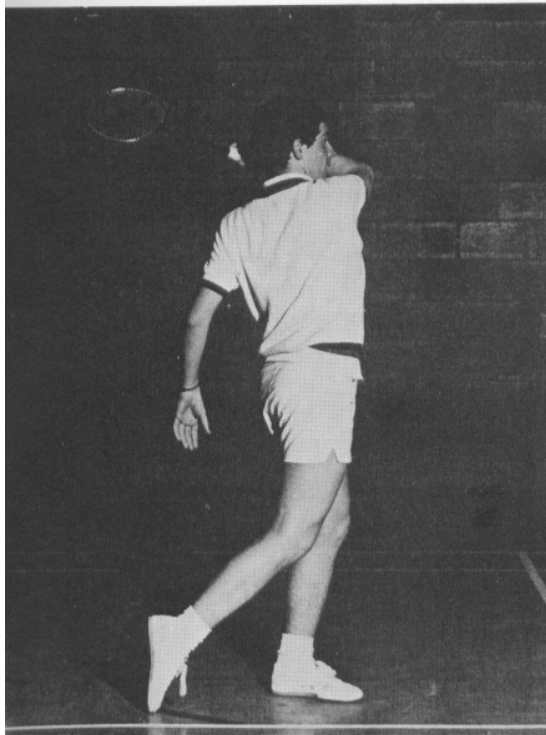
- i. Stance. Stand midcourt close to the centre line and about 2-3 feet from the front service line. Place the left foot forwards until the feet are a comfortable distance apart and your weight evenly balanced.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket in the forehand or multi-purpose grip. Hold the shuttle by the feathers or the base, in the left hand and at a comfortable distance from you. Take the racket head back to deliver a strong blow, i.e. twist the shoulders and move your arm backwards. Tilt the thumb-side of your hand towards you. The racket head points upwards. You are now ready to hit the shuttle.
- iii. The hit. Release the shuttle. As you do so, throw the racket head downwards to hit under the falling shuttle and send it forwards and upwards high to the rear court. Allow your weight to sway forwards onto your front foot.
- iv. The recovery. Let the racket head follow through in the direction of the shuttle until the arm naturally bends in towards your body and return it to the attack position.



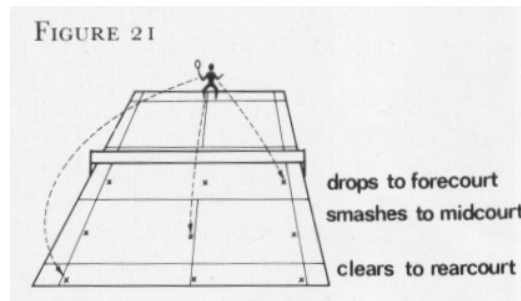
41 Above Serving stance
43 Below Follow-through into recovery



42 Hit
44 Recovery into defensive stance



Opponent's possible replies. In reply to the high serve your opponent can make the following moves. He can smash to the midcourt, drop to the forecourt or clear to your rearcourt. These moves can be made to the sides or the centre. See Figure 21.



Recovery. You must be ready to cover your opponent's strongest move. Usually this is the smash to the midcourt. Immediately after the serve assume a midcourt defensive stance and face your opponent with your racket up, ready to hit the shuttle. If he should clear or drop, you are ready to move to the rearcourt or forecourt. If you know that your opponent cannot smash very well and may clear or drop, then assume a midcourt attack position ready to travel quickly to hit the shuttle early.

Practices for the high serve

- i. Wall practice. Take a shuttle and stand in the serving position about 10 feet from, the wall of the hall or gym. Practise serving until you can throw the racket head downwards with force and hit the shuttle upwards hard against the wall.
- ii. Court practice. Take a shuttle, or if possible, about 6-10 shuttles, on to the court. Practise the high serve from the right and left courts until you can hit the shuttle upwards very high to land within the rearcourt doubles lines at the sides or the centre. Keep your score out of 10 attempts to each place.
- iii. Practice with a partner. Stand in the serving and receiving positions. Serve high to your partner to the sides or centre of the rearcourt. Ask your partner to smash. Immediately after serving assume the midcourt defensive stance and block the smash.

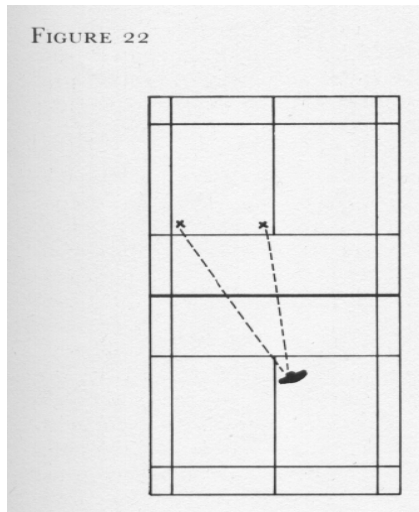
A conditioned game. This is similar to a normal game except that extra rules are added to ensure that you use your new strokes, moves or ideas. Play a game with your partner but add the following rule: you must serve high and the serve must land within the rearcourt doubles lines to be good. If you serve short of this line your opponent can allow the shuttle to fall and claim the point. This rule may also apply to your opponent.

2 The low serve

This serve is also called the 'short serve'. A good low serve skims the net and lands on the front service line near the centre or the side. See Figure 22. *The situation.* Your opponent is ready to attack the serve, knowing that you must hit the shuttle upwards. However, because you could serve the shuttle high or flick the shuttle over his head to his rearcourt, he positions himself in the midcourt. This way he covers all your possible serve-moves.

The move. You decide that you want to force him to lift the shuttle and gain the attack immediately. You serve low.

FIGURE 22



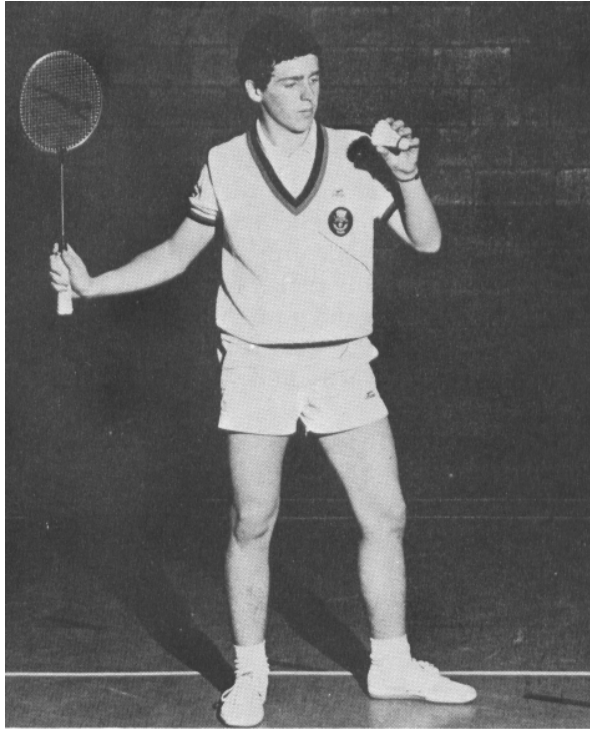
Performing the low serve (Plates 45,46,49 overleaf)

- i. Stance. Stand midcourt close to the centre line and about 2-3 feet from the front service line. Place the left foot forwards until the feet are a comfortable distance apart and weight evenly balanced.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip. To gain more control, many players grip the handle near the shaft for the low serve. Hold the shuttle by the base in the left hand at a comfortable distance away from you. Take the racket head back ready to deliver a strong blow, i.e. twist your shoulders and take your arm back with the thumb-side of your hand tilted towards you. The racket head points upwards. You are now prepared to hit the shuttle.
- iii. The hit. Release the shuttle and, as you do so, swing the racket head gently downwards. Keep your arm flexed and hand tilted. Allow the racket face to hit up under the shuttle and push the shuttle forwards to skim the net. Allow your weight to sway forwards onto your front foot.
- iv. The recovery. Let the racket face and head partially follow through in the direction of the shuttle until the arm naturally moves in towards your body and returns to the attack position.

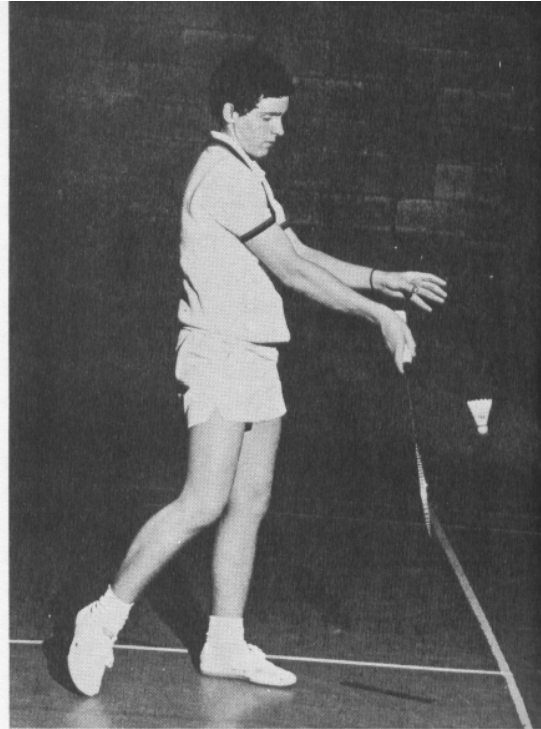
Opponent's possible replies. Your opponent can make the following moves:

- (a) he can travel or lunge forwards quickly to meet the shuttle above net height to hit it downwards;
- (b) he can travel or lunge quickly forwards to meet the shuttle near the net below net height and either return it into your forecourt at the sides or centre to force you to lift, or whip it quickly over your head to your rearcourt;
- (c) he can allow it to fall and play a low return to your forecourt or lift it high to your rearcourt.

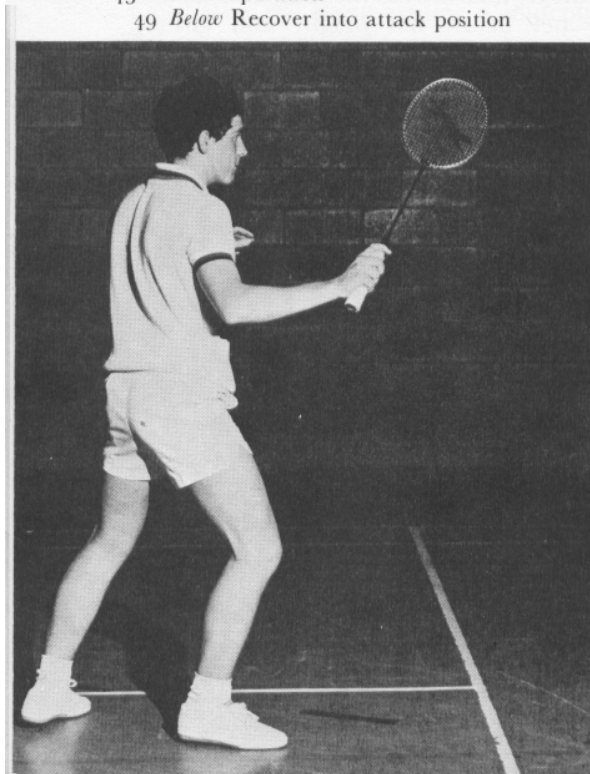
Recovery. Immediately after the serve, step forwards onto your right foot and take up an attacking stance. You must be ready to attack, prevent or cover his strongest move. If you deliver a poor low serve then he will easily hit it down for a winner because you will have created a situation to his advantage. However, if the shuttle drops below net height the situation is to your advantage. Your attacking stance threatens his move to your forecourt and forces him to lift the shuttle high to allow you to smash.



45 Above Preparation
49 Below Recover into attack position



46 Hit



Practices for the low serve

At home.

(a) Tie a piece of string across the room at a height of 5 feet. Place a dish or bowl about 2 large paces away on one side and stand ready to serve about 3 paces away on the other side. Practise serving gently into the bowl.

(b) Take a shuttle and practise serving from a distance, to the wall or across the room.

On court.

Take a number of shuttles. Stand in the serving position and practise hitting the shuttle into the opposite court. Try to skim the net and land it on the front service line at the sides or close to the centre line. Keep your score, out of 10 attempts to each place.

With a partner. Stand in the serving and receiving positions and allow your partner partner to return the shuttle as he chooses. Serve low to the sides or the centre and immediately take up the attacking stance and try to attack his return.

Conditioned game.

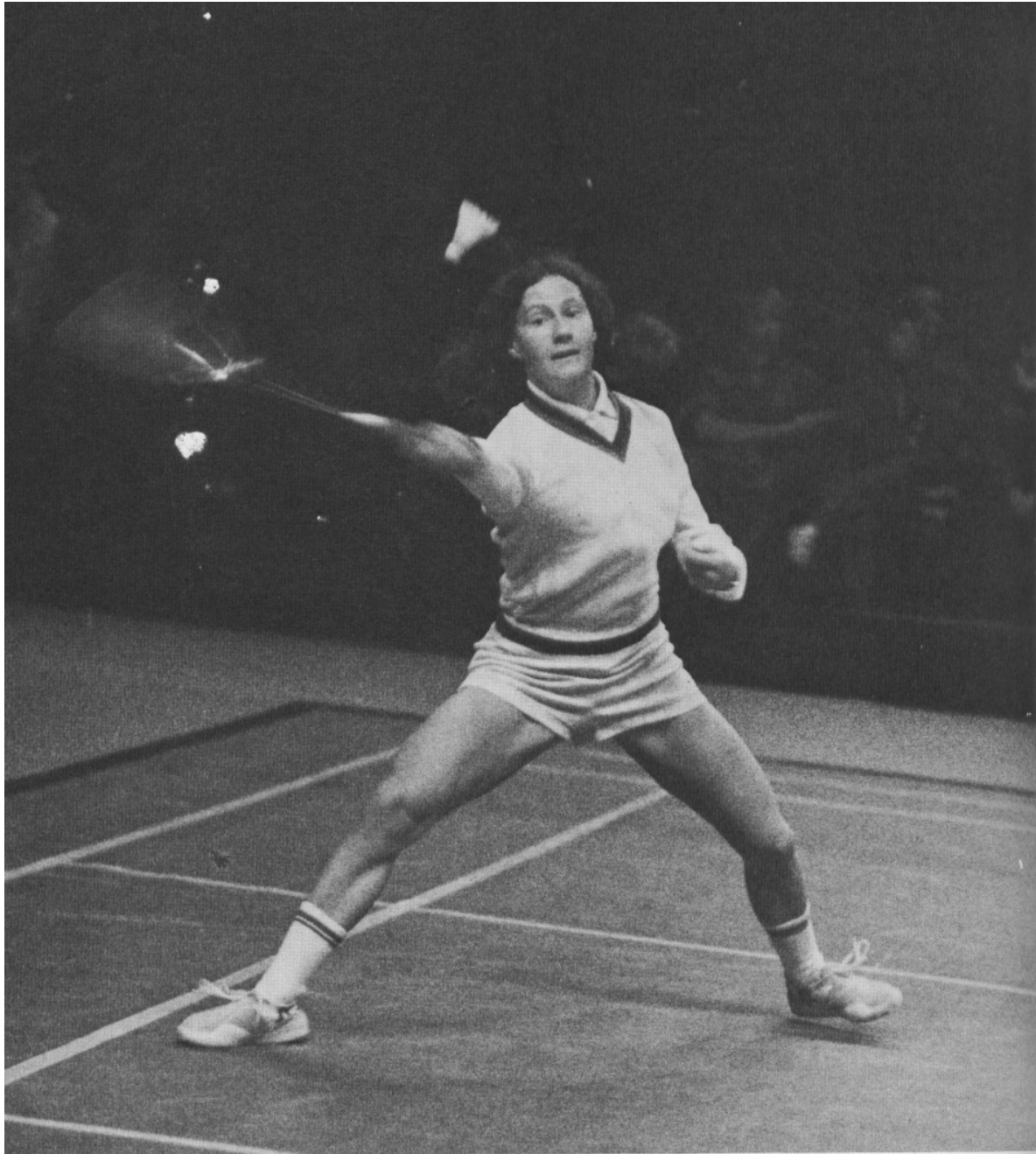
Rule: you can only serve low. This rule makes you practise under pressure. Your opponent knows what you are going to do and can get ready to attack. Unless you serve well you create a situation to his advantage. You might often lose such a game but you will become better at serving low and being ready to attack in a normal game.

The flick serve

A good flick serve travels quickly upwards above the reach of your opponent and into his rearcourt before he has time to perform a full stroke. It looks similar to the low serve and so deceives your opponent into letting his weight come forwards ready to attack. The flick is timed to coincide with his weight coming forwards.

The situation. Your opponent is ready to attack the serve. He is good at coming forwards and is having success in attacking the low serve. He has a good overhead stroke and so you do not want to serve high because that is to his advantage. You want to make him move back, or at least hesitate in coming forwards, to enable you to serve low and force him to lift the shuttle.

The move. You decide to flick the serve over his head and so force him to stand back a pace or hesitate before attacking your low serve.



50 Margaret Lockwood

Performing the flick serve

- i. Stance and preparation as usual.
- ii. The hit. Release the shuttle and swing the racket head gently downwards, as if to serve low. Immediately prior to impact whip the racket head forwards at speed to travel up under the shuttle and hit it upwards over the outstretched reach of your opponent into his rear-court. Allow your weight to come forwards onto your front foot.
- iii. Recover. Let the racket head follow through in the direction of the shuttle until the arm naturally moves in towards your body and then return to the attack position.

Opponent's possible replies. The shuttle is high in the midcourt. Your opponent could smash, clear or drop. However, if it is a good flick serve he will have to step and jump backwards to smash and will be off balance. In this case the situation is to your advantage. Immediately move your right foot forwards and take up a midcourt attacking stance ready to attack his possible weak reply.

If your flick serve is a poor one then you will create a situation to your disadvantage. Consequently you must be ready to work hard to defend against his attack.

Practice for the flick serve

You can practise the flick serve at home or on a court. The important factor is to begin the hitting action but delay the whip forwards of the racket head until the last moment. This action can be practised with or without a shuttle. The best practice of a flick serve is against an opponent for he is the one you must deceive.

Practise with a partner. Stand in the serving and receiving positions. Have a contest. Serve continually to your partner and mix low serves and flick serves to keep your partner uncertain. When you have completed a total of 5 flick serves count your successful flick serves.

Conditioned game. Rule: you can only serve low or flick serves. Try the flick serve to the forehand and backhand side of the receiver. Remember to take up the attacking stance immediately after the serve.

General comments on serving

The serve is the opening move of each rally in the game and as such is very important. In general the situation is to the advantage of the receiver for you must hit the shuttle upwards from a low position in the midcourt. This is balanced out to a certain extent because the receiver cannot move until the shuttle is hit. If your stance and preparation is identical for all your serve-moves he will find it difficult to anticipate which serve-move you intend to make.

Your choice of serve-move will depend on the sort of situation you want to create. With a player weak overhead you may decide to serve high to the rearcourt. Against a slow player you may use the flick serve. If the opponent positions himself near the rearcourt to receive the serve then you can serve low and be sure of a lift.

Once you have made your decision, take your time and concentrate on performing a good serve.

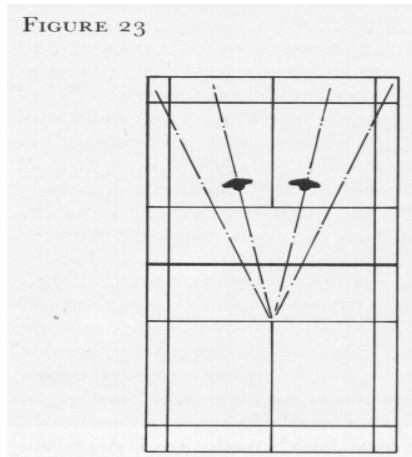
Immediately after the serve take up an attacking or defensive stance and get ready for your opponent's move.

Receiving the serve

Initially the situation is to your advantage. The server must hit the shuttle upwards and may create a situation in which you can attack. Whether you can do so or not depends on your skill in moving and hitting the shuttle, and the quality of the serve. Nevertheless you must be ready to attack all the serve-moves.

The stance. Stand in your forehand court and take up a position which will allow you both to cover a serve directed to your forehand or backhand and to attack the low serve or get back for the flick or

FIGURE 23



high serve. Usually this will be about three or four feet from the front service line and about a pace from the centre line. In the backhand court you will be further away from the centre line (see Figure 23).

Stand in the attacking stance with the left foot forwards and the feet a comfortable distance apart. Bend your knees slightly and keep your weight evenly balanced on the balls of your feet. Hold the racket in the forehand or multi-purpose grip in the attack position ready to hit the shuttle. See Plates 51 and 52.

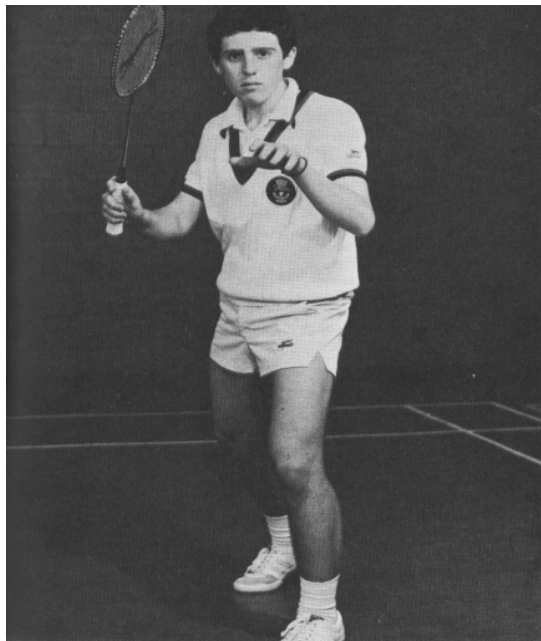
Replies to the serves

I have mentioned some of the possible replies to the serves in the account of serving. The server will hit the shuttle high to your rear court, low to your forecourt, or will flick it just above your midcourt. In each case you can make certain moves. These moves depend on your ability to play certain strokes, i.e. the smash, drop, clear and net strokes. These situations arise continually during a rally in the rear court, midcourt or forecourt. The next part of this section will deal with the strokes that you can perform in these areas and their use as moves to create situations to your advantage.

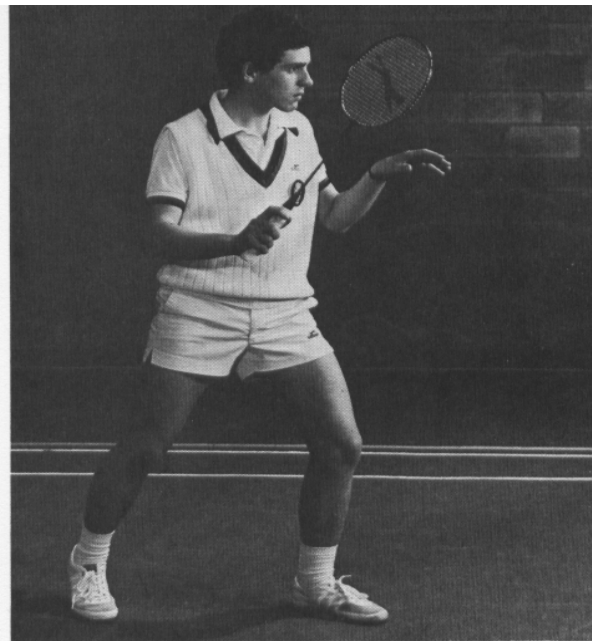
The strokes

The opening move of each rally in the game is the serve. Each serve creates a situation in different parts of the court from which several moves may be possible. The high serve

creates a situation in your rearcourt. One move here is to smash the shuttle downwards and so create a midcourt situation. The low serve creates a situation in the forecourt.



51 Receiving the serve, front view

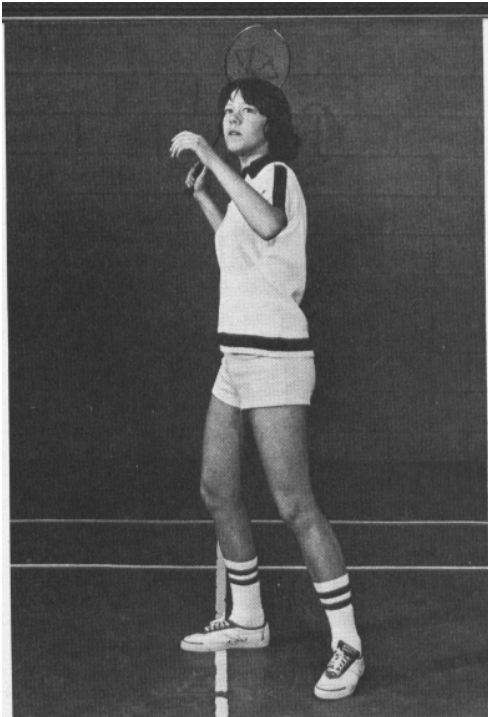


52 Receiving the serve, side view

Each move only makes sense by reference to the situation it creates in the rearcourt, midcourt and forecourt. To make a move you must be able to perform the appropriate stroke correctly and learn when to use it. Strokes are played from high or low positions and here I will explain the strokes and 'stroke-moves' you can use in high and low positions in the different areas of the court. Generally you will win most rallies when you are in a position to hit downwards. It would follow that most of your moves will be designed to force your opponent to hit the shuttle upwards so that you can hit downwards for an eventual winner.

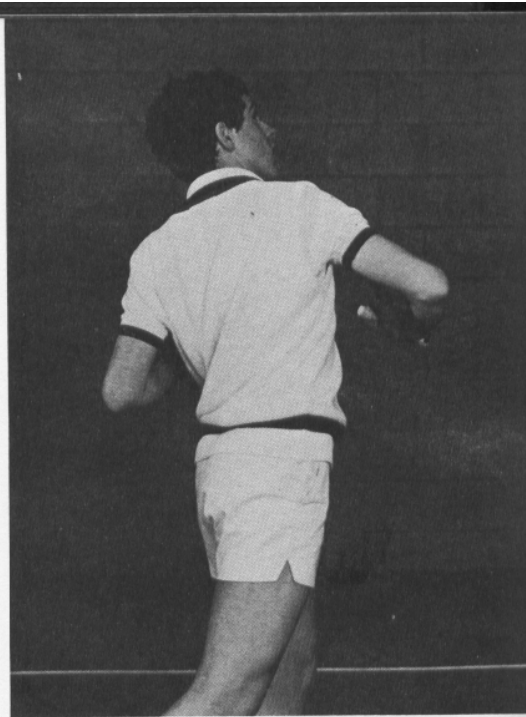
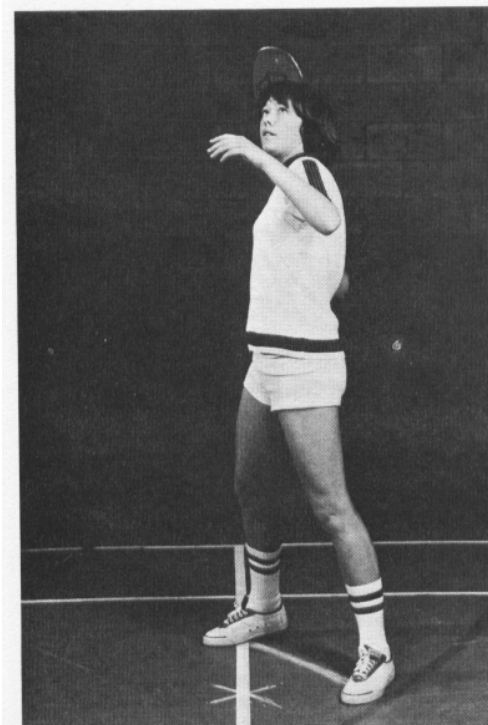
All the overhead strokes with the exception of the clear are hit downwards for a winner or to force a lift for a subsequent downward hit. All the overhead strokes on the forehand side are performed with a similar preparation, as are all the overhead strokes on the backhand side.

On the forehand side the racket head is taken back to point upwards and ready to hit the shuttle - you simply hold the racket in the attack position, then twist your shoulders and take the arm back with your thumb tilted towards you. The movement is identical on the backhand side (see Plates 53 and 54 overleaf). Whenever possible take up a position with your shoulders, trunk and whole body diagonally opposite the shuttle (see Plates 55 and 56 overleaf).



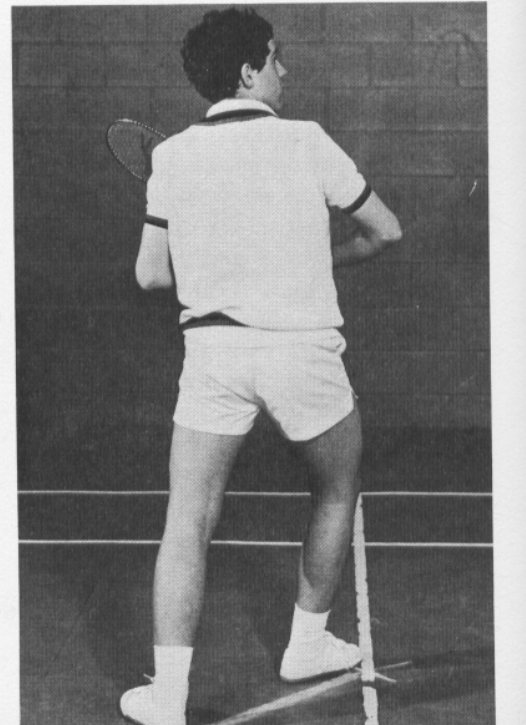
53 Forehand preparation

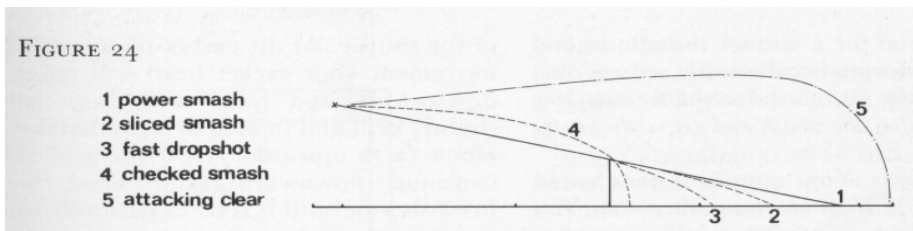
55 Diagonal relationship with the shuttle –
forehand side



54 Backhand preparation

56 Diagonal relationship with the shuttle –
backhand side





The overhead downward strokes are basically the power smash, the sliced smash, the fast drop and the slow drop or checked smash. Each one hits the shuttle relatively closer to the net. See Figure 24. One overhead stroke that hits the shuttle upwards is the attacking clear. Because this can often force a weak return, it is included as a strong attacking move. We will now look at these strokes in more detail.

The forehand attacking strokes

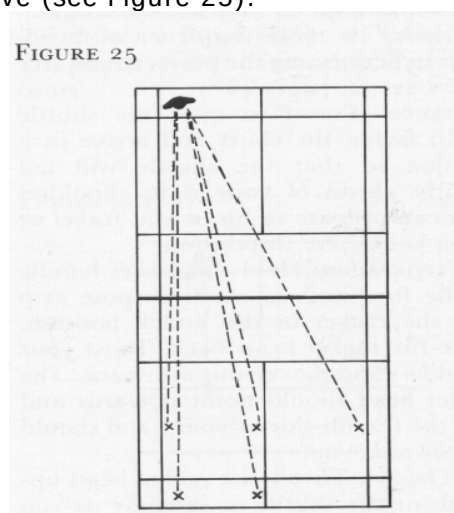
The smash

The purpose of the smash is to hit the shuttle quickly downwards. It can be performed from a high, position almost directly above you or at the sides anywhere in the court. For this reason there are a number of types of smash. In your efforts to smash the shuttle early you will jump upwards, sideways and backwards. How you hit the shuttle and where you hit it will depend on the move you decide it is best to make in the situation.

The *smash position* is the basis for over-head deception. If you prepare as if to smash for all overhead strokes, your opponent will tend to take up a defensive stance. Once he does this you can catch him out with an attacking clear or a drop shot. The rule is: *always try to get into the smash position and threaten your opponent with the possibility of a strong blow.*

The power smash

A good smash is hit very hard. It can be hit straight, cross-court or directly at your opponent in the centre and aimed to land in the midcourt or the rearcourt. Where you hit it depends on your next move (see Figure 25).



The power smash from the rearcourt is usually returned with a block or a clear and so is used to create a situation for the next move. A smash from the midcourt and forecourt can usually be hit to the ground for a winner though a good the ground for a winner though a good opponent can occasionally return one. This being so, *always adopt the attacking position after the smash and get ready for the return.*

The situation. Your opponent has cleared the shuttle high to your rearcourt. You have time to move into position and get balanced. You see that your opponent is ready to defend.

The move. You decide to smash to his midcourt backhand side and play for the return to the forecourt. Then you will move forwards and try to hit down for a winner or play a net return and force him to lift high for you to attack again.

Performing the stroke. Sequence of movement in performing the power smash (see plates on page 46/7).

- i. Stance. Travel to meet the shuttle whilst facing the court and arrive in a position so that the shuttle will fall slightly ahead of your right shoulder. You can prepare to hit as you travel or when you arrive in position.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket handle in the forehand or multi-purpose grip and the racket in the attack position. Take the racket head back. Twist your shoulders and move your arm back. The racket head should point upwards and the thumb-side of your hand should tilt towards you.
- iii. The hit. Throw the racket head upwards at the shuttle as strongly as you can. Make sure that the racket head travels at speed and hits the shuttle from above.
- iv. The recovery. Keep your body upright and allow the racket head and your arm to continue forwards in the direction of the shuttle. At the end of the forward movement your racket head will point downwards and your arm will be slightly bent and twisted over, so that the elbow faces upwards. Allow the arm to continue downwards and bend in towards you until it returns naturally to the attack position.

Opponent's possible replies. He can block to the forecourt sides or centre, whip the shuttle across to your backhand side, or clear it high to your rearcourt and so recreate a similar situation for you.

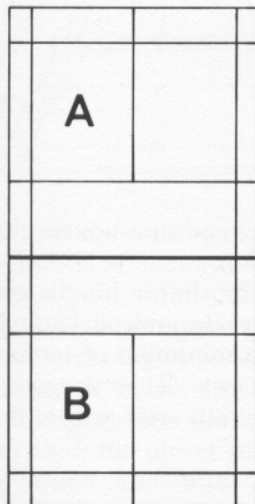
Recovery. You have played the smash-move to get a return to your forecourt. You want to prevent the clear to your rearcourt and the whip across to your backhand. After the smash travel easily forwards towards the centre of your midcourt whilst facing the opponent down the funnel. You invite the return to the open space in your forecourt. If your opponent clears the shuttle or whips it to your backhand side you are in position to attack. If he blocks it to the forecourt as you intended, you run quickly forwards and make your next attacking move.

Practices for the power smash. Correct practice is important. Decide what you want to do. Think about doing the correct movements and make sure that your 'feeder' feeds accurately and waits each time until you are ready (the 'feeder' is the partner who hits shuttles to you). In these practices A practises and B feeds.

First practice (Figure 26)

1. Stand in the positions as shown in the midcourt. A adopts the attacking stance.
2. B hits the shuttle high to the midcourt.

FIGURE 26



- 3 *A* smashes.
- 4 *B* lets the shuttle hit the ground.
- 5 *A* gets ready and signals *B* to feed again.

A hits a minimum of 10 smashes.

Second practice (Figure 27)

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown.
- 2 *B* feeds the shuttle high to the rear-court.
- 3 *A* moves back, gets into a balanced position and smashes.
- 4 *B* lets the shuttle hit the ground.
- 5 *A* recovers and walks to the midcourt attack position, gets ready and signals *B* to feed again.

A hits a minimum of 10 smashes.

Third practice (Figure 28)

- 1 *A* stands near the rearcourt, *B* in mid-court.

FIGURE 27

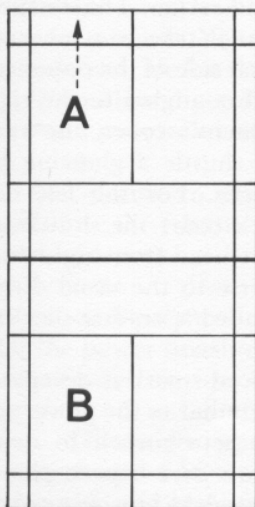
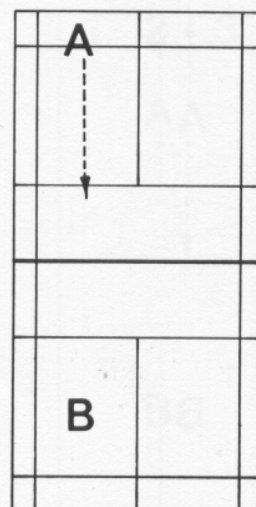
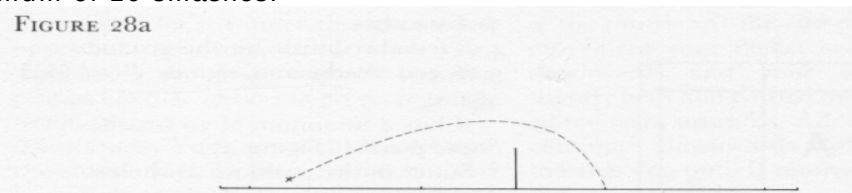


FIGURE 28



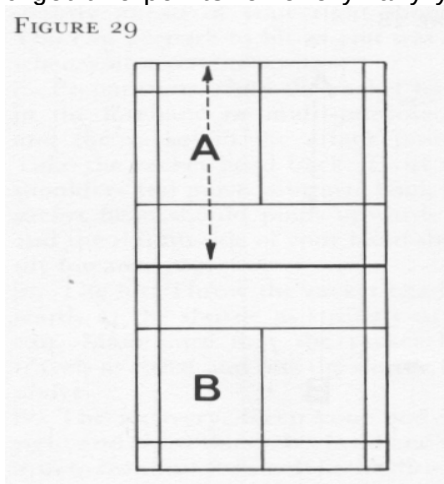
2. *B* feeds the shuttle quite high to the forecourt. See Figure 28a.
 3. *A* sprints forwards and smashes, then recovers quickly to the midcourt attack position.
 4. *B* lets shuttle fall to the ground.
 5. *A* returns to the rearcourt ready to begin again.
- A* hits a minimum of 10 smashes.



Fourth practice (Figure 29)

1. *A* and *B* stand ready in the midcourt.
 2. *B* feeds to *A* in rearcourt, midcourt or forecourt.
 3. *A* moves and smashes the shuttle from any position.
 4. *B* lets the shuttle hit the ground and *A* returns to the midcourt attack position.
- A* hits a minimum of 10 smashes.

Conditioned game. Rule: you get two points for every rally you win with a power smash.

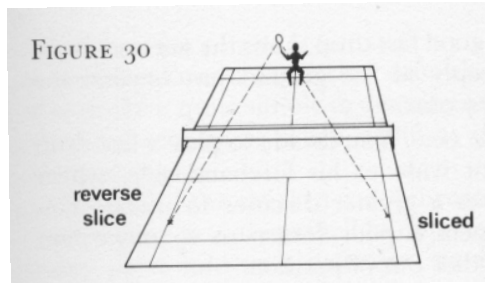


The sliced smash

The sliced smash is performed with a similar action to the power smash except that the shuttle is given a glancing blow. Consequently the shuttle has less momentum and falls to the ground steeper and earlier. The shuttle is usually hit so that it travels at an angle to the right or left side of the opponent's court. For smashes angled to the right side of the opponent's court, the racket head gives the shuttle a glancing blow from left to right. For the left side of the opponent's court the shuttle is hit with the racket head from right to left. This is in reverse to the usual direction and is often called a 'reverse slice' stroke (see Figure 30).

The sliced smash is deceptive, for the action is similar to the power smash. The opponent sets himself to defend for a strong blow and expects the shuttle to carry through to him.

Instead the shuttle falls short quickly, causing him to reach forwards and, if he is not alert, to mishit or give a poor return.



It is a good attacking move because the shuttle falls steeply and forces the opponent to lift it for you to attack. It is a useful stroke to learn for it requires less strength or arm movement than the power smash. Consequently when you want to smash quickly, or have to jump backwards to smash or travel quickly and are not in balance you can hit a sliced smash quite easily with a bent arm and thus recover quickly for the next move.

The situation. Your opponent lifts to the centre of your rearcourt. You travel back and prepare for a smash. Your opponent gets ready to defend. He has become used to the power smash and you decide that you want to vary your smash and surprise him.

The move. You decide to play a sliced smash and hit the shuttle wide to his forehand midcourt.

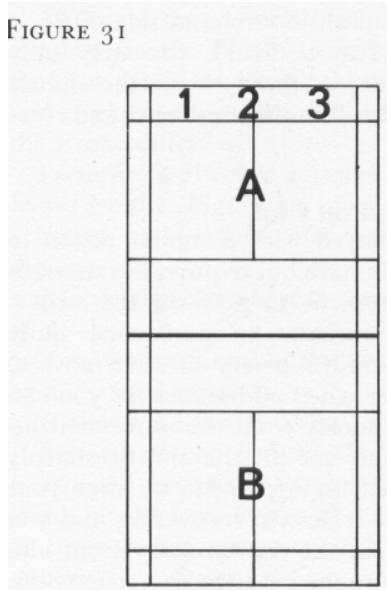
Performing the stroke

- i. The stance and preparation are the same as for the power smash except that it is more effective to use the multi-purpose grip.
- ii. The hit. Throw the racket head quickly upwards and sideways, and give the shuttle a glancing blow from left to right. Make sure that the racket head travels at speed and hits the shuttle from above.
- iii. The recovery. Allow the racket head to continue sideways after the hit until your arm naturally comes forward in front of your body, and then return it to the attack position.

Opponent's possible replies. He can make the same replies as for the power smash except that he may have to travel, reach forwards and lift from a position closer to the net, and it may not be possible for him to whip it cross-court from this position.

Recovery. As for the power smash. In a situation where you have played the sliced smash whilst travelling or jumping backwards and find yourself off balance, you may have to recover quicker than usual and sprint towards the midcourt ready to attack. You can decide this in the game situation.

FIGURE 31



Practices for the sliced smash (Figure 31, page 73)
Stand in the positions as shown.

First practice

- 1 *B feeds high to position 1 in the rear-court.*
- 2 *A travels and prepares to smash. A hits a sliced smash wide to the forehand side of B, and returns to midcourt attack position.*
- 3 *B lets shuttle fall and A signals B to feed again. Continue for 10 serves.*

Second practice

B feeds to position 2 and repeats as for the first practice.

Third practice.

B feeds to position 2. A hits a reversed sliced smash wide to the back-hand of B.

Fourth practice.

B feeds to position 3. A hits a reverse sliced smash to the backhand of B.

Fifth practice.

B feeds to position 3. A hits a sliced smash to forehand side of B.

Conditioned game. Rule: you may only use the sliced smash to hit the shuttle downwards from the midcourt and rearcourt.

The fast drop shot

This is played with a similar action to the sliced smash but requires less strength and movement to perform the stroke. The action can be performed quite quickly and it is a very effective move to use: either when off balance for you can recover quickly from the movement involved and yet hit the shuttle sharply downwards to force a lift, or when your opponent is slow in recovering and you want to hit the shuttle away from him and close to the net to force a steeper lift.

A good fast drop skims the net and drops steeply to the ground just beyond the forecourt.

The move. You decide to play a fast drop shot wide to his forehand side, which gives a greater distance to travel. You expect a poor return or to move him further out of position.

Performing the stroke

- i. Stance, preparation and grip as for the sliced smash.
- ii. The hit. Use mainly your forearm and hand to throw the racket head quickly upwards and sideways to give the shuttle a glancing blow from left to right. Make sure that the racket head travels at speed and hits the shuttle from above.
- iii. The recovery. Allow the racket face to continue sideways after the hit, until your arm naturally returns to the front of your body into the attack position.

Opponent's possible replies. He will have to sprint across the court and take the shuttle late. He will be too late to whip the shuttle cross-court to your rearcourt. He can hit the shuttle to your forecourt sides or centre, or clear to the rearcourt.

Recovery. Immediately after the move, travel quickly forwards to a midcourt position ready to anticipate the return to your forecourt. *If* the shuttle is below waist height when he hits it then move closer to the forecourt. *If* it is above waist height remain in the midcourt in the attack position, for he may attempt to flick it over your head.

Practices for the fast drop shot. The practices are identical to those for the sliced smash. Simply use less force and arm and hand movement, and try to hit the shuttle to skim the net and land near the forecourt.

The checked smash

Sometimes known as the slow drop shot, this stroke is quite simple to describe and does not require as much detail as the other strokes. It is called the checked smash because you prepare as if to smash. The opponent takes up a midcourt defensive stance. You throw the racket head up at the shuttle as if to hit it with a power or sliced smash. Just before impact, check the forward movement of the racket head to give the shuttle a gentle hit. The shuttle floats slowly through the air and lands close to the net in the forecourt.

A successful checked smash will have caused your opponent to brace himself and then suddenly rush forward to try to dig up the drop shot close to the net.

After the hit return the racket head to the attack position.

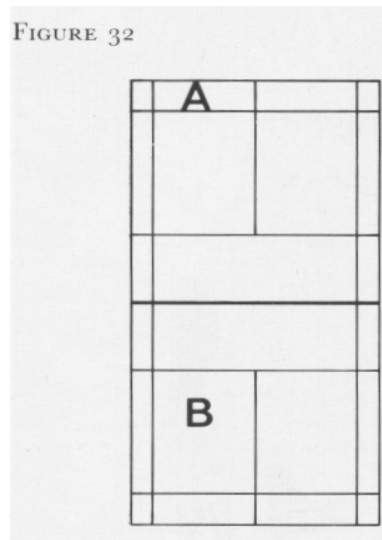
Opponent's possible replies. If caught, he will reach the shuttle when it is near the ground close to the net. He can play a net return to the forecourt sides or centre, or clear it high to your rearcourt.

Recovery. After the checked smash move quickly to the midcourt and take up an attack position ready to move into the forecourt and attack the return to the net. Cover the reply to the forecourt first as you will have time to reach any high clear to the rearcourt.

Practices for the checked smash

First practice (Figure 32)

1. A stands in the rearcourt, B in the mid-court.
2. B feeds high to the rearcourt.
3. A hits a power smash or sliced smash.
4. B allows the shuttle to drop and when A is ready feeds as before.
5. A hits a checked smash.



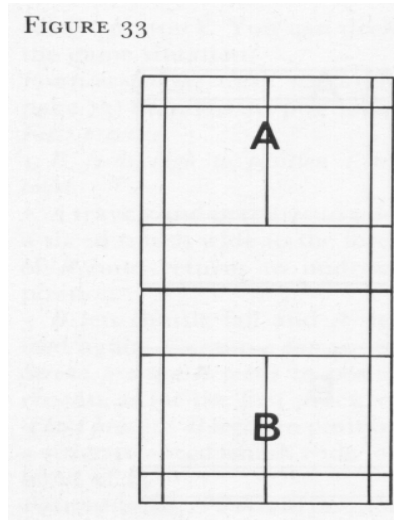
Alternate the power smash with the checked smash. This is to make certain that you make the identical preparation and stroke until impact. Only then does the stroke differ. Perform 10 checked smashes.

Second practice (Figure 33, overleaf)

1. Stand in the midcourt positions as shown.
2. B feeds high anywhere in the rearcourt of A.
3. A moves back and hits a power smash or a checked smash.
4. B allows the shuttle to hit the ground. Perform 10 checked smashes

Conditioned game. Rule: you get two points if you hit the floor from a checked smash or use it to hit a winner with the next stroke.

FIGURE 33



The attacking clear

This is used as a move to hit the shuttle past your opponent to his rearcourt. In doing so you intend to make it difficult for him to get into position to hit the shuttle downwards. A good attacking clear travels on a low trajectory above the outstretched reach of your opponent and can be hit to the centre or the sides of the rearcourt. It forces a return clear of poor length or a weak smash or drop shot. It also speeds up the rally and gives your opponent less time to play his shot. Three or four attack clears in succession are very effective moves to create an opening for you.

The situation. Your opponent has cleared to your rearcourt. He rushes to his midcourt to get ready to defend. You move back and prepare to smash. His attention will be forwards on a smash which he will expect low in his midcourt.

The move. You decide to catch him out. As he is travelling forwards to defend in the midcourt, you hit the shuttle back to his rearcourt in the opposite direction to his movement. You do this to create a situation to your advantage: you want to get a weak reply so that you can try for a winner.

Performing the stroke:

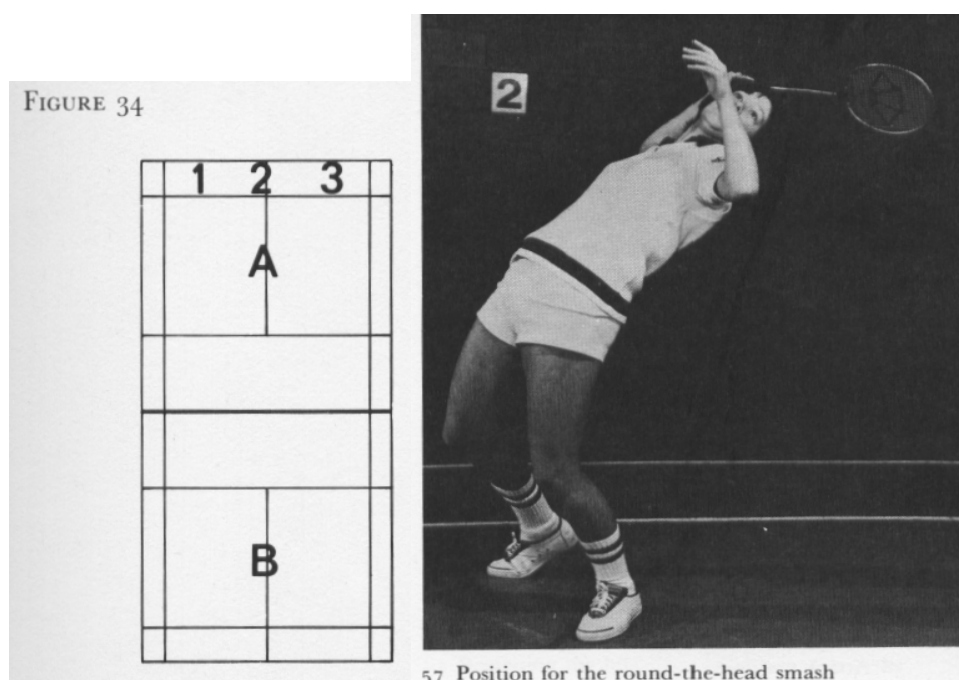
- i. The stance and preparation are as for the power smash. Use the forehand or multi-purpose grip.
- ii. The hit. Throw the racket head strongly upwards so that the racket face hits the shuttle in an upward direction. Aim to hit the shuttle on a low trajectory above the reach of your opponent.
- iii. Recovery. Allow the racket head and your arm to continue forwards and upwards in the direction of the shuttle. As the arm begins to move down and bend towards the body, return the racket to the attack position.

Opponent's possible replies. The shuttle is high in his rearcourt. He can smash, clear or drop to the sides or the centre.

Your recovery. If you have not caught him out and he gets into the position easily, hurry forwards and take up a midcourt defensive stance. If you have caught him and expect a weak reply, then walk forwards and take up a midcourt attacking stance ready to attack the weak return

Practices for the clear (Figure 34)

1. Stand in the positions as shown.
2. B feeds a high clear to position 1.
3. A moves back, performs a power smash and returns to the midcourt.
4. B allows the shuttle to fall.
5. B feeds again and A hits an attacking clear. Alternate the power smash and the attacking clear. Perform 10 clears from each position.



57 Position for the round-the-head smash

Conditioned game. Rule: you receive 2 points if you win the rally with an attacking clear or hit a winner from the reply to the attacking clear.

Variations (1): the round-the-head smash

In general the forehand stroke is the most powerful and the easiest to perform. You can also keep the court in front of you and so always see what your opponent is up to. At times the shuttle is hit high to your backhand side and you find that you do not have sufficient time to travel to the side to perform your usual forehand smash, you have to hit it from your backhand side with a 'round-the-head' forehand stroke (see Plate 57).

The situation. Your opponent has cleared the shuttle to your backhand side.

The move. You decide to attack the shuttle with a round-the-head smash.

Performing the stroke (See plates below and overleaf)

- i. Stance. Travel backwards and turn sideways to the shuttle whilst keeping your eyes on it.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip. Twist the shoulders, take your arm back high and lift the racket over your head to the left side. Keep the thumb side of your hand tilted towards you.
- iii. The hit. Using mainly your hand and forearm, throw the racket head quickly upwards and sideways to give the shuttle a glancing blow with the racket face.
- iv. Recovery. Keep your feet and hips sideways to the net and allow your arm to continue forwards until the racket face is pointing downwards. Return the racket to the attack position. The opponent's possible replies and your recovery are the same as for the sliced smash.

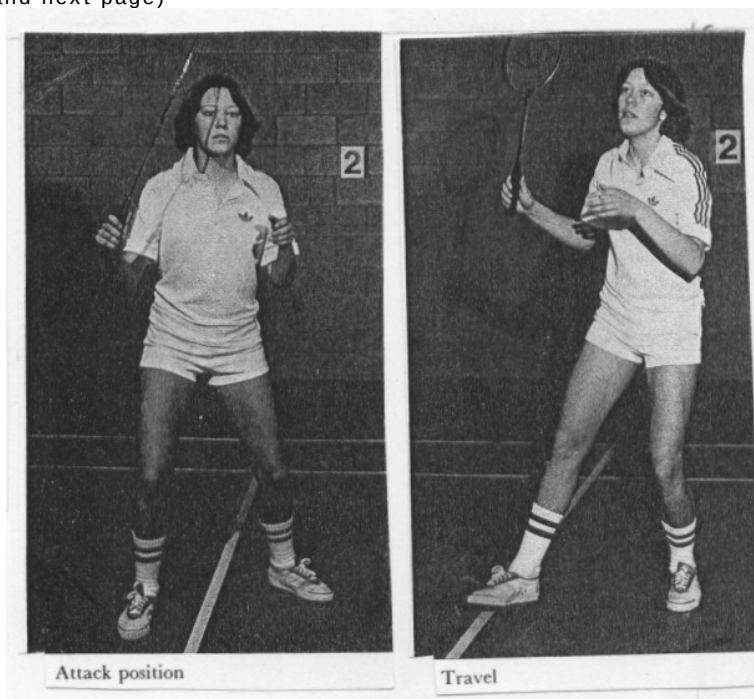
Practices for the round-the-head smash

First practice (Figure 35, overleaf)

1. Stand in the midcourt positions as shown. A in the attacking stance.
 2. B feeds shuttle fairly high to the back-hand side of A.
 3. A twists shoulders and hits smash from the backhand side.
 4. B allows the shuttle to hit the ground.
 5. A signals B when ready to feed again.
- Perform 10 smashes.

Performing the round-the head smash

(see plates below and next page)



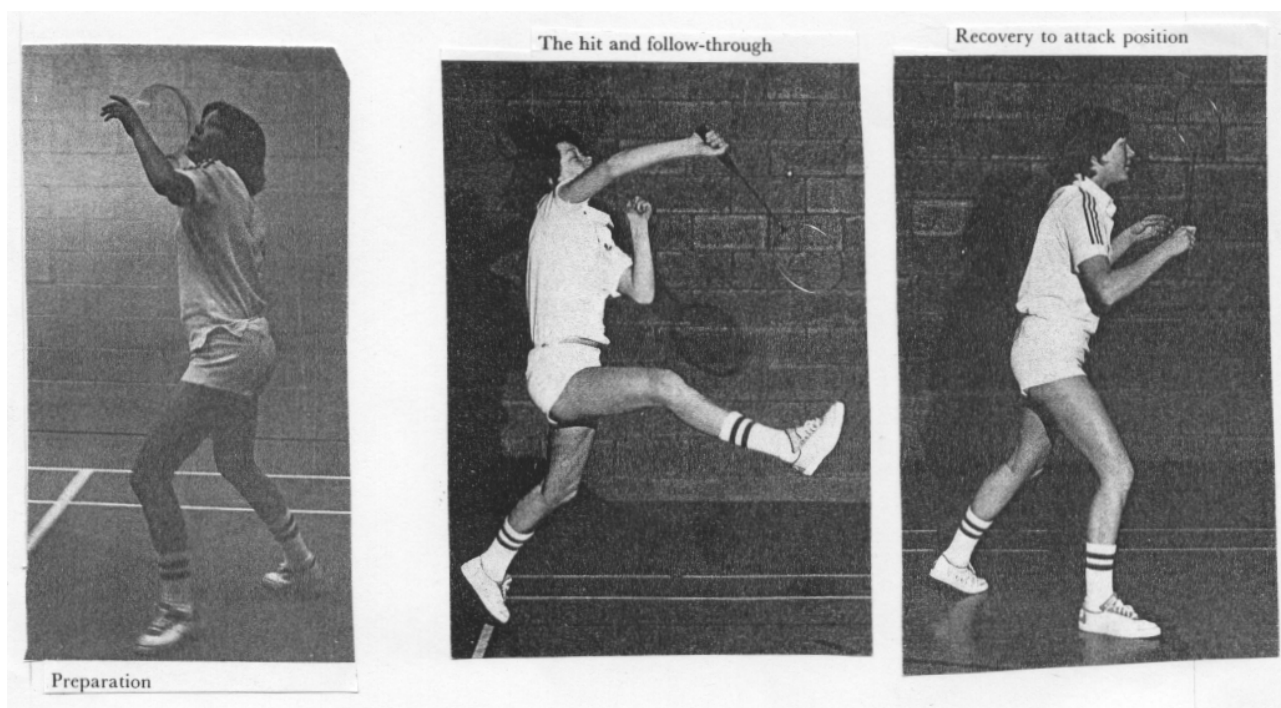


FIGURE 35

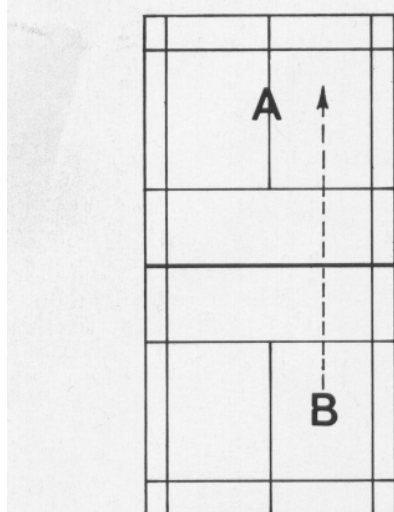
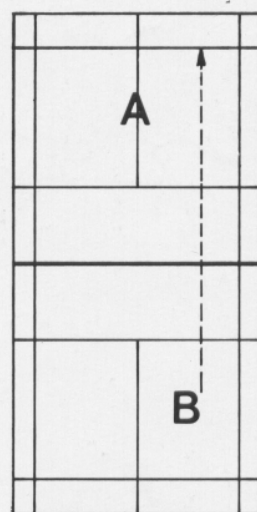


FIGURE 36



Second practice (Figure 36)

1. A and B stand in positions as shown.
 2. B feeds high to the backhand of A.
 3. A travels back and performs the round-the-head smash.
 4. B allows shuttle to fall to the ground.
 5. A recovers, returns to attack position and signals B to continue.
- Perform 10 smashes.

The round-the-head clear

This stroke is similar to the round-the-head smash, but the shuttle is hit upwards instead of down. To practise, repeat the practice as for the attacking clear from the backhand side.

Conditioned game.

Rule1 : you get two points if you hit a winner with a round-the-head smash.

Rule 2: you *lose* two points if you play a backhand stroke from a high position in your midcourt or rear-court.

Variations (2): the jump smash

I mentioned on page 69 the rule that you should try to hit the shuttle early. This may mean that you have to jump up to hit the shuttle. The belief is sometimes held, falsely, that you must keep your feet on the ground. However, it is a fact that you can hit the shuttle just as strongly whilst you are in the air as you can on the ground. Jumping to smash makes the game more exciting and enjoyable for you.

If you jump up to meet the shuttle early, you can hit any of the overhead attacking strokes in the same way and for the same reasons as you do when on the ground, but you can hit them more steeply to the ground, which is an advantage.

There is only one way to learn the jump smash and that is to have a go. At first you may mishit the shuttle, but with practice you will soon get the knack and be able to jump up with ease to hit the shuttle (see Plate 65). From the centre of the midcourt you can leap sideways to the right or left or leap backwards in any direction to smash. When you leap sideways to the right you often have to hit the shuttle at quite a distance from you. To do this, hold the the racket in the multi-purpose grip and just slash out sideways at it. It goes downwards quite effectively (see Plate 66). If you find the footwork and timing difficult at first, do not worry; work at the practices below, and the correct footwork and timing will naturally develop.

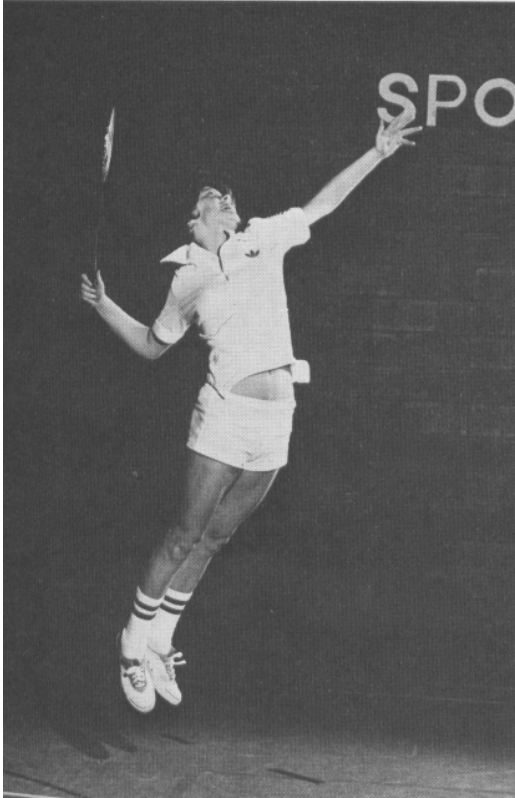
First practice (Figure 37, overleaf)

1. Stand in the midcourt positions as shown, A in the attacking stance.
2. B feeds high to the midcourt of A.
3. A jumps up and smashes.
4. B lets the shuttle hit the ground. Repeat for 10 smashes.

Second practice (Figure 38, overleaf)

1. Stand in the positions as shown.
 2. B feeds high to the right midcourt.
 3. A steps and jumps up to smash.
 4. B allows the shuttle to fall.
 5. A recovers and returns to the attack position.
- Repeat for 10 smashes.

65 Vertical jump smash



66 Side jump smash

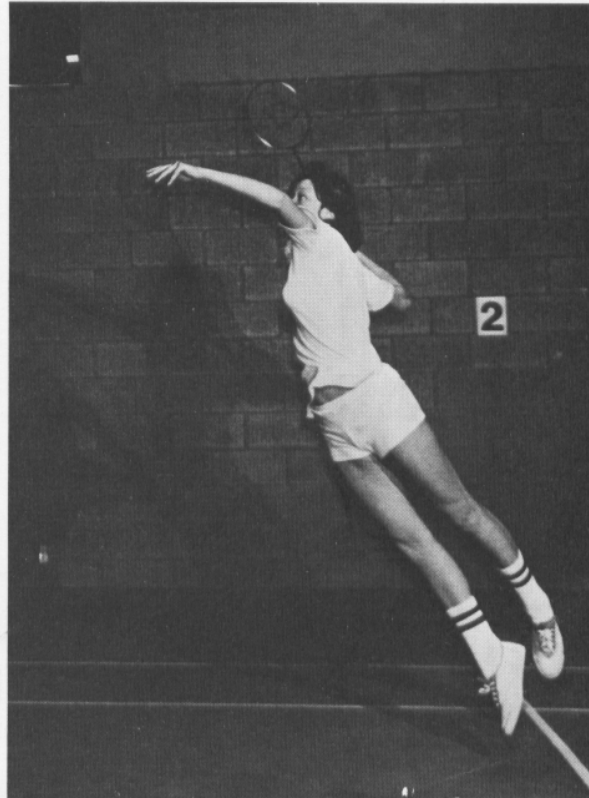


FIGURE 37

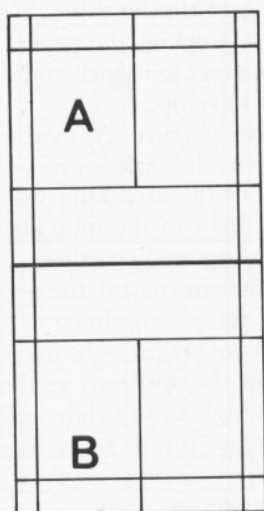


FIGURE 38

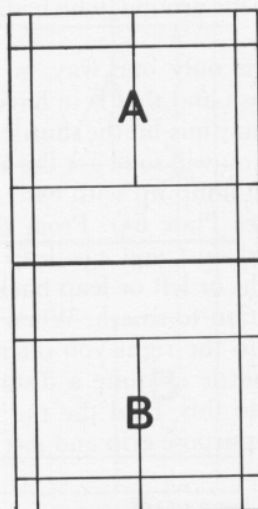


FIGURE 39

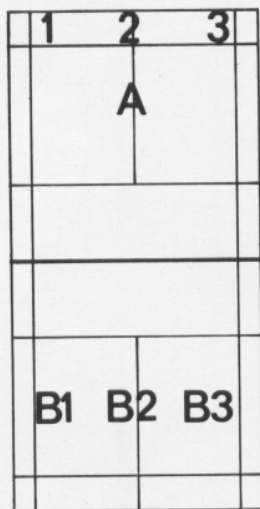
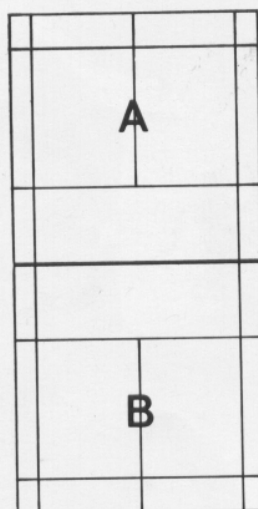


FIGURE 40



Third practice

Repeat on the left side of the midcourt.

A jumps to the left from the centre.

Repeat for 10 smashes.

Fourth practice - running backwards and jumping (Figure 39)

1. A begins from the attack position in the midcourt.

2. B feeds from B1 to position 1 in rearcourt of A.

3. A travels backwards, jumps and smashes, then lands and recovers in a balanced position. A returns to the midcourt attack position.

4. Repeat, but B now feeds from B2 to position 2.

5. Repeat, but B now feeds from B3 to position 3.

Fifth practice (Figure 40)

1. Stand in the positions as shown.

2. B feeds high to the midcourt or rearcourt of A.

3. A jumps and smashes.

4. B allows the shuttle to hit the ground. Perform 10 smashes.

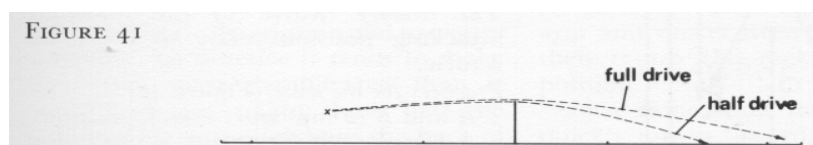
Conditioned game.

Rule: you get two points for every winner hit from a jump smash.

Variations (3): the drive

This stroke is used when the shuttle is approximately shoulder height at the side of the court (midcourt or rearcourt), and is too low to be smashed downwards yet can still be hit in a fast attacking move. The shuttle is hit with a sidearm smash, which is almost a slashing movement, performed about shoulder height (see Plates 67-69, on page 85).

A good drive hits the shuttle horizontally to skim the net and land in the corners of the rearcourt or the sides of the midcourt. A full drive travels to the rearcourt; a half drive, hit with a glancing blow, lands in the midcourt (see Figure 41) .



This is a good move to use to send the shuttle quickly past an opponent who leaves a space in the court, or to give him less time and thus force a hasty stroke.

The situation. Your opponent has hit the shuttle cross-court to your forehand mid-court/rearcourt area. You run across to meet the shuttle at shoulder height at the side of the court. Your opponent is moving to cover his midcourt.

The move. You decide to hit the shuttle down the line to his backhand rearcourt.

Performing the stroke

- i. Stance. Step across onto your right foot.
- ii. Preparation. Prepare as if to smash.
- iii. The hit. Throw the racket head out sideways in a sidearm smash action. The racket face directs the shuttle on a horizontal pathway to land in the rearcourt or midcourt of the backhand side. Whip the racket head to hit *through* the shuttle.
- iv. Allow the racket head to hit through and continue in the direction of the shuttle until the arm extends fully and naturally returns to the attack position.

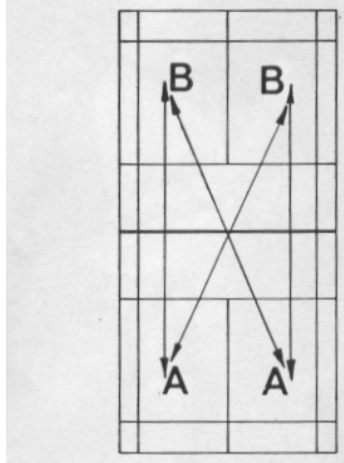
Opponent's possible replies. He can block, clear or drive it back straight or cross-court.

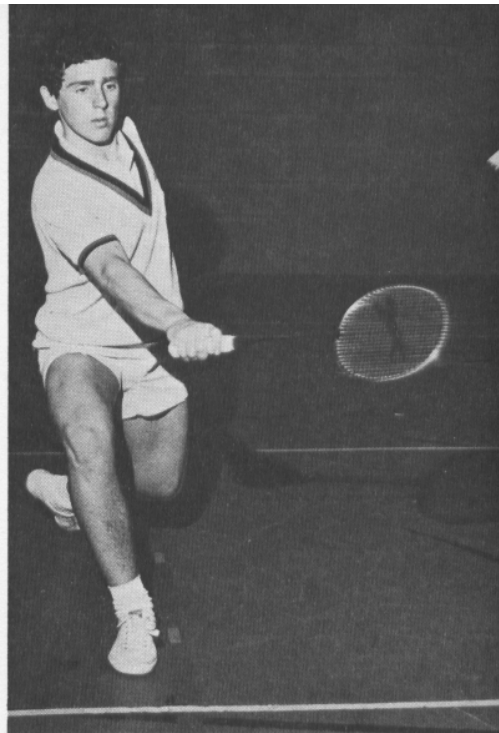
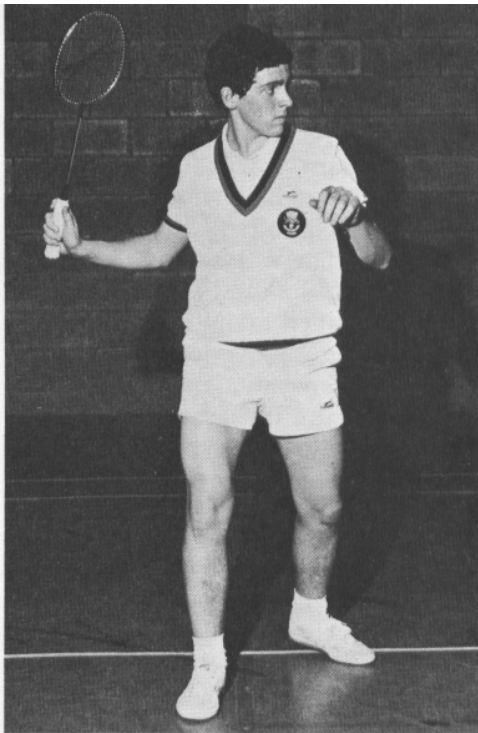
The recovery. Move to the midcourt attacking position ready to cover his return.

Practices for the drive (Figure 42)

1. A and B in midcourt attack positions.
 2. A hits the shuttle to the backhand of B. B drives to the forehand of A. Continue for 10 rallies.
 - 3 Change over. B hits forehands and A hit backhands.
- Repeat 10 rallies with:
B and A in right courts.
B in right court and A in left court.
B and A in the left courts.

FIGURE 42

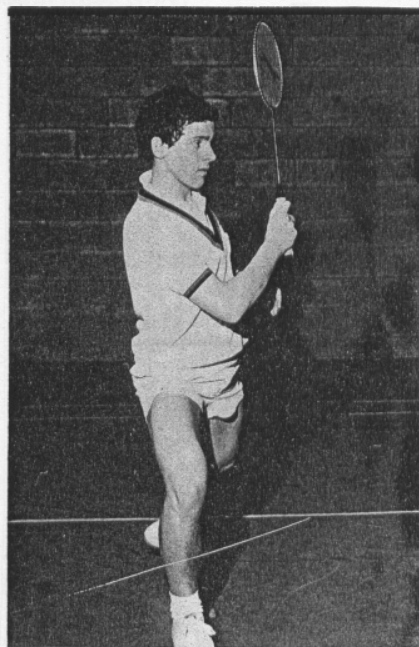




67-69 The drive

67 *Above* Preparation

68 Hit



69 Recovery

The backhand attacking strokes

In general overhead backhand strokes are not difficult to perform. Unfortunately some difficulty may be caused by the use of the word 'backhand'. It is not an accurate description and so causes confusion. In practice it tends to make the stroke more complicated than it actually is: you might think that the shuttle is hit as though with the back of the hand. If this was so, it would result in a weak preparation and a strained hitting action. In actual fact it would be more accurate to describe the stroke as the '*side of the hand*' stroke. The strength of the hit comes from a preparation as though you intend to hit the shuttle with the little finger side of the hand. Let us examine the action for the overhead backhand and you will understand what I mean.

The overhead attacking clear

A good attacking clear travels on a low trajectory above the outstretched reach of your opponent to land in his rearcourt. It is used for the same reasons as a move as the forehand attacking clear.

Performing the stroke (see Plates 33-39, pages 48/9)

- i. The stance. Stand in the midcourt attacking position.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip and keep the racket head pointing upwards. Travel into position. Twist your shoulders and trunk to the left and take your arm across your body ready to hit the shuttle. The thumb side of your hand should tilt towards you.
- iii. The hit. Keep the feet in balance and your back facing the net. Whip the racket head quickly upwards to hit *at* the shuttle. Stop the forward movement of the racket head as you hit the shuttle to prevent any follow-through. The arm should be fully extended.
- iv. Recovery. Hold the position with the arm and racket stretched upwards and then return the racket to the attack position.

In a game, after the hit, you would quickly return towards the midcourt to take up an attacking or defensive stance depending on the success of your 'clear-move'.

Practices for the clear

First practice (Figure 43)

1. Stand in the positions as shown, A in midcourt attack position.
2. B feeds high to the backhand side of A.
3. A prepares and moves into position.
4. A hits a clear, pauses and then returns to the midcourt attack position.
5. B allows the shuttle to drop. Perform 10 clears.

FIGURE 43

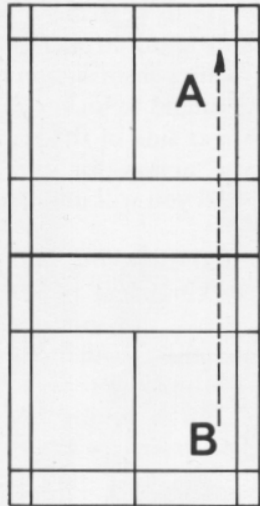
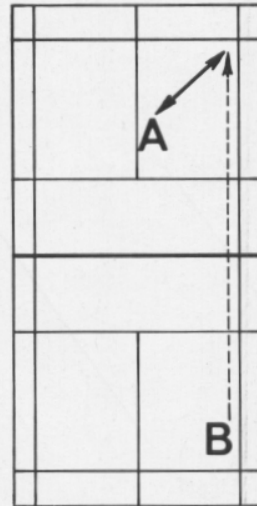


FIGURE 44



Second practice (Figure 44)

1. Stand in the positions as shown, A in midcourt attack position, B close to the rear court.
 2. B feeds high to left side of A.
 3. A moves and hits clear straight, and returns to midcourt.
 4. B hits forehand clear to left side of A.
 5. A moves' hits a clear and returns to the midcourt.
- Play a continuous rally until A has hit a minimum of 5-10 successful clears.

The overhead backhand smash

This is quite a simple action, though the timing of the hit can be difficult to master at first. It is difficult because the racket head must be brought over the top of the shuttle to hit it downwards. Do not try to hit it hard at first. Just try to hit it downwards and the power will come later.

Performing the stroke

- i. Stance. Stand as for the clear.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip or the advanced backhand grip. Keep the racket head up and twist to the left ready to hit the shuttle.
- iii. The hit. Whip the racket head up at the shuttle and allow only the racket head to continue to travel forwards to hit over the top of the shuttle. (See Plate 70)
- iv. The recovery. Hold the hitting position for a moment and then return the racket to the attacking position.

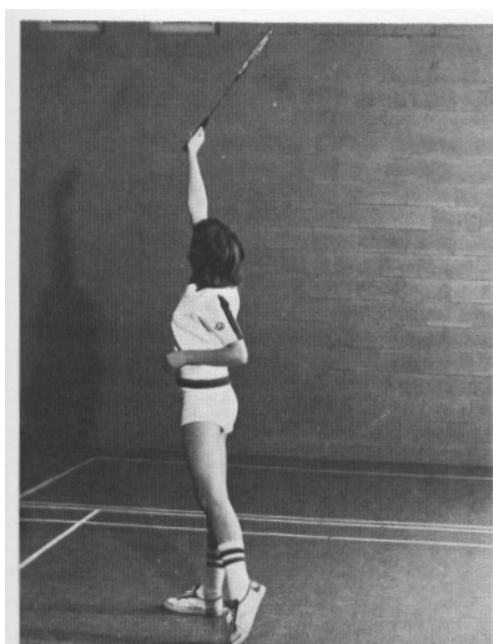
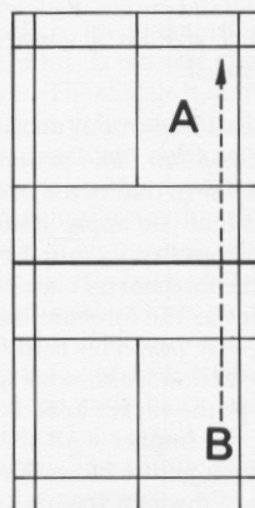
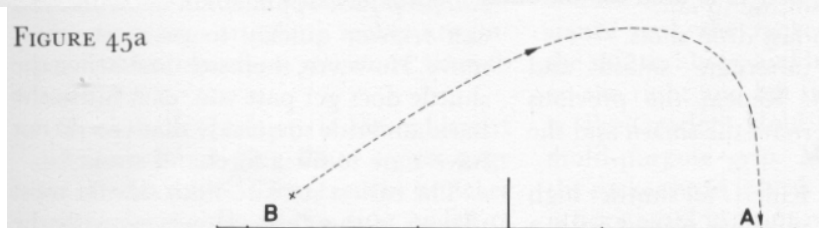


FIGURE 45



70 Impact point for the backhand smash

FIGURE 45a



Practices for the backhand smash (Figure 45)

1. Stand in the positions as shown.
 2. *B* feeds high to the edge of the rear-court (see Figure 45a).
 3. *A* moves into position and clears, then returns to the midcourt.
 4. *B* allows the shuttle to drop.
 5. *B* feeds high. *A* moves and smashes.
 6. *B* allows the shuttle to drop.
- Alternate the clear and the smash, and repeat for 10 smashes.

Conditioned game.

Rule 1 : all shuttles high on the left side of the court must be hit with a backhand stroke.

Rule 2: you get two points if you hit a winner with a backhand smash.

The overhead backhand drop shots

1. The fast drop shot.

The action for this stroke is similar to that of the smash. The difference is that you apply less force and the shuttle drops steeply into the court to land near the forecourt. It is used for the same reasons as the forehand fast drop.

2. The slow drop shot.

This is the checked smash. The action is the same as for the smash except the racket head is checked just before the impact with the shuttle, to hit it with a gentle blow. The shuttle travels slowly through the air and lands close to the net. It is used for the same reasons as the forehand checked smash.

Practices for the drop shots (Figure 46)

First practice (alternate clears and fast drop shots)

1. A and B stand in the positions as shown.
2. B feeds high to the backhand rearcourt of A.
3. A moves and hits a clear, and returns to the midcourt.
4. B allows the shuttle to fall.
5. B feeds and A moves and hits a fast drop shot.
6. B allows the shuttle to fall.

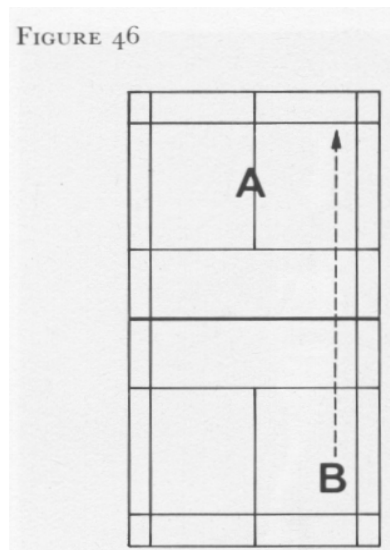
Repeat for 10 fast drop shots

Second practice (alternate smash and checked smash). Repeat the previous practice but alternate the smash and the checked smash.

Conditioned game.

Rule i: All shuttles high on the left side must be played with a backhand stroke.

FIGURE 46



Rule 2: You get two points if you hit a winner with a backhand smash, or win the rally immediately after using the checked smash or fast drop to create the situation which allows you to hit a winner.

General comments on the backhand

Generally in singles play it is better to try to play most of the attacking backhand moves with a forehand stroke. The reasons are that you keep the shuttle in front of you, you face into the court and can keep your opponent in view, and you can recover quickly to cover the next move. However, there are times when the shuttle does get past you, or is hit to the backhand side so quickly that you do not have time to hit a forehand stroke.

The easiest stroke on this side for most players is the clear. However, with the same preparation as for the clear and using the multi-purpose or advanced backhand grip, it is quite easy to learn the smash and the drop shots. So have a go, practise hard and try them out in a conditioned game before you use them in a normal game. In a normal game the situations in which you would use the backhand stroke moves are the same as for the forehand attacking strokes. Read that section to remind you.

The defensive strokes

We have dealt with the attacking 'stroke-moves', and seen that, apart from the clear, all are hit downwards. If your opponent is able to hit downwards, and attack then you are in a situation when you must defend. However, even here it is still possible to turn your defensive stroke into an attacking move.

At all times during the game every 'stroke-move' you play can be used to create a situation which you believe will lead to your advantage - either to extract you from a difficult situation or eventually to enable you to deliver a scoring blow. You should try to express *attack* with every move. So let us look at the defensive strokes in terms of how they can be used to your advantage.

The defensive position.

Initially your main concern is to defend against the fast downward shots which can hit the ground, e.g. the smash and fast drop shot. The other two attacking moves are important but do allow you more time to reach them. Your basic position is the midcourt defensive stance (see Plate 15 on page 41). In this position you face the attacker and move slightly to the right or left of centre according to where your opponent is positioned on the court.

The block

The block is used against a powerful downward hit. It is a safe move and easy to perform. The shuttle is hit to land close to the net in your opponent's forecourt. To play it well you must accept the fact that you are on the defensive: play safe and not try to do anything special with the shuttle. The purpose of the block is to get the shuttle back over the net and below net level before your opponent arrives to hit it downwards. Thus, you can play it to get a lift from your opponent. A good early block enables you to turn defence into attack.

The situation. The shuttle is high in your opponent's rearcourt. You prepare to defend. He smashes to your backhand side.

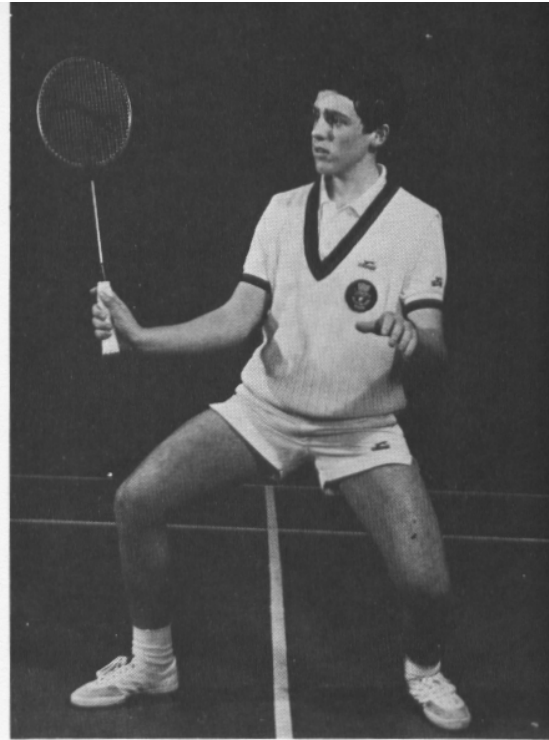
The move. You decide to block the shuttle to his centre. You do this because if he is late you can control the centre and reach the net reply easily. Also he cannot whip the shuttle across the court away from you for he has no angle to do so, and you force him to hit wide, which gives you an angle from the sides to make your next move. *It is easier to attack from the sides than from the centre.*

Performing the stroke (Plates 71-74, overleaf)

- i. Stance. Take up a midcourt defensive stance with the racket ready to block the shuttle above and below waist height on the right and left sides.
- ii. Preparation. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip. Make certain that the racket head is high and your forearm is horizontal in front of you.



71-74 The block to the smash 71 Above Forehand low block



72 Forehand high block

iii. The hit. Move into line with the shuttle. Keep your arm in front of you and simply place the racket face square on to the pathway of the shuttle. Keep the racket face in line with the shuttle and tilted back slightly to push it over the net (the action is similar to a backhand push in table tennis).

iv. Recovery. Keep the racket face in line with the shuttle as the arm extends and then return the head to the attack position.

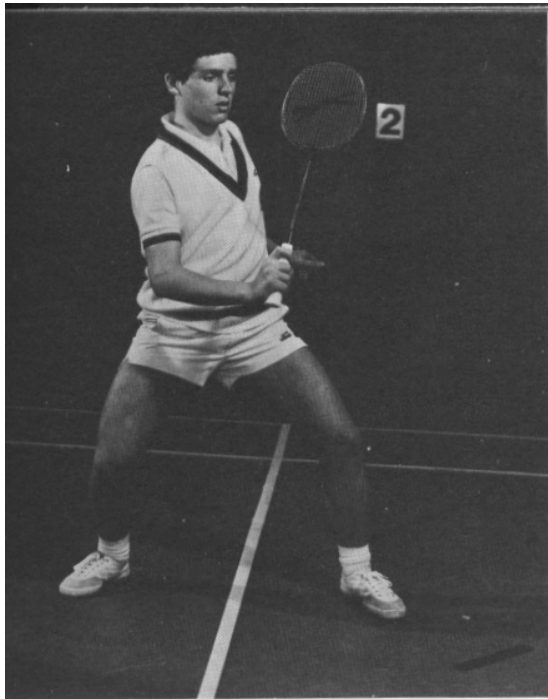
Opponent's possible replies. If the shuttle is above net level he can hit it downwards or drop it close to the net. Below net level, he can play a net return or clear it to your rearcourt.

The recovery. If he hits from above the net, move back into a defensive stance and try to return his downward hit. If he hits the shuttle from below the net, take up a midcourt attack position and threaten his reply to the net. Keep your racket head up and alert for a quick lift over your head. Because you threaten the net, you force him to lift and so create a situation to your advantage, i.e., you can hit downwards.

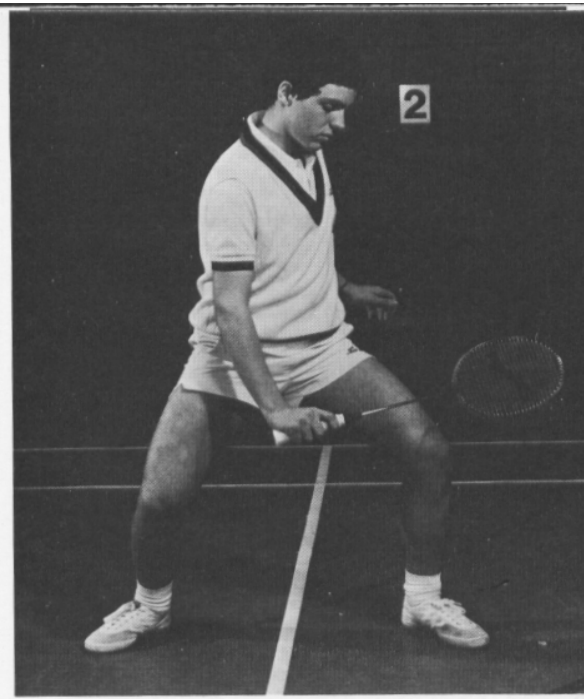
Practices for the block (Figure 47) In these practices you must be ready to move quickly sideways or backwards in your defensive stance to get into line with the shuttle.

First practice

1. Stand in the positions as shown.
 2. A feeds shuttle high to B.
 3. B smashes low to forehand side of A.
 4. A blocks shuttle to the forecourt sides or centre.
 5. B allows the shuttle to drop.
- Repeat for a minimum of 10 smashes.

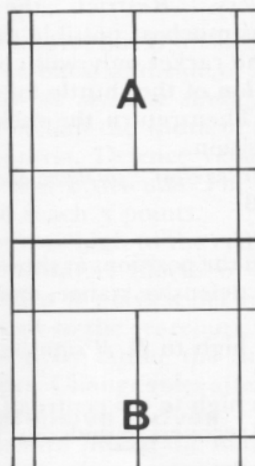


73 Backhand high block



74 Backhand low block

FIGURE 47



Second practice

Repeat on the backhand side.

Third practice

Repeat on the forehand side, but *B* smashes at shoulder height to *A*.

A blocks shuttle, with racket head above the level of the wrist.

Fourth practice Repeat the third practice on the backhand side.

Conditioned game. Rule: you can only block the smash.

The underarm clear

The clear (both forehand and backhand) is used to return the shuttle high to the rear court to the sides or centre. It is a useful move for the following reasons.

1. It may wrong-foot the opponent if he rushes forwards to the midcourt after his smash. He has to stop, get back quickly and is usually late to perform his stroke. Often his reply is a clear or a poor drop shot, either of which enables you to attack.
2. If you have a strong defence you can keep him pinned deep in the rear court until either he clears and enables you to attack or he hangs back in his rear court, leaving his forecourt open for you to return the shuttle there and perhaps force him to lift it.

The forehand underarm clear

The situation. The shuttle is high in your opponent's centre rear court. You prepare to defend. He smashes to your forehand side and begins to rush forward.

The move. You decide to clear deep to his forehand rear court, to wrongfoot him and keep him deep.

Performing the stroke

- i. The stance. Move into line with the shuttle in a midcourt defensive stance.
- ii. Preparation. Keep the racket head high and take it partly back by twisting your shoulders and taking your arm back. Keep your knees flexed.
- iii. The hit. Keep your body still and in balance during the hit (this is very important). Throw the racket head down quickly at the shuttle. The face of the racket hits the shuttle from below and sends it upwards and forwards to the rear court.
- iv. Recovery. Allow the racket head to travel upwards and forwards in the direction of the shuttle, until your arm naturally bends in towards your body and returns to the attack position. You then prepare to attack or defend according to the effect of your move.

The underarm backhand clear

This stroke can be performed in front of you or on the left side.

Performing the stroke

- i. Stance. A midcourt defensive stance.
- ii. Preparation. Move into line with the shuttle. Keep the racket head high. Take the racket head back, partly twist your shoulders to the left and move your arm across to the left.
- iii. The hit. Keep your trunk still and feet in balance. Use mainly your forearm and hand to throw the racket head at the shuttle. The face of the racket hits the shuttle from below and sends it upwards and forwards in the chosen direction.
- iv. Recovery. Restrict the follow-through as much as possible though the head of the racket only will continue in the direction of the shuttle for a limited distance. Then return the racket to the attack position.

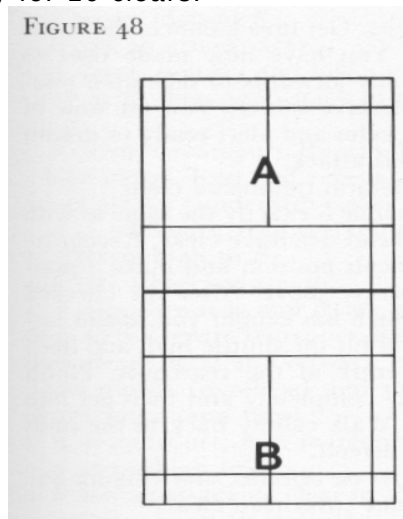
Practices for the clear-forehand and backhand (Figure 48)

First practice

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown, *A* midcourt in a defensive stance, and *B* in the rear court.

- 2 A feeds high to B. B smashes to forehand of A.
- 3 A clears high to the centre of the rear-court, and recovers to midcourt defensive stance.
4. B smashes. Continue rally for 10 clears.

FIGURE 48



Second practice

Repeat on the backhand side.

Third practice

Repeat as above, but B hits freely to the forehand or backhand side of A.

Practices for the defensive strokes.

Use the full width or half the width of the court. Have a contest. Defence versus attack. A attacks and B defends. The winner is the first to reach 5 points.

Rules: A serves high to the centre. B can smash or drop. A blocks or clears. If A blocks then B plays a net return and A clears high to the rear court. The rally can be won by either the attacker or the defender. Change roles after 5 points.

More defensive moves

The downward hits to the midcourt are the attacking moves most likely either to score an outright winner or to create a situation for one. You have learned to defend against these moves. However there are two other attacking moves which very often create a situation where your opponent can hit a winner on his next move. These are the attack-clear and the checked smash. Both are used to catch you off balance and to cause you to scramble hastily to perform the stroke. The good attack-clear gets past you and causes you to rush backwards and to lean back (often unbalanced) to hit the shuttle. A good checked smash causes you to scramble low in the forecourt and to hit the shuttle very late from close to the ground. In both cases the inexperienced player can get into a panic in the situation. He may try a rash shot and try to do something with the shuttle as though all hope is lost. It is usual to see such a player unbalanced in the rear court attempt a smash or drop shot or an attack-clear with very poor results. Control is difficult as it is, but any chance of recovery to prepare for the opponent's reply is almost out of the question. More often than not the rally is lost.

In the forecourt the scramble at the net usually results in an attempt to play a difficult net stroke or to swing wildly in an attempt to hit it over the opponent's head. Both result in an uncontrolled stroke with very little chance of recovery to cover the opponent's replies.

What do you do in the situations described above? The answer is quite simple, as is the move and the performance of it. First you recognize your predicament and accept the fact that you are very much in a defensive situation; one very much to your opponent's advantage. Second, you realize that you need lots of time to recover and calm down.

The move.

Whether in the forecourt or rearcourt you settle for a high defensive clear to the centre of your opponent's rearcourt. You should hit the shuttle as high as the ceiling allows. This move will buy time for you and place the opponent in the centre of his rearcourt with a vertically dropping shuttle. It will make it difficult for him to time his stroke accurately because the shuttle is falling vertically, and it will be difficult for him to hit a winner because you are now calm and balanced in a midcourt defensive position.

The overhead defensive clear

Use the same action as for the normal forehand and backhand clears' except that you are unbalanced and must hit the shuttle on a higher trajectory.

Performing the stroke

- i. Preparation. As normal for the clear.
- ii. The hit. Hit upwards to send the shuttle on a very high trajectory. Stay in position to ensure a full blow. Do *not* try to travel forwards at all.
- iii. Recovery. Stay in position and make certain that the racket head follows through in the direction of the shuttle for *as long as possible*. This ensures length and height. Then allow the racket to return to the attack position and recover your balance.

Opponent's possible replies. He can hit downwards from a high position in the centre of his rearcourt.

The recovery. Get into balance and stand upright. You have now made time to walk calmly forwards to take up a midcourt defensive stance. You are now in balance, calm and alert ready to defend against his attack.

The underarm defensive clear

The principle is exactly the same as with the overhead defensive clear. Recognize your difficult position and make a positive defensive move. After the checked smash which has caught you, sprint forwards and hit the shuttle high and deep to the centre of the rearcourt. Finish the stroke completely and then get into balance. Walk calmly back to the midcourt to defend.

Practices for the defensive clear (Figure 49)

First practice (overhead clear)

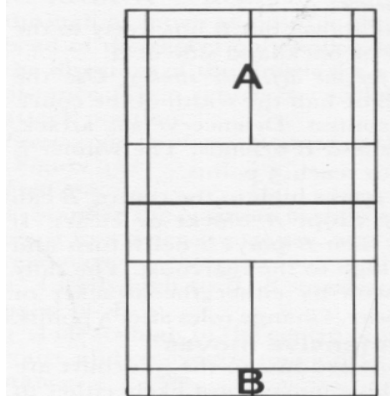
- 1 A in the midcourt, B in the rearcourt centre
2. A serves high to B.
3. B hits an attack clear.
4. A moves quickly and hits a very high clear to B, then *walks* back to the mid-court.
5. B clears to rearcourt. Repeat. Rally for 5 high clears. Rest and repeat.

Second practice (underarm clear)

1. A in midcourt, B in rearcourt.
2. A serves high to B.
3. B hits a checked smash.

4. A runs forwards and clears high and deep to the centre rearcourt. Rally for 5 high clears. Rest and repeat.

FIGURE 49



Third practice (overhead and underarm clears' smash and block)

1. A in midcourt, B in rearcourt.
2. A serves high to B.
3. B hits an attacking clear or a checked smash (try to catch A out).
4. A clears to the centre rearcourt and *walks* back to the midcourt. If A runs' the rally ends and B gets the point. If A hits a poor-length shot, B can smash and if A blocks the smash, the rally begins again. If B hits a winner' he gets a point. End of practice when B has gained five points.

Forecourt strokes

The nearer that you get to the net the easier it is either to hit the shuttle down for an outright winner or to create a situation where you can hit one on the next move. The majority of your overhead strokes are used as moves to create a situation to hit a winner or make the openings in the forecourt for a winner. For that reason it is important to improve your skill in the forecourt.

In practice many players create an opening in the forecourt but then fail to move forward to attack the shuttle and go for the winner. This failure could be due to several reasons. First, the player may not be skilful in the forecourt. Second, he may be frightened to commit himself to be adventurous and go for the winner. He may worry about the shuttle being returned over his head and so he plays safe and stays back to cover that possibility. Third, he may be adventurous and prepared to attack, but doesn't because he does not know how to recover should the shuttle be returned over his head. So he attacks the certain one, but allows other opportunities to go by.

To be adventurous and attack in the forecourt is not that difficult if you know how to perform the strokes and how to recover. It is similar to gymnastics. You could dive head first over a box three feet high, but you do not because you cannot land properly. You cannot control the outcome once you commit yourself to diving over the box' so you do not do it. However, learn how to perform a dive forward roll and diving over a box is no problem. Similarly, learn how to move in and out of the forecourt with skill and speed, and it is an easy matter to commit yourself to a particular stroke, because you know that you can recover quickly for your opponent's reply.

This section is about the strokes and movement in the forecourt and the use of strokes as attacking moves. I will explain and describe these in the following order: first the movement and then the stroke moves for above and below net height.

The movement in the forecourt

The movement in the forecourt involves a lunge from the service line to the net, a hit and a return to the service line, ready to attack again - the movement is very similar to a fencer's. Examine the plates below and compare the fencer in Figure 50 with the player. The fencer stands in the on-guard position, lunges at his opponent and then returns to the on-guard position. His rear foot is turned outwards and his body is in balance with his back straight. The player performs a higher lunge because he has to hit the shuttle from above net height. Both begin with the right arm flexed, then extend as they hit and flex it again as they return ready to attack in an on-guard position. The advantage of this movement is that it allows you to move towards and away from the net very quickly.

Performing the movement.

Stage 1

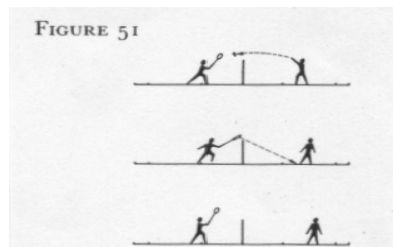
- (a) Stand astride the front service line in the attack position. Prepare as if to hit the shuttle above net height.
- (b) Push off with your rear foot and lunge forwards on to your right foot to hit the shuttle.
- (c) Recover by pushing off from your front foot at the same time as you bend your rear leg to return to the attack position.
- (d) Repeat this pattern several times' with a pause between each one. Do it to the backhand and forehand sides. You will soon get the knack of it.
- (e) Do it continuously several times without pausing. You will find this quite tiring at first.

Stage 2

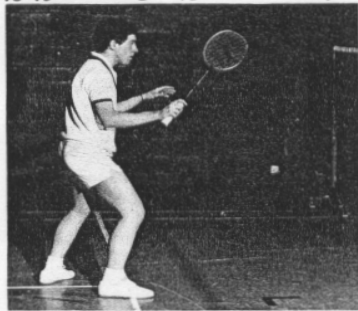
- (a) Begin in the attack position in your midcourt. Travel to the service line and then perform the lunge and hit. Recover from the lunge to the attack position and then return to the midcourt.
- (b) Repeat (a)' but this time 'lunge and recover' twice before you return to the midcourt.

Practice with a partner. Stand in the positions as shown in Figure 51 and perform 10 lunges. Five to the forehand side and five to the backhand side.

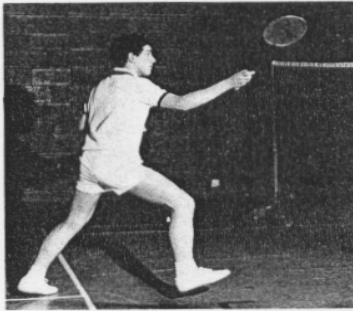
- 1. A stands astride the service line in the attack position.
- 2. B stands in the midcourt and throws the shuttle just over the net (use a dart-throwing action).



75-79 The lunge 75 Below Attack position



76 The lunge



77 The lunge

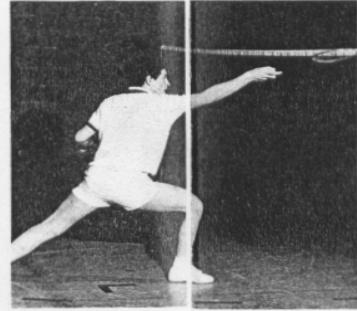
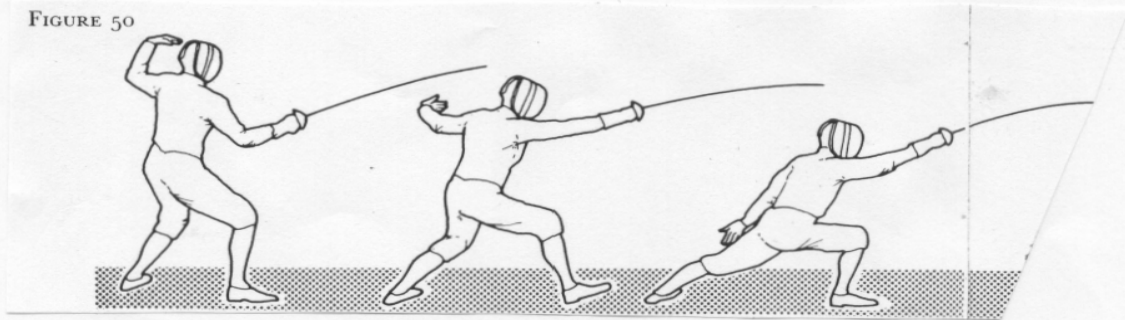
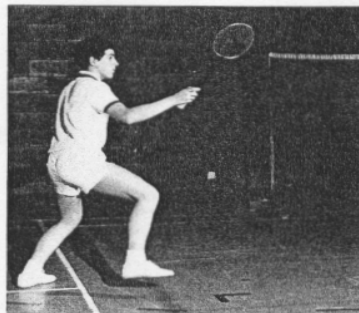


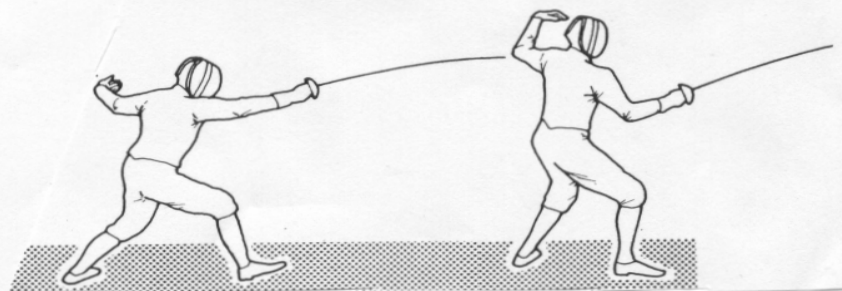
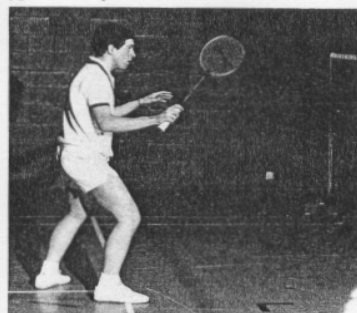
FIGURE 50



78 Recovery



79 Attack position



3. A lunges and hits the shuttle down to the floor.
4. A recovers ready to attack again.

Conditioned game.

Rule 1: your opponent must play a net return to any downward hit.

Rule 2: you get two points for every rally you win by using the lunge to hit down at the net.

Comment. The general rule for attacking play in the forecourt is: *use your right foot (right handed player) to hit from, whenever possible.* This aids recovery and enables you to maintain the attacking stance.

The strokes in the forecourt

There are two types of situation in the forecourt which determine the type of stroke you will use: there is one when the shuttle is above net height and one when it is below net height. In the first position the racket face hits the shuttle from above in a downward direction, and in the second position the shuttle is hit from below in an upward direction. (There is one other forecourt situation that has already been dealt with: when the shuttle is very near the ground and you hit an underarm defensive clear.)

Strokes played above the net.

The actual stroke you use will depend on how high the shuttle is above the net and how close it is to the net. The closer and lower, the less movement you will use to perform the stroke. If you rush forwards to hit very hard you may overrun into your opponent's court or into the net, which is not allowed (see Laws 14 (f) and 16. All these strokes are directed at or away from your opponent. If you aim at your opponent he has little time to move out of the way to play a stroke.

1. The smash.

This stroke does not require much explanation as I have already described it earlier. There are several points to consider. You may have to play this move in front of you and slightly lower than is usual. In this case you must continue to move forwards during the hit and also use less arm movement than usual in the preparation, hit and recovery. Practise smashing at a 'shuttle' in front of you and slightly lower than usual. Do this on the forehand side and the backhand side. After the smash your opponent may somehow, manage to return it over the net, so recover quickly and return to the attacking stance on the edge of the forecourt.

2. The brush shot.

The shuttle is hit from close to the net. In this situation it is not possible to hit forwards because the racket head will hit the net. Instead the shuttle is given a 'glancing' blow' from right to left for forehand strokes and left to right for backhand strokes. The racket face travels parallel to the net and hits the shuttle down. The backhand brush shot is similar to the topspin shot in table tennis.

3. The dab shot.

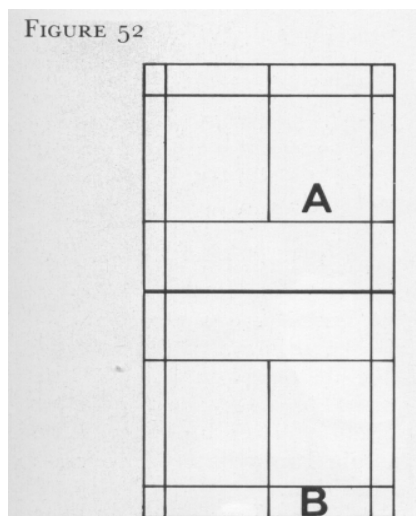
The shuttle is close to the net and you have very little time to prepare to hit it hard. Simply tilt the racket towards you' step forwards and tap the shuttle down to the ground. This is an 'impact' stroke (see page 51). The racket head rebounds after the hit. There is no follow-through. Immediately recover to the attack position.

4. The push shot. The shuttle is about level with the net and slightly away from it.

It is not possible to hit it down. Your intention is to push it forwards so that it travels horizontally and loses height quickly. Simply tilt the racket head towards you and prepare to hit. Move to meet the shuttle ahead of you and push it forwards. After the hit, recover to the attack position.

Practice with a partner (Figure 52)

1. Stand in the positions as shown: A in the attack position just behind the front service line, B in the rearcourt.
2. B hits the shuttle to the forecourt of A.
3. A lunges forwards and hits it with a brush shot, smash, dab or push.
4. B will not feed every shuttle accurately, so A hits whatever stroke he thinks is necessary to hit the shuttle to the ground from above the net.
5. A returns each time to the attack position.

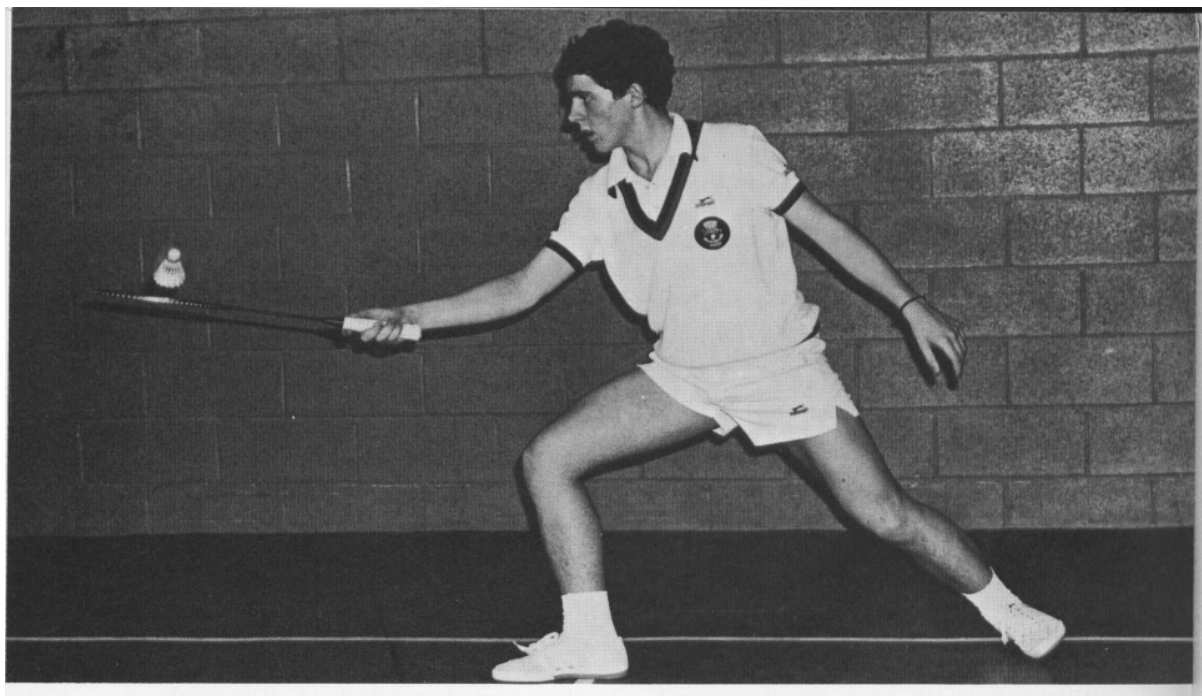


Strokes played below the level of the net.

If the shuttle is below net height and your opponent is ready to attack, you are in a difficult situation. The inclination is usually to play safe and clear the shuttle high to the rearcourt. Unfortunately if the shuttle is very close to the net the clear may only go to the midcourt and your opponent has an easy opportunity to smash for a winner.

You must learn to return the shuttle very close to the net, in such a way that makes it difficult for your opponent to hit it down. Instead he makes a mistake, gives you an easy kill from the net or has to lift it. *You must learn to spin the shuttle at the net.* This is quite easy to do with practice. It is similar to the serve in tabletennis (you may have seen good players in action: in the serve they hit the ball in such a way that it spins awkwardly and swerves in different directions. The ball bounces awkwardly and is very difficult to return). Often the receiver makes a mistake because he cannot judge the spin properly. Let us look at a few strokes and see what is involved.

We know that we can make the shuttle rotate around its vertical or horizontal axis by giving it a glancing blow (see page 50). Rotation around its horizontal axis causes it to tumble in the air. This is because the base is heavy and the shuttle does not rotate at a constant speed. It behaves rather like the clothes in the drier in the launderette, rotating for one half turn quickly and the other half slowly. So we get a tumble-drier effect. We call the two main strokes the spinner and the tumbler.



80 Forehand spinner

Performing the strokes.

Hold the racket gently in the multi-purpose grip and use as small a movement of the racket head as possible. Stand in the attacking stance with the face horizontal.

The tumbler.

Practise hitting the shuttle up and down in a continuous rally first with the forehand face and then the back-hand face (see Plates 80 and 81). Repeat the practice and occasionally give the shuttle a glancing blow from right to left (forehand face) and from left to right (backhand face). Hit the shuttle with the side edge of the racket leading the movement (see Figures 53 and 54). The shuttle will rotate in a *tumble* movement. Repeat this with the top edge of the racket leading in a *jabbing* action. It will now tumble towards you. The action of the shuttle, caused by giving the shuttle a glancing blow, is described as a *tumbler* or *tumble shot*. The action of the racket is sometimes called *the jab*.

The spinner. Hold the racket in the multi-purpose grip with the racket head held high. First practise hitting the shuttle up and down and each time return to the attacking stance (racket held high). Secondly' hit the shuttle a glancing blow below the side of the base (with the racket head held high). The glancing blow is forwards and slightly from right to left. You will see the shuttle spin and tumble at the same time. This gives the shuttle a most awkward flight in the air and makes it difficult for the opponent to control. See Figure 55.

81 Backhand spinner

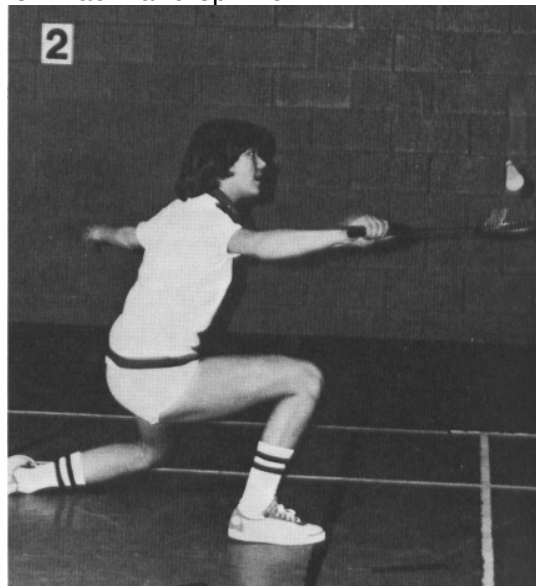


FIGURE 53

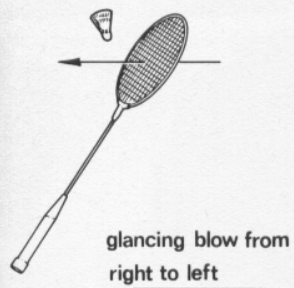


FIGURE 54

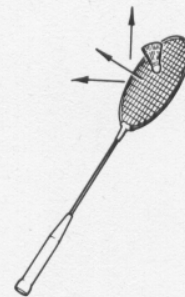
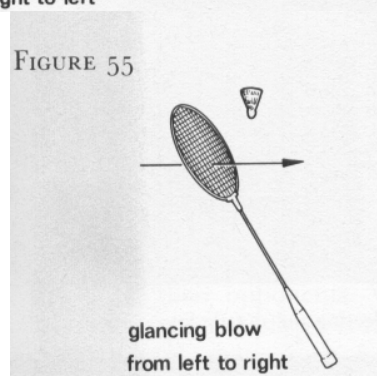


FIGURE 55



Court practice. Rally with a partner. Stand on the front service line in the attacking stance. Play a rally with a partner and try to hit spinners and tumblers to each other. It is a good stroke when the shuttle appears to crawl over the net and tumble down the other side. Try to meet the shuttle early. If it falls low, then bend your knees and hit from below the shuttle. See Plates 82 and 83.

Conditioned game.

Rule: no clears allowed from the forecourt. Take two points if you win the rally with a tumbler or a spinner.

An additional stroke from the net:

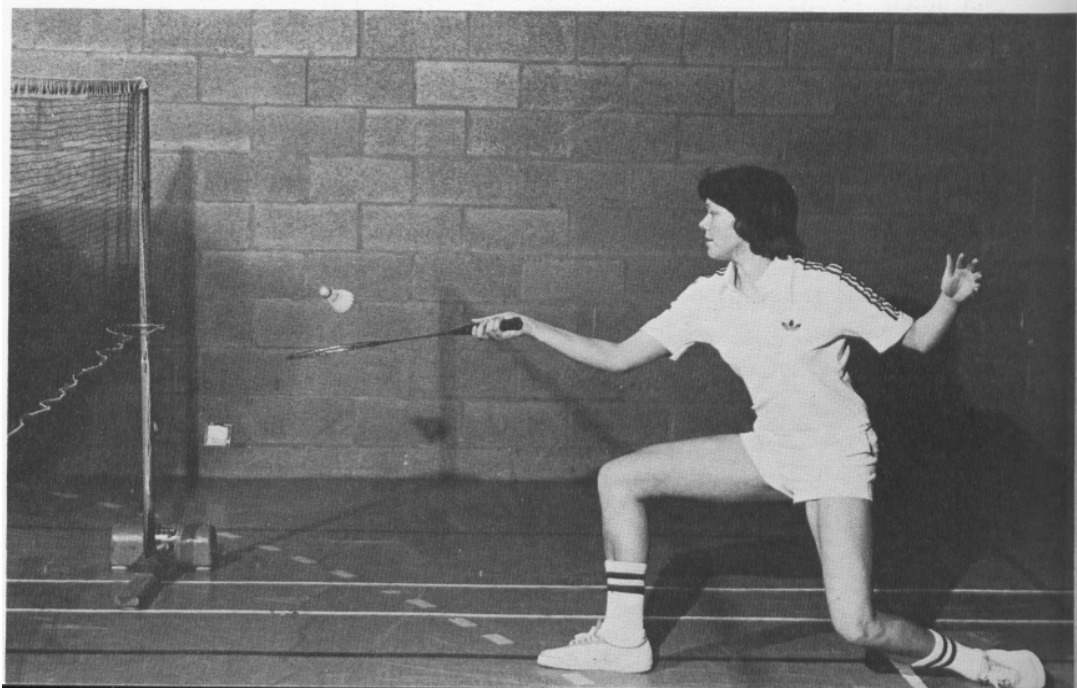
The whip. There are occasions when you will want to clear the shuttle past your opponent to the rearcourt. In such an instance you meet the shuttle early at the top of the net ahead of you and whip the shuttle up past your opponent to his rearcourt.

Comment. During an exchange of 'blows' in the forecourt it is important that you maintain an attacking stance. Keep the racket head up ready to threaten and hit the shuttle. Begin your lunge from the service line and return there each time ready to attack again.



82 *Above* Meeting the shuttle early

83 *Below* Meeting the shuttle late



A summary of the singles game

By now you will have a good idea of the strokes to learn and how to use them as moves in the game. It will take a long time and involve much practice and many games before you can perform them and use them skilfully. There is no hurry in doing this. Your main task at present is to use wisely what strokes you do possess in the different situations that obtain in singles. If you can control the situations and make moves to your advantage, then you are well on your way to becoming a good singles player. Indeed some players have reached international level and even won major championships with some very basic strokes and a good level of fitness. They used intelligently an accurate attack based on a solid defence to outwit and defeat their opponents. Very often the mark of a good player is that he can perform simple moves well. Some of the ways you can use your moves against a particular opponent are listed below.

1. *Outmanoeuvre him.* Hit the shuttle to the open spaces and move your opponent continually away from his midcourt position until he is slow to recover and leaves a space for you to hit a winner.
2. *Make him tired.* Run him around the court. Prolong the rallies until he tires slows down and cannot cover the court. To do this you must have accurate strokes and be quite fit yourself.
3. *Upset his game.* Many players like to play the game at a certain pace and in a particular way. Your opponent has his own style and tempo. So upset his game in the following ways: (a) change the rhythm, e.g. slow the game down or speed it up. Do this by hitting slower shots (high clears) or quicker shots (smashes, etc.); (b) change the direction frequently; (c) vary the game, using different types of moves at different speeds.
4. *Deceive him.* (a) Disguise your intentions. Look as if you are about to play one stroke-move and then play another. (b) Delay your hit and make him move first before you hit the shuttle. (c) Make your preparation look identical for similar strokes and then your opponent will not be able to anticipate your move until you hit the shuttle.
- 5 *Learn his weaknesses.* Discover his weakest strokes and the situations he does not like, and then attack them.
- 6 *Learn his strengths.* Either avoid them so that he cannot use them, or play to them so you can predict his move and use it to your advantage.

The way you use your moves depends of course on the type of opponent. There are many ways of using your moves to attack. You should realise that to attack does not mean that you must hit everything downwards. For example' you might play a whole set mainly of very long rallies' with clears and drops and other moves all designed to run your opponent around' e.g. ten, twenty, thirty shot rallies, until eventually at the end of that set he is very tired. In the second and third sets you then proceed to end the rallies quickly and occasionally prolong the rally just to make certain that he does not recover his fitness.

You may need to make several attempts to deliver a scoring blow before you do actually end the rally. You may create a situation to your advantage and try to hit a winner.

The Situations and				Stroke-moves		
Situation	Shuttle position	Stroke-moves	Direction	Reason	Opponent's possible replies	Your recovery
Rearcourt	High	Smash or sliced smash Fast drop shot Checked smash Attacking clear	Straight or centre or cross-court Straight or cross-court Straight or centre To corners or centre	To hit the ground or force a lift To force a lift To cause opponent to scramble and play a weak return To catch opponent off-balance and force a weak reply	Block High clear Whip Net return clear Smash Drop Clear	Move forwards towards the midcourt ready to attack the net return Move quickly into the midcourt attack position or defence position
	High	High defensive clear	To centre	You have been caught off-balance and need time to recover. You hit it to the centre to reduce the angle and make defence easier	Smash Clear Drop	Walk calmly to the midcourt and take up a defensive stance
Midcourt	High	As for the rearcourt. Now you are nearer the net and		have more chance of hitting a winning move.		
	Low	Block to the smash Clear Whip Net return to fast drop shot	Straight or centre or cross-court Cross-court Centre or sides	To force opponent to lift To move opponent to rearcourt To give him less recovery time and get it past him To force a lift	Forecourt attack Smash, clear or drop Forecourt attack	Midcourt attack Midcourt defence Midcourt attack Midcourt attack
Forecourt	Shoulder height	Drive	Straight or cross-court	To give less time To force a lift or a hasty stroke	Block, clear or drive	Midcourt attack position
	Above net height	Smash Brush shot Dab Push	Downwards at or past opponent	To hit the ground or force a weak return To force a lift	Block or hit without control	Attack position on the edge of the forecourt
	Below net height	Jab, tumbler or spinner Net whip	Straight or to the centre Angled	To keep the shuttle close to the net and make it difficult to return To force a high clear to the mid-court To get the shuttle past the opponent and to force a weak return	Net return High lift Net whip Scramble and take late	Attack position on the edge of the forecourt Attack position in midcourt
	Low, near the ground	High defensive clear	Centre	You have been caught off-balance and need time to recover. You hit the shuttle to the centre to reduce the angle and make defence easier	Smash Clear Drop shot	Walk calmly to the midcourt and take up a defensive stance

You may succeed in creating such a situation and then find that your opponent in fact returns the shuttle to his own advantage. The rally continues until another opportunity to hit a winner occurs. You must be prepared for this to happen. Quite a few moves may have to be made before the chance to end the rally occurs. *The great player is the one who can win each rally in as few moves as possible.*

To help you to remember the different situations and the 'stroke-moves' you can play in each situation, I have constructed a chart to provide a summary (see pages 104/5). It is there for reference whenever necessary. To use the chart select the situation and then read across from the left column to the right column to discover what to do in that situation. A final point about the chart: it will help you to develop your own game and in addition will help you to gain information about your opponent's game. If you know the sort of move he is likely to make in a certain situation, you can 'read' his game more easily and begin to anticipate his moves. The advantage of doing so requires no further explanation.

Practices for singles

In the description of each stroke I have included a number of practices designed specifically for that stroke. Practice is an essential part of improving your skill and regular practice should be the rule to follow. However, you must always remember that practice is only a means to an end. Your aim is to become a good player, one who plays opponents and not just strokes.

Below are added more practices which are divided into two parts:

1. stroke practices; 2. situation practices.

A *stroke practice* involves a rally with a partner for a set number of repetitions on one or two particular strokes. It is designed to improve your skill in performing that stroke. You can easily make up a simple programme which consists of a number of strokes.

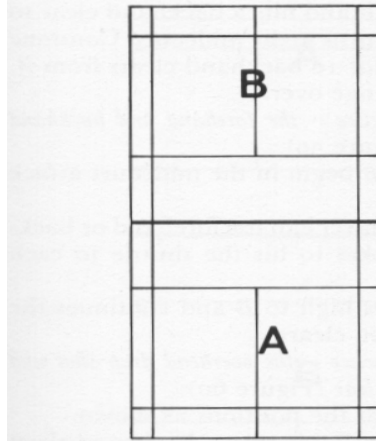
A *situation practice* is mainly for advanced players, but have a go if you want to try one for yourself. It involves the practice of a stroke-move in the game. Imagine a situation in the game. You hit a clear to your opponent's backhand rearcourt and he returns the shuttle almost to your rearcourt, and rushes back to defend. You hit a reply again to his backhand rearcourt. He is wrong-footed and makes a weak reply to your midcourt. You move forwards and smash the shuttle to his forehand side away from him, or straight to his backhand side (the area he is moving away from). We could devise such a situation as follows.

Situation practice (Figure 56)

1. Stand in the positions as shown.
2. *B* feeds high to *A*.
3. *A* hits clear to the backhand rearcourt of *B*.
4. *B* travels, hits backhand clear and recovers to the midcourt.
5. *A* hits another clear to the backhand rearcourt of *B*.
6. *B* clears again to forehand midcourt of *A* then travels towards the midcourt.
7. *A* hits a sliced smash cross-court or a power smash to the backhand of *B*.

When you stop and think about it there are numerous situation practices to devise. However, as they depend on the ability to perform the strokes I will concentrate first on some basic practices for the strokes.

FIGURE 56



Basic practices for the strokes

Aim: Accuracy' control and quality of movement from the midcourt to the backcourt, and recovery.

First practice-the forehand clear (Figure 57)

1. A and B begin in the midcourt attacking position.
2. B serves high to A.
3. A travels to backcourt and hits forehand clear to B, then returns to the midcourt attack position.
4. B travels back and hits clear to A' and so on. Continue for a rally of 20 clears.

Second practice - the backhand and forehand clears (Figure 58)

- 1 A stands in the midcourt, B in the backcourt.

FIGURE 57

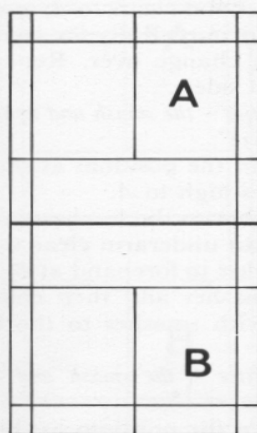


FIGURE 58

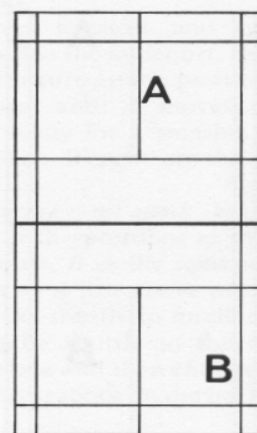


FIGURE 59

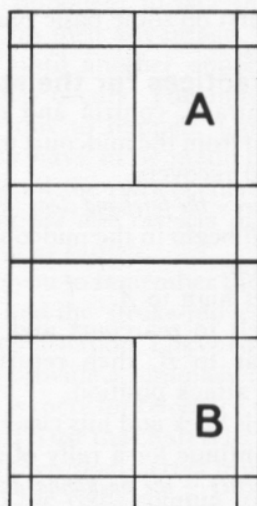
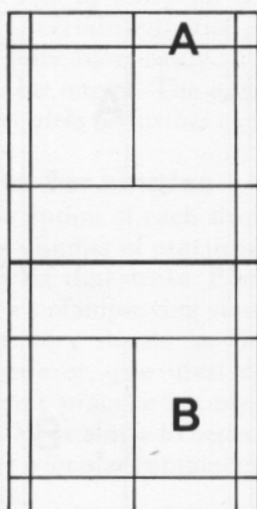


FIGURE 60



- 2 *A* serves high to *B*.
- 3 *B* clears to the backhand of *A*.
- 4 *A* travels and hits a backhand clear to *B*, and returns to the midcourt. Continue the rally for 10 backhand clears from *A*. Then change over.

Third practice – the forehand and backhand clears (Figure 59)

- 1 *A* and *B* begin in the midcourt attack positions.
- 2 Each player can use forehand or backhand strokes to hit the shuttle to each other.
- 3 *A* serves high to *B* and continues the rally for 20 clears.

Fourth practice – the overhead drop shot and underarm clear (Figure 60)

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown.
- 2 *A* hits a forehand or backhand drop shot.
- 3 *B* hits an underarm clear from the forehand.

- 4 *B* serves high to *A*.
- 5 *A* hits a drop shot to forehand of *B*.
- 6 *B* moves and clears to *A*, and recovers to the midcourt. Rally for 10 drop shots and then change over. Repeat on the backhand side.

Fifth practice – the smash and underarm clear (Figure 61)

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown.
- 2 *B* serves high to *A*.
- 3 *A* smashes to the forehand of *B*.
- 4 *B* hits an underarm clear to *A*.
- 5 *A* smashes to forehand at *B*. Continue for 10 smashes and then change over. Repeat with smashes to the backhand side.

Sixth practice – the smash and block rally (Figure 62)

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown.

FIGURE 61

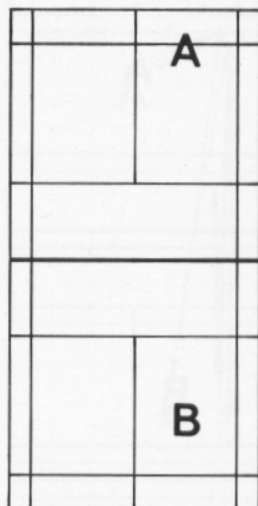


FIGURE 62

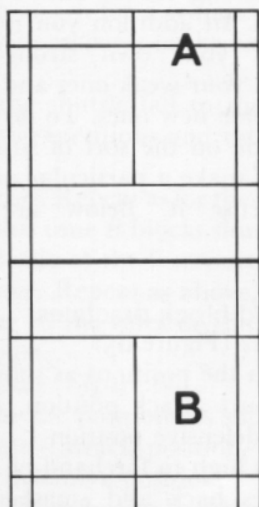
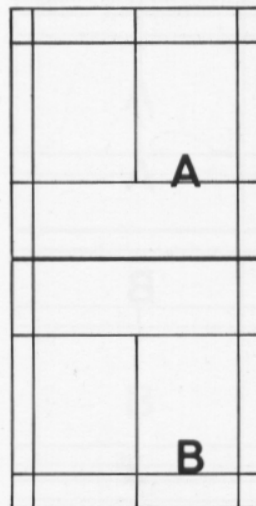


FIGURE 63



- 2 *B* serves high to *A*.
- 3 *A* smashes to the forehand of *B* and moves to the midcourt.
- 4 *B* blocks.
- 5 *A* moves forward and pushes the shuttle to *B* in the midcourt, then returns to the midcourt attack position.
- 6 *B* clears, and *A* moves back and smashes. Rally for 5 smashes and then change over. Repeat on the backhand side of *B*.

Seventh practice – net attack (Figure 63)

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown, *A* in the forecourt, *B* in the rearcourt.
- 2 *B* feeds to *A* just above net height.
- 3 *A* hits the shuttle to forehand of *B*.
- 4 *B* hits the shuttle to the net. Rally for 10–20 hits and then change positions. Repeat the practice on the backhand side of *A*.

FIGURE 64

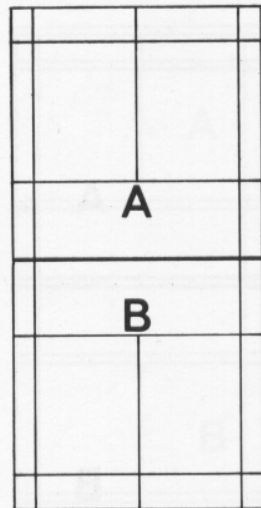
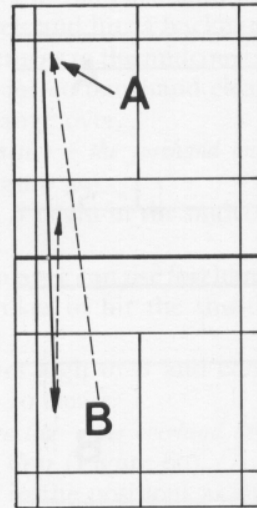


FIGURE 65



Eighth practice - net strokes (Figure 64)

Both players stand in the centre of the forecourt, in the attack position with the right foot slightly forwards. Rally and practise spinners and tumblers.

These are just a few basic practices for singles. If you practise often you will become more skilful. However remember my earlier point that practice is only a means to an end.

Situation practices

It is possible to devise numerous situation practices - so many that one could fill a complete book with them. This is not necessary. What is important is that you try out a few examples, come to understand what the point of a situation practice is and then perhaps you can devise your own.

I mentioned earlier that it is a good idea to practise making the different moves in the game. If you want to defeat an opponent you must be able to cope with his strong moves and exploit his weak ones. In addition you may want to perfect your own strong moves, strengthen your weak ones and perhaps develop some new ones. To do this you must decide on the sort of situation in which you make a particular move and then practise it. Below are a few examples.

Smash and block practices

First practice (Figure 65)

1. Stand in the positions as shown' A in the midcourt attack position, B in the midcourt defensive position.
2. B serves high to forehand of A.
3. A moves back and smashes to the backhand of B and recovers to the midcourt.

FIGURE 66

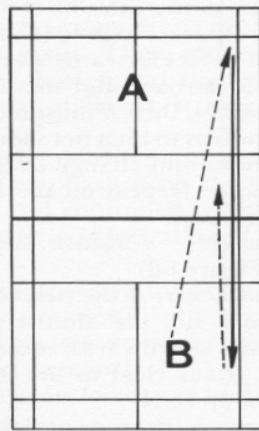
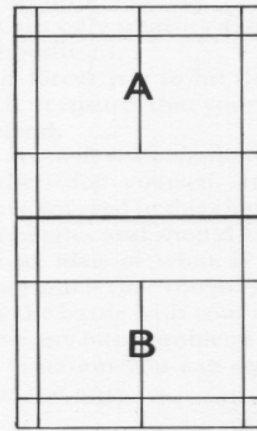


FIGURE 67



4. B blocks straight to the net.
 5. A travels forwards and lunges to hit the shuttle down for a winner or play a net jab, then recovers to the attack position.
 6. B lets the shuttle fall to the ground.
- Perform 10 repetitions and then change over.

Second practice. Repeat as for the first practice, but this time B blocks shuttle to the backhand side of the forecourt.

Third practice. Repeat as above but with B blocking to the sides or the centre of the forecourt.

Fourth practice (Figure 66)

1. Stand in the positions as shown, A in the midcourt attack position B in the midcourt defensive position.
2. B serves high to the backhand of A.
3. A travels back and smashes to the forehand of B, then recovers to the midcourt.
4. B blocks straight.
5. A moves to the forecourt and hits a backhand net shot, then recovers to the attack position.
6. B lets the shuttle fall. Perform 10 repetitions and then change over.

Fifth practice. Repeat, but this time B blocks the shuttle to the forehand side of the forecourt.

Sixth practice. Repeat as for the fourth practice, but this time B blocks the shuttle to the sides or centre of the forecourt.

Seventh practice - smash and defence (Figure 67)

1. B serves high to the forehand side of A.
2. A travels back and smashes to the

FIGURE 68

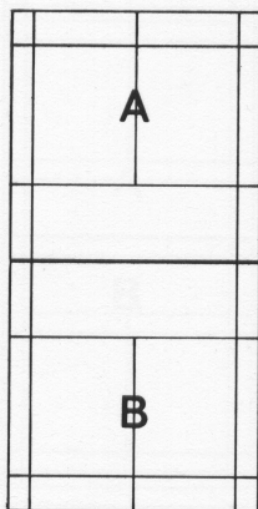
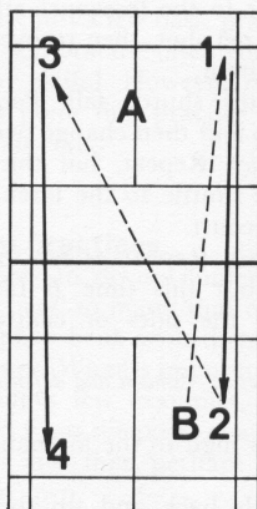


FIGURE 69



backhand of *B*, then recovers to the mid-court.

3 *B* blocks to the sides or centre of the forecourt, or clears high to the rearcourt.

4 *A* either moves forwards and hits a net shot, or moves back and smashes.

5 If *A* smashes, then *B* must block and *A* moves forwards to hit a net shot. Perform 10 repetitions and change over.

Eighth practice. Repeat on the backhand side of the court.

Ninth practice – a contest: attacker and defender (Figure 68)

A is the attacker, *B* the defender.

B can only hit the shuttle upwards, *A* must hit downwards, except when using the attack clear or net strokes.

1 *B* serves up to *A*.

2 *A* can smash, drop or attack clear.

3 *B* blocks or clears.

4 *A* attacks and *B* defends, until the rally is over. The winner of the rally gets 1 point, and the first player to reach 5 is the winner. Then change roles and begin again.

Smash and clear practice (Figure 69)

1 *A* in the midcourt attack position, *B* in midcourt defence position in the right court.

2 *B* serves high to the backhand of *A*.

3 *A* moves back and smashes straight to forehand of *B*.

4 *B* clears cross-court to forehand of *A*.

5 *A* moves across and smashes down the line for winner, then returns to the mid-court attack position. Repeat 10 times and then change over. This practice can be repeated on the backhand side.

This sort of smash and defence practice is very easy to devise for it is taken from

a typical situation in the game. By now you will have grasped the general idea and can practise these and then try to use them when they occur in the game.

Conditioned games. These games are additional to those found in the descriptions of the different strokes already given.

Game 1. Rule: no smashing allowed.

Note: The emphasis is on the clear the drop shot and controlled net play.

Game 2. Rule: no clear allowed from the forecourt.

Note: This forces you to play net strokes in difficult situations.

Game 3. Rule: no smashing allowed except in the forecourt.

Note: This game forces you to create your situation with clears and drops (checked smashes)' and to use the smash only in the forecourt to hit a winner.

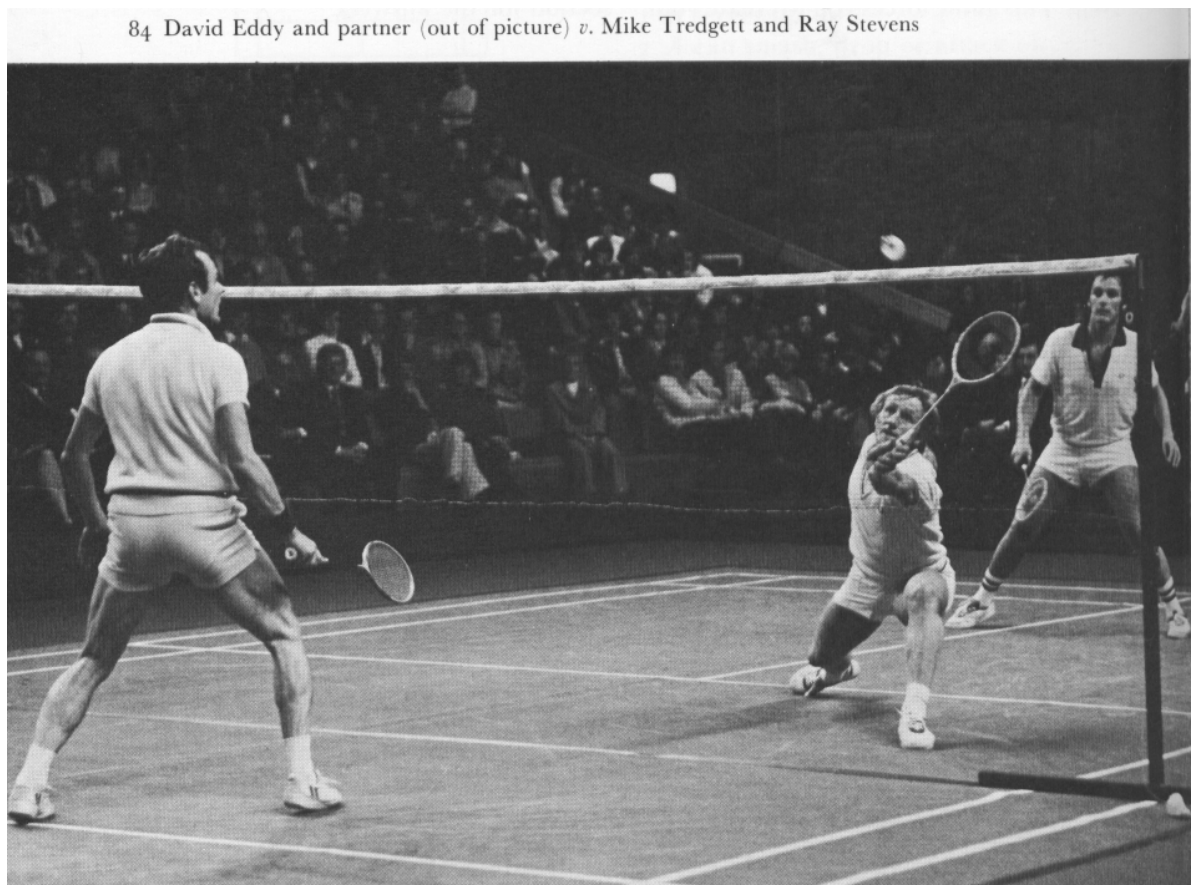
Game 4. Rule: only smashes allowed from overhead positions.

Note: This forces you to hit downwards and attack. It ensures that your opponent has to defend.

These are a few examples. You can devise others for yourself. In general what I have covered in this chapter is sufficient for singles and should have given you a good idea of what is involved. Most important is that you play the game and enjoy the battle with your opponent. If you have any basic problems about the stroke or situation you can refer to this section for the answers.

4 The Doubles Game

In doubles the emphasis is on attack. It is similar to the singles game in the sense that the same situations occur in the rearcourt, midcourt and forecourt. Similar 'stroke-moves' can be used to win each rally. The game differs in that there are, two players on each side to make the moves and to contend with the opponent's replies. The two players must co-operate, to form a unit; for if one player makes a move and creates a new situation, it effects both players, i.e. the whole unit. The strength of the unit depends on three major factors: intelligent stroke-moves, good positional play and co-operation.

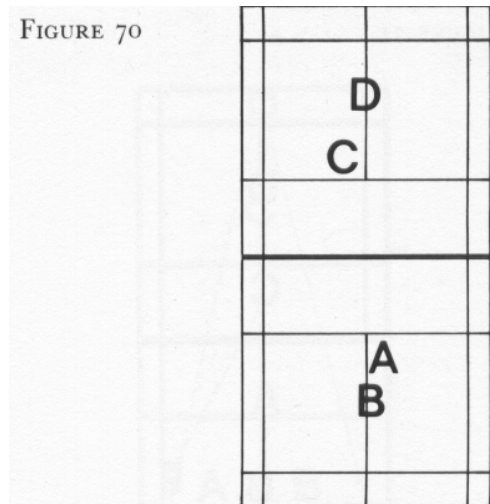


The aim of both sides is to create an attacking situation. The game is one of continual attack and defence, first by one side and then the other. Before a side can attack they must create a situation in which the shuttle is in a position to be hit downwards.

A doubles pair requires to know:

1. *Attack* (a) How to create an attacking situation. (b) How to make the best possible attack in this situation.
2. *Defence* (a) How to defend against an attack. (b) How to turn defence into attack. To create an attacking situation your side must force the opponents to hit the shuttle upwards.

There are two basic positional formations in doubles: the attacking formation - the positions the players move into for attack - and the defensive formation - the positions the players move into for defence. One way to understand doubles is to follow the development of a game from the opening move, the serve. In doubles players often serve with a forehand or backhand stroke. (The backhand serve is described in detail on page 120. Read it now if you want to try it out as a serving stroke.) The following diagrams show the logical development from the serve.



Doubles tactics

Development based on a low serve

Stage 1 The serve (Figure 70)

Side A and B begin the game with the serve, side C and D receive. The players stand in the positions shown.

1. A to serve, stands near the forecourt, B stands in the centre midcourt.
2. B is in a position to attack any high return from the serve or reach any low reply that goes past A.
3. C is the receiver. He takes up an attacking stance (with the left foot forward), on the edge of the forecourt. D takes up a midcourt attacking position ready to attack high returns to the rearcourt or low returns to the midcourt.
4. A serves low to C and steps forward on to his right foot into an attacking stance.

Stage 2 Receiving the serve (Figure 71, over-leaf)

The players stand in the positions shown after the low serve and the receiver's reply.

1. A has served low and moved forwards to attack.
2. C has moved forwards to attack and pushed the shuttle past A into the right midcourt. He then recovers to take up an attacking stance at the T on the edge of the forecourt. (The T is where the centre line meets the front service line.)

FIGURE 71

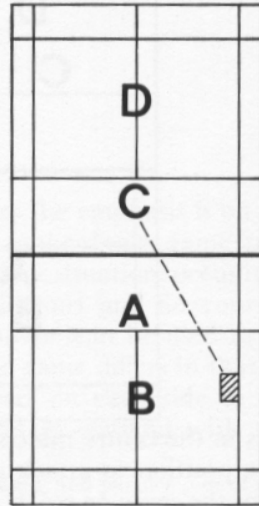
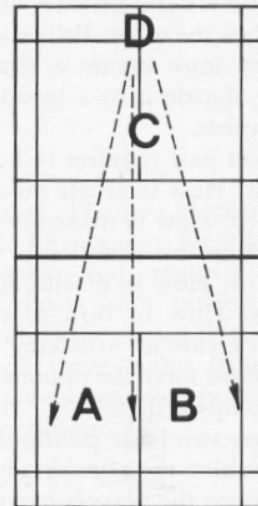


FIGURE 72



3. *B* is in the midcourt ready to move to the shuttle.
4. *D* is ready to attack a high return from *B* to the midcourt or rearcourt.
5. *A* remains in the forecourt to cover the net in case *B* plays a return to the forecourt.

At this stage only two moves have been made, i.e. the serve and the return of serve. The players have moved into position and each side is waiting to seize the attack. *B* must now play a low return past *C* to create a situation for *D* to lift and allow *A* and *B* to attack. This is a typical situation in the game with both sides hitting the shuttle low over the net to the midcourt in an attempt to gain the attack.

Stage 3 Attack and defence positions (Figure 72)

A and *B* are in a side's defensive formation in the midcourt. *C* and *D* are in the front and back attack formation.

1. *B* now clears the shuttle high to the centre rearcourt.
2. *D* moves and prepares to smash.
3. *C* moves back to the edge of the midcourt, ready to attack any reply from *A* and to the sides or centre of the forecourt.
4. *C* and *D* have created a situation for attack, and so take up the attack position.
5. *A* and *B* must cover the smash to the midcourt and so take up a midcourt defensive stance, as they must divide the court between them. Each is also prepared to run forwards for a checked smash or move back for the attack clear.

The simple rule in doubles is: *if the shuttle is high on your opponents' court, take up a defensive (sides) formation. If it is high in your court, take up an attacking formation.*

FIGURE 73

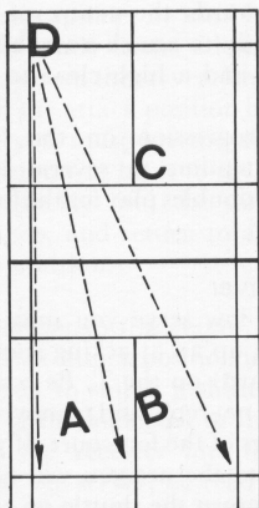
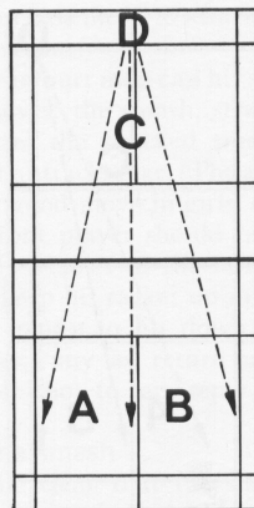


FIGURE 74



Stage 4 Adjusting the 'sides' position in relation to the smash

(a) Defending against a smash from the forehand side (Figure 73)

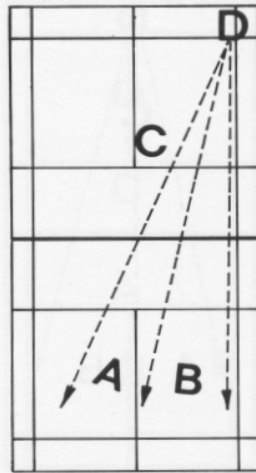
1. *D* is in position for a forehand smash. He should smash straight or to the centre of the midcourt.
2. *A* and *B* face *D* down the funnel, and take up defensive stances in the midcourt. *B* is slightly ahead of *A* but the same distance from *D*. Both face *D*.
3. *C* takes up an attack position on the T and faces towards *A* and *B*. *C* is ready to attack a reply to the forecourt and also cover the whip cross-court to the backhand rearcourt of *D*.
4. After his smash *D* moves towards the centre midcourt, ready to attack the weak clear to the midcourt or the high clear to the rearcourt.

(b) Defending against the smash from the centre (Figure 74)

D is in the centre rearcourt. He can smash to the sides or the centre.
A and *B* take up midcourt defensive positions and face *D* down the funnel.

They can block to the forecourt sides or centre, clear high to the rearcourt sides or centre, whip cross-court from the sides; or push straight to the midcourt. *C* takes up a midcourt attacking stance, ready to attack the forecourt and also to cover the whip cross-court from *A* or *B* and the push to the sides of the midcourt. (The reason *C* stands so deep is to give him time to see the shuttle and to cut off the whip to either side of the midcourt. He is in a similar position to a singles player who stays back to invite the net reply. *C* is ready to move forwards to attack the net as soon as *A* or *B* block the smash.)

FIGURE 75



(c) *Defending against the smash from the backhand rear court* (Figure 75)
D can smash straight to the centre or back-hand side.

1. A and B take up the defensive position and face D down the funnel. They can block to the forecourt sides or centre, push to the backhand midcourt, whip the shuttle cross-court to the forehand rear court, or clear high.
2. C takes up a position to attack the reply to the forecourt and the push down the line to the backhand side of the midcourt, and to cover the whip cross-court with his forehand.
3. The backhand side of the court is covered by D and C. A and B are invited to hit the shuttle to the open space on the forehand side of the court.
4. C and D hope to attack a reply to the forehand with their strong forehand stroke. After the smash, D immediately moves towards the centre of the midcourt, ready to attack a weak lift to the midcourt and a high clear to the rear court.

The progression on the low serve draws attention to several important aspects of doubles play for the four people concerned.

1. The server

After the low serve you must immediately take up an attacking stance (right foot forward) on the T. Be ready to hit down any net reply and to move to a push to the sides of the forecourt. If you move too close to the net you will find it difficult to return the shuttle on either side of you. Vary the serve. Use the flick serve to make the receiver hesitate, and so prevent an early attack of your low serve. The *high serve* can be used against an opponent with a weak smash to move him back and perhaps swing him from side to side of his rear court to make a space in which to hit the shuttle.

2. The receiver

Attack the low serve and try to meet the shuttle as it crosses the net. You should stand as close to the front service line as possible - how close, depends on your ability to move back quickly for the flick serve. You may be able to develop speed if you vary your stance for different serves, i.e. according to how good the server is. The only way to learn to play different serves is to put yourself in a situation where you must play the serve.

You learn to do something by doing it. If you cannot hit the low serve downwards, then play either a spinner or tumbler or push the shuttle gently to the side of the forecourt away from the server. Immediately recover to the attack position in the forecourt. If you must hit the shuttle upwards, then try to hit it to the sides so it will fall quickly into the midcourt or clear it deep, and return to a midcourt defensive position.

3. The partner to the server

Maintain the attack position in the midcourt, ready to smash a shuttle high at the sides of the midcourt or in the rearcourt. If the receiver hits the shuttle down past the server, be ready to move quickly and hit it back low and at speed to give your opponents less time to recover. When the receiver pushes the shuttle down the side line, move to meet it early before it drops too low. Then play either a low return to the net or midcourt to force a lift, or whip it quickly cross-court away from your opponent. Return to the attack position after each move.

4. The partner to the receiver

Maintain the attack position behind your partner. Keep alert for the fast shuttle hit low over the net by the server's partner, and also for the push down the line and the cross-court whip. If your partner clears, then move to your side of the court and take up the defensive position.

Attack

Whenever the shuttle is hit high to your side of the court you are placed in an attacking situation. The player who can reach the shuttle most easily moves to hit the smash. His partner immediately moves towards the T to attack any reply to the forecourt.

The rearcourt man can hit a variety of stroke-moves: the smash, straight or to the centre; the check-smash to the centre; the attack clear. (The attack clear is a very good move in girls' doubles.)

The front player should be ready to attack the replies to the forecourt and so must keep his racket up in the attack position, ready to hit down any weak reply, block any fast return or hit a spin or tumble shot to any reply below net height.

Using the smash

It will be clear that the smash is extremely important in doubles. A doubles side without a good smash is a very weak side. What makes a good smash? Certainly the power and speed of the smash is very important but it is not everything. *The smash in doubles is used not only to hit winners but also to create openings.* You create an opening when you make a space in which to hit a winner, force a weak reply, or force your opponent to mishit or make a mistake. To achieve these aims you must learn to vary your smash and be prepared to play a number of varied smashes before you create the situation when you can hit a winner. Here are some examples of the use of the smash:

(1) *The power smash.* If you smash with full power from the rearcourt, the shuttle will travel almost horizontally and present your opponents with a chance to whip it back at you. The quicker it goes, the faster it comes back.

The power smash is used effectively when you are within the midcourt and can aim it steeply to the ground, or at an opponent to cramp his movements and cause a weak reply or a mishit. The power smash at an opponent can be varied. You might aim below his waist, at his chest or right or left side. Vary the target according to how he positions himself in defence.

(ii) *The sliced smash.* This is used to vary the speed and trajectory of the smash. The shuttle loses speed and drops steeply to the ground. It is an ideal shot to catch your opponents off balance and get a mishit or a weak reply. It forces a steeper lift in reply and is good as a placement smash to change the direction of the smash and move the defence around.

(iii) *Direction of the smash.* A smash, in general, should be hit straight or to the centre. A straight smash is the quickest and shortest way to the midcourt. A smash to the centre is safe and creates a problem for the defence - which player should return the shuttle? Finally, it can force the opponents to hit wide or lift high, because your front man is waiting to hit a weak reply to the forecourt.

(iv) *Variety.* The varied smash used with the check-smash can upset a defensive side and enable you to create a situation in which to hit a scoring blow. So *try to improve your smash.*

Defence

If either you or your partner clear the shuttle, move into the midcourt, take up a defensive stance and face the striker. If the front man has cleared the shuttle from the forecourt, he moves back the shortest distance to the midcourt. The general rule is that the front man moves back the shortest distance to his side of the midcourt.

Replies to the attack

(a) High clears to the sides or the centre of the rearcourt are useful. Alternate the return against a weak smasher, and hit the shuttle to the corners of the rearcourt. Keep the attackers on the move in the rearcourt. They will find it difficult to smash through your defence, and eventually may hit a clear, a drop shot or a weak smash and give you a situation in which to attack.

(b) Low replies in the form of a block to the forecourt or a push to the sides of the midcourt are useful. Play for a lift and try to turn defence into attack. Direct the return to the smash on a low trajectory to skim the net and travel past the front player. Hit it low, so that he must hit upwards. If you keep alert, with your racket head in the attack position, you may be able to attack the smash and drive it back quickly before the opponents are ready.

Some variations in doubles play

The backhand serve

This is used for the low serve and the flick serve, and makes it easy to control the shuttle and to deceive the receiver. There is very little movement in the action and so it is simple to change from the low serve to a flick serve. For this reason very few receivers are tempted to rush the backhand serve.

Performing the serve (see Plates 85-87)

- i. Stance. Stand close to the T with your feet a comfortable distance apart in the attacking stance. Hold the shuttle in front of you a comfortable distance away. Hold the racket in the backhand or multi-purpose grip, with the racket head pointing downwards. The multi-purpose grip allows you to give the shuttle a glancing blow and gain more control with the spin.
- ii. Preparation. Tilt the racket head towards you.
- iii. The hit: the low serve. Release the shuttle and hit it gently upwards over the net to the centre or side of the opponents' service court to land on the front line.
- iv. The hit: the flick serve. Release the shuttle and hit it quickly upwards, over your opponents' possible reach to his rear court.
- v. Recovery. Return the racket to the attack position. If you serve low you are already positioned in the forecourt ready to attack. If you flick serve, then step back towards the midcourt, ready to attack a weak return.

Practices for the backhand serve.

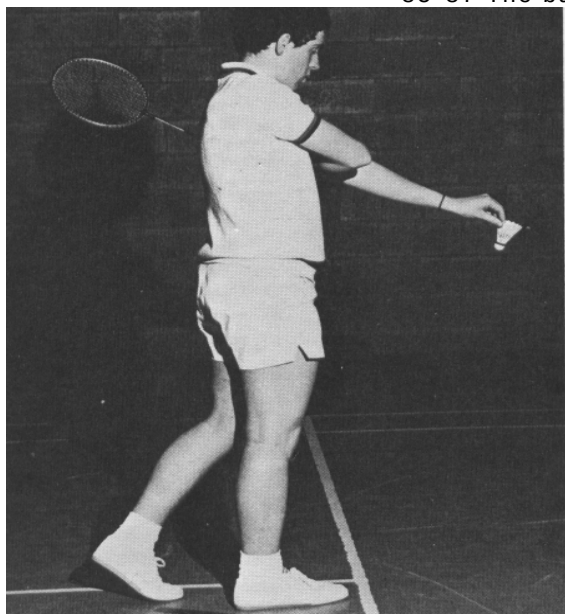
At home. Practise as for the forehand low serve (see page 62). You will soon develop control. On court.

(a) take several shuttles and practise serving low to land the shuttle in the forecourt.

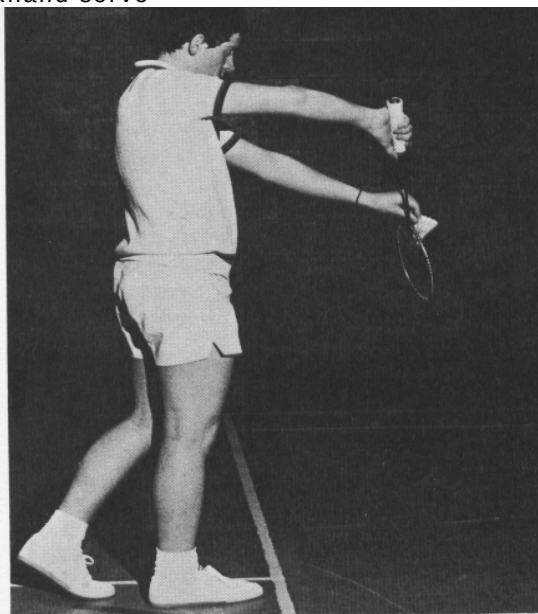
(b) practise flick serves to the corners of the doubles service court.

This practice reminds me of an occasion at the first World Championships in Sweden. The world doubles champion, Tjun Tjun of Indonesia, was on the next practice court for two hours simply hitting backhand low and flick serves to various parts of the court. He was renowned for his backhand serve, but there he was still practising. *Practice makes perfect what you practise.* You cannot practise enough.

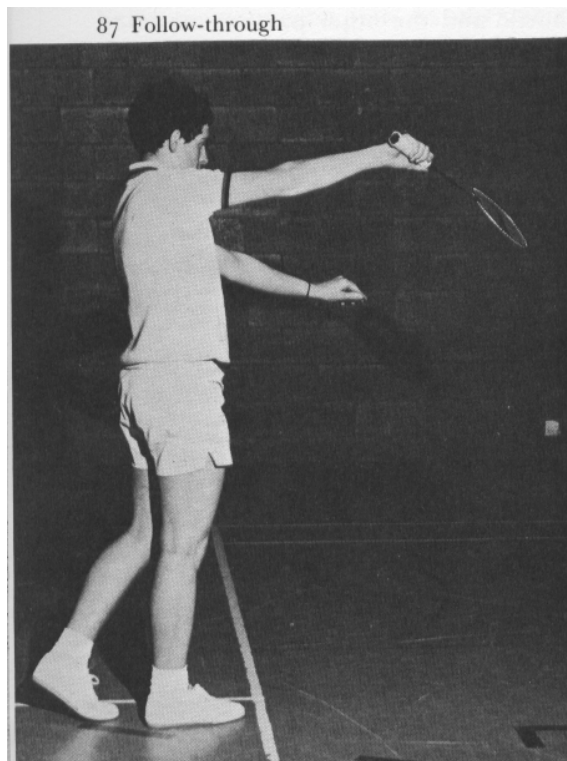
85-87 The backhand serve



85 Preparation



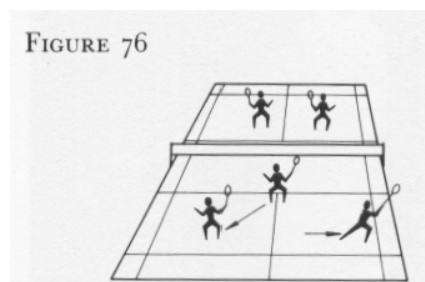
86 Hit



Sides attack

Sometimes in the game you hit a good smash from your rearcourt and your opponent hits a weak return to the side of your midcourt. It has travelled past your front man and so you move forwards to hit it. Immediately your opponents move into the sides defensive formation (see Figure 76).

What does your partner do? He is positioned on the T, ready to attack a weak reply to the forecourt. Can he remain there? Consider the replies from your opponent; a block to the forecourt sides or centre, a clear to the rearcourt sides or centre and a whip cross-court.



You are now in position to cover the replies to your own half of the court, but you cannot cover the clear to your rearcourt backhand side. That is your partner's task. He moves back to the midcourt and takes up an attacking stance. You are now in a sides attacking formation. If the opponents should block or clear the smash, one partner moves to hit the shuttle and the other partner moves to the appropriate attack position.

The rule is: *when the shuttle is high in the midcourt take up a sides attack formation, with each player ready to move to the reply in the forecourt or rearcourt on his own side of the court.*

In this position there is a slight variation on the smash. The shuttle may not be high enough to hit an overhead smash. It must be hit from shoulder level at the side. You would hit the shuttle with a sidearm smash, sometimes known as the drive (see page 83).

Practices in doubles

Doubles is a fast, exciting game which requires the ability to perform basic strokes quickly. The emphasis is on attack and at speed there may be many errors, for it is possible to become skilful at speed only with considerable practice. Fortunately many of the practices are enjoyable to perform and can be highly competitive in themselves. The following practices can be performed by any player who possesses the basic attacking and defensive strokes - the better player will perform them at a faster rate and have longer rallies.

In many of the practices mistakes are going to occur. Do not worry about this. Accept the mistake and begin a new rally. Eventually you will make fewer mistakes and the rallies will get longer. When you begin to play a normal game after practice, you will be quite surprised at the improvement in your play.

Note: In the practices the diagrams will show four players on court. Sometimes the players will practise in pairs, using half a court for each pair. At other times the practices will involve all four players together.

Attack and defence practices

In these practices the attacking side should meet the shuttle early, using jump smashes whenever possible. In addition vary the smash to create openings.

First practice (smash and defend) - 2 players (Figure 77)

The players practise in pairs: A and D, B and C. The instructions for A and D also apply to B and C.

1. D serves high to A. A tries to smash through defence of D. A must use only downward hits. If D plays a low return, A hits it back and D lifts high for the rally to continue.
2. D serves for five rallies and then changes over. Keep the score of the number of rallies won.

FIGURE 77

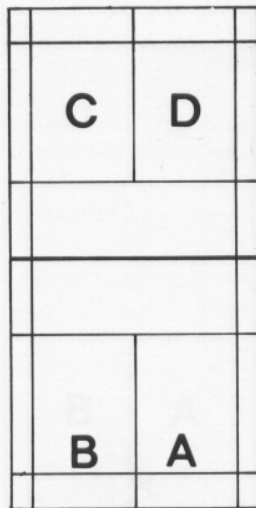
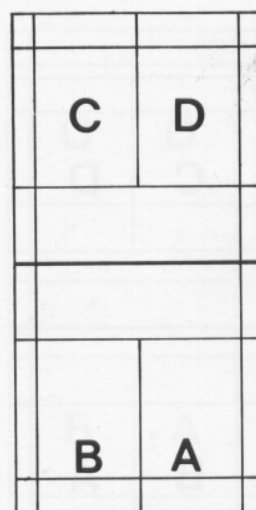


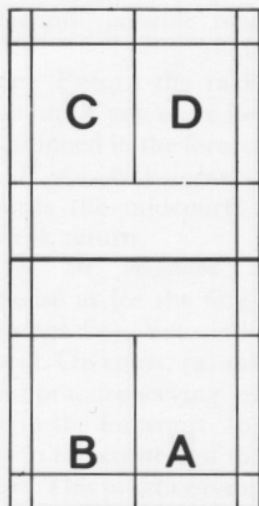
FIGURE 78



Second practice (defence into attack) – 2 players
(Figure 78 – description overleaf).

Second practice (defence into attack) for two players – see fig 78 - Instructions below.

FIGURE 79



- 1 *D* serves high to *A*. *A* must hit downwards.
- 2 *D* must force *A* to lift. If *A* lifts, *D* hits down and *A* attempts to play a return that will force *D* to lift.
- 3 The rally continues until one player hits a winner.
- 4 *D* serves for five rallies and then changes over.
- 5 Keep a score of the rallies won.

Third practice (smash and defend) – 4 players (Figure 79)

- 1 *A* and *B* attack, *C* and *D* defend. Each player remains in his own part of the court.
- 2 *A* and *B* can hit down anywhere to *C* or *D*, *C* and *D* can lift anywhere to *A* and *B*.
- 3 *C* and *D* serve for five rallies each.
- 4 If *C* or *D* play a low return, then *A* or *B* return the shuttle for *C* or *D* to clear.
- 5 Change over after ten rallies.
- 6 Keep the score out of twenty rallies.

Fourth practice (defence into attack) – 4 players (Figure 80)

- 1 Repeat the third practice.
- 2 *C* serves high to *A* for five rallies.
- 3 Either side can force the other side to lift until one side hits a winning smash or the rally breaks down.
- 4 Each player serves high for five rallies. Each player remains in his own court.

Fifth practice (attack and defence) – 4 players (Figure 81) *C* and *D* defend and must hit upwards, *A* and *B* attack and must hit downwards. The players can move anywhere on their side of the court in attack or defence. If *A* or *B* are unable to hit down, they must play a net return and *C* and *D* must clear.

FIGURE 80

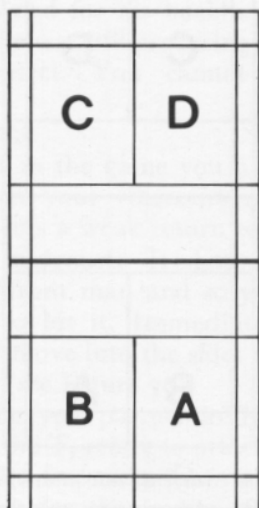
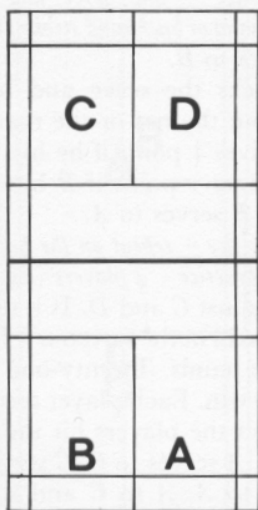


FIGURE 81



Note: This practice allows *A* and *B* to take up 'front and back' and sides attack formations, and *C* and *D* to defend. Change over after *C* and *D* have served high for five rallies each.

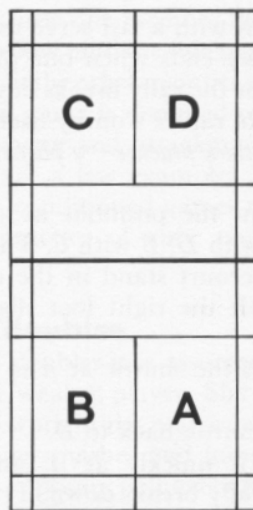
Midcourt attack practices

First practice – 2 players (Figure 82) Each player stands in the midcourt and remains or returns there during the rally.

- 1 *A* serves the shuttle quickly at *D*.
- 2 *D* smashes straight at *A*'s head.
- 3 *A* hits back with force.
- 4 The players trade 'blows' with each other until the rally breaks down or one player hits a winner from the midcourt.

Note: The purpose of the practice is to learn to hit the shuttle at the opponent at speed with either attacking or defensive strokes. Keep the racket head up at all times and try to hit the shuttle from in front of you.

FIGURE 82



Second practice – 4 players (Figure 83) A player can hit the shuttle at either opponent, but must remain in his own part of

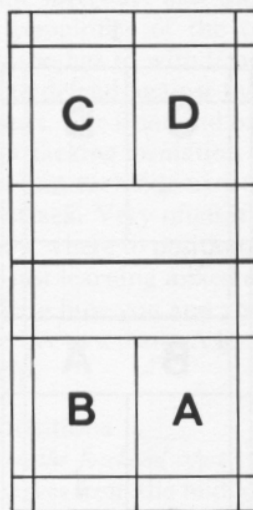


FIGURE 83

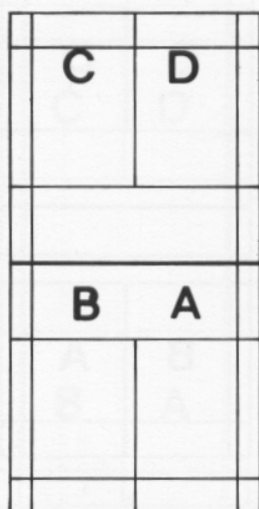
the court. Each player serves for five rallies.

- 1 *D* begins with a fast serve to *A*.
- 2 The rally ends when one player hits a winner or the rally breaks down. Keep the score of rallies won by each side.

Forecourt attack practice – 2 players (Figure 84)

- 1 Stand in the positions as shown. *A* practises with *D*, *B* with *C*. The players in the forecourt stand in the attacking stance with the right foot slightly forwards.
- 2 *D* serves the shuttle at *A* to skim the net.
- 3 *A* hits shuttle back to *D*.
- 4 *D* hits it quickly at *A*, and so on until the rally breaks down. Try to keep the rally going. *D* serves for ten rallies and then changes positions.

FIGURE 84



Server and receiver practices

First practice – low serve and flick serve using forehand or backhand stroke (Figure 85)

- 1 *A* serves to *B*.
- 2 *B* attacks the serve and hits down, either from the net or the rearcourt.
- 3 *B* receives 1 point if he hits down.
- 4 *A* receives 1 point if *B* hits up. After 5 points, *B* serves to *A*.

Second practice – repeat on the backhand side

Forecourt practice – 4 players (Figure 86) *A* and *B* against *C* and *D*. It is designed to improve skill in the forecourt. It is played like table tennis. Twenty-one points required to win. Each player serves for five points and the players hit the shuttle in turn, e.g. *A* serves to *C*, *C* serves to *B*, *B* to *D*, *D* to *A*, *A* to *C* and so on. The shuttle must be hit to land in the forecourt. No player is allowed into the fore-

FIGURE 85

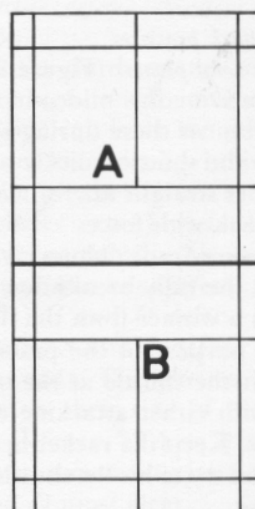
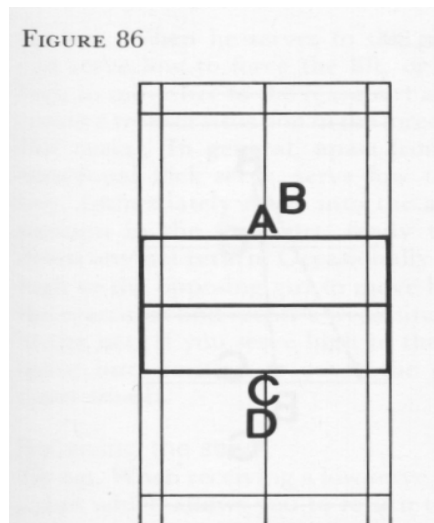


FIGURE 86



court until the shuttle is hit by the opponent. A stands behind the T and serves to the centre of the forecourt. C moves forward to play a net shot and the game continues.

Conditioned games.

Game 1. Rules: your side must hit downwards any shuttle above shoulder height; you are only allowed to clear low shots in the forecourt; shuttles hit from low positions in the midcourt and rearcourt must be returned to the net; your opponents play a normal game.

Note: This game is designed to improve your skill in attacking and changing defence into attack.

Game 2. Rules: your side is not allowed to hit a power smash, you can only use the variations on the smash, i.e. sliced smash, change of pace and direction, or checked smash; the opponents play a normal game.

Note: This game is designed to improve your skill in varying the attack.

Game 3. Rules: one member of each side must serve low until the side reaches eight points, then the other member serves low.

Note: This game is designed to improve skill in serving and attacking the serve.

These are a few examples. Make up your own conditioned games to emphasize the practice of some part of your game.

Mixed doubles

In mixed doubles it is assumed that the girl is the weaker player. She is not expected to work in the rearcourt and perform strong smashes and jump smashes while the opposing pair keeps her pinned back there. For this reason the mixed doubles game is based on the front and back formation, the attacking formation. This means that, in general, the girl controls the forecourt and the boy controls the remainder of the court.

Occasionally she has to withdraw from the forecourt to defend against the smash to the midcourt. The front and back formation is an attacking formation and so it is important that each side tries to gain and keep the attack. Very often it is a problem to know where to position yourselves if you are just learning mixed doubles, so I will explain how you and your partner work together as a team. A few diagrams should help.

Serving positions

Serving from the forehand court (Figure 87) The boy serves from the midcourt and so is already in the attack position. The girl stands on his non-racket side. When the boy receives the serve, his partner can stand in the forecourt to play all net shots or stand in the midcourt to allow her partner to attack the serve and play the net reply to his move. She must be ready to move into the forecourt as soon as possible. The girl can therefore stand at G or G1.

Serving from the backhand court (Figure 88)

The tactics and positions are similar for the forehand court,

Girl serves (Figure 89) Normal doubles formation. The boy stands midcourt, ready to attack.

Boyserves. When the boy serves to the other boy, he should serve a good low serve to force a lift. His partner is ready to attack a net return and so helps to force the lift. The occasional flick serve is useful to prevent his opponent rushing the net. When he serves to the girl he can serve low to force the lift, or serve high to move her to the rearcourt and so create a weaker situation in the forecourt.

Girl serves. In general, apart from the occasional flick serve, serve low to the boy. Immediately move into the attack position in the forecourt, ready to hit down any net return. Occasionally serve high to the opposing girl to move her to the rearcourt and create a weak situation at the net. If you serve high to the girl, move into position to cover the cross-court smash.

FIGURE 87

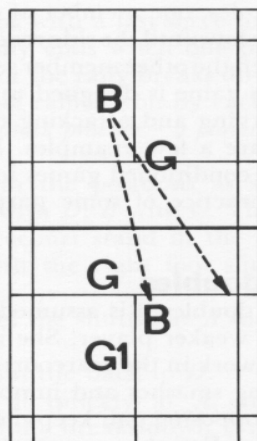


FIGURE 88

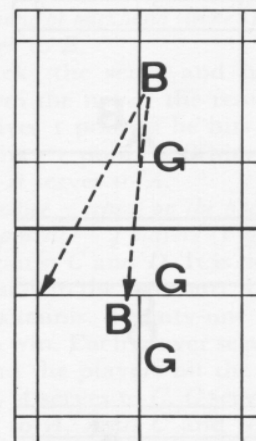


FIGURE 89

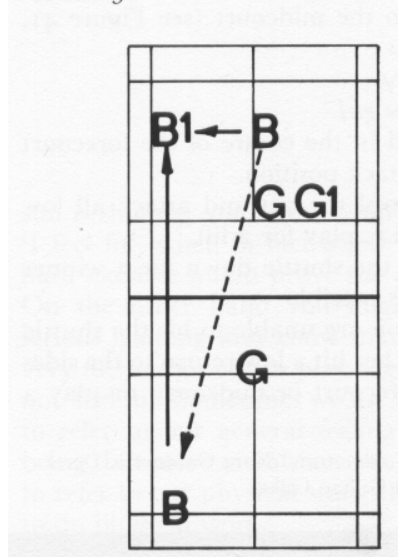
		B	
	G		
		G	
		B	

Receiving the serve

The boy. When receiving a low serve, play a shot which allows you to return to the midcourt and your partner to take the forecourt. For example, play it away from the opposing girl to the sides of the forecourt or the midcourt. In both cases this move is designed to give you time and to force a lift. If you receive a high serve, hit straight down the line or to the centre (see Figure 90). After a high serve, travel back to smash as your partner occupies the centre forecourt. The opposing boy covers the straight smash (B1) and his partner covers the cross-court smash (G1).

The girl. Return the low serve to the sides of the forecourt or midcourt, or meet it early and hit it hard at the boy in the midcourt. Immediately recover to the attack position. If you must clear, then aim for the sides and move slightly beyond the forecourt to cover the cross-court smash. Return the high serve with a smash straight to the side or centre, then move immediately to the forecourt.

FIGURE 90



If you must clear, then clear to the corners and position yourself at the edge of the forecourt to cover the cross-court smash.

Throughout mixed doubles much of the play involves low returns to the midcourt area. This is the weak point in the front-and-back formation. The aim is to manoeuvre your opponents out of position or force them to hit the shuttle up-wards. This is where the boy must be alert in the midcourt. He must be ready to move forwards to the side and hit the shuttle before it drops too low. He then hits a drive (a sidearm smash) to his opponents midcourt, or cross-court deep to the rearcourt, away from his opponent. A full drive will skim the net and travel horizontally to the rearcourt.

A half drive, one hit with less force, will drop into the midcourt (see Figure 41, page 83).

Summary

Role of the girl

- (i) Stand in the centre of the forecourt in the attack position.
- (ii) Control the net and attack all low returns, i.e. play for a lift.
- (iii) Hit the shuttle down for a winner whenever possible.
- (iv) If you are unable to hit the shuttle down, either hit a low return to the sides of the forecourt or midcourt, or play a

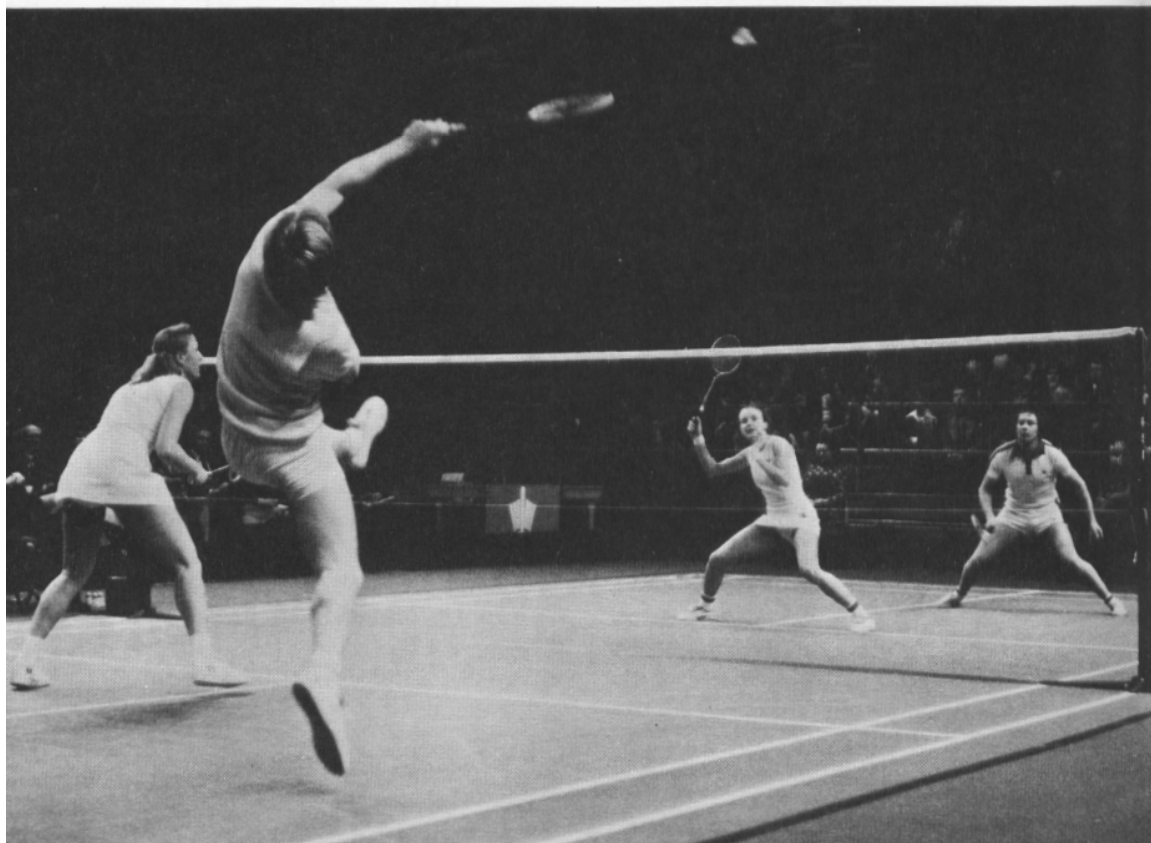
spinner or tumbler. Force the opponents to hit upwards.

- (v) Be ready to anticipate a cross-court move from either a drive or a low return.
- (vi) Allow any shuttle you cannot reach to pass by you to your partner in the midcourt.

Role of the boy

- (i) Stand in the midcourt behind the girl in the attack position.
- (ii) Cover the girl when she moves to hit the shuttle, in case she allows it to pass by her.
- (iii) Smash whenever possible.
- (iv) Avoid hitting upwards.
- (v) Hit the shuttle towards the midcourt or the corners of the court.

88 Mike Tredgett and Nora Gardner v. Derek Talbot and Gillian Gilks



Chapter 5 (pages 131-138)

--Missing--

If anyone has a copy please consider
sharing it.
stan@worldbadminton.com

6 Behaviour

Your general behaviour in badminton can reflect upon you as a sportsman and affect your performance as a player. In so far as we value good behaviour, particularly in badminton, we must ask what counts as good behaviour in the sport.

The ESBA have printed a section on game ethics in their annual handbook. This is useful for reference to particular aspects on behaviour. I would like to discuss behaviour in sport in general and then apply some instances to badminton.

Morality is essentially concerned with how you should behave towards other people. A good general rule to follow is to behave with others as you would want them to behave with you. We believe, for example, it is a good thing:

- (i) that people are honest and tell the truth, for then we can rely on the person's word and trust each other.
- (ii) that people are fair with each other. You might have experienced at school or at home a case when you feel that the teacher or your parents have not really considered your side of the argument and weighed up all the facts before making a decision, you think you have been treated unfairly. This, I am sure you would agree, is undesirable.
- (iii) that peoples' interests are considered when decisions are made affecting them.
- (iv) that people's points of view are respected. In other words, you would expect your teacher to place some importance on your point of view or reasons for your action, and consequently ask your opinion and listen fairly to your comments.

These are four basic principles which are important if we are to develop as people and live together and enjoy life together, whether it is at home, at the youth centre, at school or within the game of badminton.

Now let me concentrate on badminton and see how these principles apply to your behaviour in the game.

Badminton is a game and games belong to the world of sport. Peoples have constructed various sports throughout their history and done so for the purpose of enjoyment. In sport we enjoy many things: the competition, the challenge, the test of skill and courage, the physical movement, the social life, and so on. All the different activities that make up sport have some purpose to them. The purpose of mountain climbing may be to 'get to the top', or to test one's skill and courage on a difficult or new climb; of canoeing, perhaps to navigate rapids successfully; archery, to hit a target successfully; and of games, to win. The enjoyment comes from taking part and in competing against self, others or some natural element to succeed in the aim of that particular sport.

So although the point of sport is enjoyment and the point of badminton is to win, because badminton is a sport, one must not try to win at the expense of the enjoyment. Any behaviour which lessens the enjoyment of the sport in any way is undesirable and should, if possible, be avoided.

These principles can act as guidelines to decide whether behaviour is desirable or not. In addition there are some fixed rules which tell you how you must behave in the game. In fact you must follow two different sets of rules:

1. The Laws of Badminton which tell you how to play the game.
2. Moral 'rules' which guide your behaviour in the game.

In this section I only intend to discuss the moral rules which refer to how you ought to behave as far as other people - your opponents, your partner, the officials and the spectators - are concerned.

The spectator

You might wonder why you should be concerned about the spectators' views about how you behave. Well, in some ways, it is very much your concern. If you are playing in a hall where spectators attend to watch badminton, then they are part of the badminton setting. They have come to watch competitive badminton and to look at exciting play, a challenging game, and the skill being exhibited, or to support a particular player. Spectating provides their enjoyment of the game and as such is an important part of the game. You have no choice if the game is open to the public but to behave in a desirable manner and show some consideration for the spectators' enjoyment. You must, within reason, avoid that behaviour which lessens their enjoyment, e.g. bad temper, swearing, racket throwing, cheating, unpleasant scenes, etc.

The officials

If you play in a match or a tournament, then more often than not the game will be attended by an official, i.e. an umpire or linesman. These on-court officials are backed up by numerous off-court officials.

Off-court officials

Organized badminton would not exist but for a large number of people who work hard to bring it about. At all levels, from the World Championships down to your school tournament, some persons have to work hard to organize and administer these events. They do so for a variety of reasons - interest, satisfaction, social spirit, promotion of the game, love of the game, etc. All players benefit from organized badminton, for without it there would be no way of realizing any ambitions. There would be no targets and little opportunity to compete and measure progress at different levels of play. Organized badminton takes time to arrange and must take place within a certain time-schedule. Your match at school may have to be completed by 6.30 pm for the evening institute to begin a session, the courts may be booked for three hours only, and so on.

In a large event the planning is sometimes complex and difficult. The timing can go wrong, if matches take longer than usual or someone has arrived late. Mistakes are inevitable. Where do the players stand? All the organization is for the players but it requires the players' co-operation to run successfully. How can you help?

1. Be punctual.
2. Let the officials know that you have arrived, i.e. report in.
3. Be ready to play when required.
4. Remember to hand in your result at the end of a match.
5. Don't become annoyed when things go wrong or officials appear to be irritated.
6. Be fair and don't take the officials' work for granted, as though you have a right to expect the work they do. Consider their importance as people as much you might consider your own.
7. Express appreciation for what they do. A 'thank you' for organizing and officiating is the least you can offer someone who has worked hard to make an event run successfully for you.

On-court officials

If you disagree with a decision the rules are quite clear about procedure: the umpire's decision is final. Besides this, rudeness, bad temper and undesirable behaviour of any kind, should be controlled. Behave as you would want others to behave to you. Be fair and considerate, respect their judgements, even if you disagree. In other words, once a decision is made, get on with the game. Anything less than that spoils the enjoyment of the game for everyone, yourself included.

Your partner

In a tense doubles match it is often the case that your partner can have a bad patch and make mistakes. Should he deliberately not try and cannot be bothered, then you have a right to get annoyed with him and to express your feelings to him. For in not trying he is not being fair or considerate. When you agree to partner someone in a game you become committed to co-operate fully to 'win the game'. Not to try is to be unfair; it is to let your partner down and in a sense to break your word. A poor partner in this respect may justify some sharp words from you. However, it is easy to get angry or upset with a partner who is trying hard and having a poor game. In this case you should assume that he is doing his best at the time and indeed wants to play better. In this situation it is not fair to get annoyed with your partner. Everyone has a bad patch occasionally and in a doubles team you must learn to expect it. Help your partner and take some of the responsibility and encourage him to relax and not worry; just hope that his game gets better. More often than not it will improve and you can play at full strength again - that is what teamwork is all about. Next time it might be you that has the bad patch.

At the end of the game, win or lose, always thank your partner, for in his efforts he has contributed to the game and so to your enjoyment of it.

The opponents

Your opponent plays the game for enjoyment and, just like you, he gets his enjoyment from trying to win a good contest and using his skill to do so. During the game there will be rallies in which your opponent beats you with a good move or retrieves a losing situation to his advantage. Skill and effort are something we should appreciate in the game. A good player acknowledges the skill of his opponent at times, even during the game. Sometimes it is with a comment, like 'good shot', or even a determined nod of acknowledgement. Without giving anything away, it marks the respect two equal opponents have for each other, and makes the contest so much more enjoyable.

Sometimes you will encounter a bad line decision. You may, when you play without an umpire, be confronted with bad line-calls, fault serves, time-wasting, etc. All these are acts which lose you the point. You must decide whether or not your opponent is cheating intentionally. If he is not cheating then you can point out to him that the rules do not allow certain serves or behaviour; or that you disagree with a particular decision and wish to play the point again. Between two fair and reasonable opponents any dispute can be resolved by appeal to the rules and some discussion (learn the Laws of Badminton).

The opponent who cheats is a different matter. You can point out to this opponent that he is not being fair according to the rules or the spirit of the game. If he ignores your request for fair play, then you can appeal to the referee and ask for an umpire. If this is not possible, there are several sources of action open to you. You can concentrate and make sure that you do not give him the opportunity to cheat easily, i.e. hit the shuttle well within the court. Stand back to receive his fault serve. Try to devise a tactic to combat his cheating. Do not become annoyed. Players who cheat usually do so only when they are doubtful about winning. They try to get cheap points and to upset you. Recognize cheating and gamesmanship for what they are and keep calm. In fact it helps to become even more calm and extra polite when you know that the opponent is worried.

Unfair opponents are few and far between, but they can cause upsets and unpleasant behaviour on court. In general a good contest depends on you and your opponent co-operating to make it a good one. You will both make mis-takes and be outwitted by each other. Accept your own errors, for you are human and acknowledge your opponent's skill, for he is human too. Undesirable behaviour only affects your performance and spoils the enjoyment of the game.

At the end of the game, win or lose, thank your opponent for the contest, for without his efforts there would be no contest and accordingly no enjoyment.

Whenever you step on the court, be fair. Try your best to win and enjoy the game.

7 Tournament Play

If you have reached the stage when you want to play more competitive badminton then you must enter tournaments. A good player always prepares thoroughly for a competition. There are some factors you should consider.

Training

Conclude training and hard practice to allow at least one full day for resting before the tournament. A gentle knock-up is all right, but nothing too strenuous.

Arrival

Arrange to arrive early at the tournament venue. This should give you time to relax after travelling and get used to the conditions of the hall, lighting, temperature, etc. You will have plenty of time to change, warm up and, if possible, have a practice before you go on court. There is nothing worse than arriving at the last minute and rushing onto court restless and unprepared. More often than not you lose the first set before you have settled down.

Equipment

It is very important that you have sufficient equipment. A check-list can help when packing and then nothing is forgotten. One international player, who was careless in this respect, has been known to arrive without his rackets or his contact-lenses. All the hard work for a tournament can be wasted by forgetting to pack one important item. Here are some suggestions.

Rackets. You need at least two rackets for a tournament.

Footwear. Some players carry two pairs of shoes with them and certainly an extra pair of laces. In addition extra socks and one or two spare shirts make a difference to personal comfort and ensure that you feel fresh for each match. Extra items such as elastoplast and scissors are sometimes included by tournament players. It is attention to small details which reduces the chances of anything affecting your performance.

Dress

Begin the warm-up and knock-up in a tracksuit, particularly in cold badminton halls. Exercise the body to warm it and extend the muscles fully before play. You are then ready for a flying start when the game begins.

The game

In the game it is important that you concentrate on your opponent and not on your strokes. Some players are so concerned with the production of a stroke that they forget that there is an opponent on the other side of the net and that a stroke is only of interest as a move in the game, a move designed to help to win the rally.

In practice you may have been working on new strokes and moves. The tournament is the testing ground. You may think that you should make a purposeful effort to try out the new strokes and moves in the tournament. Unfortunately you could do this and forget, to some extent, about your opponent. When you are in a game, forget all about the practice and concentrate on defeating your opponent. If you have worked hard in practice you will most probably perform the new stroke in the game anyway.

Playing the game.

You should play to win. This means that you should play to win each rally. Do not think ahead to the end of the game, but simply concentrate on winning each rally and let the points take care of themselves. Win 15 rallies when serving and you win the game.

End of the game.

After the game, thank your opponent and the umpire, then take your equipment and return directly to the changing room. Remove your damp clothes, wash down, dry and change into dry clothes for your next match.

Evaluation. If you want to become a better player you should assess your performance each time you play. Why did you lose? What happened when you were leading 12-3 in the third set and he caught up? Is there anything you need to work on in practice? What sort of moves did your opponent make that you found difficult? Ask questions about your game, study opponents and then decide what you ought to work on. In this way you will make steady progress and find the game more interesting.

Finally, a reminder. Before you leave the tournament make it your duty to find out who is the organizer or the referee, and go and thank him for organizing the tournament and for the enjoyment you gained from participating in it.

8 Opportunities within the ESBA

The ESBA is organized in the following way. Throughout England each school affiliates directly or indirectly to its County Schools' BA, Metropolitan Schools' BA or to its local federation. The county or area schools' associations affiliated to the ESBA are organized on a regional basis whose essential structure is illustrated on page 147. The regions are almost identical to those created under the BA of E regional coaching scheme. A regional co-ordinator, whose task is to supervise and encourage schools' badminton in the area, is appointed to each functioning region. The co-ordinators work in close liaison with their BA of E counterparts and can bring promising young players to the notice of County BAs or the chief coach.

Events run by, or on behalf of, the ESBA are restricted to pupils under 16 on 1 September of the current season.

Regional representative teams compete annually in the ESBA inter-regional tournament which begins with a young player being put forward by his or her school or club for a schools' county trial. From the schools' county squad, players go forward for selection for the regional team. From the regional teams are selected a number of players from amongst whom the English Schools team is chosen. In addition ESBA selectors attend junior tournaments all over the country, on the look-out for talented players, so that, as far as is possible, no child is deprived of an opportunity to progress.

Two of the aims of the Association are 'to raise the standard of junior badminton throughout the country', and to 'provide further coaching and coaching facilities for school children and to pro-mote county and national associations'. Each school association within the ESBA is therefore committed to promote badminton and to provide the opportunity for you to compete and receive coaching. Any school in the country is entitled to membership of an affiliated schools' association and therefore able to receive the benefits of the Association. To achieve these aims the ESBA each year promotes and organizes many coaching courses and much competitive badminton. There is therefore every opportunity for you to play, learn more and compete up to the schools international level.

To ensure that the children of every school have the opportunity to learn badminton the ESBA has established the Teacher Award Scheme. Its aim is to give a basic qualification to teachers or student teachers, so that badminton may be competently introduced in as many schools and as wide an age range as possible. Ultimately it is hoped that there will be at least one qualified teacher of badminton in each school.

Some idea of the scope of the work performed by the ESBA can be seen in the list of events that follows, in which children have the opportunity to take part.

1 The ESBA award scheme

This is an award scheme which is designed to enable you to improve your own standard and receive recognition for your success. There are the bronze, silver and gold awards.

The bronze award

To attain this you must be able to:

- (a) demonstrate (i) low service, (ii) high service, (iii) clear (iv) smash, (v) drop.
- (b) show knowledge of the basic laws, i.e. height of net, the toss, who serves, service faults, receiving faults, and faults which occur in the course of the game, e.g. striking the shuttle before it has passed the net or hitting the net itself.

Assessment. You are assessed by any teacher who holds the ESBA teachers' award or by a BA of E coach, or by arrangement with the ESBA executive.

The silver award

To obtain this you must:

- (a) hold the bronze award.
- (b) demonstrate ability to play (i) forehand drive, (ii) backhand drive, (iii) returns of low serve, (iv) returns of high serve, (v) sequence of overhead shots (clears, drop and smash).
- (c) play a game of singles to show basic tactics.
- (d) play a game of doubles to show basic tactics.
- (e) show understanding of the laws with regard to: setting, faults in play (slings, double hits, invasion of opponents court, etc.).
- (f) show a practical working knowledge of game ethics.

Assessment. By nominees of the affiliated schools' association who are approved by the ESBA.

The gold award

To obtain this you must:

- (a) hold the silver award.
- (b) have competed in tournaments and submit a record at the time of the assessment.
- (c) have represented an ESBA affiliated association or represented your senior county.
- (d) show competence in scoring a game.
- (e) show a practical working knowledge of game ethics.
- (f) show practical understanding of the laws of badminton.
- (g) display an outline knowledge of the organization of badminton at national and international level.

Assessment. By the ESBA executive. Nominations are made by the County SBA to the Award Secretary, ESBA, by 31 October of each year. You are assessed on and off court throughout the season. You are notified of the result at the end of the season and the awards are pre-sented at the ESBA Inter-County Tournament.

How to apply. The application for the Bronze and Silver Awards is made to your county and area association, or your school should contact the Hon. Secretary of the ESBA.

2 Coaching courses

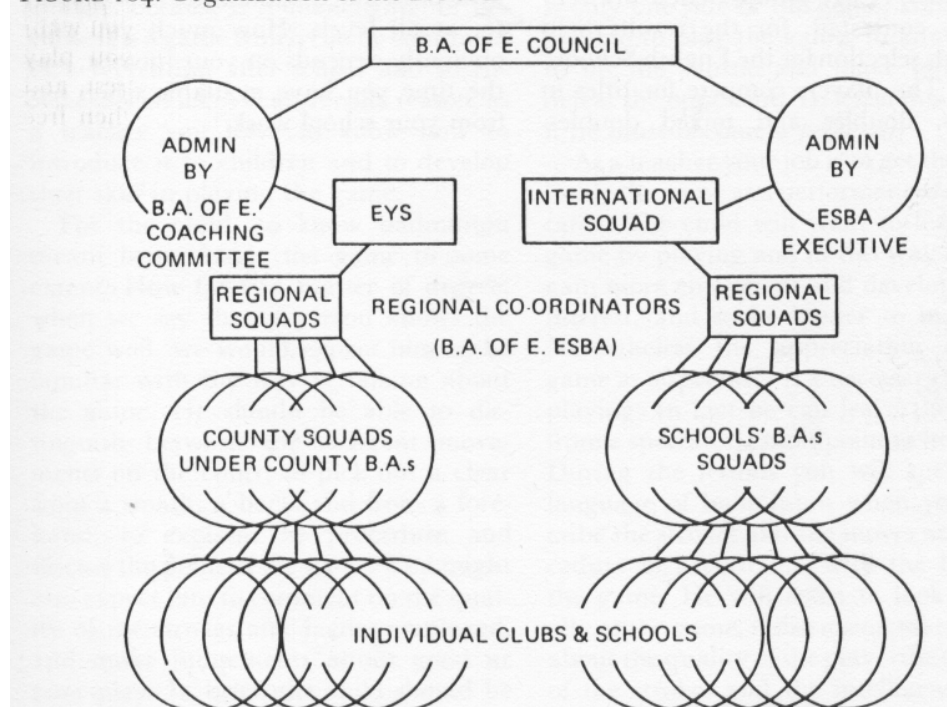
The various schools, area and county associations hold their own coaching courses, but in addition the ESBA hold courses in the summer for members and potential members of the English Schools' Squad.

3 Competition Team competition

(i) *Top schools competition.* This competition is organized in three sections: for boys, girls and mixed teams. The counties hold local competitions to find their three champion schools. These county champion schools then go forward to the regional finals, hoping to win a place in the national finals, where winners from the regional finals compete for the Charles Cumpstead Memorial Trophies.

(ii) *The ESBA inter-counties tournament.* This event is held annually during the Easter holidays. Each county team consists of 5 boys and 5 girls. The tournament is run initially on American lines, with counties playing each other in four groups. The winners and lower placed teams then play off against the winners, etc. of another section in a drawn knock-out semi-final and final, thus giving places to each county team.

FIGURE 104. Organization of the BA of E



(iii) *The inter-regional match.* This event is held annually in November. Teams representing the regions compete in a knock-out tournament. The regions are North, South-West, Home Counties, Midlands and East.

(iv) *Under-16 international matches.* Once a year a school international quadrangular match is held. The English Schools' team competes against teams from Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

Individual competition

Each year National Individual Championships are held for the under-16 and the under 14 age groups. These are very keenly contested, for the results help towards selection for the English Schools' team. The players compete for titles in singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Several winners in previous years, Nora Gardner, Kevin Jolly and Paula Kilvington for example, have gone on to gain full international honours with the English senior national team.

Further opportunities

Within the schools' system the opportunities are numerous. The ESBA is affiliated to and liaises with the BA of E. Within the parent association there are also numerous leagues, junior county teams and tournaments, regional teams and competitions, the England youth squad, international matches and finally national age-group championships.

You have the opportunity to play as little or as much badminton as you want to, at all levels. How much you play obviously depends on your interest, and the time you have available when free from your school work.

9 The Teacher

Introduction

There may be several reasons why you teach badminton. You may be interested in the game and consider that it is the sort of game children will find interesting and worthwhile. You may consider it worthwhile because it is recreational and provides enjoyment, gets children into a sport - an important part of our culture; because it is challenging; or because it is a game which can be continued as a recreation after school and so enriches social life. Whatever the reason, as a teacher you have to know how to introduce it to children and to develop their skill in playing the game.

For the child, to know badminton means being inside the game to some extent. How far is a matter of degree; when we say that a person knows the game well, we would expect him to be familiar with the way of talking about the game. He should be able to distinguish between the different movements on the court; to pick out a clear from a smash, a backhand from a forehand; to explain the procedure and discuss the point of the game. You might also expect him to comment on the quality of the strokes and tactics employed, and make judgements about good or poor play. In brief, the child should be familiar with, and able to use, the language appropriate to the game.

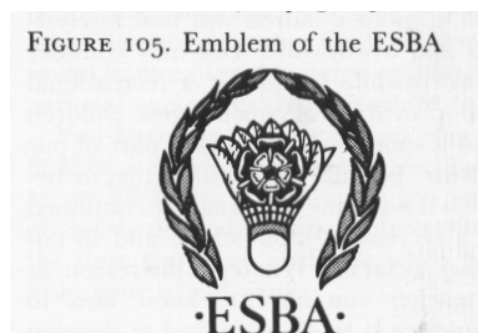
He could of course learn all this about the game without ever stepping on to the court. He could watch badminton and learn, by description and explanation, to recognize and comment on aspects of the game. In this sense of learning he would be a *spectator* of the game. However that is only one side of the game. He should be able to play the game, to know how to hit the shuttle and make moves to defeat the opponent. To learn this side of it he must become a *performer*.

As a teacher your job is to get the child inside the game as a performer *and* a spectator. The child will want to learn the game by playing and in this way he will gain more enjoyment and develop more interest, and so be keener to improve. Nevertheless the appreciation of the game as a spectator is a necessary part of playing. In fact he can learn the game from a spectator's standpoint as he plays. During the lessons you will speak the language of badminton when you describe the strokes and the moves and procedure in accordance with the laws of the game. He will learn to look critically at the game, if discussion takes place about the quality of the play - the quality of the strokes and the intelligence and imagination reflected in the moves. He will develop his understanding if reasons are provided for your comments on the game - comments with regard to stroke production, tactical moves and behaviour on court. In this way, as he plays, he will see more in the game. How much understanding a child develops and how skilful a performer he becomes, depends very much on your teaching method. If you are dogmatic and inflexible, authoritarian in your approach, allowing no latitude for individual style or interpretation within the game, then you may well hinder his development as a 'thinker' in the game. You may teach him the basic essentials of hitting but restrict flair and imaginative moves in difficult situations.

Only by combining instruction with explanation, practice with individual interpretation, and the opportunity to work out his own tactical moves or to question yours, will he develop his understanding and his growth as a person. Badminton is very much a game in which a player must think for himself on court. As a teacher it is your job to promote that aspect of the game.

Teaching the game

The ESBA now run courses for teachers who want to teach badminton in school. A teacher who passes the course receives the Teacher's Badminton Award Certificate. This award is only open to teachers or student teachers. Its aim is to increase the amount of badminton played in school, especially in the games lesson. It is hoped, in this way, that badminton will compete on an equal basis with other games in school. It is also intended to provide the teacher with the necessary knowledge to teach beginners, arrange group practices, correct basic faults and to organize simple tournaments within the school and so help to maintain the children's interest in the game. A teacher need not be a good player but must be willing and keen to promote and encourage the game. The course for the award will help you to gain sufficient knowledge to teach the basic skills up to the bronze award standard (see page 146).



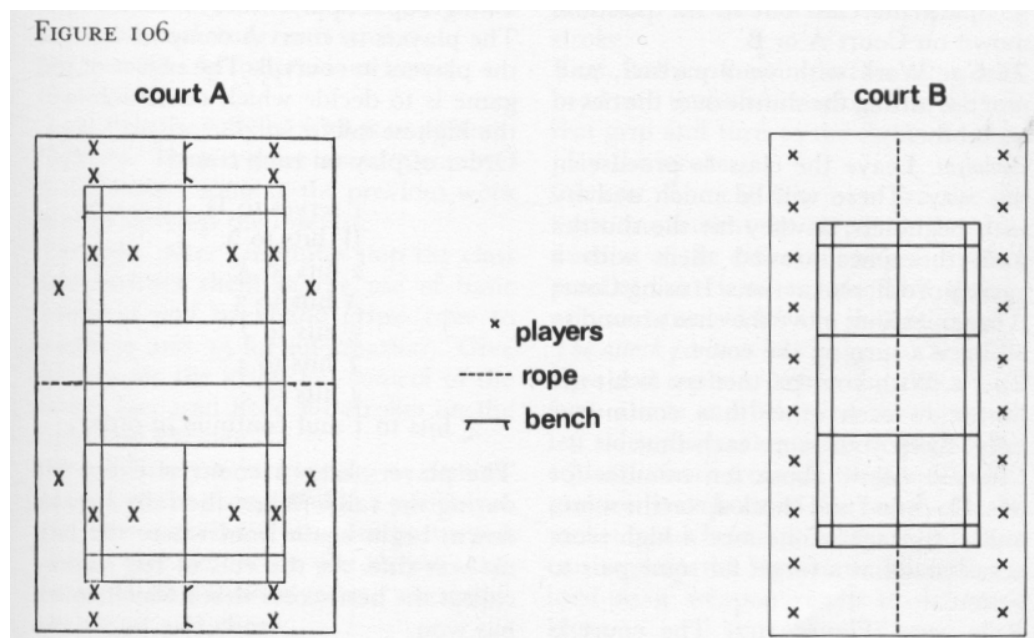
The following section is written to include most of the content of the game that falls within the scope of the TBA. It will both give you a basic knowledge, should you want to take the Teachers' Award, or if you possess the Teachers' Award or a BA of E coaching certificate, it will supplement that knowledge.

Basic lessons

The aim of these lessons is to introduce badminton to beginners. They are planned for a class of twenty in a gymnasium or hall containing one badminton court - the average gymnasium or hall will accommodate a class this size if the lesson is well organized. With extra courts, more children can be accommodated, and the following plan may be used as a basis. If problems of equipment and numbers beyond this occur, then the teacher can adapt the organization of this basic plan to meet his requirements. The lessons do not have to be followed in strict order each week. They involve a logical progression, but you may stay for several weeks on the same lesson or go back from lesson 3 to 1. Use your judgement according to the children's progress.

The idea behind these lessons is that the teachers should combine instruction with problem-solving as a method of teaching. The problems are set in the nature of tasks which the children must try to complete, e.g. 'With your partner practise hitting the shuttle over the net to each other'. There is no direction about how to do this. The child learns by having a go and unless he does the correct action he will not succeed in his task. The teacher might add to this some instruction, e.g. 'This is the forehand grip' (demonstrates and shows an illustration), 'now hold your racket in your hand like this, etc. and find ways of hitting the shuttle up and down using the forehand grip.'

The teacher will structure the situation and allow the children to explore the possibilities within that situation. In finding solutions, they will learn how to control the racket, and appreciate the flight of the shuttle and learn the various techniques of hitting the shuttle and moving about the court. The children are required to think and develop their understanding of the game in a logical manner.



Lesson 1 (Figure 106, page 151)

Aim. To introduce badminton and to explore ways of hitting the shuttle to a partner; to acquire control of the racket and to play a continuous rally.

Court A. The court – 8 players working in pairs. Side of court – rope or extra net or bench. 4 players, 2 at each side of court. End of court – the space is divided by a bench, 1 or 2 benches high. 2 pairs at each end.

Court B. The court is divided by a net or a rope lengthways. The players work across the court in pairs. Every player has a racket. The players work in pairs with a shuttle between them.

The Lesson

1. Give each player a racket.
2. Organize the class into pairs and give each pair a shuttlecock.
3. Space the class out in the positions shown on Court A or B.

Task 1. Work with your partner, and practise hitting the shuttle over the net to each other.

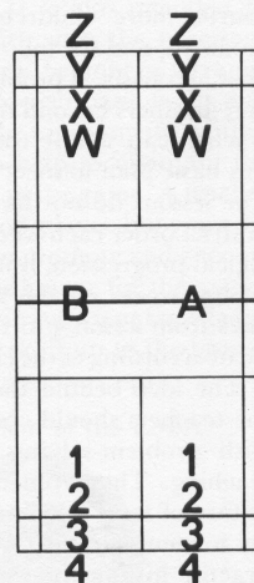
Comment. Leave the class to practise in this way. There will be much activity with beginners, as they hit the shuttles from the space around them with a variety of different actions. If using Court A organization, move the class around so all have a turn on the court.

Task 2. With your partner try to hit the shuttle to each other in a continuous rally. Keep your score each time.

Comment. Allow about ten minutes for this. Go round and check up on the scores and encourage. Announce a high score occasionally as a target for some pair to better.

Rally game (Figure 107) The court is

FIGURE 107



divided lengthways into two half courts. Two groups of players are on each court. The players in court A compete against the players in court B. The object of the game is to decide which court achieves the highest rally.

Order of play on each court:

1 serves to W
W hits to 2
2 hits to X
X hits to 3
3 hits to Y
Y hits to 4
4 hits to Z

Z hits to 1 and continue in order.

The players keep a count of every hit during the rally. When the rally breaks down, begin again from where the last hit was due. At the end of the session collect the best scores to see which court has won.

End of lesson.

Stop the class and store the equipment away.

1. Make sure that each child puts his racket away properly.
2. Place the shuttles in the box, the base of the shuttle first.
3. Show the class how to fold the net up neatly. Lift the posts and bases, carry them away and the floor will not be marked. If you insist upon standards of behaviour and care of equipment from the beginning, it will become a habit. The children learn standards and less time is spent in the lesson on preparing and storing equipment.

Lesson 2

Aims.

To teach the basic forehand and backhand grips.

To introduce the attacking stance.

To introduce forehand and backhand overhead and underarm strokes.

Organization. As for previous lesson.

The lesson

Task. Practise rallying with your partner.

Comment. They require about 5 minutes to remember some of the previous work and to develop, the interest.

The grips. After 5 minutes stop the class and instruct them in the use of basic forehand and backhand grips (refer to pages 34 and 35 for information). Give reasons for the grips, i.e. control of the racket face and head for strokes on the right and left side.

Note. Whenever instructing or demonstrating to the class, stand in a position so that they can all see your demonstration clearly and hear what you have to say. Give the class time to try out the grips. Go round and check.

Task. Practise rallying with your partner. Use the backhand grip to hit the shuttles from the left side of your body and the forehand grip to hit shuttles from the right side of your body.

Comment. While the class practise, check and correct grips where necessary. Allow sufficient time for this and then stop the class.

Discussion. Explain that hits from the left side of the body are called backhand strokes and hits from the right side of the body are called forehand strokes. The forehand and backhand strokes are hit from the overhead and underarm positions and so are called overhead forehand and backhand strokes and underarm forehand and backhand strokes. It helps to make a space to hit the shuttle if you turn to the right for the forehand stroke and turn to the left for the backhand stroke.

Task. Rally with your partner using overhead and underarm strokes. Use the correct grip and turn to the right or left to play the stroke.

Comment. The children now practise the basic movement involved in the production of the different strokes. As they practise, check to ensure they change grip and turn to hit the shuttle.

The attack position (see page 40) Stop the class and explain.

When shuttles are hit from above and below on the right and left sides, the racket must be held at an equal distance from all these areas. The position is in front of the body with the racket head held up, ready to hit. You can explain the idea that the racket is used as a weapon ready to deliver a blow.

Task. Rally with your partner. In between every hit return the racket to the attacking position, ready to hit the shuttle.

Comment. Allow time and once again check to see that your instruction is carried out.

Game. Rally game as for previous lesson. Encourage the children to change grip and to begin from the attack position.

Lesson 3

Aims.

To teach the low and high serves.

To play a game of singles.

Task. Rally with your partner. During the rally hold the racket in the attacking position and change grip for the backhand strokes.

Comment. Allow about 10 minutes for this and check and encourage the children to get it right.

The serve (read pages 58-66).

Introduce the serve. It is the opening move in the game. Show them how to do it and explain the rule regarding the serve. Organize the class for serving practice.

Task 1. The low serve.

Stand in the serving position and practise serving the shuttle low into your partner's court. Try to make it skim the net and drop onto his service line. You may use a forehand or backhand service.

Comment. Allow time to practise. For example, each child could have 10 attempts before his partner has a go.

Task 2. The high serve.

Stand in the serving position and practise serving the shuttle high into your partner's service court. Try to hit it very high and make it land on the rear line of his court.

Task 3. Varying the serve.

Practise high and low serves to your partner.

Comment. Take your time during the work and correct and advise the children where necessary.

A game. Play a game with your partner.

Rules: each player begins with 10 lives; if you make a mistake you lose a life. Take turns to serve for each rally. Begin each rally with a low serve or a high serve. The loser is the player who first loses all his lives.

Comment. The emphasis is on the serve as an opening move and on rallying. Each player will tend to play safe so as not to make a mistake, consequently the rallies should be prolonged.

Lesson 4

Aims. To introduce the clear, smash and drop shot.

Organization. As for previous lesson.

Task. Rally with your partner. Begin each rally with the serve.

Comment. During the practice, check the following: (i) Does each child serve properly? (ii) Does he use the correct grip? (iii) Does he hold the racket in the attack position? Correct and encourage where necessary.

The clear (read page 76) Stop the class and discuss the clear. Explain its purpose (its use as a move in the game), and then show them how to do it. If necessary, space out the class and shadow the action.

Task. Practise hitting the shuttle from overhead, high to your partner's rearcourt. Begin each rally with a high serve.

Comment. Allow a lot of time for this and coach where necessary.

The smash (read page 69) Stop the class and discuss the smash. Explain that it involves the same principles as the clear except that the shuttle is hit slightly forwards of the body and strongly downwards.

Task. Practise the smash with your partner. One player serves high and the partner smashes. After 10 smashes change over.

Comment. Check and correct where necessary. Practise until the children have had about 50 smashes each.

The drop shot (read page 74) Stop the class and discuss the overhead drop shot. Explain that the shuttle is hit with the same action as the smash and clear, but given only a gentle blow so that it lands near the net.

Task. Practise the drop shot with your partner. One player serves high, his partner drop shots. Change over after 10 drop shots.

Comment. Check and correct where necessary. Insist upon the correct preparation, as for the clear and smash. There is often a tendency to perform a pushing action because it is only a gentle hit.

Game. As for the previous lesson.

Comment. Explain that they can use the drop shot, clear and smash as moves in the game. A clear will force the partner to the rearcourt and leaves all the court open. A drop will bring him into the forecourt and leave his rearcourt open, and a smash will hit the shuttle to the ground quickly if he is not in position or ready.

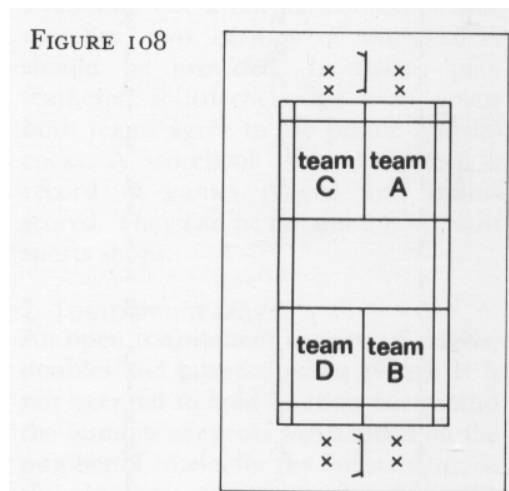
So during the game, try to make an opening in the court by moving your opponent to the rearcourt or the forecourt and then smash for a winner whenever possible. It would follow that each player must return quickly to the middle of his court and have his racket ready in the attack position. During the game, encourage the children to use these strokes as moves and try to be ready for the partner's replies each time.

Lesson 5. Team singles competition

This lesson (see Figure 108) can be used at any time to conclude each of the previous 4 lessons, or as a lesson on its own between the other lessons. Children enjoy the contest, so use your judgement about when to introduce a singles competition.

Aims. To play singles. To learn to use the strokes as moves.

Organization. This lesson is organized for competitive singles between 2 teams: team A v team B and team C v team D. Benches are provided at the end of the court for players to practise whilst waiting to go on court.



How to play. The instructions for team *A* v. team *B* also apply to team *C* v. team *D*.

1. The players in each team are numbered from 1 to 5.
2. Each player plays in turn a member of the opposite team.
3. A game is up to 5 or 7 points (depending on the time available).
4. The players toss for service. Only the server can score points. If he loses the rally, the opponent wins the service and can then add points to his score.
5. The order of play is as follows.

Team <i>A</i>		Team <i>B</i>
1	<i>v.</i>	1
2	<i>v.</i>	2
3	<i>v.</i>	3
4	<i>v.</i>	4
5	<i>v.</i>	5
1	<i>v.</i>	2
2	<i>v.</i>	3
3	<i>v.</i>	4
4	<i>v.</i>	5
5	<i>v.</i>	1
1	<i>v.</i>	3
2	<i>v.</i>	4
3	<i>v.</i>	5
4	<i>v.</i>	1
5	<i>v.</i>	2
1	<i>v.</i>	4
2	<i>v.</i>	5
3	<i>v.</i>	1
4	<i>v.</i>	2
5	<i>v.</i>	3
1	<i>v.</i>	5
2	<i>v.</i>	1
3	<i>v.</i>	2
4	<i>v.</i>	3
5	<i>v.</i>	4

6. The score is recorded on the order of play as follows.

	<i>A</i>	<i>v.</i>	<i>B</i>	
L	1	<i>v.</i>	1	W
W	2	<i>v.</i>	2	L
W	3	<i>v.</i>	3	L
L	4	<i>v.</i>	4	W
W	5	<i>v.</i>	5	L

7. At the end of play, add up the total wins and losses for each team to decide the winner.

Comments. During the competition study the children in action. At the end of a game make constructive comments to the players about their strokes, moves in the game and behaviour. Praise where due and advise where necessary. This sort of lesson can take place on several consecutive occasions, for winners of A and B could play the winners of C and D, and so on.

The school badminton club

The school badminton club usually meets in the lunch hour or in the evening. The keen player will join in order to improve his performance and gain more chances to play competitive badminton. It is in match play and tournaments that players get the opportunity to test their progress in a competitive situation. In practice the emphasis is on improving the strokes and movement. In competition the emphasis is on winning. The majority of children enjoy a contest; they concentrate harder and show more determination and effort in their attempts to win. Competition brings out the best efforts from most players and usually results in a general improvement in the standard of play.

In the school club, therefore, you will be involved with helping the keen players to improve their performance and perhaps organizing inter-school matches. With regard to performance, reference to the sections on the Singles Game, the Doubles Game and Fitness will provide more than enough information to meet your requirements.

Organizing competitive badminton

1. Match play

Inter-school competition requires some preparation and organization. The description below is intended to provide some general guidelines about arranging and organizing match play.

The team. The team usually consists of six players, arranged in three doubles pairs. Each pair play a contest against each pair of the opposing team.

The order of play. The pairs in each team are numbered as 1st Pair, 2nd Pair, 3rd Pair. Altogether nine matches are played.

	Team A	v.	Team B
Pair	1	v.	1
	2	v.	2
	3	v.	3
Pair	1	v.	2
	2	v.	3
	3	v.	1
Pair	1	v.	3
	2	v.	1
	3	v.	2

Organizing the match. Usually when a match takes place it is between the home team and a visiting team. The visitors are guests of the home team and certain courtesies should be extended to the visiting team.

(1) When arranging the match, enclose a diagram showing the directions of the venue. There is nothing more frustrating than searching for a building in a maze of streets.

(ii) When the visitors arrive, a member of the home team should welcome them and show them to the changing rooms.

(iii) Allow the visitors to knock up on court before the match begins, so that they can get used to the lighting and the conditions of the court.

(iv) Explain which part of the ceiling is considered as a let and which part is a fault.

(v) Provide refreshments during the match and make sure that the visitors are served first.

(vi) At the end of the match, the captain of the home team should thank the visitors for the contest.

These are a few courtesies, but essential for developing good social relationships between players.

Equipment. For a normal contest of nine matches, two cartons of shuttlecocks should be provided. In match play feathered shuttlecocks are used unless both teams agree to use plastic shuttlecocks. A scorebook is used to keep a record of games played and points scored. They can be obtained from most sports shops.

2. Tournament play

An open tournament consists of singles, doubles and mixed doubles events. It is not essential to hold all these events and the number of events will depend on the number of entries for the tournament, or the number of events offered to the players. However, the principle involved for organizing an open tournament is the same for one event or for five events.

In this tournament all the players start level. The tournament is organized on a knock-out basis, involving a gradual process of elimination until two players are left to contest the final.

As the tournament is restricted to the members of one particular club, the players may enter by signing their names on a notice, designating which event they wish to enter. Once the entries have been received the players' names are mixed together and the draw is made.

There may be problems if the number of entries does not permit an even draw. The ideal number of entries which leads to the final of two contestants is from 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, etc. If the number of entries is between any of these numbers, several players will have to begin in either the second or the first round of the tournament. If this is difficult to arrange, further information may be gained from the handbook of the BA of E.

Requirements.

Shuttlecocks. Assess how many, matches will be played in the tournament, and, to be on the safe side, order enough shuttles to allow for two for each match.

Recording results.

Results sheet. This should be displayed. It should show the order of the draw and a record of results of matches played.

Results Slips. This is a small book containing results slips. A results slip is given to the players for each match. It should show the names of the players involved in the match, the event and the court number. At the end of the match, the players should sign and record the result on the result slip before handing it in to the recorder.

Officials

Referee. The person in charge of the tournament. He is there to decide on all matters involving disputes and questions concerning the rules. He should keep a copy of the Laws of Badminton available for reference.

Recorder. The recorder keeps a record of the matches to be played and arranges the order of play. He is responsible for keeping the results sheet up to date as matches are completed.

Umpire. The umpire controls the game and keeps the score for the players. At this level of play, the players should act as umpires for matches themselves. It is one way in which players can accept additional responsibility and acquire a knowledge of the laws. For a small tournament, this type of organization should be sufficient.

Handicap tournaments

A handicap tournament is organized in exactly the same way as above. The difference is that the players do not start level. Each player is handicapped according to his ability. The advantage of handicapping is that it gives the weaker player an equal chance of winning against the stronger player.

Example. Player A is a strong player. Player B is a weaker player. Player A may receive a handicap of minus 10 points. If the game is played up to 15 points, player A must score 25 points to win a game. Player B may receive a handicap of plus 5 points, and has to score 10 points to win the game. The game begins at Player A minus 10, Player B plus 5.

It is important that the varying ability of the players is considered very carefully when giving handicaps.

Handicap tournaments are useful at the beginner and club level, as the strong player is forced to work hard to score his points and cannot make many mistakes. The weaker player has a chance to go for his shots and can afford to make mistakes and still win. Both players are motivated to play well and the result is usually a general improvement in each player's standard of play.

American tournament

In this type of tournament, the players are placed in sections. A player must achieve the most wins in his section to reach the final. This type of tournament can include all the possible events in the game, i.e. singles, doubles and mixed doubles.

The number of sections arranged is dependent on the number of players. If there are sixteen players in a singles tournament, there may be four sections of four players. The players in each section will play against each other. The player with the best results wins his section. With four sections there will be four winners. The winners play off a semi-final, and then there is a final between the winners of the semi-finals.

The advantage of this system is that the competitors play more matches and have an increased chance of reaching the final. In a knock-out tournament, one defeat and the tournament is over for that particular player. In the American tournament, even if a player loses one match, he is still in the tournament and has another chance at winning.

The organization for the handicap and American tournaments is the same as for the open tournament. The teacher should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each system and should be able to organize competitive badminton. These systems are basic ones and the organization is simple and practical.