

COSTUMES FOR LAWN TENNIS

By Isabel A. Mallon



THE delicate, fragile girl has no longer, from a physical standpoint, any social position. She is looked at by all the other women with an air of pity that is strongly akin to contempt. Of the justice of this not much can be said, for, after all, the woman who is not strong is probably handicapped from her birth, and much should be forgiven her because she suffers much.

However, as a nation we ought to welcome the healthy, hearty girl who can beat her brother in managing a tennis ball, in rowing a boat, and very often in managing a frisky horse. The tennis girl belongs essentially to the summer time, for she wants verdure green upon which to have her court, and she longs for the sun to shine brightly so that she may warm up and her skin get that healthful glow which will make it so white and so pink during the coming winter.

THE MATERIALS FANCIED

JUST why stripes should attach themselves to lawn tennis costumes is not known, but a good tennis player would as soon think of playing with a strange racquet as she would of not achieving a striped effect in her costume. It is true that veritable stripes in flannel, showing blue and white, scarlet and white, brown and white and black and white, may constitute the skirt, while the blouse is of plain material. Occasionally, plain white flannel is used, and then it is trimmed with a



A STRIPED TENNIS SUIT (Illus. No. 2)

colored flannel either as a striped bordering or it may be appliqued on to make it appear like such stripes as the zebra uses for his everyday frock. A preference is given in fabrics to light-weight flannels, and though they may be made up as picturesquely as possible, still they must not be elaborate, and sufficient room must be given for all parts of the body to have perfect freedom. Sometimes the blouse instead of being flannel is of soft silk, usually a cream in shade, and then for wear over this, if one should get over-heated, or if the day should be chilly, is an easy but well-fitting plain cloth blazer. Serge may be used for a tennis dress, but expert players count it as rather heavy.

English girls have a great liking for the heavy striped cotton material which we call "awning fabric." This they use for the plain full skirt and then have a blouse of blue flannel or silk, as is most fancied. Some very coarse wool stuff is shown and commended for gowns for out-door wear, but as it has a very wide mesh that would easily pull apart I cannot recommend it, believing that plain tennis flannel is, after all, the most desirable of the fabrics commonly shown for gowns to be worn for out-door games.

THE DESIGNS FANCIED

FASHIONS do not change much in the tennis get-up. Having discovered that a moderately full skirt is required for swiftness in running, that an easily fitting blouse with full sleeves permits one to be more at one's ease than in a close-fitting basque, the tennis player, though she may modify does not absolutely alter the general style of her costume. She has found that a skirt too full will tend to fly forward as she runs and cause her to trip, that a sleeve too full looks ridiculous, and that a blouse too loose is dowdy, and above everything else the tennis girl likes to look trig. The accordion-plaited skirts are still in favor, and as they are not made as wide as they were at one time, and as the plaits are caught here and there to position, they do not fly out and give the mushroomy look which was characteristic of them once.

Though a short skirt is required, it need not be one that is awkwardly short. Any little individuality may express itself about the blouse, where quaint sleeves, becoming collars and jaunty ties are possible. For belts, the plain leather one continues in favor, although the soft leather one, pointed and laced in front, is also fancied. When sashes are worn they are usually of soft silk, and provided they flatten to place they may be as long as the wearer desires.

A TYPICAL TENNIS DRESS

A VERY pretty tennis dress, more elaborate than any seen, is here shown. (Illustration No. 1). It is of white flannel laid in accordion plaits; the skirt being, however, very well fitted to the figure. The blouse waist is of pale blue silk, the sleeves, which are slightly raised on the shoulder, being turned over at the elbow to show under sleeves of white flannel; the cuffs on the upper sleeves are of white flannel, those on the under part being of blue silk. The collar is of blue silk, and the long soft sash, which is simply knotted on one side, not tied in a bow and ends, is of the soft blue silk with its ends fringed out. The hat is a white felt turned up from the face and having a cluster of pale blue ribbon loops as its decoration. The low shoes are of white canvas, and are worn over pale blue stockings. This suit could be duplicated in any colors fancied, but the combination of white and pale blue is so dainty looking and usually so becoming that it is oftener noted.

A STRIPED TENNIS SUIT

AT Illustration No. 2 is shown a tennis suit that suggests that its wearer is an expert at the art of tossing a ball, or following its swift career. The plain skirt is made of red and white striped flannel, the red being a decidedly dark shade. The blouse waist, which is very loose fitting, has inserted in the front a plastron of white flannel lined across with red braid matching the stripe. The sleeves are raised on the shoulder a very little, are easy fitting and finished with the simplest of cuffs. The apron is made of heavy white linen, being turned up at the bottom, as is usual, to form the pockets in which the balls are held. The waist band is an ordinary one of white ribbon. The hat is a straw one that comes well over the face and shades the eyes, its decoration being red poppies. The shoes are the usual canvas ones, and the stockings are red.

A gown like this could be developed in any of the materials fancied for out-door sports, and the design has much in its favor, for while it lacks the smart air of the first one shown, it has a decidedly business-like look, and would suggest that the girl who wore it played tennis to win and not merely to look fashionable, or because it was pretty. The wearing of the apron is a matter of individual taste.

A BLOUSE THAT IS FANCIED

ILLUSTRATION No. 3. There is always some girl who has not a regular tennis get-up; who either does not care for it, or who, it is just possible, does not wish to spend her money on a gown that can only be used for one purpose, so wisely enough she makes for herself a blouse like this, and wears it with some plain skirt. The material is white flannel, showing alternate stripes of scarlet, blue and brown. It is closed down the front with small dark-blue buttons and the fullness is gathered in at the waist by tapes in regular casings. The collar is of light brown silk, and the tie that comes from under it, which is carelessly knotted, is of white silk. The sleeves have cuffs matching the collar. The belt is a pointed one of light brown leather laced down the front, and the cap is the regulation white one that seems dedicated alike to man or woman for rowing or ball playing, or indeed any sport that is possible under the sun. Plain white flannel blouses look well when worn with skirts of dark blue or black, but if an ordinary skirt is worn the striped blouse seems more in harmony with a dark skirt than does the all-white one; of course, the advantage of the all-white is that it can visit the laundry, but if it is wished that it should look well it must go to a laundry where the workers are adepts in the art of making flannels look as good as new. And certainly, when they are all crinkled up, as is too often the case, you could not say this about them. So, after all, unless you are very sure of your laundry, a silk shirt is advised; though according to the doctors and all the health people, the flannel is given the preference. But be sure of your laundry.



COMBINING COMFORT AND GRACE (Illus. No. 1)

THE TENNIS HAT

OF course the regular tennis hat is the soft felt one bent up to be becoming, and with little or no decoration upon it. However, as all women do not look well in this hat a very wide choice is allowed, and there is no reason why one cannot wear just what one pleases on one's head. There is, however, a positive lack of taste in wearing an elaborate hat. If it be straw, then it should be rather coarse, with simple trimmings, and in cloth only the regular hat is permissible. At most country houses a collection of large felt sombreros, of rough straw hats, of tennis and of yachting caps are in the hall, so that the visitor may, if she does not possess a hat in harmony with the sport, be offered one by her hostess. The hair should be worn in the



A FANCIED BLOUSE (Illus. No. 3)

simplest manner possible, so that it will not seem to fly out of place each time that a sudden flight is necessary. In fact, while a tennis costume must be pretty and easy to wear, it must at the same time have the trig look that is possible even in an outing get-up. The only jewelry worn is the medal won at some tennis tournament, but the good taste of this even may be questioned. The good tennis player gives no thought to how warm she is getting and consequently, too often, becomes the victim of her own carelessness, catches cold and loses her good looks, when, if after she has finished playing she were a little careful and would be rubbed with alcohol she would find that her skin would become remarkably white and soft, and that she herself would be in good health.

THE FEW LAST WORDS

I CANNOT say too much in encouragement of out-door sports for girls; they get their lungs full of good fresh air, their bodies are well developed and the chances are that keeping well physically they are also in good health mentally. A sprightliness is apparent in the bearing of a girl who has been confined in school or office a number of months after she has returned from a needed outing. But do not let yourself become so absorbed by the gentle game of tennis that nothing else in life is of interest to you. Make your pleasures subservient to your duty, and you will find that you can more easily bear the burden that may be imposed upon you, and that you can more keenly enjoy the delights that come to you. And do not be selfish about your pleasure; that is, because you play well do not allow yourself to make a jest of the girl who is not as much of an adept as you are. Instead, show that you are a courteous hostess, and a good friend by assisting her in every way possible so that she will not feel her ignorance. A hint here and a suggestion there given in a quiet off-handed manner will put her at once at her ease. That is the best of all games to learn, the art of making your visitors feel happy and at home, and it seems to me you would be counted a poor tennis player if you did not know how to manage your friends so well that when they called "love!" there would be more meaning in it than is usually implied in the word.