

## HOME AND SOCIETY.

### Lawn Tennis.

#### HINTS FOR BEGINNERS—SCIENTIFIC PLAY—LAWS OF THE GAME.

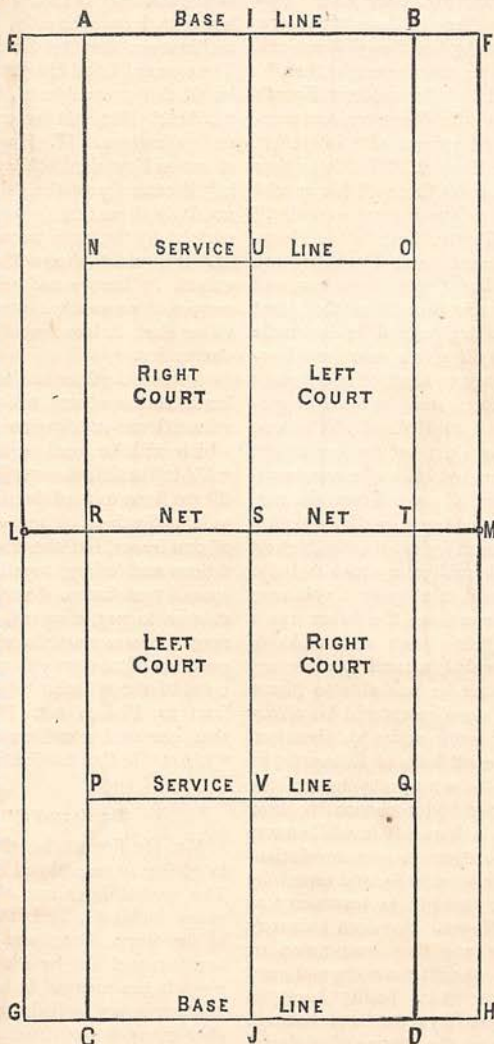
A LEVEL piece of turf is the best site for a lawn tennis court, which should be frequently cut, rolled, and watered. By wearing rubber-soled shoes, the player will secure a sure footing, and save the court, since ordinary heels cut the turf. Lay out the court as in the accompanying diagram, the lines being marked with white-wash or paint, or with cord piping fastened down with hair-pins. First mark the sides of a parallelogram, A B (twenty-seven feet), B D (seventy-eight feet), which, with the parallel lines D C and C A, form the boundaries of a single court for a two-handed game. Extend A B to E F (thirty-six feet), and C D to G H, and draw the lines F H and E G, to indicate a double court for four-handed games. Drive stakes at L and M, midway between E and G and F and H. These are to support the net, L M, which will sag too much in the middle (where it should be three feet high) unless the stakes are held in position by cords running outward to pegs in the turf. A B and C D are called "base lines." Twenty-one feet from the net, draw the "service lines," N O and P Q. Then draw the center line, I J, and the court is complete for two, three, and four handed games.

A few moments' observation of lawn tennis in play enables the novice to understand this simple game. It is another thing to play it well, since proficiency is a matter of natural aptitude and constant practice. For the instruction of persons who have no opportunity of seeing the game in operation, the elementary steps may be accurately indicated with the aid of the diagram. Where two persons play, one is called "striker-in," or "server," and the other, "striker-out." Suppose the server to be playing from the side A B R T, he places

one foot on, or within, the base line A I, and the other foot without. In this position he strikes the ball with the racket so as to serve it over the net into the corresponding right court, S T Q V, where the striker-out awaits it, behind the service line V Q. The striker-out lets the ball bound once, and before

it reaches the ground a second time, he must strike it back over the net so it will fall anywhere within A B T R. Now, the server is required to send it back so it will fall anywhere within C D T R, and to do this he may "volley" the ball (that is, strike it before it reaches the ground), or strike it after one bound. The ball is sent thus back and forth so long as it is in play, that is, until it twice touches the ground, or is struck out of court or into the net, or strikes the person of either player, in which case the ball is said to be "dead." When a service ball strikes the top of the net, yet passes over, it is called a "let," and does not count. A failure to keep the ball in play makes a score for the opponent. A ball is not in play until it has been served as above into the court of the striker-out. A failure to serve within the court of the striker-out is called a "fault." Two successive faults count a score against the server. The second ball is served from the left base line, I B, into the left court, R S V P; and so on from right to left until the game is out. The modern game is counted like ancient tennis. Before either player has scored, the score is called "Love all." The first score, or ace, counts 15; the second, 15 more, or 30 all told; the

third, 10 more, or 40; and the fifth scores game. When both sides are 40 at the same time, it is called "deuce"; then two successive scores, on either side, are necessary to win. The first score after deuce is called "advantage." If the next score is in favor of the opponent, then it is deuce again, and so on until one or the other makes two successive scores. In the second game, the striker-out becomes the server, or striker-in. They





alternate as servers until one side has won six games, thereby winning the "set." E F H G indicate the boundaries of the court for four-handed games. Partners are right and left. They alternate in serving; and, in striking out, the right partner takes all balls served into the right court (his partner covering his flank to stop missed balls), and the left partner takes all balls served into the left court. The partner who is not serving usually plays in near the service line, toward his own side, or the center, it being the duty of the server to defend the rear of the court. In three-handed games, it is two against one, the partners playing as in four-handed games.

We now come to the art of the game. First, as to rackets. No good player cares to use another's racket, or to lend his own. In choosing the racket, many things should be considered. Its weight should be in proportion to the strength of the player, but it by no means follows that a weak player should choose a very light racket. There ought to be a certain proportion between the weight of the racket and of the ball. If the regulation balls manufactured by Ayres, of London,



FIG. 1.—UNDERHAND SERVICE.

are used, the racket should be fully fifteen ounces for a gentleman and thirteen for a lady. As soon as the game is over, the racket should be fastened in the racket-case, and put away in a dry place, but it should never be placed near a fire, which would impair its elasticity. The player who goes to a store where the best English and American rackets are sold will be not a little puzzled with the various shapes and varied manner of stringing. He will hear recounted the comparative advantages of the "grip," the "Olympian," the "knotted," the "ordinary," the "double strung," etc. We prefer an ordinary strung racket. The "knotted" and the "grip" cut the ball. The "Olympian" cannot be depended upon for accuracy of stroke. Rackets of different make vary as widely in shape as in manner of stringing. They are skewed and bowed in different ways; some are flattened at the tops, and some are oval. Which is the best? Each player must choose for himself or herself, for all wrists are not alike. If, holding the racket close up to the face, the center line of the net-work of the racket is in a straight line with the arm, you do not want any skew in the racket, but if not, you do. Besides, a slight bend in the racket



FIG. 2.—OVERHAND SERVICE.

facilitates the taking of half-volleyed balls off the ground. When playing, the bend of the racket should always be uppermost.

There are three ways of serving, the underhand, the overhand, and the high service. For the simple underhand service, grasp the racket in the middle of the handle, and stooping, drop the ball, striking it with the racket full-faced. (Figure 1.)

To put "side" on the ball, strike it with the racket nearly horizontal but slightly inclined forward. This will put a right-hand twist on the ball, so that when it bounds it will skew toward the striker-out in a very puzzling way. If he is prepared for a straight stroke he must alter his position or play a back-hander.

The overhand service (Figure 2) is made with the racket held nearly on a level with the shoulder. To produce a twist, turn the racket nearly face uppermost



FIG. 3.—HIGH SERVICE.





FIG. 4.—FORE OVERHAND STROKE.

and drop the ball on to the surface, cutting rather than striking the ball. This will give a strong left-hand twist, so that on striking the ground the ball will bound away from the opponent's right.

The same result, to a greater extent, may be produced by the high service. In making it, throw the ball up nearly in a line with the right shoulder, and in striking, hold the racket on a slant so that it will strike the ball on the right side (Figure 3). If this stroke is cleverly made, it will cause the ball to swerve while in the air, so strong is the effect of the twist, and when it strikes the ground it will bound outward.

There is another, the cut service, now not so frequently used. It is played overhand as above, but with the racket slanted to an angle of about thirty degrees. It drives the ball up with a strong rotatory movement, contrary to its course. The result of this is that when it strikes the ground it rises straight up, and not at the normal angle. It forces the player,



FIG. 5.—FORE UNDERHAND STROKE.

who is prepared for an ordinary service, to run forward.

In returning a service ball, or a ball in play, the player should always endeavor to drive as near the top of the net as possible without cutting into the net. All "lobs" up (to lob a ball is to drive it high above the heads of the players) are bad play unless specially required, as in the case of a forward player, when it is desirable to play over his head. There is a right and a wrong moment for taking a ball. After bounding, it should be struck when its upward momentum is spent and it is about to fall. The reason of this is clear. If the ball is struck on the rise, it will leave the racket at an obtuse angle equal to that of its incidence. In other words, it will lob up. The same principle must be borne in mind in taking a "skyer." It will leave the racket at a descending angle equal to that at which it strikes the racket. In fast play, you must take the ball how and when you can. It is better to hold the racket long. But for ordinary forehand play, especially where the driving is not hard, the better



FIG. 6.—BACK OVERHAND STROKE.

plan is to hold the racket short and let the stroke be given more from the shoulder than the elbow.

There are eight principal strokes at tennis, each of which should be thoroughly mastered. In order to do this, a person anxious to become a good player should practice each separately, having the ball pitched to him at a certain spot, and standing so as to play one particular stroke until it can be played with certainty. Some strokes only occur at rare intervals, and, consequently, unless practiced separately, are never really learned. The first and principal stroke is the fore overhand. For this stroke, hold the racket short, well up to the face, with a very slight backward incline (Figure 4). In order to play a ball in this manner, you should stand about eighteen inches to the left of its course, and strike it as it passes you. While it is of the utmost importance to be quick, more misses are made from being too quick than too slow. You should let your racket hover, as it were, a moment before striking. If you do this there will be no force in the stroke except that intended for the





FIG. 7.—BACK UNDERHAND STROKE.

ball. When you have to run forward to a ball, recollect to deduct the force of your run from the force of the stroke, or you will strike out of court, and, if you run back, increase the force, as your run will deduct so much from the blow. Try to strike the ball well in the center of the racket. If you hit the wood, it is almost sure to score against you. In making this stroke the left foot should be forward, and the right back.

Fore underhand is a stroke made with the racket held at the extreme end of the handle (Figure 5). It is most useful in taking half-volleys, quick services, and long drives. When the play is very fast and the ball is returned close over the net, the ball rises only a few inches after striking the ground. Consequently it must be taken underhand, or not at all. In good underhand play the ball should not be lobbed up in the air. Be sure to turn the elbow well in, and return as close to the top of the net as you can.

The high stroke: Where a ball passes over the player, but at a pace that will cause it to fall behind him and within the court, he should play it down just over the net. Such a ball played either at the opponent's feet or in some undefended part of the court, is almost sure to score. Be careful not to cut into the net.

Back overhand (Figure 6): In case a ball twists suddenly, or is returned so quickly that you cannot get to the left of it so as to take it forehand, you must strike backhanded. The difficulty is to get behind the ball in time. The right foot should be well forward and the left back. Turn the body from the waist well to the left, so as to throw its whole weight into the stroke. The racket should be held long or half-handle.

Back underhand (Figure 7) is a stroke given with the right foot forward and the left back. The racket must be held at the extreme end of the handle, and, as in the preceding stroke, turn the body well to the left.

Forward play overhand and underhand: These strokes are required chiefly for volleys and twisting balls. For the overhand, hold the racket short and firm. When the ball is driven very hard, little more than its own returned momentum is required to send it back over the net. A very telling play in single games, when you are near the net and your opponent is at or near the base line, is to loosen the racket in the hand when the stroke is given. This stops the

ball without returning its force, and drops it just over the net, where it falls long before the opponent can get to it (Figure 8).

Forward underhand strokes, like back underhand, are the most difficult in the game. They should be played with the elbow forward and well up (Figure 9). The effect of this is to keep the ball from rising, and to return it just over the net.

The back stroke is very seldom used. It is a "show" play, and provokes great applause. When a ball twists so suddenly that you cannot get the racket behind it in time, pass the racket behind your back and play as in Figure 10.

Guard and attack must always be in a player's mind, the object being to protect his own court and assail his adversary in a weak point. As to the first: After every stroke, get back to the center of your court; if the play is fast, be near the base line; if it is slow, near the service line. It is always easier to get forward to a ball than back to it. No one can play a forward game without being skillful in volleying. It is a means of attack and defense in which the great beauty of the game consists. Half-volleys are strokes when the ball is close to the ground and about to bound or "pitch." There are two styles of volley play, at the net, and on the service line. The first is always played overhand. It is a showy but a dangerous play, except in four-handed games, because it leaves so much of the court unprotected. The answer to it is to play the ball up over the opponent's head where he cannot get it, or obliquely across the court out of his reach. Volleying from the service line is a safer and a much more effective play. At the service line, if the ball is not struck hard by the opponent, so as to carry it out of court, it will be approaching the ground, and may be half-volleyed or taken underhand. To do this and to return close over the net is the *ne plus ultra* of play. Half-volleys have been described by some writers as the stroke of despair. So they may be to an inferior player, but when well played, and placed, they are almost sure to score.

And now as to "placing," which consists in returning the ball to that spot in the court where the



FIG. 8.—FORWARD OVERHAND STROKE.





FIG. 9.—FORWARD UNDERHAND STROKE.

opponent is not and cannot get. If he is forward, play over his head; if he is near the base line, drop the ball just over the net. Also drive the ball to his right or left, whichever way will make the return most perplexing. A good player will keep his opponent racing from side to side till he tires him out. Thus, if the ball be played so that while striking the ground in the right side of the opponent's court it twists outward, he must go out of his court to take it. If it be returned with a volley to the left side, it is almost impossible for him to get there in time. When a ball cannot be played away from an opponent, the most embarrassing play is to place it at his feet. He must then step back to take it, and will very likely miss.

Much of the success and all of the elegance of the game depend upon correct attitudes. It is scarcely necessary to say that the dress should be loose, and the arms and shoulders absolutely free. The skirt of the dress worn by ladies should be short enough to allow the feet to be raised in running without danger of tripping. So far as the upper part of the dress is concerned, there should be no straps, bands, or anything that will deduct half an ounce of force from a stroke. The dress should not be tied tightly back, and above all, French heels should be dispensed with. In taking a service, the striker-out should stoop slightly, with the feet a little apart and the knees bent. This enables him to see more clearly what sort of a twist the server is giving the ball, underhand or overhand. If the twist is underhand, it will swerve toward the striker-in, and he should be ready to play it backhanded. If the twist is overhand, it will pass to his right, and he must be prepared for a run or a long reach. It is as well to pose in front of these balls, and if they have no twist, to play them forward underhand. We would enforce three maxims: (1) Always keep cool; repress any excitement, and let there be an imperturbability about you which no good or ill fortune can disturb. Of course you must move quickly from place to place, but always have your movements well in hand; get there in time and be ready for the ball,—a millionth part of a second in advance is sufficient. Let the stroke and the run be two different move-

ments. (2) Never try to "show off." Play steady strokes until your adversary gives you an opening, and then do your best. Do not try to be always clever. An opportunity for a great stroke does not occur once in six. You cannot always make difficult returns. (3) Do not be in too great a hurry to strike the ball. Watch its pitch, its twist, and its rise, and then strike. Try to save yourself as much running about as possible. If you are a master of backhanded strokes, it will save you many a run to and fro. If your opponent is skillful at twists, be ready to play them as in Figures 8 and 9.

In four-handed games, one partner plays forward and the other back. The non-server should stand well to the right or left, so as not to interfere with his partner's service, and come forward to the center of the court the moment the ball is in play. The forward partner should take those strokes that come fairly to him, leaving the others to his partner. He should not be too anxious to volley, but should play these strokes only when it can be done with effect. It cannot be too frequently enforced on the attention of beginners that steady play wins more games than clever play. The player who keeps well back on the base line, and drives hard to the opposite base line, is a more formidable opponent than he looks. In such play a forward partner should not interfere till he can do so with effect. For instance, if he sees both opponents right or both left, he may volley into the unguarded space. This is useful and good play, but to dance about at the net, striking some balls and missing others, is bad play. The back partner should be, as it were, captain of the team, and call out to his partner when to leave a ball or take it. In general, the back player should keep the game going, and carefully return balls. The forward player should try to puzzle the opponents. In other words, the forward player should be principally occupied with the attack, and the back player with the defense.

When first introduced, lawn tennis required little more skill than battledore and shuttlecock. The only art practiced was to strike as in the original game of tennis, with the racket slanting, so as to put "cut" on the ball. This play was soon changed by the introduction of swift service and swift return, which drove the



FIG. 10.—BACK STROKE.



"cutter" to the base line of the court, and rendered cutting impossible. Up to this point the ball had always been taken after its bound, but Mr. Renshaw, of Cheltenham, first introduced the volley at the net. He was tall, and possessed a long reach, with which he covered a great part of the net, and, standing close up, he played the balls down into his opponent's court in a manner that rendered their return impossible. Among his opponents was Mr. Lawford. This gentleman was easily defeated by Mr. Renshaw. He was not fully disposed of, however, for he invented an answer to Mr. Renshaw's play, partly by tossing the balls over his opponent's head and partly by oblique drives across the court out of his reach. Thus science triumphed over volleying at the net, and Mr. Renshaw retired defeated. At the next meeting at Wimbledon, the latter re-appeared with an entirely new play. He volleyed now from the service line. This gave him a great advantage. He had more time to get to the ball and more space to return it in. But if this play is safer in point of position, it is much more difficult of execution. Most of the returns approach the ground, and must be half-volleyed or taken underhand. The other player must judge every return with the nicest accuracy, and, if possible, so return as to drive his opponent away from the service line.

Lawn tennis is being played with success in the Seventh Regiment Armory, and the game will probably become a popular in-door sport for the winter months. The ball may be made to bound nearly as it does on turf, by stretching heavy carpeting or drugget within the boundaries of the court.

#### RULES OF LAWN TENNIS.

The accepted rules of the game are :

1. The choice of sides and the right of serving during the first game shall be decided by toss; provided that if the winner of the toss choose the right to serve, the other player shall have the choice of sides, and *vice versa*. The players shall stand on opposite sides of the net; the player who first delivers the ball shall be called the *Server*, the other the *Striker-out*. At the end of the first game, the striker-out shall become server, and the server shall become striker-out; and so on alternately in the subsequent games of the set.
2. The server shall stand with one foot outside the base line, and shall deliver the service from the right and left courts alternately, beginning from the right. The ball served must drop within the service line, half-court line, and side line of the court which is diagonally opposite to that from which it was served, or upon any such line.
3. It is a *fault* if the ball served drop in the net, or beyond the service line, or if it drop out of court, or in the wrong court. A fault may not be taken. After a fault, the server shall serve again from the same court from which he served that fault.
4. The service may not be *volleyed*, *i. e.*, taken before it touches the ground.
5. The server shall not serve until the striker-out is ready. If the latter attempt to return the service, he shall be deemed to be ready. A good service delivered when the striker-out is not ready annuls a previous fault.
6. A ball is *returned*, or *in play*, when it is played back, over the net, before it has touched the ground a second time.
7. It is a good service or return, although the ball touch the net.
8. The server wins a stroke if the striker-out volley the service; or if he fail to return the service or the ball in-play; or if he return the service or ball in-play so that it drop outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's court; or if he otherwise lose a stroke, as provided by Law 10.
9. The striker-out wins a stroke, if the server serve two consecutive faults; or if he fail to return the ball in-play; or if he return the ball in-play so that it drop outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's court; or if he otherwise lose a stroke, as provided by Law 10.

10. Either player loses a stroke if the ball in-play touch him or anything that he wears or carries, except his racket in the act of striking; or if he touch or strike the ball in-play with his racket more than once.

11. On either player winning his first stroke, the score is called fifteen for that player; on either player winning his second stroke, the score is called thirty for that player; on either player winning his third stroke, the score is called forty for that player; and the fourth stroke won by either player is scored game for that player; except as below:

If both players have won three strokes, the score is called deuce; and the next stroke won by either player is scored advantage for that player. If the same player win the next stroke, he wins the game; if he lose the next stroke, the score is again called deuce; and so on until either player wins the two strokes immediately following the score of deuce, when the game is scored for that player.

12. The player who first wins six games wins a set; except as below:

If both players win five games, the score is called games-all; and the next game vantage-game for that player. If the same player win the next game, he wins the set; if he lose the next game, the score is again called games-all; and so on until either player wins the two games immediately following the score of games-all, when he wins the set.

NOTE.—Players may agree not to play advantage-sets, but to decide the set by one game after arriving at the score of games-all.

13. The players shall change sides at the end of every set. When a series of sets is played, the player who was server in the last game of one set shall be striker-out in the first game of the next.

#### THREE-HANDED AND FOUR-HANDED GAMES.

The above laws shall apply to the three-handed and four-handed games, except as below:

In the three-handed game, the single player shall serve in every alternate game.

In the four-handed game, the pair who has the right to serve in the first game may decide which partner shall do so, and the opposing pair may decide similarly for the second game. The partner of the player who served in the first game shall serve in the third; and the partner of the player who served in the second game shall serve in the fourth; and so on in the same order in all the subsequent games of a set or series of sets.

The players shall take the service alternately throughout each game; no player shall receive or return a service delivered to his partner; and the order of service and of striking-out once arranged shall not be altered, nor shall the strikers-out change courts to receive the service, before the end of the set.

#### CHANGES IN THE LAWS.

At the meeting of the United States National Lawn Tennis Association, held in New York last May, the following alterations were made in the preceding rules:

1. The balls must now only vary from two and a half to two and nine-sixteenths inches in diameter, and from one and seven-eighths ounces to two ounces in weight.
2. In matches where umpires are appointed, their decision is final.
3. The server must stand, when delivering the service, "with one foot beyond (*i. e.*, farther from the net than) the base line, and with the other foot within or upon the base line.
4. If the server does not stand as directed in the above law, or if he delivers the service from the wrong court, it is a fault; but,
5. Having served from the wrong court, and so made a fault, he shall deliver the next service from the court from which he should have served before; and,
6. It is further provided that "a fault may not be claimed after the next service has been delivered."
7. A service, whether good or a fault, so delivered, counts for nothing.
8. A return in which the ball touches the net is still considered good; but if the ball served touch the net, the service, provided it be otherwise good, counts for nothing.
9. No player must touch the net, nor any of its supports, while the ball is in play; nor must they volley the ball before it has passed the net, on penalty of losing the stroke.
10. The umpire, on appeal from either party, before the toss for choice, may direct the players to change sides at the end of every game, if, in his opinion, either side have a distinct advantage owing to the sun, wind, or any other accidental cause; but if the appeal be made after a match has been begun, the umpire can only direct the players to change sides at the end of every game of the odd and concluding set.

BENJAMIN HARDWICK.