

that no modern coach has realized the possibilities in this dog-eared bit of rigger strategy. Why not, for example, return the kick-off by a punt instead of being smothered deep in one's own territory?

Let us suppose that the kick-off receiver, standing on his own ten-yard stripe, punts the ball back. His mates, in on the secret, swarm down the field after the ball, making no attempt to block the enemy. These ball-hounds are legally offside and have a tremendous head start. Their opponents, moving the wrong way, are impotent, as the return punt sails over their heads. Assuming that one man on the kick-off side lays back in the safety position, he isn't likely to intercept the boomerang punt. Chances are that the ball will be grounded deep in the kick-off team's territory. True, it will have possession, but only at the costly sacrifice of position. Shadowed by the bar sinister of its own goal-post, it must punt out of danger and give the enemy the whip-hand somewhere around mid-field.

A year ago the new kick-off restriction, requiring five members of the receiving side to remain outside their own forty-five-yard line until the ball is kicked, virtually nullified the value of tight knit run-back wedges. In football, it is now more blessed to kick off than to receive. With the flying wedge impractical, the receiver is apt to be smeared behind his own twenty-yard line. Given any kind of a defense, the side kicking off should force a punt and take over the attack near mid-field. Your smart captain will decline the so-called privilege of receiving the kick-off even at the cost of losing the wind advantage.

Field generals who refuse to mix their stuff and pull the unexpected will be benched. Light, fast guards are typical of the high voltage, quick-striking attacks this fall. There is no longer any place for the mastodon of the canvas-jacketed era who opened a gap merely by the brutish power of a straight-ahead charge. Frontal attacks have lost caste since the offensive doctrines of Pop Warner and the late Knute Rockne gained converts in wholesale lots.

The Rockne system is based on misdirection and change of pace. The Warner method is founded on hocus-pocus thimble-rigging. The former conceals the point of attack, relying on speed, cadence and man-to-man blocking to get the defense off balance; the latter hides the ball, banking on deception plus power to create openings.

Fielding Yost, Michigan's father confessor, feels that whereas the strategic variations in attack have been almost exhausted by resourceful teachers, there are still unplumbed possibilities in defensive alignments. "The six-man line is gradually superseding the conventional seven-man barrier," says Yost, "but why stop there? I've experimented with a 5-3-2 and an 8-2-1 defense in my football laboratory with significant results. By concentrating a lot of men up front it might be possible to throttle forward passes at the source as well as to hamstring any rushing offense. The surface has only been scratched in defensive strategy."

## United States Takes Up Badminton

BY OSCAR HOWARD

Groups of eager, hopeful men looking at idle factories, inspecting town halls, measuring school gymnasiums, peering into empty barns in your neighborhood have nothing secret in their activities.

They are looking for a place to lay out Badminton courts and start a club. They will want you to play, and despite what you think, you had better do so. They have found the perfect week-end pastime, the duffer's delight. For you and me it is the simplest, most inexpensive of active games, whereby we can all have fun. For the outstanding athlete, it is as interesting a game, as fast a work-out as any in which the contestants are kept apart by a net. It can be carried to the heights of International Tournament play.

The old, old game of Badminton is crossing the Canadian border as certainly as the migrating birds fly over in the fall. The approach of winter is sending those newly addicted to the game on a hunt for indoor quarters. They hope to find enough floor space for two or more indoor courts, each twenty feet wide by forty-four feet long. They want four feet beyond the side-lines and six feet behind the back-lines, and they fervently hope for twenty-five to thirty feet overhead.

The game is somewhat like tennis. The missile used is a light shuttle-cock of cork and feathers. It is struck with fragile rackets over a five-foot net placed in the center of a court marked somewhat differently than a tennis-court.

Upon seeing beginners patting one of these feathered shuttle-cocks back and forth with their frail bats, brawny athletes have turned pale.

The thought occurs that they have permitted themselves to enter a scene in which a tame game is being played.

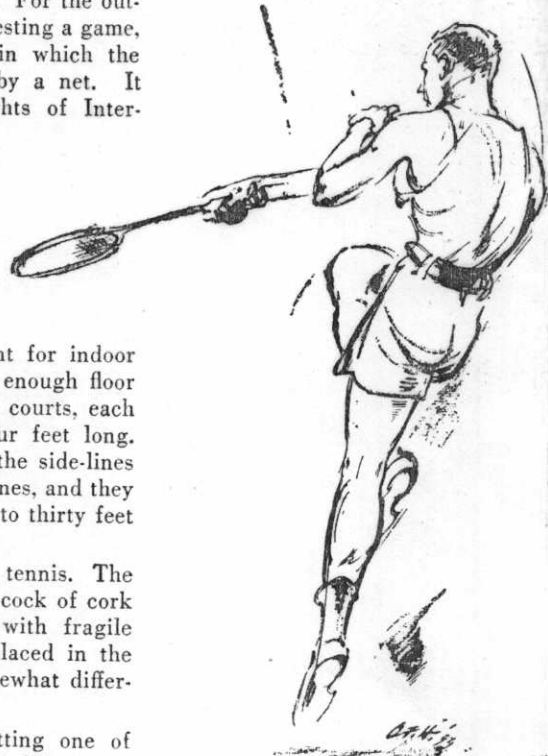
This is an error, in the face of the fact that the game has persisted among the sport-loving British and hardy Canadians since the distant days when man could not make a proper ball.

First-class singles Badminton calls for the footwork of a lightweight champion, the wind of a distance runner, and a quickness of eye and snap of wrist needed by a man fighting bees with a popsicle. It has the fundamental strategy of tennis plus a few tricks of its own. The shuttle-cock can be smashed with the force of a man's full strength or slithered over the net with the dainty deadliness of a lady wasp slipping into her home. It can be placed with rifle accuracy and the direction of the shot beautifully masked.

Because it is not only fun, but a real game, practically every town and city in Canada have Badminton clubs sometimes numbering thousands of members, playing days and evenings on as many as twelve indoor courts, in buildings designed particularly for the game. Outstanding players

from Halifax to Vancouver battle in Provincial tournaments. There are annual Canadian and British championships.

Despite the more intense development of the game among the British and Canadians, the oldest club in the world is the Badminton Club in New York. It was started in 1878 by two gentlemen who had learned the game in India and England. By 1887 it was organized with a board of governors in full control, and with the charming and



A drawing by the author

### SNAP AND SPEED ON THE COURT

praiseworthy policy that no girls except good-looking ones ever be permitted to join. The Saturday afternoon games were devoted to mixed doubles. More of the Club's money than was spent in all other ways combined went for prizes for the lovely girls. Their partners were continually shifted from the best to the poorest players so every girl won a prize in turn.

Now the New York club competes seriously in tournaments, with Sidney B. Wood, Jr., attaining a ranking similar to that which he has reached in tennis. They have a veteran No. 1 doubles team which has defeated most of those in the Metropolitan district where teams from Connecticut, Long Island, New Jersey, and New York City play an annual tournament. New England has a similar association with Boston as its center. California also has an association. Fine indoor courts, professional coaches, and first-rank players can be found as well in Philadelphia, Washington, Chicago, Detroit, Dayton, and Toledo. The formation of a national association is brewing this fall, and international tournaments are inevitable.