

# Calvert Enjoys "Silver Anniversary"

Spring 1999

Lee Calvert didn't just add to her medal collection last month at the U.S. Masters National Badminton Championships and the Senior Masters Canadian Open. She played with her regular partner from the 1960's, Berit Hagtvedt—something that meant more to her than the seven medals she won throughout the two weeks of competition.

"The best part of the whole thing was playing with her again," said Calvert, who also won gold medals in singles and doubles in her age group, the 70-and-overs, and a silver medal in the mixed doubles. "She told me she won't be playing again so that was kind of like our swan song. I'm glad we did so well together. It was almost like pressing a button and going back in time."

A special treat for Calvert was

being able to play in Hagtvedt's age group, the 60's, where the competition was tougher. Despite being older than her opponents and, for that matter, her partner, Calvert held her own and actually enjoyed the challenge her younger competition presented.

"She's a lefty and I'm a righty, so that was a tremendous advantage for us when we were younger," Calvert remembered. "We used to work on our court strategy all the time when we were regular partners. And here, we beat a seeded team from Japan to get to the finals. I'm glad I played against younger players because the quality of play was much better and faster than what I'm used to now."

Hagtvedt, a native Norwegian, stopped playing competitively a few years ago because of a neck injury but came to America while her son qualified for his Ph.D. at the University of Atlanta. The pair last played together in 1974 in Malta (where Calvert was the only player from the United States) and at the World Masters Games in Denmark, where they took second place.

So it's only fitting that 25 years later the pair should win a silver medal in the 60's doubles division of the U.S. Senior Nationals at the Renton Recreation Center in Seattle.

"This is the first time the U.S. Masters and Canadian Open were held back-to-back and it was a good idea because they are in such close proximity to each other," Calvert said. "I was amazed at the number of Canadian entries—285! That's about as many as you can have in the senior categories."

Hagtvedt not only won a silver with Calvert, she also won a silver medal in the 60's singles, while Calvert was winning golds in the 70's singles and mixed doubles with partner Bill Hilena.

The Canadian Open, held April 20-25, was played at two facilities, the Lawn and Tennis Club



From left: Silver medalists Berit Hagtvedt and Lee Calvert stand with gold medal winners Joyce Jones and Norma Veal in the 60 age group at the US Senior Nationals in Seattle.



**FRIENDS AND PARTNERS:** Lee Calvert (left) and Berit Hagtvedt pose in Malta before competing at the 4th Annual Malta Open Championships in May 1974. Photo courtesy of Lee Calvert

and the Racquets Club, both in Vancouver.

"The facilities were absolutely wonderful," Calvert said. "They shuttled us back and forth from one place to the next and the surroundings were great. It was set up just perfectly for a big tournament. The competition in Canada is awesome—it's their sport."

Prior to this year, Calvert had last played a U.S. National tournament with her long-time friend and ex-partner in 1968 when Hagtvedt was living in the United States.

In addition to her four medals at the U.S. Nationals, Calvert continued her winning ways across the

border, taking home two silver and a gold at the Canadian Open. The 74-year-old Palisadian plans to compete at the upcoming senior Olympics in Orlando, where she qualified for three events. Fellow Palisadians Larry and Bertha Lucas, who live in the Highlands, will also be competing in Florida.

"I often wonder how much longer I can compete, but as long as I'm healthy and I'm able, I'll keep going," Calvert said. "I'm having too much fun not to."

One thing's for sure, Calvert's friendship with Hagtvedt is golden—just like the medals around her neck.