

LIFE



BOWDOIN HOUSEPARTY

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BADMINTON

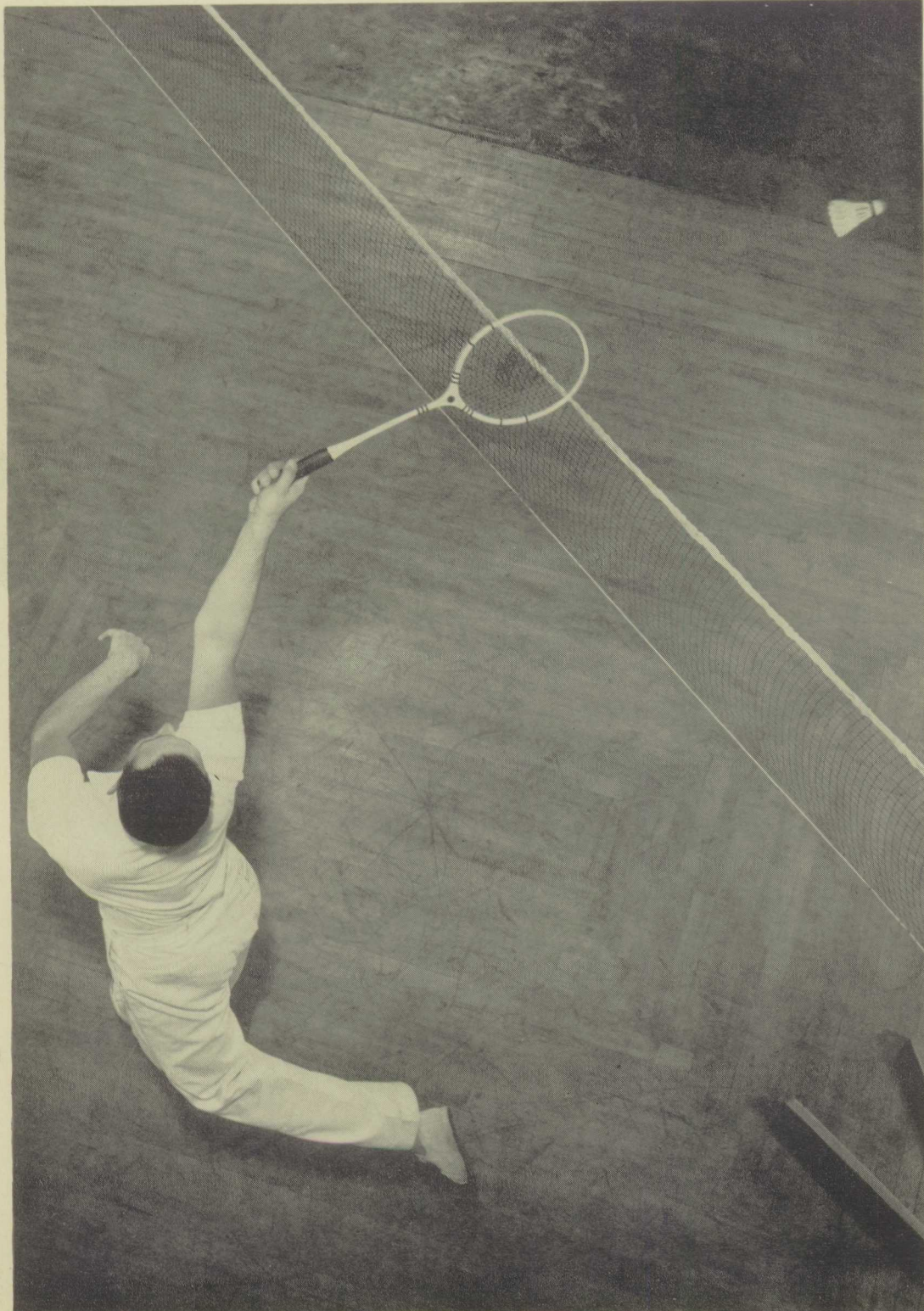
ITS PLAYERS LOOK FUNNY HITTING THE BIRD

Some 60 years ago, the English Duke of Beaufort gave a dinner party at Badminton, his country estate in Gloucestershire. A group of Army officers, home from the wars in India, were talking about a native Indian game, called Poona. To demonstrate the game, the officers took a champagne cork, studded it with a headdress of goose quills, batted it back and forth across the dinner table. That was the beginning of badminton.

In England, the game spread quickly, soon was the favorite sport of the upper classes on a weekend. In America, it spread more slowly. Introduced in 1878, badminton was first popularized around the suburbs of Boston, later adopted by the movie people of Hollywood. They found it

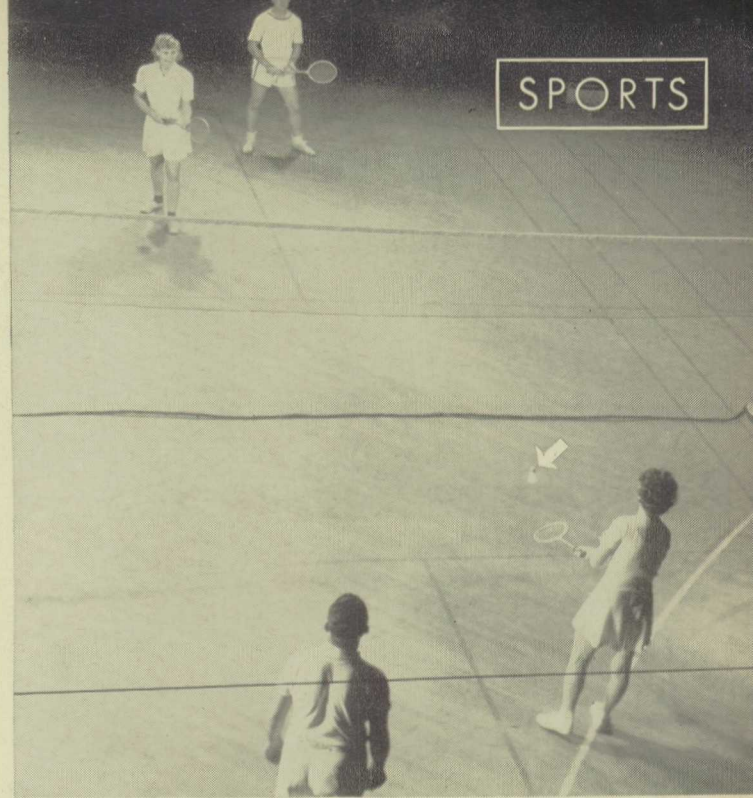
took up less room than tennis and was cheaper to play. Suddenly, a decade ago, it spread over the whole country. Today at least 100,000 Americans play it in assembly halls, armories, barns and backyards.

Few court games are faster or more strenuous than badminton. Almost no game makes its players look so silly. Because the shuttlecock, or bird, is so light and has so many feathers, it does all sorts of strange things. Sometimes it starts at 70 m. p. h., suddenly slows up. Sometimes it floats, fades or parachutes. The remarkable pictures on these pages, taken by Gjon Mili's fast-action camera, show the funny positions even good badminton players get into when they hit the bird.

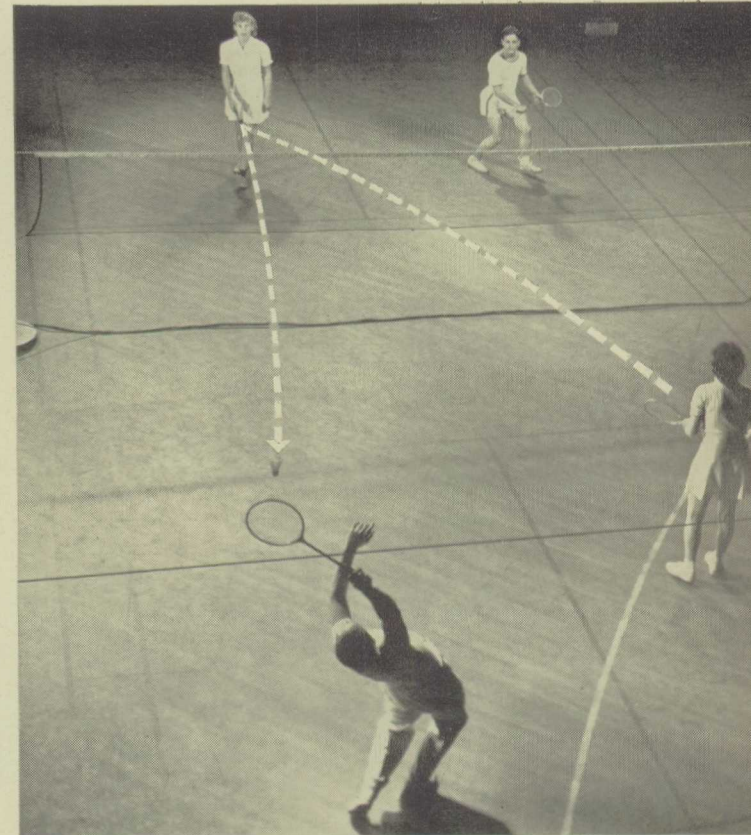


Hard backhand smash is made by Don Vaughan Jr., instructor at New York's Old 69th Armory, one of Amer-

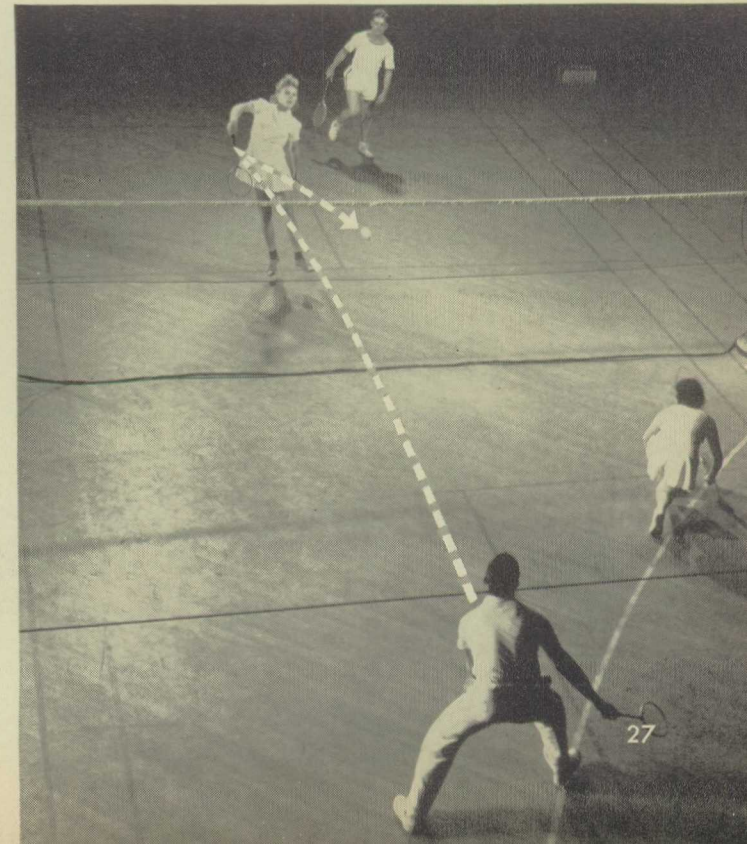
ica's famous badminton clubs. Most important things, says Vaughan, are proper timing and wrist action.



Badminton rally starts with underhand serve. As in tennis, serve must land in court diagonally opposite server. One serve is allowed.



Rally continues as girl returns to man in foreground, who makes round-the-head shot. Below: girl ends rally by drop shot over net.



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A good badminton player seldom leaves his feet. But sometimes he has to. Don Vaughan Jr. jumps in air (*above and lower left*) to get shot aimed directly at his feet. Instead

of jumping to hit shot over his shoulder (*lower right*), Vaughan keeps feet on ground, brings racket up right side, whips it around his head, smashes bird over left shoulder.

In picture at right, Mrs. Norma Junek makes mistake of jumping in air to smash bird. She could have put more speed in smash by staying on ground, letting bird come to her.



