



# SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

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## WONDERFUL WORLD OF SPORT

# TAN JOE HOK TAKES DETROIT

**Triumphing over aches and ills, an Indonesian youngster becomes U.S. badminton champion**



U.S. BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS DREW KNOWING CROWDS

To most Americans badminton is a pleasant summertime activity suitable for the backyard or summer camp and certainly not to be conducted so vigorously as to exclude time-outs for a good swallow of highball or a munch off a barbecued hamburger. Good Doctor Gallup, not long back, came up with a finding which held that some 7 million Americans take an occasional turn at the sport, and the American Badminton Association estimates that a half million new sets are sold every year. All this, though, amounts to a healthy yet casual form of recreation in the U.S. and only the suggestion of competitive attitude.

In Grosse Pointe, Mich. last week many a backyard highball-and-hamburger badminton player saw the other (competitive) side of the game as the sixth annual Open Amateur Championships of the American Badminton Association were held in the local high school's handsome gymnasium. The most accomplished and successful of the 170 entrants were five brown young men from the Far East who know very little of highballs and hamburgers. Their acquaintanceship with the sport is marked by daily miles of roadwork, hours of batting a shuttlecock against a stone wall in the interest of improving backhand, and the ritual of setting-up exercises and skipping rope. Their reward for such dedication is the realization that competitive badminton now belongs to the Far East where it started in the first place.

The Asian group, now on a world circuit tour, arrived in Detroit last Tuesday after triumphs in Britain and Canada, and they were immediately dubbed the "Achin' Asians." Tan Joe Hok, the 21-year-old whiz from Bandung, Indonesia, complained of a Scottish cold, a stuffed-up nose and postnasal drip. Thailand's Chareon Wattanasin cupped his hand over his jaw and moaned toothache. Lim Say Hup and Teh Kew San, the doubles experts from Malaya, showed themselves limp with fatigue, and the visitors expressed the common opinion that they were in no shape to begin play. The following day there was more talk of calamity.

"What's wrong with Tan Joe Hok?" an anxious host-official asked.

"He's got intestinal flu or something," a Grosse Pointer offered.

"You mean intentional flu," said a third man who had heard of Hok's inclination to hypochondria.

There came a report that Hok, medicinally treated for his stuffy head, had collapsed in the high school cafeteria, had rolled around the floor and was pleading in Indonesian for an early, happy death.

"The poor thing," a kindly cafeteria lady recalled. "I held the boy in my arms. My, he seemed sick!"

"Everything wrong with me," Hok explained later. "Eyes, nose, throat. It was owl-ful."

"I arrive in England, climate changed—damp and cold. Then Canada—dry and cold. Then Detroit—I don't know. In Indonesia I eat soft

food, noodles and rice. In England I eat beef and lamb—don't like. In Canada I find one good Chinese restaurant. Now I hope I get good rice here. When I go to school in Texas [Baylor] I will get good rice. Oh, I am feeling owl-ful."

Whatever ailed Tan Joe Hok, his game didn't suffer. In opening play he whopped Detroit's Fred Trifonoff 15-3 and 15-2, and then he dazzled and defeated sixth-seeded Ted Moehlmann of St. Louis. After a postponement granted because of his flu, Hok disposed of third-seeded Don Davis of Seattle.

### THE NAME MEANS LUCK

In each game, he drew oohs and aahs from the crowd when he executed his soft returns which toppled over the net, end over end, making it impossible for his opponent to return the bird. This maneuver, his power shots, his backhand returns and his wonderful change-of-pace made him much the superior. The exhibition demonstrated why Tan Joe Hok (whose family name means luck) is considered the world's best singles player now that the errant Dane, Finn Kobbero, is inactive because of suspension. Hok holds the Indian, the all-England open, the Indonesian, Asian and Canadian titles. Hok was also the key man in Indonesia's capture of the Thomas Cup last summer.

Wherever the visitors went, they were treated like so many visiting princes. Instead of putting up in downtown hotels, the Asians were





TO GROSSE POINTE HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM TO WATCH ASIAN COMPETITORS, THE WORLD'S BEST, TAKE ON BEST AMERICANS

guests in some of Grosse Pointe's finest homes where hosts saw to it that plenty of kettled rice was cooked just right. Tan Joe Hok was rhapsodic when he learned his host offered lemon juice, Chinese rice and pork sausage for breakfast.

By Friday night Hok and his world circuit colleagues were dominating all events they had entered. Only Teh Kew San, who lost to Poole, the U.S. champion, had not made the quarter-finals, and Poole was later defeated by Wattanasin in two exciting games, 15-7, 18-13. Lim Say Hup and Teh Kew San, who hold four world's doubles titles, reached the finals in their specialty and dispatched the American finalists, FBI Man Joe Alston and Schoolteacher Wynn Rogers, 15-5 and 15-3.

By any measure of sports performance, the singles finals between Hok and Wattanasin was sheer excitement. (Americans were absent for the first time in the history of the Open Amateur championships.) Hok, favored to win, had beaten Wattanasin five times previously, but lost the opener of the final match 15-7. But with growing confidence and composure he won the second game 15-5. Even those in the crowd who had come out of the mildest curiosity, leaned forward anxiously. In a burst of energy that showed no evidence of Scottish rheum or Detroit flu, Hok chased Wattanasin all over the court and won the championship 18-14. "Everyone is nice to me," Tan Joe Hok said. "I am feeling homely."

—NICK THIMMESCH

**HAPPY VICTOR**, Tan Joe Hok, examined his blistered soles in locker room after the finals, exclaimed, "Only nose and feet hurt now. Oh, those feet. Must see doctor."

