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The Missing Stroke in Tennis

An Account of How a Good Player May Overcome His Lack of Versatility

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The Versatile Mrs. Jessup

STILL keeping the sporting spotlight on the gentle sex, consider the case of Mrs. Marion Zinderstein Jessup, former national doubles champion with Miss Eleanor Goss, runner-up to Mrs. Mallory for the singles title in 1920, and for the last four years ranked among the first five women players in the land. Mrs. Jessup has one of the most versatile games on the courts. Overhead and off the ground, she possesses virtually all the strokes in tennis, forehand, backhand, lob, smash, volley and block volley, yet she has a weakness, one that has cost her many an important match, and, when she met Mrs. Mallory in 1920, probably the national championship.

If Mrs. Jessup were a golfer, there would be no hesitancy in diagnosing her ailment as a "mental hazard." But there is no accepted term in tennis for this particular failing, yet

it is certainly a case of where mind scores a distinct victory over matter.

Mrs. Zinderstein's service is a treacherous weapon, a tennis boomerang, for it often turns against her. The opponent finds the delivery difficult to handle, because of the top-spin and side-bound, and it is generally well placed. But all too frequently, when holding a substantial lead, Mrs. Zinderstein will make a double-fault into the net. That usually is the start of her downfall that day, for a long succession of double-faults follows. In the match against Mrs. Mallory, Mrs. Zinderstein made a total of nineteen, as I recall it, and this meant certain ruin against an opponent of Mrs. Mallory's class. It was as though she had run into a bad putting streak in golf, and this thing is liable to happen at any unguarded moment with Mrs. Zinderstein. It is her tennis nightmare.

