

Susan eyes Canadian *Starts play today*

By TERRY BELL
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SYDENHAM — For the Hill family of Sydenham, badminton is truly a family affair.

The affair began with father Dudley, who, while employed as athletic director at the Royal Military College, found the time both to play the sport and coach the school's team.

Four of Dudley's sons took up the game and now play competitively. One of them, 21-year-old Greg, won the silver medal at the Ontario Winter Games last year in Thunder Bay.

And now Dudley has a daughter who is making her name known around badminton circles in Canada in the under-16-age division.

Susan Hill, a 15-year-old grade 11 student at Sydenham High School, is the No. 1 seeded doubles and mixed doubles player in the country. She is also rated as the fifth best singles player in the land.

Susan will get a chance to prove the ranking is justified when she opens play in Vancouver, British Columbia, today for the Canadian championships. She will be paired with Steven McCoy of Hamilton in the mixed doubles and with Susan Pritchard of Peterborough in the doubles.

"I'm really looking forward to playing," said Susan. "I was in it last year but I lost out in the early rounds because they only had one junior class and that was for players 19 and under. We had trouble because the other players were older and more experienced," she said.

"This year, though, things look pretty good. I know some of the players in the mixed doubles and the doubles and it looks like we have a really good chance."

▲ Susan and her respective partners won the Provincial championships last month in February at Stratford.

"I've been playing with Steve for three years now and we make a good team," she said. "We know each other's moves and styles on the court and that makes for good team play.

"I only started playing with Susan (Pritchard) this year. She played last year and did well but her partner quit so I asked her if she would like to play with me," Miss Hill explained.



SUSAN HILL
No. 1 in Canada

—Reg Whitty

crown

But if Susan Hill is to win anything this year she will have to overcome some obstacles that have crept up to make things a little more difficult for her.

She pulled ligaments in her leg earlier in the season and just after the Provincial championship in Stratford she caught the flu. Since that time she hasn't been able to adhere to her eight-hour-a-week training schedule.

"The pulled ligaments have hurt me in the singles," she said. "In singles you have to be able to move quickly and there's a lot of movement. The injury has slowed me down and hurt my chances.

"As for the lack of training, well I'll just have to go to Vancouver and do my best," she said.

Susan, who is a member of the Sydenham Badminton Club, doesn't feel any added pressure going into the National finals as the No. 1 seed.

"I don't feel any more pressure," she explained, "I just want to win there and that's what I hope to do."

Susan, who would like to play in International tournaments some day, says opportunities are developing in that area.

"I've never had any real International competition, but the Canadian Badminton Association and the Ontario Badminton Association are both sponsoring teams which will be competing internationally.

But for now, at least, Susan Hill's thoughts are limited to one thing — Vancouver, and winning a national championship.

"I used to play a lot of sports but I've given them up now," she said. "I realized badminton was my best sport and I want to do well at it."