

TENNIS

VOLLEYS

County off to a flier

WARWICKSHIRE got off to a fine start in their attempt to win the National 55 and over Inter County League for a third successive year by defeating Sussex 5-0.

Derek Bradshaw, Geoff Cliff, Mick Webb, Will Rogers, Keith Lloyd and Keith Bland hit peak form for Warwickshire in the Group One match at Worthing.

Bradshaw, who is a former National Veterans singles champion, said: "The win was a great start but I think this season is going to provide tougher opposition."

Last year Warwickshire won every match and won 21 rubbers at 25.

However, Bradshaw, who coaches at

Edgbaston Priory, Streety and Moorpool, is suffering from tennis elbow and is fighting to get fit in time for Warwickshire's next match.

Injury

He said: "It's the first time I have had tennis elbow since I was a youngster and I've been told it could have been brought on by painting and decorating."

Alan Purnell, another Edgbaston veteran, is trying to get fit again following a foot injury. He is unlikely to be fit for the National Veterans championships at Bournemouth from which players are to be selected for the international veteran team championships in Turkey in October.

Purnell has won several national championships and was the 60 and over singles champion in the National Veterans indoor championships at Brierley Hill earlier this year.

● **WARWICKSHIRE** LTA officials believe a new ratings and rankings system for age groups from 12 upwards will encourage more players to compete.

The best six tournament performances for each player will count in a rolling 12-month period to calculate the ranking with an update every two weeks.

Liz Styles is organising the 12 and under Warwickshire Junior Tennis Challenge tournament at the Solihull Arden club on May 22 from 1pm.

● **COACH** Christopher Johnson is organising a summer Series and Veterans tournament at the Sutton Coldfield club from June 11 to 18. Closing date for entries is May 30 and the contact number is 355 0917.

PETER SWINGLER