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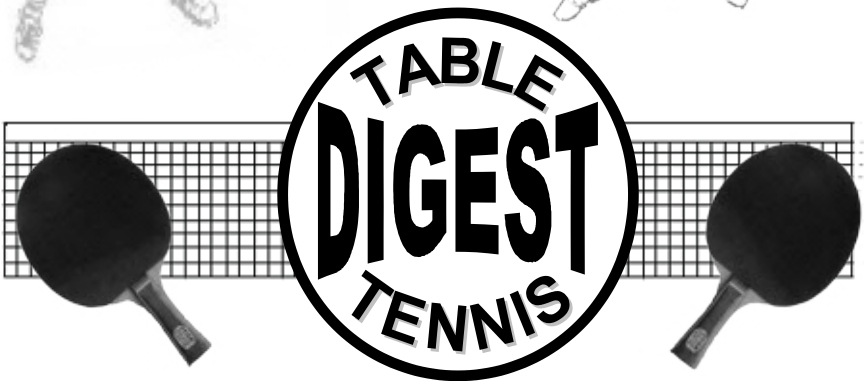
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Editorial

Another summer break soon over, funny how the first few weeks after season end feels as if we have loads of free time, but for those who have to prepare for the next season, those 'first few weeks' are soon gone and its back to work to get ready for 2014-15. For those who sit on the Disciplinary Committees, summer break was a little delayed for them, sadly a question of Rule abuse was forced to drift on, becoming a battle of wills, with a final outcome which could have been accepted sooner, I'm a great believer in old proverbs, 'Be sure your sins will find you out' is very appropriate! and, 'It seemed like a good idea at the time'! Full report page 12

Only two teams dropped out last season, both from Div. 2, it's not many seasons ago that the teams which dropped out were usually from the bottom divisions, or so it seemed, as in those days when clubs lost players from teams, players from lower down were only too eager to step up to play a better class of TT, and it was the 5th Div. that suffered, lately, when players drop out from higher divisions, players are reluctant to move up and prefer to stay where they are; is the gap between the best and the rest getting wider, is that the result of many seasons when lack of encouragement for new youngsters joining the League has resulted in the League being bottom heavy (play to enjoy) rather than top heavy (play to win with style). Now as this situation appears to be changing, then so must the mind-set of the players towards accommodating playing against young new blood, as in starting and finishing times.

This is the last Digest of season 2013-14, with thanks to all contributors, the 5 Div. reporters, Ray Jackson for Div. 2, Ray will be playing in Div1 next season but has agreed to do the reports for Div. 2, Ian McElwee is continuing with Div.3, as are Ken Roberts with Div. 4 and Jimmy Williams for Div. 5. My thanks to Don Davies, who has for the last few seasons stepped in and done the Divisions I have been unable to get a reporter for, last season he did Div. 1. plus his Nets and Edges column, thses on top of all the external work he carries out, next season I hope to give Don a break as we have a new volunteer for the top Div. and a youngster at that, Merseyside Police's Joe Howard, newly promoted from Div. 2, so hopefully Joe can turn his hand to sports writing as well as he has done to playing!

This Digest carries the final Divisional reports of last season because by the time we receive the final match cards, then the reports, the season has well finished, and players have 'turned off', but would it be better if I could publish the last one on line, say 2 weeks after the end of the last match, or do you prefer this way as a prelude to the new season, your thoughts and comments would be appreciated.

The first Grand Prix of the season has just been played in Liverpool Tennis Centre, very successfully organised and executed by the regular band of volunteers from the L&DTTL, I wasn't there myself, but have watched the Men's singles Final between Gavin Rungay and Chris Doran on u-tube a few times, the match has been edited to shorten it, but the play is so fast, I can't make up my mind if it has been speeded up, don't think so, just a brilliant match, well worth a watch. There did seem to be more local players than normal giving it a try, hopefully that grows, and Liverpool continues to host the opening Grand Prix of the season . It's amazing what you can find on u-tube to do with table tennis, matches from the top tournaments to matches loaded from individuals at local matches, and coaching videos from around the world, some great stuff if you have the time, but then putting all that good stuff into practice is the problem!

Two Clubs, Marconi and Christ the King were suddenly told they had to vacate their hall at Christ the King due to structural problems, not an easy problem to solve these days, but with a lot of work by their Club Secretaries and other Clubs helping out, both Clubs are intact for the next season at least and has not caused a loss of teams, **please note their teams change of venues in the Handbook Centre pages.**

ETTA registration is a must before playing any League matches, so if you haven't done so by the time you read this, do so now. Registration can be done on line at tabletennis365.com/etta/membership or by telephone 01908 208898 or by letter, by filling in your card details with cheques (made payable to Table Tennis England) then post to: Table Tennis England, Norfolk House, 88 Saxon Gate West, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK9 2DL. Whichever way you do it, you must re-register before playing.

Thanks to Paul Gittins fo another 11Up, on pages 11 & 12 Paul has put his 11 questions to

Pages 13 and 14 have 'A Story of a Season' from the pen of a Div. 2 player who describes his feelings, thoughts and comments over the season, and a letter to the Editor from Wavertree Labour's Secretary Stan Clark.

Has anyone come across e-mails purporting to be invoices, I receive lots of invoices via e-mail for items purchased on line, but have started receiving scam ones which look very genuine, if opened I'm sure will have some nasty things waiting to get out, so check your invoices thoroughly before opening.

Finally have a good season, played in the spirit of enjoyable competition.

Nets and Edges/Liverpool Grand Prix

Liverpool League players were hard to find at the GP over the weekend of 16/17th August, in fact only thirteen men and one lady participated. The cost of doing so was probably a major factor with men's/women's singles costing £16-50 and all other individual events £15 and doubles £7-80 for each player. Add to that £13 admin and equipment fee of £13 plus £10 player number fee payable up front but is refundable. The timing of the event may also be a problem and maybe if staged later in the season, would be better supported. However, one player who managed to beat the system when progressing to within a match of the semi-final, which would have meant us presenting a cheque, has still to cough up the entry fee. Next season, we will insist on all entries being accompanied by payment up front - those entering on line will automatically, include entry fees.

The tournament was again, a resounding success, thanks to the top table of Referee Eileen Allison, Deputy Brian Jackson and Referee's assistant Russell Thornton who combined to ensure an early finish. A number of members' plus a few none players' also chipped in which was very much appreciated. On Sunday as 'helpers' were clearing away the last of the equipment, Table Tennis England's Events officer Zach Ferris thanked me for the League's help before, during and in winding up the tournament. When I asked if the event warranted 7 or 8 out of ten he replied no, I'd say at least 9.

The most outstanding local individual achievement was in the Band 2 event when Joe Pilkington emerged as the winner from his group consisting of four players. He then progressed from last 16 into the semi-finals where he overcame top seed Jon Hall (Bucks) -7, 7, 7, 7 earning him a place in the final against Ryan Fellows (Staffs). After winning the first game 8, he lost the next two -8, -10 but, recovered well to take the next 11-9 and the decider 12-10 to claim the title.

Four Liverpool players entered the Band 3 singles Joel Webb, Aaron Beech, Tom Miller and Joe Killoran, Miller being the only casualty after the completion of the group stage. Webb's two wins in the KO rounds put him into the last eight where he lost 10, 10, 4 to Devon's Harry Cutler. Killoran went one better but, he too went out to the Devonian 3-1 the victor going on to claim the title.

Three local players entered the Band 4 – Ryan Lunn and Joel Webb (in the same group) plus Tom Miller, only Webb, though able to qualify for the KO stage. Joel topped the group beating Lunn and Sam Clayton (Ys) to reach the semi-finals where he again lost to eventual winner – Yorkshire's James Garrod who went on from 2-1 down, to beat Joshua Harland 17-15 in the deciding game in the final.

Joe Pilkington added a second title when winning the 'Single Point Sudden Death' challenge event, which is very popular and staged during the day. There he beat four players before overcoming Aaron Beech in the final which landed him a nice cheque for £50, his second success in the event having won the event at the Doncaster GP - Aaron, who beat Neil Pickard in round one, collected £14. As a footnote, second seed and four times men's singles champion, Gavin Rungay, lost in the first round! Gavin was desperate to add to his tally of four Liverpool GP men's singles titles which would have equalled five times world men's singles champion Victor Barna's five Merseyside Open M/S titles between 1932 and 1948 although there was a break of six seasons due to World War II.

Kevin Dolder was originally listed in the open doubles draw partnering Aaron Beech but by the time the event started he'd been teamed with Pavel Orzechowski (Lancs) an event very poorly supported.



Kevin Dolder and Pavel Orzechowski (Lancs) on their way to the Liverpool Grand Prix doubles title

It included two female partnerships plus the former Harold House mixed couple of Frances and Geoffrey Potjewyd who departed at the semi-final stage, beaten by Kevin and Pawel. In the final Kevin and Pavel faced Sam Cowan and Anthony Constantinou who took the opening game 11-5, but after dropping that

game, the Lancashire pair eased to victory taking the next three 6, 4, 10.

Wavertree Labour's Neil Pickard seeded at one in the veteran singles, duly won his group of four, which took him into the quarter-finals. Steve Green was also a group winner but he left at the last four stage, a victim Shah Masoudi. Neil, accounted for Andy Frain (Staffs) and Swansea's Dennis Bromage which led to a final meeting with Masoudi who proved too strong, the un-seeded Yorkshireman winning 7, 6, 6.

Robert Barker, Joel Webb, Matthew Laird, Joe Killoan, Joe Pilkington and Tom Miller, all Liverpool league players, entered the U21 event – only Laird and Miller failing to qualify for the knock out stage. Killoan and Pilkington were unfortunate to meet England number one junior Helshan Weerasinghe in successive rounds, the youngster going on to take the title 3-0.

Mike Power and Trevor Owens again faced a number of tricky situations when they set about formulating the divisions for the 2014/15 season. Undertaking it within the framework of the league's rules is often difficult since one or more teams' usually drop out after the pair have completed the task which results in a couple of unhappy teams gaining unexpected promotion. Again, just a couple of weeks ago Ford A and CADWA left division one. CADWA, having lost Joel Webb, Tomasz Rzeszotko and Paulius Vengalis

who sadly passed away during the season, applied to the league under the current rules to have the first team, which they had entered, to be placed into a lower division, the MC deciding that they should drop into division 2. Ford, on the other hand, originally believed they could support their two teams in division one, entered both but, now feel the club will be able only to field a single team.

Christ the King and Marconi, feeling the effect of losing their Score Lane home venue, have both dropped teams – Marconi F from division 5 and Christ the King seeing fit to withdraw their B team from division 2. It seems the two clubs have secured new premises which will be confirmed at the Handbook meeting. However, by the time you read this, one team not expecting to play in the top division, may do so due to the departure of Ford A from division one.

Marconi bounced back into the top flight after a year away, returning as champions - Police B joining them having won two more than the champions while suffering one fewer defeat. Both, I suspect, will find the going tough but Marconi have been there before and will know what to expect. Police B, division 2 runners-up, join Crosby High in having three teams in the top division. Finding six players of the appropriate standard every week for division one combat is hard enough but, nine is a tall order although, the Crosby High trio all finished in the top seven positions which is remarkable.

Division 1

Don Davies

Congratulations to champions Ford who season on season continue to frustrate the other leading title contenders and have done so for most of the past decade. Although Kevin Dolder has been the club's main points' winner in each of their title winning triumphs, he played only nine league matches last season. Undoubtedly, the key to remaining as title favourites was the club's acquisition of Keith Williams who provided the vital ingredient needed to retain their crown.

They enjoy a huge psychological advantage over most rivals merely by being the defending champions with opponents turning up hoping only to avoid a heavy defeat. No club in the 87 years history of the league can boast eight division one title triumphs and Ford accomplished it in successive seasons. Towards the end of the season they had to negotiate a tricky period when Police A and Crosby High both had a rare



opportunity to capitalise on the situation but, were unable to respond. Of course, even with two top players in the ranks, quality support is also a vital component in maintaining pole position and Mal McEvoy, Andy Taylor and Terry Turner, all played their part in ensuring the club's enduring division one success. It remains to be seen if they can continue to be successful since of the 212 points they collected to earn the title, Keith and Kevin's combined total accounted for just 74. Having lost to close rivals Crosby High A 7-3 and 6-4 and Police A 7-3 at home and away, they were ruthless against the lesser lights - chalking up eight 10-0 wins while on another eight occasions dropped just a single point. They'll open the 2014/15 season with only one team and may need a squad of five or six or, for Keith and Kevin to play more often if they

are to fend off their rivals while keeping happy, those members not selected.

The decision taken by Merseyside Police TTC to group their three strongest players in the 'A' team, seemed strange to most observers. At times, though, it looked like paying off as they stalked the Widnes based club until the last month of the campaign before tailing off to finish as runners-up. Joe Mullin with 63 points from 84 outings and Jonathan Taylor, 54/60 racked up the bulk of their points.

Crosby High, still to claim the division one title for the first time, put in a vigorous challenge but, unfortunately, weren't able to call on Grantham College student Jack Dempsey, who inflicted one of only three defeats over Keith Williams in the league. He was only able to make a handful of outings for the first team but, Robert Barker, Steve Green, John Goodall, Gavin Lloyd and Paul Cicchelli could break the club's duck should they put it together next season. The story on the street is that a well respected international will be joining them next season but, if true, I'll be surprised if he or she turns out often enough to make a difference.

Fifth in the division Christ the King, relied on their usual combination of Omid Khaiyat and Keith Bird, both former Fawley Construction Closed men's singles finalists. However, due to work commitments the pair played only 20 and 16 matches respectively while newcomer to the club and 2013 closed semi-finalist Ryan Maynard played 13 matches, losing just 7 from 39 singles contests.

The statistics provided by Trevor Owens makes interesting reading and in particular, as to who turned out most often. Dave Roberts made 86 singles trips to the table, returning 50 victories while Joe Mullin (Police) with two fewer singles encounters, won 63. Fourteen year old Robert Barker also chalked up 63 points from 71 matches - all for his grouped team while the most sets played in a single team was Joel Webb with 75. Roy Smith, the most successful league player ever in terms of first division and Readman cup successes, rarely misses a match and the twice closed men's singles finalist and veteran champion, engaged in 74 singles encounters, something he has done regularly since the late 1950's.

Outside of the top five title contenders, lie teams' happy to turn out each week in the top flight just for the pleasure of playing and have more chance of facing relegation than winning the division. All have very good players who give 100% which helps keep

the standard in the league improving with each season. The draw-back for those sides is the difficulty in raising their strongest trio on a regular basis - hence the number of instances of 'playing up'. Without this rule, many wouldn't complete a season without conceding three matches leading to a team being withdrawn from the league although, not necessarily, that particular team. The next five teams, Wavertree Labour, Crosby High B, Bath Street, CADWA and Bath Street A, each racked up in excess of a century of points and from time to time registered impressive victories and in truth, not even the top five teams dared take them for granted.

Christ the King A and Harold House finished in the bottom two relegation positions but, as I said in an earlier Digest, Harold House may be relieved to escape the high octane week to week drubbing. Although division 2 boasts a high standard of play, they'll surely be happier in those surroundings.

Half a dozen women appeared in the division the most victories coming from six times Liverpool Closed ladies' singles champion and current holder Clare Peers who appeared in 19 fixtures returning 35 points from 57 sets. Cherith Graham won 21 from 51, Gemma Grant chalking up 17 from 46 while Annie Hudson (Ford) the league's only female to play in August's GP, won 4 from 12, her club mate Denise McEvoy winning 2 from 15 also in division one. A third Crosby High player Sylvia Graham picked up one from 16 outings.

To wind up my first season compiling these notes, here are a few facts and figures which make interesting reading but may, also, shock you. The division produced twenty four 10-0 matches, of which seven were conceded as walk-over's while a further four ended as 10-0 - the losing side having failed to turn out a complete team. However, another worrying fact to emerge was that on 26 occasions, a match was played where one side failed to turn out three players. In a season of twenty six weeks, only eight were trouble free with zero walk over's, incomplete teams' or late score cards. Of course, apart from the latter issue, the other contraventions of league rules left players' feeling cheated in not being denied a full evening's play and entertainment or, at times, none at all.

I believe that Editor Roly Wright has asked a new, much younger correspondent to compile these notes next season so, hope you have enjoyed my short stint, for I have.

Good luck for the new season.
Don Davies

Week 24

Marconi had trebles from Bob Edwards and myself in their win over Cadwa A, with Cadwa's Paul Evans saving the whitewash by defeating Adrian Bramham. Every point now crucial in the title race this was a good result. Christ the King had a Billy Cheung treble at Marconi B, but that was all they managed, to effectively end their interest in the title.

Dong Xia was the unbeaten star in Wavertree Lab B's win over Bath Street B, with Lee Farley picking up a couple and combining with Dong to take the doubles, Rob Peat winning a couple for Bathe Street. Tom Miller remained unbeaten in Crosby High C's loss to Wavertree Lab A, and he must be close to moving up to the holy grail of the first division.

Harold House A won a close encounter with Marconi A, nobody managing to stay unbeaten, with Peter Findlater, Rod McPherson and Michael Sui picking up two each, and Ian Wensley getting to for Marconi.

Week 25

With Merseyside Police B having brought forward their final game of the season this week was effectively the final week for the two title contenders, and Marconi had a I point lead. The Police played Cadwa A, and Cadwa's Paul Evans again managed to win a point, beating Paul Gittins, plus he and Mike Power beat Joe Howard and Dominic Greene in the doubles, giving the Police a 7 point lead over Marconi.

With the Police having beaten Marconi twice this season a draw Marconi knew they needed 8 points to secure the title, and they were up against their A team. The game started with Adrian against Frank McCann, who went two sets up but Adrian came back to win 13/11 in the fifth.

Chris Spedding then goes two sets down but manages to pull back and win in five against Andy Lloyd. Everything then went swimmingly for the first team up to 7-0 and only needing one more point to take the title. At this point Ian Wensley defeated Adrian in straight sets.

It was then me against Frank McCann, who had beaten me earlier in the season, and Frank again went 2-1 up and had a match point in the fifth, but I managed to take the set 10/12 and take the title. Just as well as Ian Wensley then beat Chris deuce in the fifth and the title was won by 1 point.

Paul Banks took the honours in Wavertree Labour A's win over Bootle YMCA with a hat trick of wins, plus a



couple for Dave Harse and 1 for Dong Xia, Alan Chase getting a couple for Bootle. Crosby High C had another Tom Miller treble in their win at Marconi B, with Roger Neal and Sylvia Graham picking up two apiece, Marconi's Tony Mullaley beating them both. Colin Owen, Rob Peat and Dave Stoddern each picked up 2 wins in their win at Christ the King B, Peter Taylor picking up a couple for Christ the King.

Week 26

Merseyside Police B's trio of Joe Howard, Dominic Greene, and Paul Gittins remained unbeaten in this clash with Marconi A, which had actually been brought forward, but

Marconi's Ian Wensley did his best to upset the applecart, losing in five to both Joe and Dominic, with Joe's game at deuce.

Graeme Black and Paul Evans scored hat tricks in Cadwa A's win at Wavertree Lab B, Dong Xia saving the whitewash with a win against Mike Power. Billy Cheung remained unbeaten in Christ the King B's draw at Crosby High C, inflicting a rare defeat on Tom Miller, Tom and Sylvia Graham picking up a couple each.

Paul Banks was the unbeaten star in Wavertree Lab A's win at Harold House A, Roy Adams and Dave Harse picking up a brace apiece. Alan Chase three, and Ted Birch two for Bootle YMCA in their draw with Marconi B, Neil Colville picking up a couple for Marconi.

So that's the season over for another year, and what a cracker it's been, with the closest title race for many a year, Marconi's strength in depth just seeing them through against the youth, well in the top two, of Merseyside Police, and Cadwa finishing third, level on points with Wavertree Lab A, and Christ the King B close behind. The two other Marconi teams finished in the bottom places, but picked up some useful points along the way, and assuming they stay in the division, will do so again next season.

Bootle YMCA, with Alan Chase and Ted Birch will always be competitive, Harold House A could be joined by their first team, Bath Street B have a good outfit that can upset any team, as they did against Marconi, Crosby High C will struggle to hang on to Tom Miller, who will surely move up next season, and Wavertree Lab B have a promising star in Flora Yang.

Division 3

Ian McElwee

There was never a doubt as to which team were going to win the division. The Maghull team of Paul Hutchings, Daughter Amy and Rob Beattie only dropped 40 from the 260 points available during the season, to finish a comfortable 19 points clear of second placed BSM D.

Paul remained unbeaten throughout the season, Rob lost only one and young Amy continued her improvement to gain a very respectable 66%. However, CADWA C gave

them a fright in the penultimate match of the season, Steve Graham and Ian Lunt both beat Amy and reserve John McLoughlin as Maghull scraped a win.

The BSM D squad of Barry Davis (76%), Ricky Brown (75%), Myself (87%) and Colin Mitchell (53%) were always going to finish in second place, we lost 2 matches during the season, both to Maghull, but remained unbeaten

against all other opposition. Ricky and I remained unbeaten when we combined in the doubles even managing to beat Paul and Amy when visiting Maghull. Ricky and I have been around a long time but both Barry and Colin only started playing in the 5th Division a few years ago, they have steadily improved each season to become excellent competitors at this level.

Sefton Park came 3rd on 169 points, their 3 strongest players all ended up with more than respectable records, Alan Davies won 52 from 63 (82%), Peter Tod 33 from 45 (73%) and Ian Laird 45 from 63 (71%), they were ably backed up by Mike Perry with 23 wins. In their final fixture, a strong Marconi C team of Matt Evans, Paul Loftus and Bobby Bell pushed them all the way before going down 6/4.

Maghull A acquired a creditable 154 points to finish in 4th place. They were a very well balanced side with very little to choose between their squad of 4 as confirmed with them finishing 16, 17, 18 and 19 in the divisional averages. John McLoughlin (64%) led the way, followed by Phil Christie (63%), Peter Holmes (60%) and Sue Hughes (59%). In their final match John came up against his son John, with young John's superior youth and fitness enabling him to gain an 11/6 5th set victory. The Maghull side won the match 7/3 with Sue having a great night on the table to remain unbeaten in her singles.

Next in line are BSM C on 141 points, Andy Cheung (50%), Brian Crolley (51%) and Mal Kent (58%) were very well led by captain Brian and as a team never failed to be less than competitive, whilst always playing with a smile on their faces. Typically their final 3 matches all ended 6/4 with them getting the better of Maghull A and Merseyside Police but losing out to Bootle YMCA A. Andy was the star man against Maghull A as he remained unbeaten in the singles. Brian and Mal won 2 each against the Police side, Andy won 1 before combining with Mal to take the doubles 11/9 in the 5th set.

6th placed Marconi will be pleased with their season attaining a respectable 135 points, newcomer Matt Evans had no difficulty adjusting to this level only losing on 8 occasions in obtaining 86%. They had an 8/2 win over a 2 man Wavertree Labour D with Colin Fyles in top form in beating the Marconi pair Paul Loftus and Bobby Bell. When losing 7/3 at BSM C, Matt beat Ricky Brown and Colin Mitchell and Paul weighed in with a 5th set victory over Colin Mitchell.

Merseyside Police C have concentrated on ensuring a string of youngsters have gained experience of playing league table tennis. The players involved Harry Watson, Jack and Sam Gittins, Stephan Shober-Thomson and Michael Russell all have excellent TT skills and if they continue their improvement should not be far away from the top of the division next season. It would not, of course, have



been possible to bring on these youngsters without the support and encouragement of experienced players ie Paul Gittins (96%) and the young at heart Brenda Buoe (64%).

Bootle YMCA A finished 8th on 119 points, their player of the year was Shakil Malik (79%), his team mates, Bert Rivers, Mike Hughes and Eddie Preston created a very competitive squad who always gave 100% effort. At week 25 Shakil, Bert and Mike combined to gain a fine 8/2 victory over Sefton Park A with Shakil and Bert remaining unbeaten on the night.

Huntsman's Wood were only 1 point adrift on 118, their most successful player was the hard working Lee Madin (71%), Lee and the hard hitting John McLoughlin Junior both won their 3 singles and Paul Rees 1 when they gained a 7/3 win over CADWA A. Steve Rees replaced Paul the following week when they went one better in beating Police C 8/2, John was again unbeaten in the singles with Lee losing to Harry Watson and Mike Russell getting the better of Steve.

Wavertree Labour had a reasonable season finishing on 111 points, Paul Jennings played well to get a 70% average and ably supported by Colin Fyles (54%) and Andy Bird (48%) they remained well clear of the relegation fight. In the final week of the season Colin and Andy both remained unbeaten as they ran out 6/4 winners over Linacre. The youth policies within these clubs were on offer and when Stan Clarke and Harry Reeve met they both gave everything before Harry won 11/7 in the 5th.

CADWA C were never actually in any real danger of relegation, always managing to keep their head above water to achieve 95 points. The team of George Higham (45%), Steve Graham (41%) and Ian Lunt were always sporting and welcoming but I can't help but think that they did not do themselves justice on occasions. Their 6/4 final week loss to the all-conquering Maghull provides an indication of their individual capabilities, if Steve and Ian can both get the better of Amy and John it begs the question why they did not do it more often against lesser players, maybe next season?

To be honest there was never any question of who the 2 bottom teams would be, only who would end up propping up the division. The crunch came at week 25, Linacre had their best result of the season in beating Arrive NW 7/3, Harry Reeve went away with the man of the match award as a result of winning his 3, he was offered great support by Alex Charcenko and Charlie Bradshaw who both won 2 singles. In the same week Sefton Park A only managed 2 points when they visited Bootle YMCA A, both Rob Pudifer and Carl Anderson had 5th set wins over Mike Hughes. These results put Linacre ahead of Sefton Park A and they held on to beat Sefton's final total of 67 by 3 points.

Division 4

Ken Roberts

Well to the final 3 weeks of the 2013-14 season, which in the case of the tussle between Bath St. Marine E and Maghull B was probably instrumental in finalising their positions as it was very close indeed. Bath St Marine grasping the runner up spot finishing 9 points ahead of Maghull B.

It was a good win for Bath St. Marine F over Marconi E in week 24, Danny Low saving the whitewash with an excellent win over Darren. Bath St E beat Arriva 7-3, John Rowan picking up a double over Ted C and Graham Turner. A close game between Bootle YMCA C and QVC, Bootle coming out victors 6-4. Maghull B beat Bootle YMCA B 7-3, Tom D. picking up a brace against John L. and loon respectively. All square in the game between Wavertree Labour E and Maghull C. Another strong performance by East Wavertree over Police, Andy beating Joey, and Tommy beating Chris, for their 2 games. A close fought game between Cadwa D and my own team Marconi D. Marconi coming out victors 6-4, John G and James winning both of their games for Marconi.

East Wavertree on form again in week 25, whitewashing Maghull B, this result might have been a major factor to Maghull losing out on the runner up spot. Bath St. Marine F had a good win over Bootle YMCA B, Saul and Tom picking up a game each for their 2 points. Marconi D had a good win over Bootle YMCA C, made a little easier because of the fact that Bootle played short. A hard fought game between Arriva A and Cadwa D. Cadwa just edging it 6-4. Bath St. Marine E beat Maghull C, the evergreen George Frost saving the whitewash. All square between Marconi E and Wavertree Labour E.



Finally to the last week of the season, week 26. Bath St. Marine F had a good win over Wavertree Labour E. Robin beating Dave Nod to save the whitewash. A very competitive game between East Wavertree and Bootle YMCA B. East Wavertree just edging it 6-4. The same score between Bootle YMCA C and Arriva A, Arriva winning that clash. Another strong performance from Bath St. Marine E, their full house against Marconi E contributing well to their runner up spot. Maghull B beat QVC. Dean saving the whitewash with a brace over Ben and John. Similar score for the Police over my own team Marconi D. Adam beating Tommy, and John and I pairing up for a double win for the 2 points.

After over 6 months of enjoyable competitive table Tennis the season has finished, East Wavertree have completed a wonderful double, winning both the Division and Cup. Another superb performance by them finishing on over 200 points. This Division I think was particularly strong this year with some very good players well capable of playing in higher Divisions, this shows what a very strong squad East Wavertree are. Unfortunately at the other end of the table it was sad to see the E team from my own club Marconi facing relegation. Again this shows the depth in talent this Division has. Let's hope they bounce back next season.

I hope everybody has enjoyed this season, I certainly have. Here's to a well earned rest this summer and I hope to see you all next season, refreshed and ready to go!

Division 5

Joey Williams

Congratulations to St Anne's on becoming Champions on their seasonal debut. A richly deserved top spot that their refreshing approach to the game warranted. This was no mean feat in an exciting and extremely closely contested division with several teams of similar ability with a wide range of fine individual players. A major factor in St Anne's success proved to be their consistent strength throughout the side – plus the addition of a more consistent number four in the second half of the season. Regarding the second spot, a number of clubs battled for the other promotional place and this was achieved (in the

final week!) by early pace setters Maghull D. Best of luck to both sides next year in Division 4.

Week 24 saw St Anne's cement their lead at the top considerably with an impressive 2-8 victory at Waterloo A. The Wavertree side winning all the single matches but losing out in both of the doubles matches. There was an extremely close singles game between Hassib Nuree and Geoff Metcalf with the St. Anne's player taking the final set 9-11. A closely contested match at Maghull D resulted in the visitors, Waterloo, taking the majority of the points 4-6, Michael Stewart being the sole player on the night to win both of his singles (albeit very closely – going to

five against Gavin Minett and Paul Mainey respectively). A very good 8-2 victory for East Wavertree against Wavertree Labour F with some fine games, including Eric Spencer emerging victoriously in an exciting 5 setter against James Logan, Terry Jones picking up the other point for the visitors in his 3-0 defeat of Connor Creevy, using his 'spin' service to maximum effect. An excellent match between Cadwa E and Sefton Park B resulted in a 5-5 draw, the reliable Paul Morgan winning both of his singles for the visitors and Mark Slater doing similar for the home side – including an 11-9 fifth set victory over Carl Anderson. The Cadwa E side demonstrating their considerable potential with some fine results in the latter half of the season with the acquisition of Mark also having a positive effect on their results.



Week 25 produced a strong 9-1 win for Merseyside Police E over QVC A with only one of the 5 sets going to 5 (Mike Flannery's 3-2 victory over Matthew Shaji). James Kemp registering the sole win for QVC in a close match against Neil Thomas (10-12 in the fourth decisive set). Harry Hughes led his Arriva North West B side to a 6-4 victory At Wavertree Labour F, calling the the two 1s to the table for the first match of the night and consequently defeating Mike Dugdale 3 sets to 1 in a fast attacking game of contrasts that set the tone for a night of open, attacking play. Excellent doubles victory for Terry Jones and Mike in the penultimate match of the night, beating Harry and Alan Jones in three straight sets, well done. Very good 7-3 win for Maghull E over Marconi F (with a player short) with Joe Rock winning both of his singles quite convincingly, an excellent double for Martin Latham beating experienced campaigners Alan Smethurst and Brian Gregory in three sets.

The concluding week (26) of the season brought several exciting and significant matches, Maghull D cementing their promotion place with a commanding 9-1 win against Bath Street Marine G' Keith Dudley losing a close match to Harry McGanity in 5 sets after earlier combining with Tom Bell in doubles to collect a vital point on the night. A significant win for Waterloo over Sefton Park B (7-3), with Gavin Minnett securing an impressive double with three set victories over Paul Morgan and Ray Jones. In the same match, Eric Wood triumphing in a close 5 setter with an 11-9 victory in the deciding game against a determined

Graham Chellew. Jamie Whitty also playing well on the night and unlucky to lose both of his singles matches 9-11 in the fifth set (against left hander Stuart McGhee and the steady Alex Daly), evidence that a fine margin/detail can be the deciding factor in a close match. A very good win for the ever improving Waterloo A at Arriva North West B (4-6) with Phil O' Mullane and Alex Daly both winning their singles matches, an excellent result that was even more impressive considering it was achieved without their injured number one Jeff Hornby. Harry Hughes winning his three matches for Arriva, and Gary Mavis edging out Geoff Metcalf 11-9 in the fifth set, a close match with a number of superb, close, games.

A selection of some close individual games in the final three matches of the season:

Alex Daly (Waterloo A) against **Gary Mavis** (Arriva North West B) 11/8, 18/16 and 18/16. **Paul Morgan** (Sefton Park B) against **Michael Stewart** 11/2, 11/8, 6/11, 10/12 and 11/8. **Carl Anderson** (Sefton Park B) against **Daniel Hall** 11/7, 9/11, 12/10, 9/11 and 11/9. **Geoff Metcalf** (Waterloo A) against **James Logan** (East Wavertree A) 11/9, 3/11, 8/11, 11/8 and 11/8.) **Nikolay Primuk** (Waterloo A) against **Francis Dako** (St Anne's) 7/11, 18/16, 8/11, 11/6 and 11/9. **Chris Halliday** (Cadwa E) against **Ged Hanley** 11/3, 11/6, 10/12, 7/11 and 12/10. **Oliver O'Connor** (Marconi F) against **Neil Thomas** (Merseyside Police E) 11/8, 11/9, 6/11, 3/11 and 12/10. **Jimmy Williams** (East Wavertree A) against **Israel Isaac** (St Anne's) 12/14, 11/9, 6/11, 11/6 and 11/8. **Brian Morrison** (East Wavertree A) against **Sharon Mahon** (Wavertree Labour F) 5/11, 9/11, 11/0, 12/10 and 11/7. **Brian Gregory** (Maghull E) against **Bob Finnigan** (QVC A) 9/11, 11/6, 14/16, 12/10 and 11/7.

Final thoughts: An exciting, enjoyable and exacting season is over. Remember to build in plenty of practice over the summer (especially if you have actually purchased that new bat that you 'plan' to purchase every year) and return, refreshed, for a new campaign. Furthermore, congratulations to Stefan Shober-Thomson on his recent closed victory – successfully transferring his increasingly impressive league form to the end of season competition, well done, a worthy winner.

And finally, many thanks to all who included comments on their match cards.

11 Up Paul Gittins asks Cadwa's Graeme Black

1. Where did it all start

It all started for me some 42 years ago at the age of 10 playing in the garage on an old door balanced on 2 stools with a plank of wood for a net ! My sister Julie gave me the t/t bug as she was being coached at the time and kept coming home and telling me how great it was. One night as she was being dropped off by her coach John O'Sullivan and I was still banging a ball against the garage wall John suggested that I may like to come to the coaching sessions too, he then became my one and only coach taught me everything I know and I'll be forever thankful for the time he gave me. I joined English Electric and stayed there for 20 + years before taking a break from the game, coming back and playing a couple of seasons at Waterloo and then moving to CADWA where I hope to see out my remaining t/t days.



1972 - move up to the 'big school'

time he gave me. I joined English Electric and stayed there for 20 + years before taking a break from the game, coming back and playing a couple of seasons at Waterloo and then moving to CADWA where I hope to see out my remaining t/t days.

2. Best player played against

It was nearly Chester Barnes !! we were at a holiday camp in Devon, I was 12 and I won the t/t comp. Part of the prize was to play Chester Barnes who was giving an exhibition, unfortunately another part of the prize was various bottles of spirits and when the organisers realised my age they told me that I shouldn't have been allowed to enter and gave the runner up the ale and let him play Chester Barnes, I did get a consolation cuddly toy though.

So rather than mention the usual suspects I'd have to say that Gordon Birch was probably one of the best I've played against way back in the English Electric Closed, great all round game and a really nice bloke from what I can remember. From outside the L'pool league it'd have to be Graham Sandley who I played in the English Schoolboy Championships in 1975, you could see back then



The garage, but not the bat, didn't have enough room, so converted to the little bat!



1975 - member of the England Schoolboys Team - Graeme second right

4. Worst defeat ?

Again it was Peter Wass and yeah he did talk me out of it, couldn't show my face for weeks, great bloke but great blagger too ! It's close between that one and another I played way back against the sadly departed and greatly missed Frank Murphy. Picture it finals night at Eng Electric sometime in the 70's, the "up and coming" youngster Graeme Black plays "seasoned campaigner" Frank and to be honest I think I was expected to win convincingly. Frank however had other thoughts



"just relaxing before getting ready to play a match



The only time Graeme would be caught wearing the Blues stuff- fast asleep!!

and from the first point he blew me away, not with world class tabo but with a patter second to none, I didn't know what had hit me, what a man! a game between Peter and Frank would have been a good un to watch.

5. Best player to watch ?

I love to watch a good defender against a good attacker. I always like watching my old team mate Alan Timewell, he has bamboozled a good few with his bat spinning. Michael Marsden signed briefly for CADWA one season and I had the privilege to play in the same team, some of the stuff he played was unreal.

6. Funniest table tennis moment ?

Didn't involve me but my late and great mum Betty, anybody that knew my mum knows that her t/t matches were more of a social night than a competitive win at all costs one, she liked a few drams and the odd fag (at a time when it was allowed indoors). She was umpiring a game and came to the table to sort out who was serving, she lights a ciggie puts it in her mouth, rolls the ball back and puts it under the table, she then takes hold of the ciggie in one hand and asks



That often seen smile of satisfaction

"Which hand love" apparently both teams were in fits !

7. Who's your t/t hero and why ?

My dad Ken used to drive me everywhere when I was playing tournaments as a junior, so without him I wouldn't have been able to play as much. May I also refer back to question 1, John O'Sullivan taught me everything I know about t/t and coached me for many years and all for free, I owe John a large debt of gratitude.



My partner doesn't play t/t, it was a course in Almeria having a well earned break

8. Is there life other than table tennis ?

I'm a keen golfer playing off 11, can I add I rarely play too 11 though!! I also like horse racing, watching on tv and going to the course to watch my hard earned cash disappear live !

9. Tell me something that would surprise me ?

I'm still using the same blade that I had when I played at English Electric some 30 years ago, a very young Andrew Eden played was in our team and gave me it, it's served me well.

10. What changes in the game would you like to see?

Getting rid of the net would help! I'd like to see less yong and joing being shouted after every point, not necessary. Another bug bear of mine (as my current teammates will confirm) is when your opponent thinks a let has been served and puts their hand up to stop play, can't we just play to the umpire?

11. Coaching tip ?

I suppose practice makes perfect but that's rich coming from me, I hate practising and will only do it a couple of weeks before the start of the season. "Always stay in the present, forget the last point". "It's not what spin you put on your service it's where you place it that really matters".

Those last 2 points are from my old mucker Alan Timewell, they've served me well since he told me them after he'd just beaten me !!

ITTF Goes Plastic for Future Events

Title events will be played using plastic composite balls instead of the traditional celluloid ball.

There are no rule changes, as plastic balls are according to the ITTF's rules in table tennis competitions since the 1950's. This also means that table tennis events may still be played with celluloid balls.

On the upcoming change, the ITTF President Adham SHARARA stated: "Any change in sport usually divides the participants into three groups. The "optimists" who believe the change is for the best; the "pessimists" who believe the change is a disaster; and finally the "indifferent" who just go with the flow."

"Based on my experience, the proportion of people in each group changes with time, and eventually the majority just goes with the flow. In this case, the use of plastic balls was more for necessity rather than by design. The fact is that the supply of the celluloid sheets to make the traditional celluloid balls is dwindling will eventually no longer be available."

The reasons for the change to plastic balls for ITTF sanctioned and World Title events are:

Most countries prefer not to produce celluloid anymore because of high flammability issues.

Celluloid balls are not allowed to be shipped on airplanes due to their flammable nature. This means that if shipped by air, special fire-proof containers must be used. The same applies when shipped by land or sea. This is very expensive and not cost effective.

Plastic balls are safer and much more cost effective than celluloid balls to produce.

There are currently four manufacturers (3 from China and 1 from Japan) and 21 brands that have their plastic balls approved by the ITTF for use in international competitions. A new manufacturer from Germany will be joining this list soon. The ITTF has kept the levels of specification for the approval of plastic balls as close as possible to the specifications of celluloid balls. Some wider tolerances have been allowed for an 18-months period to ensure best quality. This will ensure that the plastic balls used in competitions will feel similar to celluloid balls, reducing disruptions to the players.

ITTF Athletes Commission Chairman and table tennis legend Vladimir SAMSONOV (BLR) stated:

"I just started my preparations with the new plastic ball and it will take a little bit of time to adjust to it. In any case I am very excited and looking forward to Belarus Open where we will finally be able to play with the new ball. I am also very happy that my country is hosting the first World Tour event played with plastic balls."

The first time the plastic ball will be used in an international competition will be at the GAC Group 2014 World Tour Belarus Open, which will take place from 21 to 24 August 2014. The upcoming Youth Olympic Games will continue to be played with the celluloid ball as this was the ball used at all the qualification events. In order to avoid any confusion and misunderstandings, plastic balls and celluloid balls are both legal, however, the ITTF world title events and ITTF sanctioned events will use exclusively the plastic balls, whereas all other events are free to choose the type of ball they wish to use.

Table Tennis England has postponed the introduction of the new plastic ball because of a lack of widespread availability.

Consequently, the celluloid ball will be used at the first two Grand Prix events of the season – at Liverpool on August 16-17 and at Medway on September 6-7.

The ITTF had previously decided that the new plastic ball would be introduced in ITTF competitions from July 1, 2014, and Table Tennis England confirmed that it would be used at the three National Championships and all Grand Prix events next season. However, with stocks running low, it has now been agreed by the Table Tennis England Board to postpone its introduction.

Table Tennis England CEO Sara Sutcliffe said: "We always recognised this would be a transitional year and that there may be practical difficulties to address, particularly concerning supplies of the new ball. "We feel it is important to take a common-sense approach and also to make an early decision to avoid any confusion as the events draw closer." It is still intended to introduce the plastic ball at the National Championships and later Grand Prix events, though Table Tennis England will continue to adopt a watching brief concerning supplies of the new ball and may issue further guidance in due course. Apart from the above events, those responsible for all other aspects of Competitive Table Tennis (as defined in the Regulations) will be able to choose either celluloid or plastic balls until July 1, 2015 when use of the plastic ball will become mandatory for all Competitive Table Tennis in England.

July 8th, 2014 Editor's note: It is a decision for leagues which ball will be used. Clubs then abide by that decision.

Disciplinary issues for inclusion in the Digest

- 1) It was reported in the previous digest that 5 players had been charged and found to be in breach of rule/s for submitting a scorecard for a match that did not in fact take place. Further charges were subsequently brought against the secretaries of the clubs involved as they both withheld information from the Management Committee regarding the incident. Both secretaries later admitted that they had known at an early stage in the Leagues enquiries that the scorecard submitted was false although one of those secretaries believed there was nothing in the League rules to state that a match played as a 'double header' is not permitted even though he had been informed in the very first notification sent to him that a 'double header' would be a breach of rule/s. It was felt by the MC that due to the course of action taken by those 2 clubs secretaries an enormous amount of work carried out by the MC could have been avoided including the suspension of 5 players before the MC were informed about the full facts.

Both secretaries were charged and proven to be in breach of rule 1(d) and rule 18.

One secretary was given a letter of warning and fined the amount of £20 whilst the other secretary was also given a letter of warning and fined the amount of £25.

The letters of warning included the following extract in italics: -

The DSC was very concerned about your actions as you are an experienced club secretary.

The integrity of the LD TTL is based on honesty and sportsmanship from its members and in particular the club secretaries who are responsible for ensuring that the league matches are played in accordance with the League Rules and Regulations.

In this particular case the integrity and conduct expected from you did not meet the standards expected from LD TTL members. You were aware that the Readman Cup match had not been played in accordance with League Rules and Regulations, withheld that information and failed to inform the Management Committee or the DSC.

Following the decision made by the DSC one secretary submitted the fine imposed. The other secretary appealed against the decision. This appeal was heard on 9th June 2014. The Appeal Board consisted of Stan Clarke (Chair), Harry Reeve and Jeanette Hutchings. The appeal was lost and therefore the decision of the DSC stood. The fine of £25 was subsequently paid.

The MC would like to thank the members of the Appeal Board who freely offered their time in order to assist the League in the performance of its duties.

- 2) It was reported in the previous Digest that a player was found to be in breach of Rule 1(d) and Match Regulation 2 for entering the field of play and confronting a player in an unacceptable manner. He was given a written warning about his future conduct. A further protest was received against the same player about his conduct at a match in the final week of last season. He was subsequently found to be in breach of Rules 1(d) and 18 and also Match Regulation 2. Following this second offence he has been suspended from attending or taking part in all events arranged under the auspices of the Liverpool & District Table Tennis League through to Sunday 5th October 2014. If it is found that he breaches that order the suspension will restart and a further 10 week suspension will be enforced with the same proviso attached. A further warning regarding his future conduct was also given.

Rules and Match Regulations referred to: -

Rule 1(d) - That all activities of the League and its members should reflect a high standard of integrity and sportsmanship.

Rule 18 - No member shall by misconduct do anything which would bring the League or the game of Table Tennis into disrepute.

Match Regulation 2 – All Members shall uphold the aims of the League as outlined in Rule 1(d).

A Storey of a Season

After reading Roly's editorial in Digest Vol. 68 No.2, I noticed his comment that "Sadly letters have dried up....", so I thought I would help him out. Struggling for ideas, I decided to write a week by week resume of my team Marconi's season in Div. 2.

Wav Lab 'A' - A good win against a strong side, with six 5 setters shared equally and a treble from Adrian. I lost to my good friend Paul Banks, but more of that later.

BSM 'B' - An easy 10-0 win with only one set going to five. I was expecting to have to face my Preston teammate, Tony Kendall, as all season he was saying that he would go through my game "like a knife through butter". Tony has been used by BSM as a floater (pardon the phrase) this season, having played everywhere bar the 5th Div, surprisingly as they do have a team there. Graham Turner is a good judge of a player, so maybe Tony was playing in the 4th Div. again that week?

Marconi 'B' - None of the 'B' team turned up, instead Peter Wass from the 'A' and two from the 'C' team. The 'C' teamers struggled, but Peter had a good win against Bob.

Crosby High 'C' - I was dropped by Trevor Owens, but we had an easy win with only two close games, a doubles loss and Bob just pipping Mattie Laird.

Bootle YMCA - Adrian assured me he knew how to get there, so I met him at BSM at 7.00 to follow him. Several U-turns and stops for Adrian to consult a map later, we arrived at 7.30. Greeted at the door by Alan Chase, on our way up the stairs he told us that they had a reserve playing. Great I thought, I could do with an easy game after that journey. It was only when I caught the glint in Alan's eye that I smelt a rat, correctly as it was Wayne Percival! with his four sets and Alan hardly missing a ball until he ran out of steam against Adrian, we fell to our first defeat, Bob played superbly against Wayne though, and only lost close in the 5th.

Cup 1st Harold House 'A' - A 5-2 win with Alec Bryce beating me and Peter Findlater beating Adrian in close 5 setters.

Harold House 'A' - A slightly different HH team from the Cup and Andy Lloyd stepping up to help us out, only losing to Alec in a 9-1 win.

CTK 'B' - A hard fought draw with a Billy Cheung treble. Just as Dave Tagg and me were making our way to the table, the main light went out, I stupidly suggested that if we turn it off and on again it should work, not realising how long it takes to warm up, it took 15 mins. to come back on, but it did work!

Police 'B' - Another 6-4 defeat, all of the sets won by their two very promising youngsters, Joe Howard and Dominic Green.

Wav Lab 'B' - I was again dropped by Trevor, but I did notice Roly's comments in Digest Vol 68 No.1 "A strong Marconi with Ray Jackson, Bob Edwards and Adrian Bramham....", the inference being that a team with me in it isn't strong? we did win 9-1, so maybe he was right?

Cup 2nd Wav Lab 'A' - Another 5-2 win, with Paul and me not having to play each other.

BSM 'B' - A 7-3 win, but Rob Peat with home advantage gaining a fine treble.

Cadwa 'A' - This match was re-arranged until the New Year, but ended up in another 6-4 defeat, mainly due to Graeme Black's four wins.

Marconi 'A' - An easy win against a weakened team, with Ray Hibbs subbing for Ian Wensley.

Wav Lab 'A' - Another weakened team, resulting in an unexpected 10-0 win, I beat Paul Banks, leaving us 2-2 in Liverpool and Preston. Maybe WL turning out with only Paul and Stan Clarke made up for Wayne Percival playing his only league match against us?

Marconi 'B' - A 'normal' team this time and an 8-2 win, but good wins for Tony Mullally and John McCann against Bob.

Semi Cadwa 'A' - Judging by our previous encounters, Paul Evans' games were the key as he probably had to win two for them. Bearing in mind that I've never beaten Paul and I've never seen him beat Bob, it boiled down to him against Adrian, which Adrian won 13-11 in the 5th for a 5-4 win!

Crosby High 'C' - A good 8-2 win away from home, with Adrian and me having good very close wins against Tom Miller, another very promising youngster.

Bootle YMCA - Frank McCann stepped in for Ray and had two excellent wins in a 5-5 draw containing several close 5 setters. The most notable feature was Adrian losing his three for the only time I can remember in Div 2, including Ted Birch finishing him off 11-0, clearly Adrian had lost all fight by then.

Harold House 'A' - An easy win, but it was nice to play Howard Flint for the first time, having been a teammate of his brother Peter in Southport many years ago. I did go off him though when, at the end of the match, he went up to Adrian and bowed, saying that he was his

favourite player, I told him not be so stupid and quickly ushered him out of the room.

CTK 'B' - An excellent 6-4 win against a full strength team, with Dave Tagg surprisingly losing his three and Billy Cheung only winning one this time.

Police 'B' - Again a 6-4 defeat, but probably the best match of the season, the only difference from the first half was Ray playing in Adrian's place, with the youngsters again winning all six sets.

Wav Lab 'B' - An acceptable 7-3 win, with Flora Yang beating Bob and me, Bob can count himself unfortunate in a way to lose to Dong Xia, as in the 5th game Dong played unbelievably, his backhand loop killing from everywhere.

Cup Final CTK 'B' - A surprisingly easy 5-1 win, with their only win coming from John Lau against Adrian in the opening set. The key set was Bob's 12-10 5th game win against Billy Cheung, the same score as in the previous league match, apparently Bob played equally well when we won the Cup two years ago, clearly a man for the big occasion. I will have to try and convince him next season that every match is a Cup Final.

BSM 'B' - An easy 10-0 win with only one set going to five.

Cadwa 'A' - Unfortunately no Graeme Black, so a 9-1 win, with Paul Evans beating Adrian. When Adrian played Mike Power, the League's Hon. Organising Secretary, he went 2-0 up. At 12-11 in the 3rd game, Mike finished off a fantastic rally with a superb backhand down the line, Adrian diving full length, but not quite reaching it, when Mike walked round the table towards Adrian, we all thought that he was going to help him up, only to try and kick him. Fortunately Adrian managed to roll out of the way in time, but clearly shocked by Mike's

actions, he struggled in the 4th game and only managed to win it 11-9. Adrian then went to shake hands, only for Mike to attempt to head butt him! Disciplinary Committee take note.

Marconi 'A' - Needing to win 8-2 to win the Div. we went 7-0 up, with Bob, who came down to watch, calculating the percentage probability after each set! We can't fail to get eight now we all said, but we spoke too soon as Adrian lost 3-0 to his nemesis Ian Wensley. Ray and Frank McCann then played out a brilliant game which swung one way and then the other, Ray winning deuce in the 5th to win the Div, my heart pounding ever louder throughout at the prospect of needing to beat Ian in the final set. Having previously confirmed with Trevor's cardiologist that he does have a heart, Adrian then plucked up the courage to approach him to ask whether, due to our achievements, he would refund our subs. The room went quiet as Trevor contemplated, then said "No flippin chance, but I'll refund them if you do the same thing next year." He then waddled into the kitchen chuckling away, obviously pleased with himself. I must say that Trevor has been a reassuring constant during the season, watering down the milk, providing knock off biscuits, supporting the opposition and only smiling when I lose or pay my subs, no doubt we will see him every week next season as he will enjoy watching us losing regularly in the 1st Div.

Chris Spedding
Marconi

Hoping that the good humour in Mike's interactions with Adrian (v Cadwa 'A') will clearly come out in the way I wrote about it, and I would find it hard for anybody to believe that he actually attacked Adrian, especially bearing in mind the light hearted tone of this article!
Chris.

Dear Roly,

I read with interest the article headed ' Police academy ' in the last edition and can only congratulate Paul Gittins and the Police club on their efforts. It just goes to prove that children can be enthused at the idea of playing table tennis and that the place to catch them is in the schools.

Many years ago the English Schools Table Tennis Association issued a document entitled Adopt -A- School, the idea being that T.T. clubs should approach nearby schools to offer help in setting up T.T. teams within the school, or inviting pupils to visit their club to learn the game. Unfortunately, table tennis players being short sighted the idea never took off as it should have and we lost years of possible player recruitment as a result. It can't have escaped the notice of league members that some, a very small number, of clubs have been spectacularly successful as a result of finding school children and coaching them to good levels of play, take a bow Dave Graham and Roly Wright.

My concern over assimilating school age players into main stream table tennis is the diehard attitude to change of so many of our senior players . It is unrealistic to expect school children to be playing matches late at night, but until the outlook of senior player's changes we will continue to lose young players as fast as we can recruit them if we are not prepared to adjust our method of play to suit the younger players and their parents.

I fear that in the near future Police club may come to regret their decision to vote against allowing clubs to use two tables in order to complete their matches at a reasonable time for young players

Stan Clarke,

Final League Tables for 2013 -14 Season

Division One						Division Two							
	P	W	D	L	Pts		P	W	D	L	Pts		
1	Fords	26	23	0	3	212	1	Marconi	22	16	2	4	159
2	M/Side Police A	26	22	3	1	192	2	M/Side Police B	22	20	1	1	158
3	Crosby High	26	18	4	4	177	3	Cadwa A	22	14	1	7	129
4	Crosby High A	26	17	4	5	164	4	Wavertree Lab A	22	15	2	5	129
5	Christ The King	26	14	4	8	153	5	Christ The King B	22	10	4	8	126
6	Wavertree Lab	26	12	6	8	137	6	Bootle YMCA	22	10	5	7	110
7	Crosby High B	26	10	4	12	119	7	**Harold House A	22	9	1	12	91
8	Bath St Marine	26	8	4	14	114	8	Bath St Marine B	22	5	2	15	88
9	Cadwa	26	10	2	14	114	9	Crosby High C	22	5	5	12	88
10	**Bath St Marine A	26	10	2	14	105	10	Wavertree Lab B	22	6	2	14	82
11	Fords A	26	6	3	17	95	11	Marconi A	22	5	1	16	79
12	M/Side Police	26	5	1	20	78	12	Marconi B	22	3	2	17	71
13	**Christ The King A	26	3	5	18	71	13	Cadwa B	Withdrawn				
14	Harold House	26	2	2	22	68	14	Wavertree Lab C	Withdrawn				

Division Three						Division Four							
	P	W	D	L	Pts		P	W	D	L	Pts		
1	Maghull	26	25	1	0	220	1	East Wavertree	26	22	2	2	203
2	Bath St Marine D	26	22	2	2	201	2	Bath St Marine E	26	22	1	3	188
3	Sefton Park	26	17	3	6	169	3	Maghull B	26	20	1	5	179
4	Maghull A	26	15	3	8	154	4	Arriva Nth West A	26	16	3	7	159
5	Bath St Marine C	26	15	3	8	141	5	M/Side Police D	26	15	1	10	137
6	Marconi C	26	9	7	10	135	6	Bath St Marine F	26	10	6	10	129
7	M/Side Police C	26	12	5	9	130	7	Cadwa D	26	11	3	12	129
8	Bootle YMCA A	26	10	4	12	119	8	Bootle YMCA B	26	11	3	12	120
9	Huntsman Wood	26	10	3	13	118	9	Maghull C	26	6	5	15	109
10	Wavertree Lab D	26	8	3	15	111	10	QVC	26	8	2	16	107
11	Cadwa C	26	3	6	17	95	11	Marconi D	26	9	2	15	106
12	Arriva Nth West	26	6	3	17	90	12	Wavertree Lab E	26	7	2	17	99
13	Linacre	26	3	3	20	70	13	Bootle YMCA C	26	4	3	19	80
14	Sefton Park A	26	2	4	20	67	14	Marconi E	26	1	6	19	75

Division Five						
	P	W	D	L	Pts	
1	St Annes	26	21	2	3	179
2	Maghull D	26	15	2	9	155
3	M/Side Police E	26	16	1	9	152
4	Sefton Park B	26	14	5	7	151
5	Waterloo A	26	13	6	7	143
6	Waterloo	26	13	6	7	136
7	Arriva Nth West B	26	11	3	12	135
8	Wavertree Lab F	26	9	3	14	127
9	East Wavertree A	26	8	5	13	122
10	Cadwa E	26	10	2	14	117
11	Marconi F	26	10	4	12	115
12	QVC A	26	7	2	17	111
13	Maghull E	26	7	4	15	94
14	Bath St Marine G	26	4	3	19	83

Doubles Table

DIVISION ONE	P	W	L	Pts
Fords	26	21	5	21

DIVISION TWO	P	W	L	Pts
M/Side Police B	22	17	5	17

DIVISION THREE	P	W	L	Pts
Maghull	26	25	1	25

DIVISION FOUR	P	W	L	Pts
East Wavertree	52	43	9	43

DIVISION FIVE	P	W	L	Pts
Arriva Nth West B	52	34	18	34