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**TABLE  
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DIGEST**

*Official Magazine*

OF THE

**LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE**

# TABLE DIGEST TENNIS

All correspondence must be addressed to the Editor "Table Tennis Digest", 83 Lark Lane, Liverpool 17.

Published during the months of November, January, February, March and April.

## EDITORIAL BOARD :

Editor : **Albert Montgomery.**

**J. Green (News), T. H. Edge (Features), J. McKim, A. Upton and D. Cameron**

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## EDITORIAL

**A**LTHOUGH the season is well under way this is the first time I have had the opportunity of addressing the "DIGEST" readers as Editor, and it is with considerable trepidation that I approach the task when I remember the commendable efficiency of the two previous Editors, Jack Pattison and Eric Caird. To their efforts we all owe our thanks for the continuation of, what I believe is the only League magazine in the country.

Now . . . the aims and objectives of the "DIGEST."

As Editor I consider it my duty to make it perfectly clear to everyone that it is not in my mind to try to force upon you my personal views. This paper is the official organ of the L. & D.T.T.L. and is the platform from which any individual can express his views and criticisms.

It is the aim of the Editorial Board to let you have your magazine as nearly as can be, up-to-date, but please remember that copy has to be got together, sorted and checked, and then passed to the Printer, who needs time to set up the type and eventually print. It is then delivered to Mrs. Jim Green who once again has taken on the thankless job of addressing the wrappers each month, wrapping and posting the finished article to you, the reader.

What part can you play in the success of the "DIGEST"? Well, there is always room for additional sales, and here YOU can help by getting 'outside contributors'—ex-players, etc., and let Don Cameron have the names and addresses together with 3/9d. for the season's 5 issues. This will help the finances, and help to keep our worthy Treasurer from breathing down my neck!

Any Club Secretary who is in constant touch with his members might undertake to accept delivery "in bulk" and dish them out, which will vastly assist in bridging our financial gap.

My last, and very pleasant thought, is to wish you all (albeit belatedly) a successful season, and to equalise things a little, wish you all, in advance, all the best for 1964.

## A NEW THEME BUT THE SAME FIDDLERS

THE more season of table tennis is under way, but this time a season with a difference. A new structure for the divisions and a new system of awarding points. Whether either or both of these ideas will be a success only time will tell, but in my experience at least, players are talking about the points system and of the new faces they are meeting in their matches. All the criticism is not complimentary, but at least the changes are provoking discussion, which I feel is an achievement.

### Elasticised Rules.

Unfortunately, we still have with us the same few, who are intent on stretching the rules to the very limit in order to gain advantage for themselves—I refer to the ranking lists of certain clubs wherein you will find some extraordinary evaluations of the capabilities of certain players. Rule 15 states that you must group your players in groups of 5, but unfortunately (or fortunately, depending upon your views on the subject) it does NOT state "in order of merit." Therefore, in my opinion, the Committee cannot object if a club registers its players for its 'B' or 'C' team, thus enabling them to come up as reserves for tough matches and also play for the lower team in IT'S tougher games.

### Am I a 'Square'?

I may be old-fashioned (or considered so by some), but I believe that the majority of clubs play table tennis in this League as a form of recreation, and consider it to be a sport—not a business matter in which you must win at all costs. I feel that our answer to these few fiddlers must be twofold. In the first place, this season, treat them with the contempt which they deserve, for ridicule can be a powerful weapon. Let them fiddle away, and win all their matches 10-0.

For this they will win a medal (or as Rule 27 states "some suitable token"). The others, by playing the game, will win some matches and lose others, but will have the satisfaction of gaining some friends and of knowing that the points you do accumulate will have been won on merit and are richly deserved.

Our second answer must be to endeavour to alter the rules to eliminate this pest from our League.

Another twist to the fiddling game is the 'Ghost' player. For the uninitiated (are there any?) a ghost player is one who is ranked in the top group of five but never plays. This enables the fifth best player in a club to be ranked at No. 6, making him eligible for the "A" team when they need strengthening. BUT, of course, he spends most of the season playing as 'reserve' for the first team. This results so that EVERY team in that club can call on the services of an additional strong player when required. One club has at least one such ghost player in their first team who HAS NOT PLAYED FOR AT LEAST THREE YEARS!). Who knows, he might even BE a ghost!!

This article is NOT directed at the many clubs who ARE playing the game. Please continue to do so in the right spirit. The temptation to fiddle to outwit the fiddlers is strong, but it weakens our hand when we come to deal with the matter at the end of the season.

To those clubs who are blatantly fiddling I make no appeal whatsoever. Whoever heard of a ghost who played in the right 'spirit' or had a conscience? I would merely recommend that they note the first sentence of Rule 17.

*Editor's Note. Glad to see you fit and well again after your recent illness.*



## An Appreciation

Whilst it is not the normal policy of the League Management Committee to individualise publicly in terms of praise or criticism regarding its members, the accepted belief being that as an elected body it should share bouquets or brickbats collectively, it is my considered opinion that the recent yeoman efforts of two members, Mr. Jim Green and Mr. Albert Montgomery, should be brought to the notice of members.

I refer, of course, to the appeal sponsored by them for prizes to be utilised in connection with the Merseyside Open Championships and reference to the acknowledgement published elsewhere in this issue will give some indication as to the success of their endeavours. I have not the slightest doubt that in according them sincere thanks I am expressing the sentiments not only of the Committee and myself, but of the League members in general.

A. E. UPTON, *Chairman.*

In reply to the Chairman I would like to express my personal thanks to him for his prompt and courteous letters of acknowledgement written to every donor of the prizes. They have all remarked on these letters to me personally, and there is no doubt that the favourable impression thus created has greatly enhanced the standing of the L. & D.T.T.L. in their eyes.

EDITOR.

### SILVER WEDDING.

On behalf of all League members we offer hearty and sincere congratulations to Renney and Ivy Crafter, who celebrated their Silver Wedding on 20th August of this year. Both still actively engaged in table tennis, their 'offspring' are carrying on the Crafter tradition, and in truth it may be said that theirs has been a table tennis romance. We hope that in some future issue similar sentiments will be expressed to them on the occasion of their Golden Wedding, and by then we shall be confident that, the honeymoon then being over, the marriage will probably last!! Best wishes to them both.

### COUNTY RECOGNITION.

You just cannot keep these Crafters out of the news! Judy has already represented Liverpool in the Lancashire second team twice this season, and on both occasions won both doubles events (not playing in the Singles). On December 14th she is due to make her third appearance v. Northumberland at Bolton, and we have no doubt that she will once again do her stuff properly. We have waited a long time for County players, and it is good to see that we have had a few players in the teams over the past two or three seasons.

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## Generous Gestures

The Management Committee wishes to express its grateful appreciation to the undermentioned for their generous gifts and donations in response to the appeal for prizes for the Merseyside Open Championships :-

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In addition to the above, a gift was received from one other donor with the expressed wish that they should remain anonymous.

# Around the Divisions

(By our Special Correspondents)

## DIVISION 1

—By JIM GREEN.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Liverpool YMCA	6	6	0	0	54
Bohemians	6	6	0	0	50
Rafters	5	5	0	0	43
CADWA	6	5	1	0	38
Liverpool YM 'A'	6	4	2	0	38
Anfield	6	4	2	0	33
Waterloo Dock	6	2	4	0	25
Balfour	5	2	3	0	24
Oakhill	6	2	4	0	24
Linnets	6	1	5	0	18
Rafters 'A'	5	1	4	0	17
Bohemians 'A'	5	1	4	0	14
Lucem	5	1	4	0	11
Bootle YMCA	6	0	6	0	7

**T**HE points system introduced this season has already been demonstrated as an utter failure on the first five weeks matches in this division. Liverpool YMCA are four points ahead of the field, and although both Bohemians and Rafters are as yet unbeaten, it is improbable that either will overtake the present leaders, for, even though either of these two sides might conceivably beat the YM 6-4 twice, the odd sets lost to lesser teams will still leave the YM up in front. So, it is possible (I do not say probable) that an unbeaten team will finish second to a team who may have been beaten twice. Absolutely farcical but true! Again, a glance at the lower half shows seven sides battling against the four relegation places, with yet an eighth (Waterloo Dock) still not out of danger. While interesting from the element of danger involved, in this case sides which have actually won more matches are likely to be relegated. What a set-up!

May I remark at this stage that to date I have met not one single first division player who can see any sense at all in this system. All seem to dislike it most heartily, and

some are hoping that, at the seasons end, at least three or four sides tie for the fourth place from bottom, just to see what action will be taken. An interesting point.

Cadwa, strengthened by the addition of Wallay Allanson and Ted Birch, are doing well in their first season, and seem set to stay near the top, while their companions in promotion, Lucem, have still to find their feet, but I have an idea that Lucem will still pull something out of the bag as they have done so often in the past. Bootle YM have the weakest team for some years, and with their present strength seem doomed, but the rest of the lower eight are all well involved in the struggle for survival. Despite 'Dunbars' comments that Linnets are the worst team ever seen in this division, they scraped together 15 points in the five weeks despite meeting three of the strongest sides in the first three matches. 'Dixie' Dean, condemned as 'useless' in the same article has won a few points, and even a certain old man has laboriously climbed from his bath chair with some success. Balfour have not yet found a settled side, but I don't expect to find them so low down at the end of the season.

Rafters 'A' despite the loss of several key players, are putting up a good show, and Bohemians 'A' have still to meet their companions in misery, so by the time the next 'Digest' comes out the situation might be nearer solution or even more tightly compressed. Your guess is as good as mine.

One final point on friend 'Dunbars' article--I was deeply sorry to learn that Pete D'Arcy was so completely out-of-touch! You'll have to put some practice in next summer, Pete!

Come on, folks! Comments to the Editor.

## DIVISION 2A

By JIM ROBINSON.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
W'tree Lab. 'A'	6	6	0	0	53
RAFA	6	5	1	0	42
Cadwa 'A'	6	3	3	0	34
Beauclair	5	4	1	0	32
LPAS 'A'	5	2	2	1	29
Bath St. 'A'	6	2	3	1	28
Linacre	6	3	3	0	28
Liverpool P.O.	5	2	2	1	24
Waterloo Park	5	2	3	0	23
Oakhill 'A'	5	1	3	1	22
English Electric	4	3	1	0	19
Fairlawn 'A'	5	0	5	0	9
Rafters 'B'	6	0	6	0	8

**F**IRST of all, a welcome to all new teams in the division, and best wishes to them and to the "old-timers" for a pleasant and successful season.

We now come to the moan-and-groan department. The following is a factual report of a match played recently—this season! The away team arrived at 7-30 p.m. They were then TOLD that the home No. 1 would not be arriving until 9-30 p.m. So the home Captain was given the choice of either playing a reserve or forfeiting the No. 1's set.

At 8-15 the space on the score card for the home No. 3 had not been filled in. Explanation? He would be arriving "shortly"! We now come to the evening's "crowning glory"—the visiting Captain, from the resultant very restricted list of available players, asked for the home No. 2, only to be told in no uncertain tones by this 'gentleman' that he wasn't going to **x x x** well play as he had just finished his tea! After a great deal of highly acrimonious discussion he eventually deigned to perform, complete with full track suit.

For a great proportion of this somewhat controversial match, a long-serving member of the Management Committee was present, but the prevailing unpleasant atmosphere and continued breaches of both League rules and normal good manners left him completely unmoved! Would it be in order to pose the question—"WHY"?

It is to be hoped that there are no repeat performances of this nature as it is, perhaps, the most likely way of killing interest in the game.

In the playing sense it seems that our division has settled down to about four small sections. Wavertree Labour "A" appear to be virtually certain to carry off the title; runners-up will probably come from Beauclair, R.A.F.A. or Cadwa "A": Rafters "B" (unless strengthened) are the most likely relegation candidates, and no doubt the remainder of our teams will be doing their utmost to prove me a poor prophet.

## DIVISION 2B

—By PETE HURWORTH.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Wavertree Labour	5	5	0	0	46
Bohemians 'B'	5	3	1	1	35
Crawfords	5	3	1	1	35
Linnet 'A'	5	2	1	2	30
LPAS	6	4	1	1	30
Bath St.	5	2	2	1	28
Anfield 'A'	6	3	3	0	27
L'pool YM 'B'	4	3	1	0	25
Fairlawn	5	2	3	0	24
Cadwa 'B'	5	1	4	0	18
University	4	0	2	2	17
Bath St. 'B'	5	0	5	0	5
Waterloo Park 'A'	4	0	4	0	1

**T**HIS division finds Wavertree Labour setting a very hot pace, and although it is still early in the season I don't think I will be

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sticking my neck out by forecasting an easy passage into Division 1 for them. They have been further strengthened by the signings of Ted Morris and Gordon Brownlee (ex-Bootle YMCA) which gives the side an experienced well-balanced look.

Their match v. Cadwa "B" produced two surprises when P. Ferris (Cadwa) beat F. Farquharson 14-21, 21-16, 21-19 and R. McPherson beat G. Brownlee 17-21, 21-19, 28-26. Two very hard fought sets. These youngsters show a lot of promise, and more will be heard of them in the near future.

The battle for second place looks wide open, with 5 or 6 teams all closely grouped in the table. Bath Street, Crawfords, Linnets 'A', Fairlawn, LPAS and Anfield 'A' are all in with a chance.

LPAS v. Crawfords was a very close affair with the Police getting the verdict 6-4, Crawfords however, being weakened by the absence of their No. 1 Arthur Jones. Linnets 'A' had a good win over Bohs. 'B', doubles from Allan Watson and Eric Wood going a long way to make it possible.

Waterloo Park 'A' and Bath St. 'B' look like facing relegation unless they show a rapid improvement, and the fact that Waterloo Park have already conceded 20 points by failing to fulfil fixtures twice will not help them to avoid the drop.

The new points system has given rise to a lot of discussion and the devotees of both new and old systems seem about equally divided. My personal opinion is that this present system, where each set counts as a point has grave snags. To illustrate my point I take two teams at present tying with 24 points from 5 matches—LPAS and Fairlawn. Based on last seasons methods their records would read :

	P	W	D	F	A	Pts.
LPAS	5	3	1	24	26	7
Fairlawn	5	2	0	24	26	4

Coupled with the fact that the Police have beaten Fairlawn already this season this new system does not seem to have done them justice, and they will have to accumulate a better sets average to gain first Division status, as they have been winning most of their matches to date by the narrow margin of 6-4.

## DIVISION 3A

—By DAVID EATON.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Balfour 'A'	5	5	0	0	48
Colonsay	5	5	0	0	37
Maghull	6	4	2	0	36
St. Mary's O.B.	6	4	2	0	35
Eng. Electric 'C'	6	3	3	0	32
Wav. Lab. 'C'	5	3	2	0	30
University 'A'	6	3	3	0	27
Linnet 'C'	5	3	2	0	26
Fairlawn 'B'	6	2	4	0	26
Oakhill 'B'	6	1	5	0	19
LYCA	6	1	5	0	18
Stanley House	3	2	1	0	17
L'pool Jewish 'B'	5	2	3	0	15
Anfield 'D'	6	0	6	0	14

**E**VEN at this early stage of the season it looks as though Balfour 'A' will prove to be far and away the strongest team in this division. They have strength right down from number one to five, and at this time they have conceded only two points from fifty in five matches.

Welcome to newcomers St. Mary's Old Boys. With 35 points from six games they are showing up particularly well for their first season. It is good to see L.Y.C.A. back with us again after an absence of a couple of seasons (what happened to you?), though, after a good win of 9-1 over Liverpool Jewish they do seem to have fallen away somewhat.

Those who played in the very depleted division 4 last season are undoubtedly delighted to find that this year we have a division at full strength.

Maghull Co-Op have two extremely useful players in D. Newton and R. Brown. Newton uses a sandwich bat, but unfortunately the table at Maghull is so dead that he cannot benefit from the use of this bat to the full.

Stanley House might prove the strongest challengers to Balfour, but as they have as yet played only three matches it is difficult to tell at this stage. And another team with great potential is Wavertree Labour 'C' who, when at full strength are a good side.

The new system of points scoring seems to find favour from some clubs, and it does seem that there are not now quite so many early departures from matches as there were.

## DIVISION 3B

—By GEORGE GRIME.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Linnet 'B' .....	6	5	1	0	51
Anfield 'B' .....	5	5	0	0	49
Bath St. 'C' .....	6	4	1	1	40
Crawfords 'B' .....	6	3	2	1	37
Wav. Lab. 'B' .....	4	4	0	0	36
Sefton General .....	5	5	0	0	36
Mossley Hill .....	5	2	2	1	27
Eng. Elec. 'B' .....	6	2	3	1	21
Balfour 'B' .....	4	1	3	0	15
Linnet 'F' .....	4	1	2	1	13
Coll. Tech. 'A' .....	6	0	4	2	11
Orrell 'A' .....	6	0	6	0	10
Crawfords 'C' .....	5	0	5	0	9
Colonsay 'A' .....	5	0	4	1	7

**P**ERHAPS the most refreshing point to consider at the start of our new season was that, this year we are all going to make new friends as well as renewing acquaintance with some of the old. What can be a more exhilarating prospect than that of tramping round some obscure and uncharted part of Liverpool looking for a venue at which we have not previously enjoyed the pleasure of playing?

It was expected, long before the first wave of a bat, that the "big guns" from Wavertree Labour would shoot their way into a very convincing lead before their rivals had time to draw breath. However, it seems that a strong combination from that little room in Beech Road are anxious to topple this preconceived idea, and indeed, Anfield 'B' have stormed into top position having dropped only 1 point from 50 in their five matches played.

Hot on their heels come Wavertree Labour 'B', Linnets 'B', Sefton and Bath St. 'C'. It is interesting to note that Linnets 'B' captained by the amiable Harry Holmes is strongly reminiscent of the once-existent Lussac side. In spite of the change

of guise it's grand to see the same bunch of lads playing together. Whilst still on the subject of Linnets (a club named after a bird!), those who have played against their newly-formed 'F' team will have noted that the side includes three or four ladies each week. Not only does this bring a little glamour to the Division but it ensures that at least one match is played on a truly gentlemanly and sporting level each week. It is rumoured that the next team to entertain them at home are arranging a Dance for the interval!

Finally I should like to say what a pleasure it is to thumb through the score cards and note that the number of walk-overs due to absentees has been reduced to a bare minimum. Let's hope that the new points system will result in a continued keenness to turn up throughout the season.

## DIVISION 3C

—By JIM GREEN.

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Crawfords 'A' .....	6	5	0	1	48
Coll. of Tech. ....	6	4	0	2	47
LPAS 'B' .....	6	4	2	0	41
L'pool YM 'C' .....	5	4	1	0	33
Bohemians 'C' .....	6	3	2	1	33
Balfour 'C' .....	5	2	2	1	30
Orrell .....	5	2	3	0	28
Eng. Elec. 'D' .....	6	3	2	1	27
L'pool Jewish .....	4	2	1	1	26
Beauclair 'A' .....	5	3	0	2	26
Lowlands 'A' .....	6	1	5	0	21
Oakhill 'C' .....	6	0	6	0	9
Linnet 'F' .....	4	0	3	1	8
Bradstones .....	6	0	6	0	3

**I** START with an appeal! Prior to the season I gathered unto myself a nice little band of contributors for divisional notes. Unfortunately the lady who was to write for this division now finds herself playing for another of her

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club's teams in another division, so I am writing this from score cards, tables, and my limited personal knowledge of your players. Will some willing soul undertake this job? Come on, you budding journalists. Give me a ring and I'll tell you just what we want. Obviously this way of doing the job is not the best.

As I write, Crawfords 'A' and Coll. Tech. are pulling ahead from the field, but there are so many score cards not yet in that to predict that they will stay there is stupid. For instance, Liverpool Jewish have two matches in hand—if won by a good margin they will climb right up among the leaders, and the YMCA 'C' team are in with a good chance. However, while this is still well and truly undecided, I lean to the view that Crawfords, who have proved their worth in the past, will be sitting pretty at the end.

Linnets 'E' and Bradstones are composed entirely of newcomers to the League, and although not doing very well as yet, there is time for improvement with experience. Oak-hill 'C', as becomes the clubs lowest team, enjoy their matches but not a lot of success, but always go out to win. For the rest there is a comfortable middle-of-the-table look, although the Police might sneak through on the rails.

Beauclair 'A' have suffered by reason of the illness of John McKim and they are not a very settled side which has effectually put them out of the running for this year, though under the old points system they would still have had more than an outside chance.

As I say, my knowledge of these players is limited in certain cases, so forgive me if I do not mention what you might consider a good individual performance. However, it is pleasing to see our Chairman back in action after a few years. Having only a women's team at his club for some time, he consumed his impatience, and now, with two mixed teams at Orrell, he is back doing his stuff. Welcome back to the rat-race, Arthur!

Let's have a volunteer for next time's notes, please.

## DIVISION 3D

—By TOM BUNNER.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
St. Edward's	6	6	0	0	54
Balfour 'D'	6	6	0	0	51
Anfield 'C'	6	3	3	0	41
L'pool Jewish 'A'	5	5	0	0	39
Lowlands	5	4	1	0	38
Beauclair 'B'	6	3	3	0	30
Dom. Mission	6	2	4	0	26
Eng. Elec. 'A'	2	1	1	0	12
Linnet 'D'	4	1	2	1	12
L'pool YM 'D'	5	0	4	1	11
Lucem 'A'	4	1	3	0	9
Lussac	5	0	5	0	6
Bradstones 'A'	4	0	4	0	1
Eng. Elec. 'E'	2	0	2	0	0

**T**HE positions in the league tables, as most team captains and players must realise, are dependent, not purely on the games played, but rather on the results of those games which reach the address printed on the back of every match card. Many clubs are at fault in failing to send in results, as league positions will no doubt indicate. Please, if you are given a match card to post, tie a knot in something till you reach the post-box. The English Electric club particularly should take the hint.

I sympathise with English Electric 'A' for their 3-7 defeat at the hands of Balfour 'D'; no fewer than 5 out of 6 deciding games, and 4 deuce games going in Balfour's favour.

The number of 10-0 results in both 3D and other 3rd divisions show that many clubs and players are having a very unhappy season. Desertions to 'Other Leagues' and early retirement are said to be imminent in many individual players cases. It is very likely that in the near future some representation will be made to ensure that some of the totally one-sided games currently being played will not be repeated next season.

Some honorable mention is due, I feel, to those players registering their teams only successes in a 9-1 defeat. Up to the 5th week of the season the players include: K. Thompson (L'pool YM 'D') twice, J. McVey (Domestic Mission), R. Hopwood (Lucem 'A'), J. Rice (Bradstones 'A'), W. Kelly (Linnets 'D'), E. McCullough (Lucem 'A'),

A. Roberts (L'pool YM 'D'). It is not difficult to see which teams are likely candidates for the wooden spoon at the end of the season.

At the other end of the table the leadership seems likely to be hotly contended. St. Edward's, Balfour 'D' and Anfield 'C' being the current main contenders. Anfield 'C' after a promising start of 29 points from 3 games then conceded 6 points each to the teams above them. Although these are early days, St. Edward's seem to have a very strong team, especially at 1 and 2, and could do very well.

It is always disconcerting to have to record W/O in match scores. In the process of partly playing 5 matches, one Lussac player has conceded no fewer than four sets, due to non-arrival apparently.

Commiserations to his team mates who must know who, if not where, he is.

Commiserations also to all those ex-8th Division teams who are struggling manfully with little hope of success at the foot of the table. A consoling thought may be that there is, as yet, no relegation to worry about.

## WOMEN'S DIVISION

—By AMY BELL.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Cadwa	5	5	0	0	40
Bohemians	5	5	0	0	38
Linnet	5	3	1	1	34
Bath St.	4	3	1	0	33
Crawfords	5	3	1	1	33
Rafters	5	3	1	1	30
Anfield	4	3	1	0	29
Cadwa 'A'	4	1	3	0	20
Chesh. Lines	6	2	4	0	20
Balfour	4	0	2	2	15
Eng. Elec.	6	0	5	1	12
Bohemians 'A'	4	0	4	0	4
Linnet 'A'	5	0	5	0	2

**A**FTER the first five weeks of matches it is too early to make any prophecies about eventual champions, but it has rapidly become clear that the issue will lie between Bohemians, Rafters and Cadwa. The move of Eileen Mansell from Cadwa to Rafters might well be the key to the whole situation, for she strengthens an already powerful Rafters side and considerably weakens Cadwa's

chances, while at the same time, Moya Jones seems to be concentrating on the mixed divisions rather than ours, Barbara Cain from the Wirral making up the team. In these days, when every set counts as a point I would have thought that every team would have wished to turn out at full strength, but it is their own business as long as full teams turn out.

Only two black marks so far—one where a ladies' team turned out with only three players—three others playing for a men's team the same evening. Strangely, although the details of these two games are common knowledge, no card has been sent in (after three weeks) for the ladies' match, so for obvious reasons I don't feel competent to name the club involved, but it is a poor show when a strongish side arrives after a ten mile journey to find three very weak players opposing them and no reserve to fill the fourth place because three strong girls are in a men's team! Again, in my opinion, it is a very poor spirit when a player of some twelve or more years experience sets out to win 21-0 against a complete beginner, playing in her first match. This doesn't seem to be the way to build up ladies strength in the league.

We've got two new sides with us this season, English Electric and Linnets 'A' and only one of each side is anything but a beginner. Having seen both teams in action, it is my opinion that these girls are all on the right lines, and from them we hope for some future City players. In particular do I prophecy a bright future for Marion Lewis (Linnets 'A') and Valerie Ball (English Electric), and I was very pleased to see them in the Merseyside Open. On behalf of the 'old' hands I extend a welcome to these girls and their fellow newcomers, and I hope their keenness lasts long enough for them to take their places among the list of 'stronger' players.

Jack McCaig deals with all City games in his article elsewhere, but I would like to thank all of the girls who gave up two Sunday afternoons and one evening of their time to take part in a somewhat exhaustive series of trials for the two Liverpool teams. We tried to give a show to every possible girl, and the trials proved

their worth in that Pat Brown (English Electric) was eventually selected together with Mabel Francis, who has 'opted' for Liverpool instead of the Business Houses this season, both for the "A" team. Another who has shown a tremendous advance during the summer is Maureen King (Balfour), and there is no doubt that a little more steadiness and practice will find her taking one of the few places before very long. The advent of these new

players gives us a wide variety for selection and the competition might prove beneficial to the City sides. But here I appeal to all Club Secretaries whose girls were missed from the trials—if you think you have any girls good enough, let me have their names and I will see that they are included in future trials.

Next month there should be some comment on league games, for one or two tight clashes are expected before then. A happy season to all.

## THERE ARE SPOOKS ABROAD !!!

—By JIM GREEN.

**D**ID you know that we have ghosts in this League? Did you know that, year after year, certain people 'sign' registration forms, and appear in high positions in grouping lists, yet never, never, touch a bat? Is it a generally accepted fact that these people pay their full subscriptions and become bona-fide members of these clubs?

Ha! HA! HA!!!

Then, there are other cases, such as that club who have grouped last year's second team members into their SIXTH team—below members whose sole ambition has always been to win two sets in a season!!! My, my! How these "A" teamers do deteriorate during one summer, even though all have been long-playing experienced bods. Does anyone object if I request these clubs to mind my split lips?

And one grouping list shows a player who is, at present playing in League representative play (in another League) as reserve for their sixth team. What tremendous strength this club must have at their disposal! Liverpool YM will have to watch their championship!! For these remarks are NOT aimed at the YMCA, who have two good players as supernumeraries, simply because they are seldom available. This is aimed in quite another direction.

Fiddling? Not at all. PLAYING THE DOUBLE-BASS more likely fills the bill. For these low-placed stars can, at any time slide gracefully into any higher side if a tough game looms ahead, and in the cases of the high-ranked 'Ghosts' lower placed people can go up and down

like yo-yos to clobber the ungodly who haven't yet learned sense enough to juggle left, right and centre with the clubs best players to the destruction and utter damnation of the unwary. Suffering Ducks!! What a set-up.

Don't for one moment imagine that the Management Committee don't know what is going on. They do, but the difficulty arises as to how it can be stopped. Refuse the grouping list! On what grounds? Rule 15 allows the power to reject a grouping list, but, and here's the rub—since players do not have to be ranked in order of merit, clubs can play jigsaws just as and when they like. Which leads to the 64 dollar question—'Why don't we have the words *order of merit* included?' Well, mates, this has been proposed year after year, and the proposal gets murdered by the A.G.M. But what satisfaction is to be derived by beating the weaker sides by fiddling players four or five teams lower than merit deserves baffles comprehension.

Whenever I get on to this hobby-horse, my beloved 'earers tell me 'but Linnets do it.' I expect the same again, BUT, on being challenged not one single soul has ever been able to name a case of Linnets putting players in teams lower than ability demanded, and if any of you can think of one I would be delighted to have it aired in the next *Digest*. WITH only one exception, which is freely admitted—in season 1953-4 when, in order to draw attention to the stupidity of the present system, we changed over the entire two ladies teams.

How do I know so much about grouping lists? This information is given in the normal course of business to the Committee on request, and, may it be said, such information is often requested. Unfortunately other clubs do not know generally what gives. So, if the Editor and his Board approve, and allow this to be published, I'm telling you all here and now, that there are fewer straightforward lists sent in than there are crooked ones.

There is one little matter which these would-be Jascha Heifitz's might bear in mind—the first sentence of Rule 17. It might prove uncommonly awkward should this sentence be invoked against, say the worst-offending club, might it not? But it may well deter others in future years.

Let us hear from some of the other clubs and players on this subject. Do you want straight ranking or not? Do you want clubs and teams in order of merit or not? Or do you want to be out-fiddled more and more and more in coming years? It is YOUR choice, for to

the best of its ability the Committee is always ready and willing to apply and uphold the rules MADP BY YOU.

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### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

47, New Fields Ave.,  
Braunstone,  
Leicester.

Dear Sir,

I was shown a copy of your *Table Tennis Digest* by a friend of mine yesterday (Maurice Billington of Warwickshire). It was most interesting and I would like to take out a subscription if possible—can I send you a postal order for a season's supply?

We have for some time contemplated publishing a similar type of thing in Leicester, and this may give the Committee some ideas.

Yours faithfully,

PHILLIP REID,  
*Chairman/Secretary,*  
*Leicestershire Table Tennis Assoc.*

*Our fame is spreading! (Editor).*

Lanashire and Cheshire League

By Jack McCaig

## Forthcoming Attractions

**H**ERE are the home fixtures of our teams until the end of the year, together with the respective venues. It would be nice to see some of younger league members supporting the various teams, and perhaps they themselves would learn something at the same time. Inter-City matches are poorly supported these days, and a little encouragement would be most welcome:

**Saturday, 23rd November.**

Men's "A" v. Barrow at Crawfords (7 p.m.)

**Friday, 6th December.**

Men's 1st v. Preston at Liverpool V.M.C.A. (7-30 p.m.)

**Friday, 18th December.**

Ladies' 1st v. Ladies' "A" at Beauclair (7-30 p.m.)

**Saturday, 21st December.**

Juniors v. Wirral at Linnets (2-30 p.m.)

In addition to the above games, our Ladies play Preston in the J. M. Rose Bowl competition. The date has not yet been fixed, but I hope that this will be announced in the Press.

Our Men's team successfully overcame Bury by 6-3 in the first round of the Wilmott Cup, whilst the Juniors have again made a good start in their division, dropping but one set in their first two matches.

### NOTICE TO MATCH SECRETARIES.

You may have received a reminder arising for outstanding cards. If these are not received or new dates advised to the Fixture Secretary the matches will be awarded 10-0 to the visiting team.

# Merseyside Open, 1963

**T**HIS year's Open, held once again in Dunlop's Canteen, brought with it a few surprise results in the earlier rounds, although the eventual finalists were as expected. Mike Symonds (Warrington) the No. 1 seed in all the events he entered, proved his top ranking by winning (1) Men's Singles he beat all his opponents in two straight games; (2) Men's Doubles, in which partnered by Maurice Billington (Stevenage), the closest result was the Final itself, providing the most exciting event of the evening, and (3) Mixed Doubles in which partnered by Miss L. Proudlock of Sheffield, the games were not so clear cut, but nevertheless fairly comfortable wins.

The No. 2 seed, Brian Hill of Boston, was knocked out by A. Pidcock (Kent) in the Quarter Final, and in the Semi-Final Pidcock accounted for the 4th seed, Brian Wright. The Final, however, was never in much doubt, although the second game went to deuce, and Symonds almost conceded a game.

The 3rd seed, Denis Neale of Middlesbrough, went out to D. Basden (Kent) who then lost to G. Livesey (Burnley) in the Quarter Final.

Of the local players, 16 were in the Draw on Saturday, 4 didn't arrive to play, and 2 won through two rounds.

The Women's Singles provided few surprises. The No. 1 seed, Miss C. Blackshaw (Doncaster) lost in the Final to the No. 2 seed, Miss J. Canham (Kent). Miss Blackshaw had an attack of cramp in the second game when leading 10-5, and although she won this game, the third proved too much for her and Miss Canham romped home.

Eight locals were put through to Saturday but as only one of them won through one round, the least said the better. At least they all turned up to take part.

The greatest local success was without doubt the appearance of Wally Allanson and Peter Hurworth in the Semi-Final of the Men's Doubles. Up to that stage they had

defeated Brian Hill and Peter Walsley in the third round and in the Quarter Final they overcame F. Kershaw and D. Frankland. The Semi-Final was won 21-18, 22-20 by Billington and Symonds, but full marks to Allanson and Hurworth for a fine display.

The Women's Doubles was a success for the top seeds in this event. Miss L. Proudlock and Miss C. Blackshaw beat Miss M. Leigh and Miss W. Swift, who had defeated the second seeds, C. Moore and Miss D. Fitzgerald in the first round.

The Mixed Doubles brought another Liverpool player into the Semi-Final stage. Miss J. Crafter, partnered by Brian Hill, lost in two straight to the top Yorkshire pair, P. Duncombe and Miss C. Blackshaw, who then managed to take one game out of the top seeds in the Final.

The Veteran's event brought yet another triumph for H. G. Spiers, while the Junior Girls' Singles was too easy for Miss P. Dainty (Doncaster).

The Junior Boys' Final was between Alan Hydes (Barnsley) ranked nationally as No. 4, and Michael Johns (Northwich) who is ranked nationally No. 5. Johns must have been very pleased with his display in the Final, which he won almost as he pleased without any real fight from Hydes.

In the first round Hydes had taken three games to dispose of Gordon Birch, but Johns took the title without conceding a game.

The Finals which were played on Saturday evening were not as exciting as one would have hoped. The most exciting contest was the Men's Doubles Final, which was nearly snatched from the top seeds by A. Pidcock and H. Buist of Kent. These two had beaten the second seeds, D. Neale and P. Duncombe in two straight in the Semi-Final, and then they so nearly took the Final as well.

A complete list of the Final results follow this summary.

BRIAN LEFSON.

## MERSEYSIDE OPEN, 1963

Saturday, 9th November, 1963

### 1. SEMI-FINALS MEN'S SINGLES

(a) **M. Symonds** (Warrington) v. G. Livesey (Burnley) 21-7 21-16  
(b) B. D. Wright (London) v. **A. Piddock** (Kent) 17-21 18-21

### 2. WOMEN'S DOUBLES FINAL

**L. Proudlock** (Sheffield) & **C. Blackshaw** (Doncaster) v.  
M. Leigh (Manchester) & W. Swift (Manchester) 21-12 18-21 21-17

### FINAL JUNIOR BOYS' SINGLES

A. Hydes (Barnsley) v. **M. Johns** (Northwich) 18-21 13-21

### FINAL WOMEN'S SINGLES

**Miss J. Canham** (Kent) v. Miss C. Blackshaw (Doncaster) 22-20 13-21 21-8

### FINAL MEN'S DOUBLES

A. Piddock (Kent) & H. Buist (Kent) v.  
**M. Billingham** (Stevenage) & **M. Symonds** (Warrington) 21-19 18-21 20-22

### FINAL MIXED DOUBLES

P. Dumcombe (Doncaster) & C. Blackshaw (Doncaster) v.  
**M. Symonds** (Warrington) & **L. Proudlock** (Sheffield) 18-21 21-14 18-21

### FINAL MEN'S SINGLES

**M. Symonds** v. A. Piddock 21-13 22-20

### FINALS already played

**Junior Girls' Singles**: **P. Dainty** (Dincaister) beat S. D. Crowe (Doncaster)  
21-7 21-4.

**Veterans' Singles**: **H. G. Spiers** (Birmingham) beat J. K. Keunerley  
(Northwich) 21-10 21-19.

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### WRITE TO US!

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