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No. 1



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**TABLE  
TENNIS  
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.

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## EDITORIAL BOARD :

Editor : **Albert Montgomery.**

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

VOL. XV

NOVEMBER 1964

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## EDITORIAL

**T**HE first issue of a new season always has to wait for news to be made before it can go to press. However, there are certain things which each new season brings along which should not be overlooked, and the predominant of these is the welcome due to new clubs joining us for the first time. On behalf of all League members may I extend a hearty welcome to Edge Hill Boys Club, Palmerston, Twelve-fifty Club, the girls of Telecomms, and British Railways North End, and sincerely hope that their first season in the League will be the first of many. May they climb through the divisions and enjoy their table tennis whilst so doing.

There is also a more depressing side in the omissions of familiar names from our ranks—clubs who have graced Liverpool T. T., some for many years, and this year we have lost (as separate clubs) Cheshire Lines, Fairlawn, R.A.F.A., and Waterloo Dock, and since the opening weeks, Anfield. Many and varied are the reasons for their extinction, and it is regrettable that it seems to be the purely table tennis clubs, who have no affiliation to another sport or who are not members of some larger organisation which are affected most. Bath Street, and Rafters seem to be the sole survivors of such clubs, although

some are technically solely table tennis but rent premises for odd evenings per week from other organisations. I believe that the main cause for their demise is finance.

What then is the answer to this problem? Some clubs have been swallowed up by other clubs, and some have become part of larger clubs under their own names, but while this is to their mutual advantage it is sad that the number of club headquarters should be reduced thus, with the consequent reduction of opportunities for young players to gain experience and eventual inclusion in League sides. Can the League do anything to assist these clubs to combat their financial troubles? The League already has a 'loan Scheme' in operation (details of which can be obtained from the Treasurer), but a loan has to be repaid and this apparently only postpones the evil day. Have any of you any ideas which could help? If you have, let us have them for publication in the "Digest" and possibly we might be able to act on them.

## IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret that we have to announce the untimely death of Mrs. Nan Stamp, a vice-president of the League and wife of our late secretary Bill Stamp.

## Choose Your Trophies

**T**HE Committee has heard some complaints around the clubrooms regarding the trophies presented over the past few seasons to Divisional champions and Cup winners (and runners-up) and we are giving this matter some thought before placing our order for the awards for this season. Of course cost does tie our hands to a certain degree, but should a good idea come along I am certain that the Committee would authorise the spending of a little more than in the past, as the League is in such a healthy financial position.

The Committee has asked me to appeal to you all through this article to give this matter some thought. After all, you are the people who receive the awards, and you should know which type of award is most acceptable. From last season's Balance Sheet you will see that we spent about £28 on medals and engraving, and my personal view is that we could cater for a figure of about up to £40. I MUST stress that this is not an official figure. As yet the Committee have not discussed any sum, but it is obvious that some guide should be given to you regarding cost and the figure of £40 seems to us to be reasonable.

It was most disappointing to find the entry for the Merseyside Open lower than last year, the local entry for the Mens Singles being only 27. This year we raised our fees to make them comparable with other major tournaments and had hoped that the extra revenue thus raised would offset the huge increase in our E.T.T.A. fees next season. This year our fees are £41.12.0d. Next season, if our strength remains the same, our fees will jump to £65. On top of this, our fees to the County will probably increase considerably, as the County are being forced by the E.T.T.A. to change to a team basis for assessing fees. We had hoped to absorb these large increases and our main method of doing so would be

to make a profit (as last year) on our two local tournaments. Several members of the Committee have, by their efforts, made it possible for us to anticipate a substantial profit from these events but we must have your entries. It is too late to do anything about the 'Open' now, but I do urge you all to try to enter the 'Closed' next April.

Since I sent out a circular containing the handbook alterations, ANFIELD have withdrawn from the League. Will all Club Secretaries please note this. Liverpool Pirates have entered an additional Womens team (taking over the Anfield fixtures) and have entered also TWO additional teams in division 4B. All clubs in the Womens and 4B divisions have been advised by Liverpool Pirates of these amendments, and I would ask all clubs who have matches to catch up to try to arrange these matches as quickly as possible.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Since our last issue was published, Judy Crafter has been awarded her County badge and Gordon Birch his County Junior badge, and on behalf of every Liverpool player we offer hearty congratulations. May this be but a step to yet higher things for both of these young players, and an incentive to other up-and-coming players to emulate their example. It is pleasant to record the Cadwa were not slow to recognise that these two had brought honour to their Club and they subsequently received their "Cadwa" blazer badge for outstanding services.

The Editorial Board wish to announce that arrangements can be made to include small classified adverts in The Digest at a cost of 1/6 for every Five words. Copy to be forwarded to the Editor together with Postal Order covering the advert.

# On Late Arrivals

BY JIM GREEN

**D**URING the first few weeks of this season I have seen a number of matches in nearly every division, and although it does take a lot to surprise me after my long connection with this game, I really have been appalled at the number of players who have decided to stroll in at any time they please for matches, usually with no apology nor any reasonable excuse.

It has long been a practice (which I have always upheld) that a player can make a prior arrangement with the opposition to arrive late when his circumstances make an early arrival impossible—working overtime etc., and I can say that whenever a member of my club is likely to be late, a phone call to the opponents has invariably been met with their agreement. Which courtesy we meet with acquiescence when we are approached on similar lines. But this year it seems that many players don't bother to advise even their own team, let alone the opponents, and I have seen several matches held up long after 8 o'clock simply because someone decides (for reasons never disclosed) to come along just as the mood strikes them.

I am afraid that to me, this is just rank bad manners. An appointment is something to be kept, whether business or pleasure, and when a match should start at 7-30 p.m., I have invariably considered it my duty to be there on time. I have been held up on odd occasions (very few) and have

arrived late, but I cannot recall coming later than 8, and even then I consider it my duty to apologise to the opposing Captain. Perhaps I am old-fashioned, but to act otherwise offends me, just as I get livid when I see others doing it. Only once during my career can I recall refusing permission to arrive late (during last season), and can never remember being refused similar requests when asked by odd Secretaries.

Surely it is easy to make a short phone call beforehand to put everyone into the picture instead of arriving at any time between 7-30 and 9-30 in the full expectation of being allowed to play. Good manners are satisfied—everyone knows that “so-and-so” will be late, and harmony prevails. Instead, we find players ambling in and out with no apologies, usually a grouse if they have to play right away or two on the run, and all Hell breaks loose if they find their places filled! And a simple phone call would set everyone's minds at rest. Quite easy when you think of it!

Finally, to those bods who don't bother to change out of their outdoor shoes—do they ever think of the clubs where they are visiting and the damage their clogs might do to floors? Plimsolls are relatively cheap, and even though nothing might be said to them when they play in their hob-nailed boots or wrinkle-pickers, there is plenty thought!

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**REPRIEVE**

Due to a re-distribution of teams in Division One our senior Men's team were spared the indignity of relegation to the second division of the Lancashire and Cheshire League and live to fight another campaign in the Premier Division. Such a reprieve is unlikely to be repeated and the most must be made of the chance to hold the teams' position by results alone. Meanwhile a new look shows itself this season, and with Peter D'Arcy opting for Liverpool this time the current team is D'Arcy, Frank Thomas, and Ted Mandaluff. Wally Allanson has, of course, taken up an appointment abroad where I am sure we all wish him luck and thank him for the excellent service he has rendered to the League in past seasons. Always a sporting player, his immaculate turnout was always a credit to him and something that many players could copy to their advantage.

To date the 1st team has played Bolton in the League where they lost 2-8, wins being notched by D'Arcy and Mandaluff. Lancaster proved an easy hurdle in the 1st round of the Wilmott Cup, played recently at Liverpool Y.M.C.A., when not even one game was dropped by our players. Mid-Cheshire is the next League match, and this will have an important bearing on the teams chances this season.

**NEW FACES**

The new look is pretty wide-spread, so that the team of G. Birch, E. Moran,

and T. Owens (representing the Men's "A" Team) has a chance to gain experience. So far they have played only one match, against Chester "A", which they won comfortably by 7-3.

**LADIES TOO**

Here again, two retirements necessitated changes from the fairly set pattern of the past few seasons. Both Mrs. Moya Jones and Miss Muriel Willcox (better known by her maiden name) have decided to call it a day. They too have been excellent representatives of the Liverpool League wherever they have played, and their efforts on our behalf are very much appreciated. Thank you girls.

Miss Mabel Francis has accordingly been given the promotion she deserves, and along with Miss Judy Crafter and Miss Maureen King made pretty short work of the Crewe team, winning by 9 sets to 1. Preston provide the next hurdle and this should be a much stiffer test.

**MORE NEW FACES**

With the Selection Committee not at present using Gordon Birch for the Junior side, the way was opened for new blood, and after a trial held at Crawfords, Ian Burrows and Peter Wass (both Linnets) and John Hankin (Trinity) were chosen to open the programme against Barrow. Mixed fortunes emerged and also a 5-5 draw. Burnley visit us in the next match. Always a difficult one.

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## GOOD START

With two consecutive wins, 6—4 over Preston and 8—2 against Barrow, the Youth team have made an excellent start in their pursuit of another championship win. There are one or two newcomers to the Youth division this year in the shape of Hyde and Blackburn, both unknown quantities, so optimism is a little premature at present.

## "A" TEAM NEWCOMERS

With Mrs. Jean Reynolds still a force to be reckoned with, the "A" team got away to a good start against Oldham winning by 7—3. Making their debuts were Mrs. Muriel Cox and Miss Marion Lewis, both of whom can be quite satisfied with their baptisms. Their next game is away at Wigan.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

9 Newland Drive,  
Wallasey.

The Editor,  
Dear Sir,

As you know the new season is now under way and I hope that this will be a good one for all clubs taking part.

Last season, you will remember that there was a big argument over the points system which had been introduced for the first time. There were comments, also, on the way in which divisions were matched. Some divisions had teams included which were either too good or too poor for the opposition, and I realised that it was not an easy job for the Management Committee to succeed first time to match the divisions equally.

This season I would have thought it would have been a little better, but I am afraid that the Management Committee have made another botch of it. L.Y.C.A., for which side I play, played our first match v. Colonsay "A" which we looked forward to for a good match. But we came off worst to the tune of a 10-0 thrashing. I don't mind losing to a team of our own standing, but to meet a team which represented Fairlawn's 1st team in division 2A last season is going just a bit too far. No disrespect to Colonsay for it was an enjoyable night indeed. It is just the principle of it.

If the Management Committee don't make any effort on the likes of these incidents that crop up from time to time I can see it happening that we will find a 1st division team in the lady's section and a lady's in division 1.

Yours faithfully,  
D. Coulson,  
L.Y.C.A. T.T.C.

## FINALS NIGHT

One year ago, this very night  
Amidst some great applause,  
At the table green I stood serene  
'Twas Finals' Night of course.

No "First-night" fears did I perceive  
With confidence I played.  
At two games all I do recall,  
Something inside me frayed.

I chopped and chiselled in the fifth  
But 'twas to no avail.  
With bulldog grit I counterhit  
But the ball he did assail.

His footwork was, I thought, the cause  
Of why I was a flop.  
For his counter-drive was a kind of jive  
And his defence was the lindy hop.

His backhand flicks were full of tricks.  
His forehand wiles I covet.  
And his repertoire is full of strokes  
That the savants haven't named yet.

Whilst in defence his range is large,  
But in attack it's larger,  
For he blazed away in an abandoned way  
Like a knight on a coal-black charger.

So silently I said a prayer  
For the whole wide world seemed  
wrong.

For even my Guardian Angel,  
Was just no good at ping-pong.

I played a drop-shot clean and true,  
The stroke that brought me fame,  
But for all I dared, I stood and stared,  
As he flicked it for the game.

I left that night, my hopes forlorn.  
My prestige sorely branded.  
Was I surprised when I realised  
That the blighter WAS LEFT-HANDED?



Beauclair will be fighting all the way to stay up with the leaders in case one of them would slip. Pirates "A" are another side who will come into the picture now with the added strength of George Sanders and Freddie Bamford. That they are formidable opposition for any team, Rafter's "A" found (to their disapproval) when they lost their unbeaten record together with six invaluable points, going down to Pirates 4-6.

College of Technology are not finding the going as easy in this division as they did last year, and even though they cannot always turn out their full side they are finding it a rougher road than was the case last season. Colonsay, another team which won promotion and are newcomers to this division, have started off well. They have quite a useful side when at full strength, and their No. 1 John Hodges, with his wooden bat will prove himself a hot handful for all opposing 1's and 2's.

Unsettled teams seem the order of the day. To date no team has played with a regular five, and some clubs have called on quite a few players in order to find a winning combination. Once the sides have sorted themselves out into settled fives, I expect the battle at the top and bottom of the division to get hotter. Only seven points cover the leading six teams, and one or two shock wins (and losses) can upset such a slender margin.

However, it does seem that this second season of the 'twinstream' League has produced divisions nearly more equal in strength. 10-0 victories are few and far between, and matches appear to be harder fought throughout. So we can hope for a good season, and may the best team win.

#### DIVISION 3A

	BY MABEL FRANCIS				
	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Crawfords 'B'	5	4	0	1	38
Oakhill 'A'	5	2	2	1	32
Sefton Gen.	4	3	0	1	29
Wav. Lab. 'C'	4	3	0	1	28
Lpl. Jewish 'B'	3	2	1	0	25
Pirates 'B'	4	3	1	0	25
Stanley H.	4	2	1	1	23
St. Mary's Col.	4	1	2	1	19
Maghull	2	2	0	0	17
Eng. Elec. 'B'	4	0	4	0	10
Beauclair 'B'	4	0	3	1	7
Bath St. 'C'	5	0	4	1	6
Dom. Mission	3	0	3	0	1

**T**HIS division (mainly the middles of last season's 3A and 3B) looks to be a fairly well balanced one, and most teams should have a good match nearly every week. I foresee a keen fight for the two top positions between more than just two teams, but unfortunately it seems to be clear who will be relegated already. It certainly looks as though Domestic Mission has been fitted into too strong a Division. Why were they transferred from 4B.

Beauclair "B" can't be too happy either with their present position, but I'm sure they are pleased with the way Alan Kelly is coming along. Only 14½ years old and playing at No. 5 in his first match against Crawfords "B" he won their sole set. Playing at No. 3 against Liverpool Jewish "B" he beat Warren Davies—17, 17, 23 (again the only set won for Beauclair—against a strong opponent), and losing only at 19 and 20 in his second set v. M. Wiseman. Moving up once more against Oakhill "A" he failed to win a set for the first time, but I understand that he got his first double v. Bath Street "C" (in a drawn match). I have not yet had confirmation of this so cannot quote his opponents or scores, but definitely promising for the future.

English Electric "B" are still looking for a win, Ian Hodgson being the main set provider so far (6 wins) and Billy Sill (3 wins). It's about time they got some support. All St. Mary's matches have been very close to date with a 6-4 win, 1 draw, and two 4-6 losses. I won't be surprised to see these latter two scores reversed next half and to see many wins to their credit.

That's all the news for now—just a reminder that if your team includes the "evening-class bug" then make sure that you have at least one reserve on hand.

If you have any items of news regarding the division or its players let me know, for I am always interested in outstanding performances etc.

#### DIVISION 4A

	BY GLYNN HUGHES				
	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Colonsay 'A'	5	5	0	0	49
Wav. Lab. 'D'	5	4	1	0	35
12/50	4	4	0	0	31
University 'A'	4	3	1	0	25
Linnet 'F'	4	2	2	0	21
Coll. Tech. 'A'	4	2	2	0	19



Oakhill 'B'	4	0	2	2	17
L.Y.C.A.	4	1	2	1	17
Eng. Elec. 'C'	3	1	2	0	15
Palmerston 'A'	5	1	4	0	13
Bradstones 'A'	5	0	5	0	2
Crawfords 'C'	4	2	2	0	18
Orrell 'A'	5	1	3	1	18

IT is not too early for me to predict who is going to finish in the top three places this season. The battle for the top spot is surely going to be between Colonsay "A" 12-50 Club, and Wavertree Labour "D". The former two teams consist of players from last seasons second division, as Colonsay merged with Fairlawn, and Fairlawn's 1st team became Colonsay "A", while 12-50 Club was the name taken by the R.A.F.A. team when they decided to re-enter the League as a new club. Quite remarkable, although not unusual, is the success enjoyed by Wavertree Labour "D" on their first appearance in the League. They have done extremely well in their matches to date.

Colonsay "A" leads the field at present by virtue of wins of 10-0 over Palmerston "A", L.Y.C.A., and Bradstones "A", and a crushing win 9-1 over Crawfords "C". While the most thrilling scrap as yet must have been between Wavertree Labour "D" and 12-50. Playing at No. 1 for the Labour team was Ted Morris, making the first step in his come-back after the serious injury sustained in last year's Cup final. He just scraped home in three games in each set against Brian Smith and Stan Wooding, but despite this effort, the match ended with a 6-4 win for 12-50 Club, and the return seems to have the makings of a needle match.

Holding their own are College of Technology "A", who should have a little more success this season than they enjoyed last, as recent wins of 10-0 over Bradstones "A" and 7-3 over Palmerston "A" will confirm. At the same time, Orrell "A" had a 7-3 win against English Electric "C" (away), and this win was urgently needed to lift them from sharing bottom spot with Bradstones. The boost in morale may do them good.

The Sandfield Park side will have to start to pull something from the bag if they don't want to finish up the season in the relegation spot, but such predictions are far from accurate thus early

## DIVISION 2B

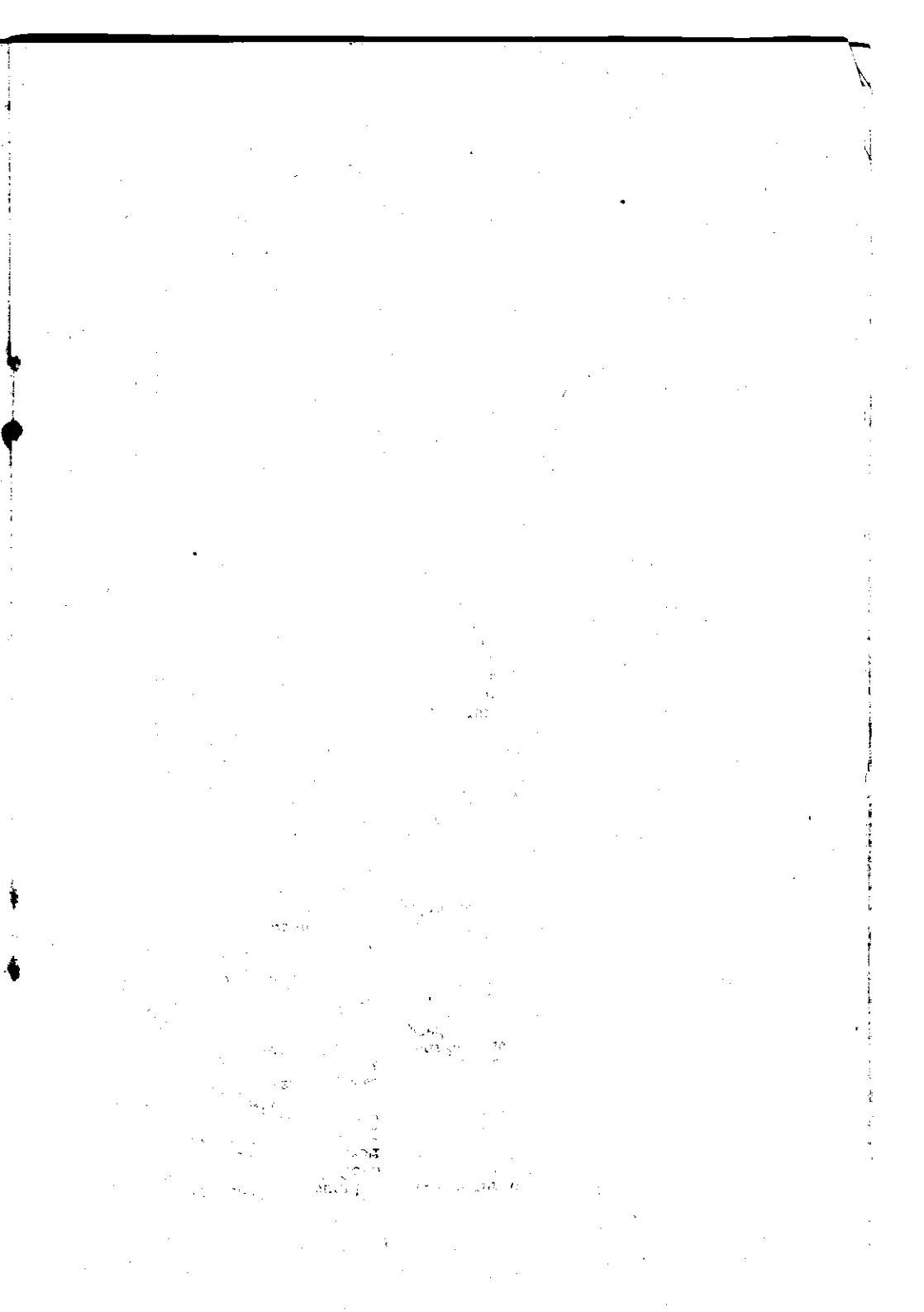
	By JOHN O'SULLIVAN				
	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Wav. Lab. 'B'	5	5	0	0	42
Bath Street	5	5	0	0	41
L.P.A.S.	5	4	1	0	33
St. Edwards	5	3	1	1	31
Mossley Hill	5	2	2	1	28
University	4	2	1	1	26
Linnet 'B'	4	2	1	1	25
Linnet 'A'	5	1	2	2	24
Crawfords	5	3	2	0	22
Cadwa 'B'	6	1	4	1	21
Bootle YMCA	5	1	3	1	17
Lpl. YMCA 'B'	4	1	3	0	16
Lpl. Jewish 'A'	5	0	5	0	8
Bohemains 'B'	5	0	5	0	6

EVERY year we have the usual crop of handbook changes, and this year has proved no exception. It has been a Secretary's nightmare! There have been so many alterations in my handbook that you need a guide to follow it. I see that after only two matches had been played, Bootle Y.M.C.A. had a 10-0 walk-over. I don't know if this was due to the confusion, but I wouldn't be surprised.

At the beginning of each new season it is not long before it becomes evident that one or two outstanding teams will be fighting it out for the championship by the end of the season, and I think that this year we shall see Wavertree Labour "B" and Bath Street at the top. Not necessarily in that order, but champions or not, the clash between them on November 11th should be a match worth watching.

St. Edwards, promoted from Division 3D, are already showing that they intend to go further by beating Linnetts "B" 6-4 and Liverpool Y.M.C.A. "B" 8-2. I must congratulate Bill Wood (Crawfords) who in their defeat by Bath Street beat Alec Gould in two straight games. From records I have seen to date, he is the only one to have stopped Alec yet.

The meeting of Wavertree Labour and Mossley Hill was interesting as no less than four 100% records went by the board, only Bob Hudson retaining his. I particularly like the philosophy of Eddie Birch (Wavertree) who claims that his 100% record is still intact, as being beaten by a girl doesn't count! This does make it a devil of a hard job for people like Judy Crafter (Linnetts) who happens to be



just haven't a clue who IS playing herein. Teams are in and out so fast that it makes your head spin to watch them, but I've no doubt that somewhere there is a budding journalist well suited for the job, and to him (or her) I plead—contact me and I will give you all the gen! But for the nonce I must do my best from score cards and my little personal knowledge of the players.

Several sides seem strong enough to top the table, albeit that nearly every team is a new one to the League. In most cases these sides are composed of players well known to us. Bert Ariss, ex-Warbreck, has been joined at B. R. North End by Dave Berry and C. Stock (Bath Street) and Len Kilshaw (Waterloo Dock) among others. At Mossley Hill we have an "A" team of players who all have appeared from time to time in their 1st team, and Palmerston are led into battle by an ex-Mossley Hill trio in Winnall, Pickup, and Alexander. At Stanley House, only the name of G. Lewtas is one which has not been prominent in their 1st team over the past year or two, and Colonsay "B" is a strong combination of last seasons "A" team and ex-Fairlawn players. In addition to this little lot, Liverpool Pirates have now entered two extra sides in this division, and since these will be composed of a mixture of their own and the now defunct Anfield members, they should be strong opposition for all. From which you may deduce that as regards promotion, it seems to be a matter of paying yer penny and taking yer choice!

In this division in particular, it would be as well for every player to make sure that all handbook alterations have been made. Already Linnets "E" lost to Colonsay 10-0, walkover because they had not got their books up to date, and from the look of my own book—a mass of alterations, ins and outs, replacements, and other hieroglyphics, it will be nothing short of a miracle if this is the only one before the season ends.

We seem to have more than the usual share of glamour in the division, for from the score cards I can find quite a number of our female players, with English Electric leading the way with three regulars in Val Ball, Celia Buckles and Lynn McWilliam. Which adds variety of a most pleasant type to matches. Edge Hill Boys Club started well enough for an entirely

new side to the League, taking 13 points from the first 3 matches, with a 6-4 win over Stanley House among them. A start which promises well for the future and I hope to see this side improving with more experience.

Bradstones, who are newcomers last season have kicked off with 2 wins from 3 matches, and this indicates a more successful year for them than was the last. With much the same team. Anything can happen in this division of unknowns, but all we want is a good season of good matches.

## WOMEN'S DIVISION

By AMY BELL

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Linnet 'A' ..	3	3	0	0	29
Pirates ..	4	2	2	0	24
Crawfords ..	3	2	0	1	22
Cadwa ..	2	2	0	0	20
Rafters ..	3	1	1	0	18
Linnet ..	3	2	1	0	15
Lussac ..	4	1	3	0	7
Rafters 'A' ..	3	0	3	0	4
Telecomms	4	0	4	0	1
Pirates ..	0	0	0	0	0
Bohemians ..	0	0	0	0	0

**T**HE new season started with the news of the retirement from the game of Moya Jones and Muriel Willcox (both Bohemians and Liverpool). This is a heavy blow to their club and to the Liverpool team, for they have given valiant service to both for several years, and have brought both honours and respect wherever they have played. I know that I am voicing the sentiments of the entire division when I say that we are truly sorry that they have packed up, and we all hope to see them back in some future year. I thank them both for all their efforts for women's table tennis in Liverpool.

When I saw the handbook I was overjoyed to see that we had a full division, but minutes later my hopes were dashed to hear that Bath Street, Bohemians "A", and Cadwa "A" had withdrawn, leaving us once again 3 sides short. Now I hear that Anfield have withdrawn, but to replace them I am told that Pirates have entered an "A" team. This problem of under strength division is always with us, and suggestions on how we may expand women's table tennis would be more than welcome. We have got two extremely young new teams this year in Telecomms and Lussac. To both I

say that it is most unlikely that you will enjoy much success this season, but after the first year the going gets easier, especially with as much practice as possible. If these girls look on this year as "experience" only, to get ready for next, and not lose heart at weekly defeat, I feel sure that they will soon improve their own standard to give the best a good game. I know the Telecomms girls well, and have heard good reports of Lussac, and I hope that they will have a happy season this time and a more successful one next. Rafters "A" are back again with some old faces and a couple of new ones. Welcome back girls. And welcome back to Doreen Doncaster (ex Oakhill) who left to live in the South a few years ago and is now back, this time with Cadwa.

The championship is more open this year than for a long time. Bohemians are weakened by the loss of Moya and Muriel, Crawfords and Rafters stay much the same as do Linnets, and Cadwa have a strong side even though Judy Crafter is spending most of her time in the mixed divisions. Pirates still have the same side and with the girls from Anfield added can put out a really strong foursome, though Barbara Topping seems to have 'opted' for mixed teams up to now. Linnets "A" are a much improved team and have a good record to date, but they still have to

play all of the stronger sides, and I don't think that they will beat many of these. However, their improvement demonstrates what can be done by keenness and practice among the younger girls.

So few matches have been played to date that there are few results which have not been expected. Maureen King has lost only to Jean Reynolds as yet, Jean, in turn losing to Mabel Francis. Milly Harris (Linnets) has started off badly, but has had some formidable opposition in her only two matches, and better things should come her way very soon. Perhaps the most surprising result in the first few matches was the Lussac win 7-3 over Rafters "A" for Lussac are all complete beginners, and some of the Rafters girls are seasoned players. Gloria Greeley got both her sets and together with Audrey Short won the doubles, but all other sets went to Lussac. A remarkable debut for Anne Marsden and her team.

City matches are dealt with in a separate offering by Jack McCaig, but I am delighted that both our Women's teams have won the first matches, all the more so in the knowledge that the retirement of Moya and Muriel inevitably led to the inclusion in each team of complete newcomers to inter-League warfare, and in every case the newcomers won 2 and lost 1 set each. Giving hope for the future.

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## ARE THE "INDEPENDANTS" DOOMED?

**T**HE sudden death of one of the League's oldest clubs, Anfield, who first entered about 30 years ago as St. Simons and St. Judes, once again reduces the ranks of the completely independent clubs, who now number three—Bath Street, Pirates, and Rafters.

Over the past few years, Victoria Park (another established club), 15th Crosby, Lofters, and St. Michaels have dropped away, and Linnets, Oakhill, and others have joined forces with larger organisations to reduce running costs. Beauclair and Linacre (like others) only rent their clubrooms for certain evenings from larger bodies, and are only in part independent. In fact the current trend seems to be going towards teams from clubs with a variety of other interests—tennis and cricket clubs, works sides, boys and youth clubs etc., and this does appear to indicate that costs are now too high for a completely independent table tennis club to go it alone.

Premises suitable for clubrooms are becoming harder to find than ever, and even when found, rents and rates usually put them right out of reach of the average club. Linnets moved three times before deciding that it was cheaper to build their own pavilion and become a section of Aigburth Cricket Club. Victoria Park just could not find suitable accommodation. Oakhill joined forces with the Everton Y.M.C.A. when they lost their old premises, and now, it is understood, Anfield have died purely on the grounds of finance.

Although League fees are much the same as they have been over the past 10 years, although even they have gone up a little, balls have increased in cost by some 66%, taking a large lump from every club. Bats soar up and up, and although these are bought by the players, it does not make them feel inclined to increase subscriptions. Everything connecting with the game seems to have gone up in price, and since it is normally a much lower sub. with a works club, or branch of some parent organisation, the trend is for players to join up there rather than with the dearer independent.

Is this a good thing? Who can say, but it does seem rather sad that some

of the oldest established League clubs have had to drop away purely because of costs.

What it does appear to do is to create bigger and bigger clubs with more teams, and fewer individual clubs. Whereas a few years ago a club with 5 teams was rather exceptional, there are so many now with 5 or over that it is commonplace, and the smaller clubs are the exception rather than the rule. While the number of players, consequently teams, remains roughly the same as ten years ago, the number of CLUBS has dropped, and each club now has far more teams than they had then. Which does not materially alter the size of the League, but very definitely does alter its pattern. Again, is this a good thing or does it take something away from the sport?

Can nothing be done to increase the number of 1 and 2 team clubs once more? Or have the few remaining independents to sit back and await extinction as their members get older and retire? Cannot anything be done to reduce costs rather than this ever-increasing spiral we have been watching over the years? It doesn't seem as though it is possible, but if any of our readers have ideas on the subject the Editor will be pleased to have them, and to publish them in future issues.

All constructive ideas are welcomed, so, Readers, if you have any bright thoughts let us have them either as letter to the Editor or articles (via Mr. Tom Edge) and let us see what good can come from the unhappy demise of Anfield.

## 26th MERSEYSIDE OPEN

**T**HE local entries for the annual Tournament at Dunlops were disappointingly few, especially in the men's events compared with last year's numbers, and it was unnecessary to have any Friday play. The whole Tournament was held on the one day, Saturday, 7th November.

The first upset in the Men's Singles was the defeat of the top seed, Mike Symonds in round 3 by L. Sawyer of Essex. Sawyer won 21-16, 17-21, 21-16 and his pure defensive style, demanding tremendous concentration, was not always attractive to watch, but won him a place in the Final against J. Ingber.

Ingber's path to the Final, was sprinkled with tougher opposition, including H. Venner, H. Spiers, A. Ransome, J. Kedge and G. Livesey.

The best progress made by any local player was by Roy Jones, who reached round 4 before going out to Livesey.

Local interest in the Men's Doubles was centred mainly on the progress of Frank Thomas and Peter D'Arcy, who eventually found themselves facing Ingber and Warren in the Semi-Final. Roy Jones and Ted Mandaluff reached the Quarters, there to be knocked out by the Lincolnshire pair B. Hill and A. Coby. The eventual winners of this event, H. Venner and L. Sawyer, had no easy passage in the earlier rounds. A narrow win over the formidable Forshaw/Crusham partnership was followed by a victory over the top seeds, Symonds and Schofield.

In the Women's events, Miss M. Francis made the most progress. She reached the Quarter Final before losing to Miss Pauline Martin, who later became the new champion.

Miss Martin had in fact been drawn to play Miss J. Canham, top seed and holder of the Women's Trophy, in the first round, but when Miss Canham failed to arrive (an unfortunate road accident intervened) Pauline of course received a walk over. Apart from a very closely fought Final against Miss Proudlock, the only other opponent who really extended her was Miss M. Heppell in the Semi-Final.

Gordon Birch reached the Semi-Final of the Boy's Singles without conceding a game, but then he found J. Kedge too strong and lost in two straight.

All the finals were held in the evening and although some games were not as spectacular as had been hoped, some moments of suspense were in store for the spectators, as for instance the third game of the Women's Final which was won 21-19 on a net cord and the Men's Doubles Final in which the poor form of Warren enabled the winners to recover to take the title in two straight games.

## Shady Scoring ! ! !

**I**N most ordinary matches the scorer-umpire is usually one of the players in the team. The more dubious, shady types will perhaps gain great psychological advantages by proper (or improper) use of this system. (If you are not a shady, dubious character please don't read on).

The aim of the ideal shady scorer is to upset the susceptible type of opponent. Study your man while the players are knocking-up. Watch for traces of 'nerves' and make a mental note of anything that seems likely to upset his concentration.

As you all know, players will 'knock-up' all night unless the umpire intervenes, but choose your time immediately the opponent has either just missed the table or has dropped the ball in the net (this will leave him with a slight feeling of annoyance at himself).

You must then hold the ball and ask if the players are ready to start. There are two useful methods of doing this. You can either just snarl sharply the one word "Ready?", or you can enquire in a bored, sarcastic tone "You don't mind if we make a start do you?—we're not getting any younger."

You then spin the ball along the net with one finger. There are two ways of doing this: (a) the efficient way, in which the ball travels the width of the table and returns to your hand; or (b) in which the ball shoots off the other end of the table. Use whichever you reckon suitable to create "atmosphere".

Now follows a typical routine of "shady scoring". This gives great variety, but naturally nobody would need to use them all in one game. Against a highly-nervous opponent, the repetition of just one of them would be sufficient. But, let us assume that the opponent is a particularly phlegmatic type, with nerves so well steeled that he seems hardly to know you are there.

To begin with you must say "Love all". Contrive (if your team-mate is serving to say this quickly, and very quietly just when the opponent is scratching his head or tucking in his shirt. Alternatively, if the opponent is serving, open your mouth to speak, then break off and pretend to check up that both players are ready to go. Prolong this just long enough to get the opponent keyed-up, and if possible, off-balance. His first serve may go

awry altogether.

At this stage, score each point in an almost inaudible voice. If this seems to leave the foe unaffected, deliberately switch over to a loud, booming tone. If there is still no reaction, then you must become a little more subtle and become "emotionally involved".

This can be effected in a variety of ways, but the most primitive is to show a feeling of decided bias towards your team-mate. Every time he lands a good shot say "Good Shot", or "Beauty", or "Oh A Good One", or even, simply "Shot". When the enemy hits a real beauty, however, maintain a calm and frigid silence.

But a more, much more, subtle ruse is to side with your opponents, on the shots he muffs. When he misses the end of the table, or pops one into the net, say, with the deepest sympathy, "Oh! Hard Luck." Provided he misses enough, your cloying sentiment might induce a gradual feeling of martyrdom within his bosom: might even build within his mind a superstitious belief that he is "off-form" or "going off-form".

Now, if these attempts fail, and the opponent carries blithely on with the massacre of your poor innocent team-mate, you can fall back on the more desperate measures. There are the

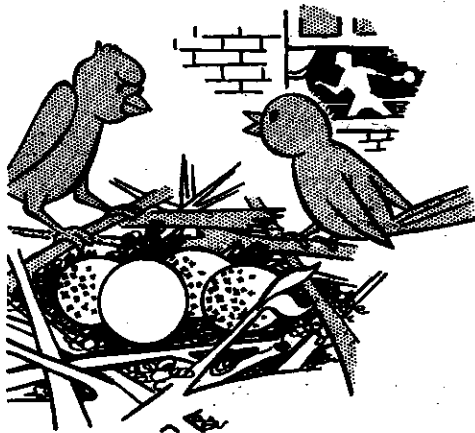
"imaginary distractions". You can always turn irritably on the spectators and bark sharply "Will you please be quiet?" This is always more effective when the spectators are being as quiet as mice, for the opponent will probably feel that you are going round the bend.

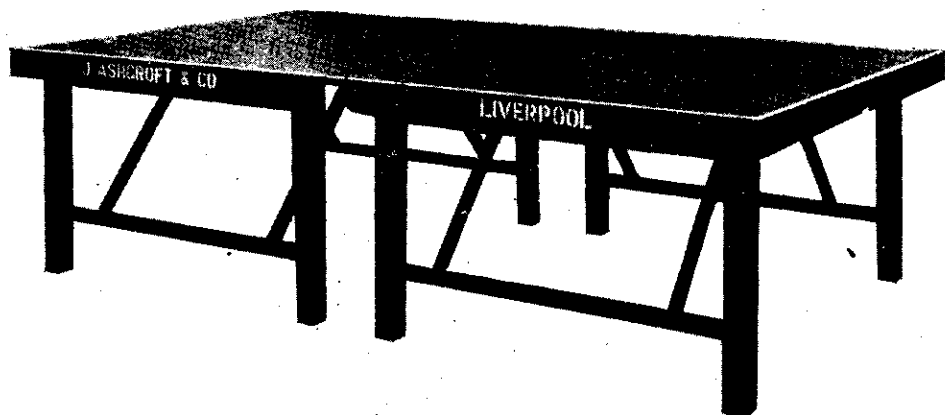
If still no effect, there is the "half strangled cry." That is, announce each point in a voice, shrill with emotion, in an attempt to pass this stress on to him.

Assuming that the opponent still has the imperturbability of a vertical marble slab, then you may have to resort to the "deliberate mistake". Here you announce "12-14"—pause—"I mean 11-15". Or you can appear to lose your grip altogether thus—"Whose point was that?" . . . "Did that ball bounce twice?" . . . "Did that touch?" . . . "Did that hit the top or side of the table?"

If, despite your best endeavours, your team-mate still contrives to lose, then—the less said the better.

If the results are favourable, however, then I am glad that in some small way I have helped you to better yourself, and sincerely trust that you will always continue to play good clean games in the great tradition of Table Tennis sportsmanship.





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