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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. R. Green (News), J. O'Sullivan and P. A. Rix (Features),

A. E. Upton, J. C. McKim and S. D. Cameron

Vol. XVI

October, 1965

No. 1

Editorial

MY first duty as Editor of the Magazine for the season is to extend a most cordial welcome to the new Clubs who have joined our ranks this season. We all hope that Bibby's, Knotty Ash, Goodlass, Sandown, St. Patrick's CYMS, Waterloo, Wyde Y.C. and Vagabonds will be happy among us for many years to come. At the same time, it is regrettable to note that other clubs have felt obliged to resign. To these, Bradstones, Domestic Mission, Lowlands, Lucem, Telecomm and Twelve-Fifty, we express our sincere hope that we shall have them amongst us again very shortly. Of the clubs leaving, Domestic Mission and Lucem have been associated with the League for so very long that the League looks very strange without seeing their names, and this reduces to three the clubs connecting us with the 1930's. It is sincerely hoped that the majority of the players concerned have been able to find niches for themselves in other clubs and thus will be able to continue to enjoy their table tennis.

You are probably most surprised to receive your first copy of the "Digest" so early in the season, but there has been a growing feeling that there should be TWO issues before Christmas instead of one, and this early issue does give us a chance to print all of the Handbook changes, and also to include an entry form for the Merseyside Open tournament for your personal use. This should be completed and sent to the Tournament Secretary as soon as possible. This is the major event in the Merseyside table tennis calendar for the season, and it is renowned as one of the finest in the country both for the quality of the entries and for the fine conditions under which it is played. This is your tournament, so I have no hesitation in appealing to all to support it, as either a player or a spectator.

Whilst writing, I am conscious of the fact that two new members have joined the Editorial Board—John O'Sullivan (Mossley Hill) and Peter Rix (Beauchair)—who are jointly responsible for ensuring a constant supply of all types of Features. I take this opportunity of welcoming them and I'm sure that members of the League will avail themselves of the opportunity of expressing their thoughts to these two gentlemen whenever they should meet. Which will enable them to pass on your views via the columns of the magazine.

I wish you all a really good season, and leave you to thread your way through the rest of the pages. Don't hesitate to write in with your criticisms and ideas.

From the Secretary's Desk

By J. C. McKIM

TWO items in the "Digest" are of importance to all members of the League and I would ask you all to spare them a few minutes attention. The first is the list of alterations which have been made to the handbook up to the date of going to print. Please make a careful note of all those that affect your own club. This may well save to a long and fruitless journey some cold, foggy night.

The second item which I would ask for you all to consider most carefully is the form enclosed for the MERSEYSIDE 'OPEN.' Whilst we undoubtedly look for a strong outside entry for this event, it cannot be considered a success unless we get good support from our own League members. This is an opportunity for you to play against oppositions you seldom (if ever) meet, and may I suggest that it is an excellent opportunity, early in the season, to let the city team Selectors see what you can do.

Three new rules have been approved by the I.T.T.F. for a 2-year trial period, and we in England are putting them into practice for a trial season. These new rules will apply to all League and Cup matches, also in the Merseyside Open and Liverpool Closed tournaments.

- (a) You may now serve outside the imaginary continuation of the side-lines, but must strike the ball behind the base line or an imaginary continuation of it.
- (b) In Doubles play, the order of serving and receiving must alter in successive games, so that the player to whom you serve in the first game **MUST** serve to you in the second. In the third game

you revert to the order in which you played the first game, and at the change of ends at the score ten, you change once more.

- (c) The third new rule applies to the Expedite rule which only interests you normally in Open tournaments. It states that the Expedite Rule, once it has been enforced, will apply in every succeeding game in that set, and not, as previously, after 10 minutes play.

ONE LAST APPEAL TO ALL CLUB SECRETARIES. Please address your letters and make your 'phone calls to the correct Official. I continually get requests for registration forms (which, of course, is the Fixture Secretary's department), and I receive cheques. These I do not object to provided that they are made out to me, but if they are for the League, **PLEASE** send them to the Treasurer. And changes of match nights, Secretary's 'phone number, etc., should be advised to both the Fixture Secretary and myself, **NOT** to the Match Secretary. Every time you contact the wrong official, that person has to either write or 'phone the information to the correct person. To do this costs money—**YOUR** money. We are trying to keep costs down, and this is one way in which you can help. In addition it means, also, that the information you seek or are wishing to impart is obtained or given at the right source, and there is less possibility of error when not conveyed through a third party.

If the Secretary of a new club or the new Secretary of an established club is in any doubt as to which Official he should contact, please 'phone me first. I shall be only too pleased to help.

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HANDBOOK AMENDMENTS

(as received up to 26th September)

- Page 3. *Add to Selection Committee* : P. U. Rumjahn.
- Page 16. **BATH STREET.** *Delete* "C" team, Division 3A.
Add Match Sec. : Mr. W. Jones, 70 Brownmoor Lane, Crosby, Liverpool 23. Tel. (Business) BIR 7111 (Ext. 42).
BOHEMIANS. Tel. (Business) now ORM 3029.
BOOTLE YMCA. *Alter* Secretary's address to : 10 Netherton Park Road, Liverpool 21.
BRITISH LEGION. *Delete* entirely—Withdrawn from League.
- Page 17. **CADWA.** *Delete* "A" team, Division 2A. *Alter* Ext. 2797 to 2414.
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY. *Alter* "nem" to "new."
Alter Ext. 2574 to 2573.
COLONSAY. New Headquarters : Queens Arms, 202 Walton Road, Liverpool 4. Directions : Any 'bus to junction of Spellow Lane/Walton Road. *Alter* match nights to :
 1st team and "B" team—THURSDAY.
 "A" team and "C" team—MONDAY.
 "C" team plays in Div. 4B.
CRAWFORDS. *Alter* match night to :
 1st team—THURSDAY, "A" team—WEDNESDAY.
 "B" team and "C" team—TUESDAY.
 New Secretary : Mr. B. W. Hart, 209 Lowerhouse Lane, West Derby, Liverpool 11. Tel. (Business) STO 2711 (Ext. 282).
- Page 18. **LINNETS.** *Alter* "Women's and Women's 'B'" to "Women's and Women's 'A'"
 Women's 'B' team : *Alter* M/night from Monday to WEDNESDAY.
- Page 19. **LIVERPOOL PIRATES.** *Delete* Women's 'A' team.
LIVERPOOL YMCA. *Alter* Sec's. business phone no. thus :
 Ext. 40 to 27.
- Page 20. **OAKHILL.** *Alter* "B" team from Div. 4A to 3A.
RAFTERS. *Add* Women's 'A' team. M/night WEDNESDAY.
Add "B" team, Div. 4B. M/night THURSDAY.
- Page 21. **ST. MARY'S OLD BOYS.** *Delete* "A" team, Division 4B.
- Page 22. **TWELVE-FIFTY.** *Delete* entirely. Withdrawn from League.
WAVERTREE LABOUR. New Secretary : K. Armson, 31 Hillcrest Road, Liverpool 4. Tel. (Home) STA 6447.
- NEW CLUB—**BIBBY'S.** J. Bibby & Son Ltd., Great Howard Street—Concert Room. Bus : 1 or 39 to Northern Hospital. Bus to Town Hall, then walk along Old Hall Street.
 Sec. : Miss R. Royle, J. Bibby & Son, King Edward St., L'pool 3. Tel. CEN 6671. 1st Women's team—WEDNESDAY.
 Women's "A" team—TUESDAY.
- NEW CLUB—**KNOTTY ASH.** Knotty Ash Tennis Club, Grant Road (off Pilch Lane) Liverpool 14. Bus : 75. Sec. : Miss P. Rothwell, 53 Swanside Road, Liverpool 14. Tel. STO 6819. Div. 4A—MONDAY.
- NEW CLUB—**VAGABONDS.** Vagabonds Tennis Club, Queens Drive, L'pool 13. Directions same as for Bohemians.
 Sec. : D. G. Ridgway, 10 Mackets Close, Woolton, Liverpool 25. Tel. (Home) GAT 3476 ; (Club) STO 2568.
 1st team Div. 3A—WEDNESDAY ; "A" team Div. 4A—MONDAY.
- Page 26. *Delete* **CADWA** "A" (Division 2A).
- Page 32. Division 3A. **VAGABONDS** take over **BATH ST.** "C" fixtures.
OAKHILL "B" take over **TWELVE-FIFTY** fixtures.
- Page 38. Div. 4A. **KNOTTY ASH** take over "A" fixtures.
VAGABONDS "A" take over **OAKHILL** "B" fixtures.
- Page 41. Div. 4B. **RAFTERS** "B" take over **ST. MARY'S** "A" fixtures.
COLONSAY "C" take over **BRITISH LEGION** fixtures.
- Page 44. Women's Division. *Delete* **PIRATES** "A"
BIBBY'S take over the "A" fixtures.
RAFTERS "A" take over the "B" fixtures.
BIBBY'S "A" take over **CADWA** fixtures.
CADWA take over "C" fixtures.

A NEW POLICY

NONE of our teams have played yet so we haven't a clue how we shall fare, but after the last few seasons, which apart from the Ladies "A", Youth, and Junior teams, have been pretty disastrous, the Selection Committee have decided to adopt a new policy. The two 1st teams, Men's and Ladies, will comprise those players who (in our opinion) are the strongest available, while the "A" teams are to be used to introduce new players into city warfare, seeking players who can step into the 1st teams at some future date with some success. The Youth and Junior teams will carry on with the best of their age group available, where we feel that they will be gaining experience for the future also. So the personnel of the two "A" teams might be changed from time to time without apparent reason, merely to bring out other players.

This system might not pay off, but the Committee feel that this is the means to pay our insurance premium for seasons yet to come, and what have we got to lose anyway? For the past three or four years the Men's 1st team have had a far from distinguished record — saved from relegation by the gong every time! And the two "A" teams, though higher in their respective divisions than the Men's 1st, have little or nothing to lose by a few experiments. In fact, of our senior teams only the Ladies 1st have left us with any feelings of pride at all, and the Youths and Juniors the sole teams to gain any honours at all.

So, for the start, the Men's 1st team will be Peter D'Arcy (Bohs.), Roy Jones (YMCA)—recalled to the city side after some 15 years—and Ron Jones (YMCA). The Ladies at first sight look as though we might have some trouble, with Mabel Francis trotting off to France, Joyce Randall out of the game for a time, and Marion Lewis (one of our brighter young hopes) "emigrating" to Brighton. But we gained Maureen Coe, from Durham, so the side is—Judy Crafter (Cadwa), Maureen Coe

and Jean Reynolds. The Men's "A" team of Eddie Moran, Gordon Birch and Eddie Clein will certainly not let us down, and the Ladies "A" team of Betty Black (Cadwa), Marie Lupton (LPAS & Linnets) and Barbara Horsley (Bibby's) should not let the city down. We are looking to the Youth team—Rod McPherson (Bohs.), Ian Burrow (Linnets) and Eddie Birch (Wav. Labour) to show up well again after winning the division last season with virtually the same team. The Junior side has not yet been picked, for as always trial must be held to sort our players who are completely unknown quantities, and these trials will have been held before you read this. Together with these trials we shall be having Youth trials, and it is our pious hope that these will throw up some player(s) out of the ordinary.

As usual, we have entered teams in the Wilmott Cup and Rose Bowl, also a Junior team in a new National knock-out competition. We don't know our first opponents yet but if possible will let you know through the "Digest".

During October we have three HOME matches for various teams. On October 22nd (Friday) our Men's 1st team meet BOLTON at Liverpool YMCA, and the Youth team meet WIGAN at Wavertree Labour on the same evening. The Men's "A" oppose PRESTON in their first match, at English Electric. All start at 7-30 p.m., and may I voice the eternal plea for a few supporters at our matches? The Selection Committee pick the teams, but only the players can win them, and there has never been any doubt that a number of friendly bods strewn around the room give the players more encouragement and a greater chance of success than do the normal complement—players, officials, and the ladies who make the tea!! If every member of the League attended only one city match through the sea on we'd have an average attendance of about 40 a time. But, we might get some from the new clubs, for they can learn a lot from watching higher grade players in action.

Team of the Month

By JOHN O'SULLIVAN

UNTIL I visited Rafter's to watch them play Lussac, I had never seen a League match among the Women's division, but I had watched the Lussac girls during the summer months, being coached, and I wondered therefore how they would fare against a team as experienced and talented as Rafter's, who finished third in their division last season, while Lussac were second from bottom. Armed with this information I made Rafter's an odds-on favourite to win, and they proved me right by strolling home 10-0. But as I mentioned above, I have seen the Lussac girls in practice and I know that they are capable of a better performance than this.

No. 1, Anne Marsden has one of the hardest forehands I have yet seen from a girl, and normally they all go on. I've been on the receiving end on more than one occasion, so I can vouch for their ferocity, so after her first set in which she was beaten fairly comfortably I asked her the cause of her apparent timidity. She explained that for the first couple of matches at the beginning of the season she is so nervous that she can hardly keep the ball going on to the table let alone hit it. This was the case last year and (ruefully) she reckoned that the same was happening this season. Her nerves were evident again in her second set, when, despite a lightly better fight, she again lost easily in two straight. Brenda Williams at no. 2, while not being a big hitter like her no. 1, does have the knack of distributing the ball around the table, and usually ends up by putting it just where you aren't. But during this match she also seemed to be overawed by the occasion, and although she attempted to return all shots, her efforts at hoaxing her opponents seemed to be restricted to just getting the ball back, so that it could be clobbered back at her. Brenda, a left-hander, and probably one of the daintiest players I've seen, will play far better than this when she conquers her nerves.

Marjory Knapman showed that, nerves or no nerves, she wasn't going to give in without a fight. A veritable bundle of energy is this lass!

If my memory serves me right, against one of the Rumjahn ladies (I don't know which one I get confused even among the male members of the family!) Marjory got properly stuck in and went to three. She did her best to win one for Lussac, and against less formidable opposition I reckon that she could have managed it. Her forehand is the nearest thing I've seen yet to a 'loop' done by a girl in Liverpool. It floats over the net, fairly high, seemingly innocuous, then, when the ball touches the table it shoots like the last pickled onion in the jar! When she has settled down with it, I can imagine that many an opponent is going to have trouble with this shot, but it is a recent acquisition and will take a few weeks for her to get it working properly.

I think that it was just after this game between Marjory and Mrs. Rumjahn that I witnessed what must be the most original way of, if not 'disturbing' an opponent, at least certainly bending the concentration thereof, and I reckoned until then that I knew all of the angles It was the turn of team X to provide the Umpire. Unknown to the opposition, the male volunteer who occupied the umpires' throne has recently broken his glasses and without his specs. his sight is, to say the least, somewhat limited! He tossed a coin to determine the server. He tossed it about three feet above our heads—the umpire held out his hand to catch it while the two players looked on—and missed it by about 12 inches. He couldn't find the coin so someone retrieved it and passed it back to him. He then repeated the performance with little or no variation of speed or direction, and the look on the player from the opposing side was worth a guinea a box! (He's going to umpire my set). He then discarded the coin in favour of the ball, by which means the identity of the serve was eventually established. In all fairness, may it be said that he umpired the set without the slightest hitch, but I was glad that there were no disputed points! (It's a pity that Peter wasn't there—*Editor*).

Christine Barr ("Dusty" to her friends) made up the Lussac side, and again nerves came into their own, but this time the results were visible, for even from where I sat hershaking was obvious. She played well below her normal level, but there was neither bite nor in piration—such are the results of nerves.

Rafters are all too well known for me to do more than award them a very honourable mention. They couldn't have lost this match had they tried, but they created an atmosphere which made me make up my mind that I would come again

as soon as I could, for seldom have I been made to feel so welcome.

Finally, I must say that "nerves" do wear off, and as soon as they do, the signs are there for all to see that these Lussac girls will take a bit of beating, and I reckon that they will be far higher in the final tables this year than they were last.

Editor's Note. John has a roving commission to call on any team he may select and to give us a report on the same lines as this, so if he turns up at one of your matches you know what to expect.

Personality Parade

CYRIL BRADSHAW

(Age 35 yrs.)—Beauclair.

He became interested in the game when only eleven but it was not until 1950 that he joined his first League club—Liverpool YMCA. After 10 years there he went to CADWA for 6 months in 1960, then returned to the YMCA until August 1964, when he signed for the Beauclair club.

In all, Cyril has played in the 1st Division 10 years. Last season he played in the 2nd Division and was instrumental in helping Beauclair gain promotion to the 1st Division for the first time in their history. Apart from this success he has only figured in the capacity of runner-up during his playing career.

His other interests include football and golf. Cyril reckons that his close-to-the-table style was influenced largely by his watching former international Aubrey Simons during his hey-day. There is no doubting that his at-'em-all-the-time game upsets many players.

ERIC SMITTON

(Aged 34 yrs.—so he says—
—English Electric.

Eric began playing table tennis when he was a pupil of Florence Melly School in the L.B.A. league. At 16 he played for his 'branch' in the Co-op league for several seasons. When 18 years old he joined Bohemians and after a season there he went to English Electric. He has been a stalwart of this club's 1st team since that time.

Whilst playing in the Co-op league he won the men's singles title 5 years running. In all, Eric has been a Liverpool league player for 17 years and says his main interests are now wine, women and table tennis.

From early days he reckons that his game has been influenced by the style of Len Ross of Oakhill, who used to coach lads at Florence Melly. But whatever his style you couldn't wish to meet a more jovial and likeable chap on the table tennis circuit.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "DIGEST"

should be sent to the officials named below:

The Editor (address on Page 1). All letters to the Editor.

J. E. Green. All Divisional Notes and Items of News.

J. O'Sullivan and P. A. Rix. All Articles, Features, Competitions, etc.

COACHING! as she is spoke

HAVE you ever heard a male observe to a young female that she moves her feet like a "paralytic duck-billed platypus?" Or that her movements bear a resemblance to a "web-footed wart-hog?" Have you ever listened to such a remark to some young, delectable dish that "your backside waves round and round like a wind-mill?" No? Well, I have.

Throughout this summer I've been going along to a weekly coaching class, partly to keep my hand in, and partly to act as a 'feeder' on one of the tables, and it has been an education, not only in learning the correct way to perform the various shots, but also in the manner in which invective, vituperation and insults can be hurled at luscious young damsels, apparently without the recipients taking umbrage. For instance, footwork calls for a language entirely its own. Those whose feet never seem to be able to please, starting at the lowest level are told in no uncertain tones, that you're "waddling like a walrus" or look like a "rheumatic rhinoceros", and as the movement comes more into keeping with the requirements of the coach, range throughout the alphabet up to the highest level of bearing a close resemblance to an "amorous anteater". And some of these alliterative descriptions are delivered in so straightforward a manner that it seems highly unlikely that the speaker will reach the door alive—yet he does

To find a young lovely, after being told that she moves like a "paralytic penguin" coming away from the table smiling happily needs some delving into . . . to find that she's really truly happy because only a couple of weeks back she had only reached the "yammering yak" stage and so she's made a deal of progress since then!

Then, wrists come in for criticism also. A tiny wobble just when the wrist should be firm brings forth a comment drawing the resemblance to a wet haddock, and that gay little twiddle at the end of the follow-through entices into the open the plaintive query "What's that for?"

Are you waving your ruddy flag at the Queen or something?"

Yet, to remain stiff throughout is an even greater crime, for apparently "you're as muscle-bound as the village ruddy blacksmith"—to a shapely young doll at that!! "Throwing the hammer is what you're fit for, not table tennis". After a few more efforts to perform with more lissome grace comes a word of advice—"Relax". A moment or two go by then "Gawd-elpus, RELAX!" (in a bellow). "Swing the bat at the ball, don't use a blighted sledgehammer on it". Later . . . "you're attempting to do a forehand, NOT shovelling coal!"

Ultimately comes that moment when his patience seems to have run dry, and the pupil stands miserably facing her tormentor, saying "I can't. I'm sorry, I just can't" in heartbreaking, plaintive tones. Your heart bleeds for her! "Can't? Can't?? You CAN'T?????" "Of course you can, or I wouldn't be here wasting my valuable time on you". "Can you Twist?" A nod. "Well, show me". And the poor, unhappy, small object does a couple of reluctant twist steps. "Now, when you twist you control your blasted muscles, so CONTROL THEM NOW!" And little by little the tenseness goes, and a good-looking forehand (or backhand) emerges. Everyone is now happy. Sorry, *nearly* everyone. Grudgingly comes a reluctant grunt of "that's a bit better. You can do it nearly as well now as my small three-year-old niece can". Yet he still lives

I come in for my share, too. You'd almost think I was a pupil sometimes, for, when a beautiful forehand screams past me so fast that I catch pneumonia from the draught (I don't even see the blooming ball as it screams somewhere into the middle distance) I am in the receiving end of a remark like "You're there to keep the ball going! Get them back or let my three-year-old niece take over! She thrives on delicate little shots like that!", or perhaps "get them back you great steaming nit. How on earth can the girl practice if you can't put sitters like that

where she can hit them?" or even "if you decided to try to put your bat in the way the ball might bounce off it onto the table if you're lucky, so don't just close your eyes and duck,—have a wild stab at it and someday perhaps you'll actually hit the ruddy thing".

There comes the day when the pupil is doing steady, reliable fore-hands, and the stooge (me) is getting them back somewhere in the right region or thereabouts, and a long rally ensues. Happily we smile at each other. We're a regular mutual admiration. Happiness is short-lived, however, for to the pupil "Why are you wagging your head like a golden daffodil on a long green stalk? And furthermore, to date you have done everything with your bottom bar actually hit the ball with it, so why not do that, complete the set, then get down to doing the blasted shot properly?" I smile in commiseration at the downtrodden lassie, but to me "And she'd have a better chance if you kept the ball going to where she needed it, not to where you, with your crass ignorance keep putting it", and down onto the table goes a sixpence. "Hit that, then she can practice". Have you ever tried to hit the nimble tanner? The harder you try, the further away you get, until you're lucky to get within a couple of feet of it! Comes the remark "A perfect example of brute force and b...y ignorance!" Totally deflated we keep on the toil.

In all of the books on table tennis that I ever read there has been a full description (illustrated) of the

various shots, and a wealth of assorted advice to the learner, but never a word regarding the language to be employed by the coach, yet I've come to the conclusion that sarcasm, invective and the well-chosen phrase *do* come into it somewhere, for it has certainly got results in our small circle, and there came the day when we got the grudging admission that, given all the nets and edges, we might *all* stand a remote chance of beating that hateful three-year-old genius, at any rate until she'd grown a little more. What greater praise could any of us obtain?

I reckon that the only thing that has bound us all together, stooges like me and pupils like them is our mutual feeling of undying hatred towards that murderer's mate—our coach. Yet week after week we have gone back to endure more torture and insult, guaging this phrase against that of last week, to assess improvement, and I reckon that next summer will find us all back again to listen to that sarcastic voice hurling more words at us, probably of a depth as yet unplumbed, for we are of the honest opinion that he will spend this winter in working out an entirely new vocabular for our benefit. Yet, when we look round the improvement is very noticeable, and although we know that only our hard work did it, I often wonder how much effort would have gone in had not those neatly turned phrases not been coming our way so often? What a Sergeant Major he'd have made!! Coaching? As she spoke

* * * * *

After the receipt of the above article, we sent our Special Correspondent to interview the Coach concerned, with the results as follows. Since we have not had any fee for an advertisement, we call the coach Mr. X, as we see no good reason why he should get a free advert. (If he wants one, let him, pay like anyone else).

Our S.C. Now that you've read the article, are the comments given in it those which you use yourself at your classes? Do you call young ladies "web-footed wart-hogs" and if so, why?

Mr. X. Yes! And yes! All coaches ask to be told the truth about their play. So when they remind me of web-footed warthogs I say so.

Our S.C. Why use an expression like Rheumatic rhinoceros?

Mr. X. Well, sometimes a little flattery is called for to keep their spirits up.

Our S.C. Don't you feel that a little more tact could be employed?

Mr. X. TACT? Nobody could be more tactful than I am! After all, I left my dog-whip at home, though sorely tempted at times! Tact? Huh!!

- Our S.C.* Do you use the same expressions to men?
- Mr. X.* Always, when they are smaller and weedier than me. If they are bigger, I use them sometimes, depending entirely on how hefty they are, and the proximity of the door to myself.
- Our S.C.* What would you say to a bloke the size and physical development of, say, Cassius Clay?
- Mr. X.* I'd take him outside and say "Let me see how fast you can run?"
- Our S.C.* And then?
- Mr. X.* If he was slow, I'd get him back to the table, stand right by the door, and speak my mind !*:*!*!!
- Our S.C.* And if he was really fast?
- Mr. X.* I'd suggest, very gently, that "you might get better results if you could remember, now and again, to move one of your dainty little feet a couple of inches hither and thither".
- Our S.C.* It sounds as though you're a coward!!
- Mr. X.* Too true, mate! You live longer that way, I'm not out to earn the ruddy Victoria Cross, merely to try to instill the rudiments of the game into the little victims.
- Our S.C.* Do you prefer to coach girls?
- Mr. X.* What a damn silly question! Who wouldn't, you miserable, skinny, undersized little worm?

TRAINED ON JAM BUTTIES By EDDIE CAMERON

KNOTTY ASH and its Jam Buttie mines have been making news for some years, and now the League has welcomed into its midst the Knotty Ash Table Tennis Club. The club is situated in a district where table tennis clubs are scarce and we hope that this will lead to a resurgence of interest in the sport in their corner of the city. Certainly they bring with them a tremendous enthusiasm for the game, and they invaded Crawfords *en masse* for their League debut with the spectators well outnumbering the players.

Their team is essentially young, with R. Haigh, D. Crewe and D. Jones ably supported by veteran W. Rowlandson, whose modern pen grip is, I suspect, a throwback to the days when open style and Victor Barna were just an interesting development on the British scene. Glamour

is well supplied by the lady in green, Miss L. Lee, whose table tennis prowess obviously won her her place in the side in competition with many enthusiastic reserves. The club was a credit in its turn-out, appearance, team support and their generous applause for the opponent's successes.

What of the opposition? Crawfords fielded what was virtually a youth side also—in Hart, Cameron, Raper and Langley—with the surprising re-appearance of Jim Houghton, an older campaigner back to the game after a break of a season or so.

Knotty Ash were far from disgraced by the 10-0 win by Crawfords. With their determination they will soon absorb experience, and who knows, they may well become the next Wavertree Labour.

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Around the Clubs

DIVISION 1. —By JIM GREEN

STRUTH! What a carve-up! This season must be an all-time record for the number of new players and for players changing clubs. Liverpool YMCA, though weakened by the loss of Ken Roberts (emigrated to Australia) have signed on Norman Parker from Gloucester, Pete Turtle (ex-Wavertree Labour), Jimmy Bowden (from Rafters) and these three together with last season's players form their first two teams. Wavertree Labour have lost Norman Chaloner to Oakhill, Peter Turtle, Alan Tolson (gone to sea) and have brought G. Metcalf up from their fourth team to the "A", with Peter Hurworth's younger brother bringing up at the tail of their third team. Gordon Exel (Wirral) has signed for Linnets, replacing Harry Spiers. Pirates seem to have lost Norman Jones, Mal Wallace, Maurice Oakes and Ted Barnes, and with two teams now in the 1st division they don't have anything like the strength of last season despite the arrival of Ronnie Blackmore from Rafters. Bohemians have had a regular influx of newcomers in Val Franco (London), Gordon Birch, and a number of others from Cadwa, and this to the detriment of Cadwa's hopes of staying up, for only Bill Crafter is now left of last season's players. Harold Wilcock has come back from retirement and Judy Crafter from Linnets to help out, and with Ken Westhead and Glynn Jones they form the 1st division side. Bath Street have lost Norman Cooke and R. Kite from last year's promotion winning team, which doesn't help them much, but against this Beauclair, despite losing Brian Pardy and Ron Weston, have acquired Ted Birch (Cadwa) and Frank Murphy (Rafters) so still have a fair team.

Only one week's matches have been played as this is written, so nothing is yet available to give indications of the form of players. Rafters, the only team unchanged from last year cruised home comfortably 10-0 against Wavertree Labour "B" as did Wavertree Labour against the Police. Linnets came in 8-2 over Wavertree "A", the YMCA 1st team dropped 2 against Pirates

"A", due to the non-arrival of David Butterworth and the last minute grabbing of a reserve from the snooker table, while the YM's "A" team put paid to Pirates 1st team 8-2. The main surprise was the loss of two points by Bohemians to Bath Street. The surprise choice of Peter Ferris at no. 5 for Bohs. in preference to such players as Vic Chesham, Keith Rawlinson or Rod McPherson didn't pay any dividends for he dropped a set which may prove expensive later on.

Obviously any forecast must be a matter of mere opinion, but sticking out the neck, as always in the first issue, I'll nominate YMCA, Bohs. and Wavertree to fill the top three places, provided that they play at full strength. Rafters, Linnets, and Wavertree "A" in the next three, with Liverpool Y.M. "A" probably there or thereabout and Beauclair following close below. Cadwa, Bath Street and L.P.A.S., I feel, are in for a grim time, as are Wavertree Labour "B", for nothing is more certain than their team is going to prove too weak to live in this division unless strengthened from above, to the detriment of the "A" team.

Pirates, as last season, seem to be the main puzzle. On paper they have players to form a first team well capable of holding its own, but in this case nothing is more certain than that their "A" team would return sharpish to the 2nd division. With Alan Lawson and Fred Bamford in the "A" team, they seem to have decided to split their strength to try to keep both sides up. This is not fiddling, nor is the slightest criticism intended, for the principle of split strength has been used in this division for many, many years. The point is, have Pirates got the sufficient strength to be able to afford to split it?

Don't forget the "Merseyside". There are always complaints because players haven't had forms, so this year we're sending them in with this "Digest". So, with those who do enter usually, together with those who would have entered over the past four or five years had they had forms(?) we should see a fantastic entry from Liverpool. Let's hope so anyway.

DIVISION 2A.

—BY DAVID COHEN

WELL, the season is on us once again, and we extend the usual welcome to the newcomers to the division, although I am quite sure that Bohemians would rather not be in the position to be welcomed.

I see that Colonsay have done their best to ensure that Bohs. path back to the 1st division is not going to be too easy, for in their first match of the season, Colonsay took seven points, leaving Bohs. with only three. McPherson, the Liverpool Youth player, playing at no. 3, won both of his sets for Bohs. But the game of the night, however, was between Vic Chesham and Eddie Mooney, in which hard fought tussle Eddie Mooney just managed to scrape a point for Colonsay after three games.

I think that the Kafters team will have a pretty tough time this year—although I hope that events prove me wrong. Bob Rohrer who leads them, tells me that due to the wholesale resignations from the team which represented them in this division last year, most of them in this year's team are players who have been playing in Division 3B last season finishing in a position not too high up. I always think that it is a little sad when circumstances such as these force a player or a group of

players to play at a level which is, generally speaking, beyond them.

Looking around, and attempting to prophesy (always a dangerous thing to do) it's quite on the cards that if Waterloo Park and Linacre put out teams with the same fine balance as last year, one or both teams could end up with honours. Not forgetting, of course, newly promoted Sefton General. This club has had the reputation for years of upsetting the most careful of calculations. Liverpool Jewish who had the misfortune last season of being unable to field a regular five players, have remedied the situation this year, and they have hopes also.

All in all, the picture at the start is a very open one. The only thing definite is that the season's play should prove to be both pleasant and agreeable to all concerned. This is one of the targets that one always aims at.

A note to finish off with. Sincere sympathies are extended by the entire complement of members of the Liverpool Jewish Club to the League' statistics man . . . Jim Green. They reckon that, with TWO "A. Cohens" — TWO "R. Cohens" — ONE "D. Cohen" and a possibility of ONE "L. Cohen", Jim won't know whether he is coming or Cohen!!!

DIVISION 2B.

—BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN

AFTER last year's "Handbook Meeting" at which I wrote my first novel in the form of alterations, I decided that I would go along this year fully trained, fighting fit, and ready to fight my weight in wild cats. Part of the close season I spent in exhaustive exercises to prevent the possibility of writer's cramp, then, armed with about 20 ball point pens of assorted colours I arrived at the YMCA all set to produce my latest epic. But, low and behold, to my utter amazement and vast delight, the alterations were well below last year's total.

I now notice that in Div. 2B we have lost five of last season's teams, mainly due to promotion and relegation, but Cadwa "B" have been obliged to drop out. Against this we have five new clubs, to whom

I extend the customary welcome. How hearty the welcome will depend on how my average is affected after I've played them!

Since I started writing these notes I have received a letter in which Crawfords have gone "abundance", keeping only the same clubroom, and another from which I gather that Cadwa and Bibby's "A" (Women's Div.) both think the grass over the fence to be a little greener! It makes you wonder if the storm has yet to break?

It is difficult to pass any opinions as to which teams are in the running to finish at the top this year. Last year nobody had any doubts about Wavertree going to the 1st division, but such a forecast this season is hopeless at present. Oakhill are the unknown quantity, but I reckon it safe to hazard a guess that they will be somewhere near the top. Despite the loss of Basil Townsend,

they have acquired Norman Chaloner from Waverree Labour, and together with the remaining four of last year's team, led by the redoubtable Bill Harris, they do seem the best each-way bet for a swift return whence they came.

Mossley Hill played their first match against the YMCA "B" team at the YM. I arrived rather late (having obtained permission) at this game just in time to see the score go up for the YM "B" at 6-2. They eventually won 8-2. My arrival didn't seem to do anything for the Mossley Hill team! Whether this performance was a flash in the pan by the YMCA, or whether they are going to turn into giant-killers (they finished 2nd from bottom last year) remains to be seen.

St. Edward's came away winners 9-1 from Bootle YMCA. I've noticed

that at the beginning of the season St. Edward's start off like a bomb, winning all their matches, and then, as the season wears on they start to fade out. By the different players that they use from about mid-season on it looks as though some players become unavailable after a month or two to account for the slide in their team position. Maybe the addition of Basi Townsend will help them in enabling them to turn out a full strength team.

I see that Linnets "B" just scraped a 6-4 win over Liverpool Jewish "A". I don't know the details of this match but those who remember the Linnets "B" team of last year—Harry Holmes and Co.—will have a surprise when they meet this "B" team for none of last season's players are in it. Harry and his colleagues now constitute the club's "C" team in Division 2A.

DIVISION 3A.

—BY JACK LAMBERT

HAVING just cooled off from my first game I find material of current interest rather lacking.

As the division has practically a complete new look it would be a bold man who would forecast a championship team, so let us hope that we have a competitive and interesting season, which, to my mind, means saying a little prayer including "Please don't let any team run away with the League from the start".

While I do not see the new service rule making any terrific impact on the game, especially in our sphere, I do feel that it is just another step in the wrong direction which was started with sponge and spin (or should I say spinning sponge). Com-

bined with the new service rule it makes the game more "serve and hit" and less of a spectacle with tactics being used to a greater extent and certainly more physical exercise.

A sincere welcome to our new club Vagabonds. May they enjoy their season with us, and may we all help them to do so.

Are we interested in finding a divisional champion? To run an open tournament for all players to take part would provide administrative and expense difficulties but for each team to provide their best player by nomination or play-off, and for them all to play off at one club on one evening would be a simple matter. Are we interested?

(*Editor.* Isn't this the purpose of the Restricted event in the Closed, Jack?).

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DIVISION 3B.

—BY BERT ARISS

IT is already obvious, even at this early stage, that the battle for honours is going to be a hotly contested affair, with several teams in the division having a chance of honours, and some extremely close finishes to matches between them.

Much will depend, as it so often does, on the constitution of teams from the multiple clubs. And as the season progresses, and re-grouping takes place, these teams may become either weakened or strengthened, but Pirates "D", unbeaten in League matches since the team was formed (provided that their personnel has not changed too much) and Beauclair "A" appeal strongly as contenders for the top spot, as the pace warms up.

One thing that should be borne in mind by every player is that it is

laid down for matches to start at 7-30 p.m. Unfortunately it is becoming almost an accepted fact that play commences at 8-0 p.m. by those players who are present at that time, with some players arriving at any time as they see fit. Please make every effort to start your matches at the stipulated hour and avoid having to travel home at an unnecessarily late hour.

I am sorry that I have not been able to give you any news, match results, etc., but it is too early in the season for me to have heard even the results of the first weeks matches.

Here's hoping you all have a very successful season, and remember there's always got to be a loser.

One man that everyone will have to watch to retain their proud records—Alan Crawshaw of College of Technology.

DIVISION 4A.

—BY TOM GORDON

DOCTOR Cameron & Co. have undertaken some drastic surgery on this division. They have neatly cut it in half, thrown the top half to division 3A, grafting on no less than seven new teams and finished with a short injection from 3B. All of which should have done us a power of good. By losing last year's top five teams the strength of the division has been considerably diluted; this should provide an incentive for the remainder of last year's teams, and also allow the new teams to show their mettle in their first season.

To the new teams we extend a warm welcome to the League. Four of the teams, Trinity "A", University "C", Waterloo Park "A" and L'pool YM "C" are from established clubs, so it is quite possible that they contain some players with League experience, or at least of playing with fellow club members who are already League players, either of which will help them considerably in regular competitive play. The

other new teams are St. Patrick's, Goodlass, Vagabonds "A" and Knotty Ash. These teams are completely new to me and I look forward with particular interest to reviewing their progress. I certainly wish them success, though I am tempted to add "not too much success" for if one team wins convincingly too often it results in a one-horse race and deadens competition. This regrettable circumstances was exemplified last year in this very division by the 12/50 club who won all their games and were totally unassailable.

It is interesting to note that, at the last League A.G.M. there was evidence of general discontent at the one-horse practice, which culminated in the Committee being vested with the power to promote teams to higher divisions at their discretion (always provided that a vacancy occurs in a higher division). Thus the Committee are now in a position to move a team such as the 12/50 of last year over the 3rd division to the 2nd, or even to the 1st should they feel that ability warranted such a step.

HELP !!

Some of you must know of an ex-League player who would like to take the "Digest" to keep in touch with the successes and disappointments of their friends still in the game. Why not get in touch with them? The "Digest" needs outside subscribers, and if everyone got one ex-player to take a copy, it would set us up financially. Send the name and address of any such friend, together with 4/9d. for the season's issues (post free) to me.

DON CAMERON, *Hon. Treasurer.*

DIVISION 4B.

—BY MAX RATOFF

IN looking back at previous issues of the "Digest" I am surprised at the number of contributors who start with the classic introduction, "I welcome you to another season". Consequently to break with tradition I will not open with that, rather, I will welcome you to another season in the second sentence.

I really must tell you how I come to be writing the divisional notes. I was settling down quietly to another day's hard, strenuous and back-breaking skive at work, when the 'phone rang:

"Jim Green here".

"Oh yes!" — I always reply non-committally because I have had experience of "Father" (as J.R.G. is affectionately known around the clubs) before.

Obviously deciding the short attack the best, he launched right into the middle of his earth-shattering news. "We have a new chap writing the notes for division 4B".

Rapidly, I decided that ignorance would definitely pay off in this case —

"Oh yes,—who is it?" One second's pause, and then —"You!" —as if I didn't know.

Well, of course I told him straight away that I wasn't doing it; not competent enough; no grammatical sense at all; don't know the players well enough (the Totties always excepted)—(indidentally any Linnets member will supply the glossary for "Totty"); haven't the time, etc., etc., etc. Of course he agreed that I needn't do it, and it was finally settled that the divisional notes would be supplied by a more erudite

member of the division. I take this opportunity to welcome you to another season

The difficulty in writing this opening epistle is that, in order to go to press in time, all contributions must be in before I receive the score cards or see the first week's match results. So, if you will excuse me being a "homer", as this is the only match I know about, I can report that Linnets "E" drew their opening match with Pirates "E". I was particularly pleased that this match was played with all the usual keenness, and perhaps, with more than the usual social spirit. Our own Colm Cox (Linnets answer to Charles Atlas) seems to have improved considerably since he converted to pen-holder. A fascinating game from the watching point of view was between Colm, leaning right over the table pushing pen-holder, and Alf Demain leaning right over the other end pushing in his own interpretation of sideways pen-holder. Alf eventually pushed Colm off the table in two straight. There was only one 'let' called—when Alf and Colm banged heads at a point some six inches above the centre of the net. I only hope that Alf and Colm will forgive me for this interpretation of their game.

I hope that I haven't wasted too much space in the "Digest". Any complaints, observations, or comments, containing not more than three swear words, should be sent to the Editor, who is under strict orders not to disclose my address (as I don't want the windows broken and this precaution is necessary). I will reply to all correspondence in a plain sealed envelope, bearing no advertising matter whatsoever.

WOMEN'S DIVISION.

—BY JUDY CRAFTER

ON behalf of the Committee and all people concerned, I would like to welcome you back at the start of the new season, which promises to be a very exciting one.

There have been numerous changes of personnel within the Women's division, and I am delighted to see that for the first time for some years we have a full division, and I'm told that *we even have two teams on the*

waiting list. A much happier state of affairs.

You will no doubt be interested in the changes within the teams during the close season. This may or may not help you to position your players in matches against the teams mentioned.

Crawfords have split up, with Mabel Francis settling down in France. This is also a great loss to the City team. Barbara Horsley has joined Bibby's and her sister, Joyce Bartone, has gone to Sandown

(I hear) and both will strengthen their new clubs. This leave Muriel Cox on her own, but she has been joined by Barbara Topping from the Pirates (who have none of last year's first team left).

Bibby's have a strong side in Barbar Cain (ex Bohs.), Reggie Royle, Barbara Horsley and Olga Eagle, and it is a pleasure to see that Margaret Corrigan and M. Welsh are playing once again.

Linnets have lost the entire first team of last season together with Cath. Churchill from their "A" team. They have also lost their most talented younger player Marion Lewis, who has gone to live in Brighton, but they have signed up Marie Lupton and Isla Russell, both of L.P.A.S. Marie showed her ability in the Liverpool Closed at the end of last season, when she reached the semi-final of the Ladies singles, losing narrowly to Barbara Cain. They have, in addition, signed up a number of promising new young players, aged from 15-20, and despite losing six girls can still field three teams. (I believe that one of them is ambidextrous, which will cause a bit of thought by her opponents--*Editor*).

Cadwa have the same team as last season with Judy Crafter, Betty Black, Pauline Lawrenson and Maureen Wilcock. Betty Black is playing better than ever, and has been picked for the Liverpool "A"

team for the opening matches.

Rafters have signed the daughter of Ted and Kay Rumjahn, Janet, whose 14th birthday falls in Nov. I am sure that playing in competitive matches will give her experience, which I hope, in the near future, will allow her to follow in her father's footsteps.

One of the new clubs in the division is Goodlass Wall, who have Rene Sturgeon, Beauclair's secretary, and everyone wishes the best of luck in the coming season.

Joyce Randall, ex-Bohs., is out of the game at the moment for family reasons, but she has signed a form for Crawfords, and we hope to see her back at the earliest date possible.

On behalf of all of the Women I extend a hearty welcome to those teams whose names we haven't heard before, such as Sandown (whose name is new, but who are all established players) and Goodlass Wall, who, apart from Rene, are all new to organised table tennis. To the latter especially do I stress that we all hope that you will enjoy yourselves in the League as much as the old-established members.

Finally I would like to say that it is with deep regret that we all found that Bohemians, for so long one of the League's strongest sides, have gone into voluntary liquidation—purely temporarily we all hope!

May you all have a good season, and the best team win.

120, Woolton Road,
Liverpool 19.

The Editor,
Table Tennis Digest.

Dear Sir,

During last season both the "Digest" and the "Liverpool Echo" were concerned with the problem of absenteeism and walk-overs. May I add my own comments on the present situation.

A secretary's life is complicated enough without the added complications of alterations to match nights and re-arranged fixtures. The League should realise that a handbook is worse than useless if it is out of date as soon as it leaves the Printers. It is all very well to say that you should alter your book every time a new leaflet is circulated, but people just don't. Instead, they hurriedly

consult the handbook and rush off to the wrong venue. Why not insist that, if you *submit* club details for publication then they should stand? If a secretary is uncertain of these details at the time of going to press, then he should be given a final date (say one month after the start of the season) to get sorted out. Then, send one circular to all clubs and let that be the end of it.

I am ashamed to admit that my own club suffered a 10-0 walkover, and a fine. This was bad enough, but to read that we had, therefore, denied somebody a game of table tennis was worse. When the *real* date for the fixture arrived we were all eager to play, but, a week previously, the Committee had awarded our opponents a walkover!

Yours sincerely,
D. W. MAHLEN (Mossley Hill).