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**TABLE
TENNIS
DIGEST**

Official Magazine

OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

TABLE DIGEST TENNIS

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— Editorial Board —

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Vol. 18

JANUARY, 1968

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Editorial

Although we are now well into 1968, I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all members on behalf of the Management Committee and myself a rather belated Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Now to business. I wonder how many members noticed that the figures in the Org. Secretary's Report in the November issue were a 1/- short? I must confess that I myself did not, and was very surprised when informed of it a week later. However, this brought me down to earth, as until that moment I had been congratulating myself on having succeeded in producing and distributing my first issue. Unfortunately for me one particular person did not miss it, and on ascertaining that the mistake was mine and not the Org. Secretary's, he proceeded to put the information to good use. On the subject of these figures, I was sure they would arouse some comment from members when they realised how much of our income is swallowed by the E.T.T.A. and the County. It seems, however, to be very true, that the only figures most players are interested in are their own average figures!

THAT NOM-DE-PLUME !!!

I have been taken to task regarding the non-de-plume used on the new column "Net Cords" but whatever the eventful outcome I stand by my decision that it is definitely suitable. I would like to make it clear, however, that this was entirely my idea and the writer of the column was in no way connected with it. However, to put matters right, and avoid embarrassment to my own colleagues on the Editorial Board, who have been asked about it, the column this issue will carry the writers name. I, personally, think the non-de-plume suits it better, and will therefore be used in future issues, assuming of course, that sufficient material is available. The column itself has aroused considerable comment, most of which has been favourable. Many people agree with the criticisms and comments passed and are in favour of this method of presentation. The end result has been two letters—one for, and one against—which is not a bad start, and we hope it will lead to more. The idea of this column is to stimulate interest by commenting on happenings, opinions, and criticisms, which are widespread in the Clubs, but never get into print. There will obviously be those who object for one reason or another, but I feel it is not a bad thing to know what others are thinking, and at the same time to be able to have a laugh at ourselves. What do you think?

The hardest part of this type of column is getting hold of the right material and we would appreciate any information about happenings in your own Club, or at matches which we can use. So, if you know of any thing useful, why not send it to me and I will pass it on for consideration.

Having played only three matches our ladies team have concluded one-half of their league programme, and have reached the zone final of the Rose Bowl. They have beaten Wirral and Preston, and drawn with Blackpool, but what their league position is I haven't a clue, since I've received no league tables this season as yet. Their next League match is at Crewe, on 11th January, and considering the strength of our team this year we should pick up two more points.

We reached the Zone Final of the Rose Bowl by means of a bye in the 1st Round and a walk-over conceded by Burnley in the 2nd, and now face Manchester at the English Electric on April 6th, at 3-0 p.m. We have an excellent chance of beating our oldest rivals, for while we have our strongest side for some years in Judy Crafter, Barbara Cain and Mabel Francis, the Manchester team is much weakened by the absence of Connie Moore, due to a serious operation. Kay Rumjahn is to captain the team in the unavoidable absence of Elizabeth Loughrey.

Our Ladies "A" Team, Janet Rumjahn, Pam Fidler and Jean Mackenzie have played 2, won 1 and lost 1. Following our 8-2 win over Bury, the girls lost 2-8 to Oldham, Janet winning the only 2 sets. Now, while we all like to see our teams win, the object of selecting these three youngsters was to give them experience in the inter-city field, and we cannot expect them to win all the time, for they are constantly meeting older and more experienced opponents. They will certainly enjoy more success after a little more match play in this company.

The Men's 1st Team have won only 3 points from their first four matches, having lost at Burnley 6-4, and 1-9 versus Bolton at home. Business commitments have prevented both Gordon Birch and Pete D'Arcy from playing in every match, but it seems likely that they will be available from now on. Arthur Taylor (Bath St.) has earned the 3rd place in the team, who now meet Hyde, at the Liverpool Y.M.C.A., on 5th January. On the 6th, the same team travels to Bolton for the Zone Final of the Wilmott Cup, where we hope for a better result than in the recent

League game. Neither Birch nor Taylor were playing on that occasion so anything can happen.

In the Norman Cook Trophy, after a bye in the 1st Round, our team of George and Roy Smith, Arthur Taylor and Judy Crafter beat Blackburn 7-3 and our opponents for the next Round (3) are not yet known.

The Men's "A" Team are having a rough time in Division 2 North, having played 4, won 1 and lost 3. However, with an easier second-half programme they should pick up a few more points yet. Dixie Dean now replaces Ian Burrows in the team. Ian wanted a "rest" having gone stale from 4½ years non-stop play. There is little doubt that he will be returning to the team in the future, but it is problematical "when."

The Youth team have 5 points from 5 games. In November, they won 10-0 versus Crewe, away, then lost 2-8 at home versus Mid-Cheshire, in a match where only Richard Heath won 2 sets. In December an 8-2 win over Illersmere Port (Heath 3, Dean 2, Wensley 2) was dimmed a little at Warrington, where the best we could achieve was a draw. Heath was unable to play, so Dave Watson (YMCA) made his first appearance of the season. Alan Dean and Watson each got 2, and Ian Wensley 1. Their next match is away versus Stockport, on Jan. 9th, and since Heath is still not available, the same three will do duty once again.

The unfortunate Juniors have played another of their very few matches, and lost to Burnley "A" 0-10, but the results of certain sets was much closer than such a sweeping score indicates. For instance, Alan Williams (Colonsay) lost one set 22-20, 29-22, 21-19, and you cannot get much closer than that. Ian Shaw and Alan Metcalfe justified their inclusion also, and the same side will meet Oldham, away, on 24th January.

Unfortunately Janet Rumjahn was unable to make the trip to Birmingham for the Inter-Zone match in the Bromfield Trophy, so an all Colonsay side of Pam Fidler, Jean Mackenzie and Christine Lavelle took on a very strong Birmingham team. Each won 1 set in a not

unexpected defeat, but they gave their opponents a few nasty moments before the issue was decided.

My thanks to Ken Jones and Vic Chesham for having taken over as Captains of the Men's 1st and "A" Teams respectively, more or less at a moments notice, and I must express my sincere and grateful thanks to Brian Leeson, who has taken so much

work off my shoulders while I have been ill. I don't think that any previous Match Secretary could have had more loyal support from both Captains and players that I have had this season, but Brian's efforts have gone beyond the "call of duty," a fact which I must acknowledge freely and publicly.

That "New" Service Rule

By K. Armson.

HOW IT IS ABUSED

Last season we saw the spread of those acrobatic services from below table top level. There was no doubt in most people's minds that the players making use of this type of service were bending the service rule to their own advantage and were making deliberate use of the fact that most players acting as umpires did not know where legality ended, and they were thus able to get away with far too much.

All credit then to the E.T.T.A. who have acted promptly and put into operation, for a trial period, a service rule whose wording for the most part is unmistakable. The result was an immediate cessation of the low level service, which has been to everyone's advantage. This is not to say that a player should not be able to obtain any advantage from his own service, far from it, but any advantage gained must be within the rules.

Alas, for this imaginative attempt to improve our game, for if ours is a sample of general practice, and I believe it is, the rule is already being abused. We, the players, in both our playing and umpiring capacity are to blame, and for why?

The main answer to that question is too many players don't wish to acknowledge that they know what the words "Palm of the hand" mean. Far too many place the ball on the fingers or serve with the fingers cupped around it. This immediately becomes a foul service as the umpire must be able to see it "visibly leave the palm." The way some players hold it you would need X-Ray eyes to see it at all.

Another part of the wording being abused is "projected near vertically upward" are players doing this? No. Those who previously rolled the ball onto the bat continue to do so and brave the umpire who dares to call them.

Similar abuse is being given to the wording "so that the ball is visible at all times to the umpire." Again, some players wave the bat around it momentarily obscuring it from the umpires view. A minor point this you may say, and so it is. Nevertheless, it is from such small beginnings that the spread of the low level service began.

Another version of this is the practice of some players to throw the ball almost to ceiling height. Depending on room conditions it would be difficult to say whether or not the umpire lost sight of the ball, even so, this type of service places an unjust strain on the umpire who has to follow the flight of the ball, and then when it is struck, switch his vision to the net. Try doing this yourself and you will see what I mean. There also arises the point that the servers opponent also loses sight of the ball giving an unfair advantage to the server. This could be stopped by adding to the wording "not to be thrown above the level of table lights."

HOW WE COULD OVERCOME THIS ABUSE !

The biggest obstacle to be overcome is on the umpiring side, for as we all know many of the players who act as umpires do so reluctantly and often unsuccessfully, thus there is very little chance of offenders being

pulled up. The players also are to blame for not accepting the umpires decision. They usually glare and pass remarks about the umpires own service and then proceed to repeat the offence. Result of all that, no further attempt by the umpire to insist on correct services. Why can't we just accept the umpires decision and get on with playing to the rules ?

I would like to see each team select one player with the ability to insist on the service rule being correctly obeyed and he would then act as umpire for all their matches. This, I well realise is throwing all the work onto one player, but once teams realised that they were not going to be allowed to get away with anything they would soon begin to respect

any team operating this system, and the system itself would soon catch on when its efficiency was realised. Few are the teams, especially those concerned in promotion or relegation, who can continue to lose sets because their own players refused to obey the umpire, with the subsequent loss of points.

I know there are a lot of snags, and I know its hard to find the players able to carry it out successfully. But, as I have already said, it only needs one club to make it work for it to catch on.

However, please don't look to me to start the ball rolling, as I regret to say, that like the rest of you, I am at heart a moral coward!!!

Sharp Practice— or Tactics ?

By Philip Reid.

To an outsider to your League, it would perhaps seem your Divisional write-ups would be of little or no interest. To most people this may well be true, but I personally read any table tennis magazine from cover to cover including every issue of the Liverpool magazine. I was then interested in two remarks which to me, an outsider appeared rather contradictory, though I may have got the wrong end of the stick. Jim Green, in his Division 1 notes (this is the November issue, by the way, perhaps I should have said that earlier says — “and secondly by some astute captaincy by Bath St. whose order was completely reversed” Gordon Nevins, writing on Division 2A, reports—“A. Horewood picking up two sets at the No. 4 spot—possibly suspension for two weeks would cut this sort of thing out.”

Now, reading those two reports there appears a conflict of opinion. are Clubs supposed to place their players in order of merit or are tactical manoeuvres permitted ? It may be of interest that up to the war, I'm told, teams in the Leicester & District League were of five players, but each player played the

five opponents a single game. After the war, teams of three were introduced and this is still the system used. With everyone playing there is no way of any player avoiding any of the opposition, which I suppose is one of the advantages, but it does have its disadvantages. One is that only three players can occupy a table in any one night and clubs with a big or good membership may only be able to give a limited number of players a game. The big disadvantage of the 3-A-Side teams, as I see it, is that one really good player can almost assure a point for his team. With his three and the doubles, his two team-mates need only pick-up one set between them to gain a point. In other words in the 3-A-Side, a player can play in 40% of the matches and in the the 5-A-side only 20%. The latter is clearly more dependent on team-work than on one player. Notwithstanding this however, I cannot ever see us in Leicester ever reverting to the 5-A-Side League. It is too well established. There are many small clubs who who would be hard pushed to register the requisite number of players—but—back to square one— is it sharp practice or tactics ?

Letters to the Editor

103, Norville Road,
Liverpool, 14.

Dear Sir,

I like "T.T. Ball's" comment about the track suit. I have never been able to understand why the wearing of a track suit was forbidden.

Let's face it, MOST of the Club Rooms, where matches have to be played are like refrigerators, and as a player plays only two games all evening, which could very well be the first at (dare I say) 7-30, and the second three hours later. I am sure most people can appreciate that it would take more than the usual knock-up before a player was warm enough to cast off any garment.

The track suit is designed for freedom of movement and is also all one colour (usually dark), which is more than can be said for some players long trousers and sweaters !!

Yours sincerely,

Joyce Barton (Mrs.).

:: :: :: ::

43-45, Lark Lane,
Liverpool, 17.

Dear Sir,

In reply to the comment regarding the Selection Committee in the November issue. As a humble member of that much maligned body I assure you that we do not favour the "Crystal Ball" method of team selection.

Rather would we use our own *secret* method—neither a hat, pin nor "OO-jah board"—and by our own devious devices have already selected, Gordon Birch, Peter D'Arcy, Frank Thomas, George Smith, Roy Smith and Arthur Taylor, to play in the Men's Team, and Dave Butterworth told me (himself) that he is not available on Fridays!

I, personally regret that the constant inclusion of Gordon Birch and Peter D'Arcy does not please "T.T. Ball." George and the others will, also, bow their heads in shame before his weighty criticism !! But, until "T.T. Ball" himself decides to register as a League player (cost 10/-), to join a club and to show us his own playing ability (no doubt of international standard) we must struggle along without him!

A member of the Editorial Board tells me that "T.T. Ball" is a non-deplume! By the tone of his notes I am

not surprised. It is much easier to write snide remarks from the cover of anonymity than it is to do so openly, under one's own name! But, of course, it takes a certain amount of courage to attack others in your own name! Nuff said!!!

Yours sincerely,

James R. Green

(Linnets and Aigburth T.T.C.).

Editor's Note—I have already covered the question of this non-deplume in my Editorial. The points regarding "T.T. Ball" will have to be answered in the next issue, as I have not disclosed the contents of this letter to him. One or two answers come to my mind, but as I must remain neutral I will leave "T.T. Ball" to answer.

I can, however, answer the implication, intended or otherwise, that I have allowed an un-registered player to pass critical comment on the League and its members. This is definitely not true, and I am surprised that the writer is so ready to assume that I would be prepared to do this, and that any such move would have the Editorial Boards consent! Nuff said!!

:: :: :: ::

Convent of Mercy High School,
Broughton Hall,
West Derby,
Liverpool, 12.

Dear Sir,

As many of your readers are no doubt aware, table tennis has now been introduced into some city schools. We, at Broughton Hall, have quite a flourishing table tennis club going now, and played several matches against other school clubs. However, to improve their game further, our girls really need to join senior clubs and play in the Liverpool League, as the girls of Holly Lodge do with Colonsay.

Our girls are aged between 12 and 16 years, and naturally their parents are not very keen for them to join a club a long way from their home. If any of your clubs would accept these girls as junior members and let us know, we would be very grateful, particularly clubs in the Huyton and West Derby areas.

Colonsay, have shown us what a benefit these young girls can be to a

club team, and if we can get sufficient numbers from the schools, we may even be able to start a Women's 2nd Division in the League.

Yours faithfully,

Annette P. Cross.

Editor's Note :- I believe these girls have been getting coached by one of our leading lights, so any club interested in signing some young players or who are interested in starting a Ladies' team can contact the writer at the above address. But, why not a Broughton Hall Club Team in the League?

:: :: ::

11a, Dorbett Drive,
Liverpool, 23.

Dear Sir,

I thought the selection of "Net Cord" comments were amusingly written and interesting. But I raised my eyebrows at the one re critics of the scoring and league set-up systems.

I agree that the scoring system has proved a success—I hoped it would from the outset, but to suggest the pyramid league has proved even remotely successful is putting a strain on the facts. It was a dismal failure the first season and was modified to the present inefficient and unfair "Twin Stream" get-up.

I can assure "T.T. Ball" that I have remained fiercely critical of this set-up and have tried repeatedly, but without success, to express my criticisms, which included some new suggestions for improving this ridiculous system.

The biggest and most glaring defect in our system is surely the unbalanced divisions—non-existent in straight divisions. The winners of an "A" Division for example are often

inferior to the runners-up in "B," but still get the medals and promotion. It sounds ridiculous, but it does happen.

Take this season's 4A Divisions for example:—English Electric "D" must be favourites for the title, medals and promotion. If we were in 4B, however, I doubt if we would get higher than fifth place. This is fine for us, but hardly fair to those stronger teams in 4B.

These teams (Bootle Y.M., Mossley Hill, Pirates, English Electric, etc.) should not be in such low divisions anyway. They should be together in a 4th or 5th Division in a straight set-up. Leaving their opponents with more equality in a 7th or 8th division.

Another effect of this can be seen in 2A and 2B. In 2A, Crawfords "A," play English Electric "A," but in 2B Crawfords first team meet only English Electric "B." Logically these fixtures should be reversed, but if this happened one division would be markedly stronger than the other. Despite the best efforts of the selection committee we have to live with these anomalies, as they are inherent in the faulty "Twin Stream" set-up.

To me it is as plain as a pike-staff that straight divisions are superior and when I read comments enthusing on the present set-up I wonder whether I am going mad or they are.

I put it to "T.T. Ball," or anyone else for that matter if you honestly believe this *pathetic* set-up is the best, then let's have some facts and figures. I'd love to be convinced.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Gordon

(A fierce Twin Stream
Critic).

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Net Cords

By John Molyneux.

Rumours about bribery in Table Tennis have been rife. Our reporter has gathered the facts, and fearlessly and without favour we print his findings that :

There is no Bribery in Table Tennis.

:: :: :: ::

I hear that Jim Green fails to agree with my previous observations on the selectors, as an ex-Editor he knows that the Editorial Board does not allow the printing of libellous material.

:: :: :: ::

Saw a First Division match recently, nine out of the ten players had an illegal service. At least three of these offenders are helping to coach young players. What hope do they have ?

:: :: :: ::

Talking of young players, it's very refreshing to see much older and well beaten opponents congratulating the youngsters with a smile. A pity then that some of these youngsters are following the fashions set by some of the more conceited players !

:: :: :: ::

Cadwa, look certain champions of Division 2A, as any team should be with Bill Crafter at No. 5 - a modest captain Bill.

:: :: :: ::

An excuse :- "This place is much warmer than ours, so the ball floats a lot more."

:: :: :: ::

Another Excuse :- "I'm not saying the room is small, but I never realised that I suffered from claustrophobia before."

:: :: :: ::

It appears that Eddie Birch made an attempt to muscle in on the well-known long playing record of Ted Mandaluff and Eddie Clein. He was contemptuously dismissed by Eddie Clein in a pathetic 55 minutes. Talk about sending a boy to do a man's job !

:: :: :: ::

Overhead at a club not very far from a railway station. "It's not the noise of the trains that bothers me, its the way the icicles rattle on the lightshades."

:: :: :: ::

Congratulations to Mossley Hill on a fine showing in their first Season in the 1st Division. Fellow newcomers English Electric aren't doing badly either, especially their No.'s 1 and 2, a couple of promising lads named Birch and D'Arcy, more will be heard of them !

Is our Editor scheming for a job in the Treasury ? It appears that at least he had advance information on the devaluation decision, as anybody who added up the breakdown of the registration fee could see. Or did he just lose one of the beads off his calculating machine ?

:: :: :: ::

Walk-overs are one of the curses of our game. Why not have a rule that offendings clubs must pay the expenses incurred by their opponents ? Especially as a large proportion of our players live outside Liverpool.

:: :: :: ::

A sign of the times is that young players are now saying that pimpled rubber bats spoil the game !

:: :: :: ::

Its good to hear that Roy Jones has decided to return home. After his most successful farewell outing, this surely calls for a welcome home party, with Roy being the guest this time ?

:: :: :: ::

Finally, our homeless nomads, St. Elizabeth's, have succeeded in finding shelter, appropriately enough with Trinity.

Around the Divisions

DIVISION 1.

By Jim Green.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Liverpool Y.M.	10	8	0	2	78
Eng. Electric	10	8	0	2	72
Wav. Labour	9	8	1	0	71
L'pool Y.M.	10	5	3	2	56
Bath St.	10	5	2	3	54
Rafters	10	5	4	1	48
Mossley Hill	9	3	3	3	47
Wav. Lab A	10	4	6	0	47
Beauclair	10	2	8	0	31
Linnets	8	1	7	0	26
Waterloo Park	9	1	8	0	26
Linnets A	9	0	8	1	14

The top of the Division has an aspect most unusual at this stage of the season, for customarily one can forecast the ultimate winners with a reasonable amount of accuracy, but the position is so tense between the three leading sides that only an inspired guess is likely to foretell the ultimate champions.

Examination of score-cards appears to show that the new system of "swopping the order" is one of the major contributory factors of the existing tension. When we find such players as Gordon Birch, Arthur Taylor and Peter Hurworth lurking around the tail end, then there is definitely something wrong, and the sooner that "order of merit" is brought back the better! Strangely, the leading teams agree with my views. They would prefer to play in order of strength, but like others, they know that to do so is to cut their own throats. But we are likely to

see many strange names in "red" figures in the seasons records, and even more uncommon ones among those in the 3-5 class!

However, this system does give many strange results, which have no relation to the various strengths of teams, and to forecast any final order would be utterly foolish. I still incline rather to the Y.M.C.A.'s chances for they have their strength more equally distributed.

Bath St. are having a good season, and Mossley Hill have quickly established themselves in this Division. Both teams have certain "strong men" to bear the brunt of the opposition, but are good teams overall. We all regret the losses Mossley Hill have sustained by reason of the emigration of Eddie Cooke, and the operation to Bob Hudson, which might keep him out for the rest of the season. I think I can speak for everyone connected with the division when I wish him a speedy recovery.

Linnets are having a thin time—Gordon Exell hasn't yet been able to turn out, Frank Thomas's injured arm has been slow in mending, and with Ian Burrows enforced lay-off, are feeling the pinch. But somehow they feel no fear of relegation as yet. But their "A" team seem sure bet for next years 2nd Division. It still seems unsure which team will be the other unlucky one, for the battle at the bottom is as tough as that at the top.

Here's wishing everyone all the best for 1968.

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DIVISION 2B.

By JERRY O'KEEFE

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool Y.M. B.	11	10	0	1	85
L.P.A.S.	12	8	2	2	75
Colonsay	10	8	1	1	71
Trinity	11	6	2	3	70
Crawfords	11	6	3	2	63
Beauclair A.	11	7	3	1	62
Eng. Elec. B.	10	5	3	2	56
Linnets B.	12	3	7	2	47
Sparta	9	3	5	1	43
St. Edward's	11	2	8	1	42
L'pool Jew. A.	10	3	6	1	38
Palmerston	12	1	9	2	36
University	9	2	7	0	34
Colonsay B.	11	1	9	1	28

Well, the league positions have sorted themselves out a little more as we approach the halfway point in the season. The young YMCA side have established a lead and look good enough to keep it. Colonsay are a good second with Trinity and Police not far behind. At the other end of the scale Colonsay 'B', University, Palmerston and Liverpool Jewish are holding up the rest, although University have some games in hand and should improve their position when they return from their Christmas break.

I understand the game between Sparta and Colonsay was quite a dust-up, in the verbal sense, with cries of "I'll report you to the league," etc., being flung about with gay abandon. However, as I have only heard one side of the story, I cannot really comment on the affair and I am sure it all ended happily in the bar afterwards!

Remaining with Sparta, I was pleased to find my old friend Terry Holloway, still a happy extrovert and playing quite a useful game of Table Tennis as well. I wonder why they call him the Bobby Charlton of

Table Tennis. Veteran A. Demain has the most unusual grip on a table tennis bat I have seen, he holds the bat horizontally by the edge of the blade. Most disconcerting to play against, especially when your best shots seem to be coming back almost before you have hit them.

Another "hot" game was that between St. Edwards and English Electric. About half-way through the match, one of the visitors (Eng. Elec.) noticed a lot of smoke coming from a cellar which houses the main fuse board and on investigating, found that the main fuses and the wood surrounding them were glowing red and just starting to ignite. Eventually four fire engines arrived and after all this the fire was put out with a small extinguisher reminiscent of an aerosol spray. Many thanks to our visitors for saving the club and for their professional advice regarding the electrical apparatus. The game as well as the fire was extinguished as we were left with no lights. There were four games still to be played so I wonder what happens now. Do we replay the whole match or just the four games outstanding?

Judging from the score cards, the instances of teams turning up short are few and far between this season which is to everyone's benefit. I see Sparta have sent in a walk-over for their match with Colonsay 'B'. I believe this was due to a mix-up over Colonsay's change of match night and involved another club also.

With regard to individual records I cannot really say accurately which players have the best percentages. However, I can find only one defeat for J. Hodges (Eng. Elec.) this to Mike Truman (Crawfords) who himself has lost very few. F. Bailey of the YMCA and I. Grundy of Colonsay must also have very good records.

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DIVISION 3A.

By EDDIE CAMERON

	F	W	L	D	Pts.
Vagabonds	12	7	1	4	78
Sefton	12	6	3	3	76
Waterloo Pk. A	12	7	2	3	75
Bath St. A.	9	9	0	0	73
Crawfords B.	12	7	3	2	72
L'pool Y.M. C.	11	7	1	3	68
Maghull	11	4	2	5	60
Cadwa A.	12	2	3	7	58
Knotty Ash	12	3	7	2	50
Colonsay C.	11	3	6	2	43
Beauclair B.	12	2	9	1	37
L'pool Jew. B.	12	0	8	4	36
C.F. Mott	10	1	8	1	33
L.Y.C.A.	10	2	7	1	31

I was wrong about Knotty Ash, I think I may be proved wrong about Liverpool Jewish, and again I may be wrong about Sefton General. I was right about Bath St. They are not likely to be seriously challenged and will romp home with the championship.

I was also right about the strength of the division, just look at the Hyde Cup, a single intruder from Div. 3B in the last eight. I am confident that by the time you read these notes Sefton will have rectified that and made it an exclusive 3A semi-final.

Knotty Ash had such a good season last year that my relegation forecast, on reflection, did appear to be a little hasty. I had seen them in the cup final completely overshadowed by Mossley Hill but made no allowance for nervous tension, and when the league position after four hard matches showed so little return I started to write them off. It was good then to find a team so refreshingly aggressive and so confident of holding their own. They do not profess to be budding champions this year, but make no mistake, this team will mature and will continue to climb up the league. I. Hogg, at No. 1, is the veteran and sheet anchor, not a particularly classic player but beware of underestimating his ability. Miss V. Lee, at No. 5, brings grace and charm into the team, and then proceeds to man-size smash hits accompanied by a running commentary to herself if one or two fall short of her standards. Murray, Blore and Braithwaite have a refreshing eagerness to play their game hard and to enjoy it. Here, I think,

is the prospect for the future as all three tighten up their game with the increased competition, he warned now, do not expect an easy passage in the second half of the season against Knotty Ash.

How about Liverpool Jewish? It seems Dave Cohen brought out his cheque book and signed on several players just after the start of the season which has resulted in a general strengthening of all teams. Our division gain Max Ratoff and D. Blake (ex Linnets), add to these one of the best players in the division, M. Synder, include J. Melia and E. Taylor at Nos. 4 and 5 and you have a team good enough to prove me wrong in my second relegation choice. Unfortunately, Blake has had a nasty accident on his motor bike, a broken collar bone I understand, and we all wish him a speedy recovery. M. Synder cannot play regularly and there is just a possibility of weakened teams keeping Liverpool Jewish well down in the league.

What Price Vagabonds?

The number two position in the league is developing into a great fight, at the moment Vagabonds have stolen a march on Sefton General but Liverpool Y.M. 'C' may well nip in, to lead both at the halfway stage.

I wonder why I did not think of Vagabonds first time? After all, I knew they had Doug Ridgway and Tommy Johnstone at Nos. 1 and 2, and that on their night they were as good as any in the division, but may be that was the reason. I had niggling doubts about Tommy Johnstone's consistency, he has proved me wrong and is crashing his way through opponents with a greater accuracy than ever before. Barton has lifted his game and increased his determination, whilst Martin and Lowey at Nos. 4 and 5 add a variety of styles to make Vagabonds one of the best prospects in the division. On their own table they are a better team still and having accounted for Sefton they will be visiting Bath St. full of confidence to wind up their first half of the season. They start the second half visiting Liverpool Y.M. 'C' and the result of these two matches could well settle the argument of Vagabond's challenge.

DIVISION 3B By Colin Stock.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Orrell	12	10	2	0	80
Bath St. B.	11	11	0	0	79
Wav. Lab. C.	12	8	2	2	75
Trinity A.	11	7	3	1	71
Coll. of Tech.	12	5	7	0	68
Eng. Elec. C.	11	8	3	0	67
Hilltop	12	6	4	2	64
Panto	11	4	4	3	57
Beauclair C.	12	4	6	2	55
Crawfords C.	10	3	5	2	49
St. Elizabeth's	11	2	9	0	39
L.P.A.S. B.	11	2	8	1	37
University B.	9	1	7	1	31
Linnets D.	11	0	11	0	8

A Keen Promotion Struggle.

Bath Street "B" have now emerged as clear favourites for promotion, with Wavertree Labour C, Trinity A, Orrell and English Electric C well in the running. There is no apparent weakness in the undefeated Bath Street's line up, and they have now defeated all their close rivals with each of their players winning consistently.

Bath Street's main rivals, as I see it, are Trinity A. After two early season defeats at the hands of Crawfords C and Bath Street, they have now picked themselves off the floor and have dropped only 13 points in their last six matches. Unlike Bath Street's solid team effort, the success of the Trinity side has been mainly due to the fine play of three players—A. Abbott, R. Bailey and John Hankin—in fact R. Bailey is still undefeated, although it seems strange that both Hankin and Bailey usually appear fairly low down in the order. The third successful member of the side, Abbott has won his sets the hard way at No. 1 or 2, and has only been beaten twice, going down in the third game to both Harry Dumbell (Bath St.) and Dave Berry (Beauclair).

Trinity had a great home win over Orrell by 8 sets to 2, although I doubt if the margin of victory would

have been so great had the match been played at Orrell. Abbott, Bailey and Hankin all scored doubles, with Law and Hulm chipping in with one each. Gerry Brint and Tony Morris were the only successful players for Orrell, who despite this defeat are still top of the league, having played a game more than Bath Street.

English Electric C are another side who have made a tremendous improvement after an uncertain start. Ken Black at No. 1 has proved to be their most consistent player, and in his last six matches has suffered only two defeats, these being to K. Chan (Coll. of Tech.) and G. Edmunds (St. Eliz.). Apart from K. Black, Bill Burness, playing most of his games at No. 3, and Abby Parker, playing mostly at No. 5, have the most impressive records.

An interesting position has developed at the bottom of the table, where four clubs are having a battle of their own, fighting to hold their Third Division status. Of these clubs, Linnets D's position is hopeless, but all credit to them for carrying on under difficult conditions. The other three teams—St. Elizabeth's, L. & B.P.A.S. "B" and University "B"—seem to be about equally matched, although the University side have habit of improving as the season progresses.

St. Elizabeth's are lucky to have the tall left-hander Geoff Edmunds in their side at No. 1, and from that position he has won nearly half of his teams sets on his own. He has shown that he is one of the most outstanding players in the Division, and has lost only one set so far, going down in the third game 21-18, to Hilltop's, Bobby Chew.

I notice that certain clubs, on arriving at away matches with only 4 players, have left the blank at No. 1, in case deliberately moving the regular No. 1 to No. 2. I realise that this is quite legal, but is it really necessary ?

DIVISION 4A

By Ken Armson.

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Eng. Elec. D.	9	9	0	0	78
Wav. Lab. D.	11	7	3	1	68
University C.	9	7	1	1	58
L.P.A.S. C.	9	6	3	0	52
Palmerston A.	9	5	4	0	47
Colonsay D.	8	5	2	1	46
Essemay	10	5	5	0	46
Knotty Ash B.	10	2	6	2	40
Bath St. D.	10	2	7	1	36
Rafters B.	9	2	6	1	36
St. Patrick's A.	9	2	7	0	29
Coll. of Tech. A	9	0	8	1	24

I am writing these notes myself as Alan Wych is away on holiday (those lucky schoolmasters). I have found it very enjoyable and will have "to have a go" at it myself next season, the Editor permitting.

The battle for the divisional title has already ended with English Electric "D" clear leaders with two games in hand and a 10-0 win over their nearest challengers, Wav. Labour "D." They are obviously far too strong for this Division, but this may be due to signings in their club, resulting in moves all round for this team could only manage 6th place last season. However, all credit to them for their fine performances and a regular turn out.

The runner-up spot is still very open with Wav. Labour "D", University "C" and Police "C" the main contenders, the last two having matches in hand over Wav. Labour. It looks like being a hard battle for this spot with University the likely winners.

College of Tech. "A" are obvious wooden spoonists and have received some very heavy defeats, but have continued to field a regular team in spite of this. St. Patrick's are also helping the Division, but have a couple of wins to their credit, including one over Wav. Labour 4-6. They arrived with only 4 players, plus I think, the only non-playing and non-registered secretary in the League. However, this does not detract from her capabilities, as on taking over this job she complied immediately with the rules, which is more than can be said for some secretaries.

The Labour Club were expecting an easy victory, but were soon put in their place and St. Patrick's left with two unexpected, but well deserved points. The Harding family have won most of their points and also seem to have been responsible for most of their walk-overs through playing short, of which there have been quite a few.

When Colonsay "D" made their annual pilgrimage to Diddyland they took with them their strongest side, determined no doubt to put the diddyites in their place. However, the diddymen refused to be overawed by this show of force and showing scant respect for some of their opponents reputations proceeded to pull off a draw, helped by a christmas gift from Colonsay of two walk-overs. Much I am sure to the chagrin of Colonsay's secretary, Pam Fidler, Jean Mackenzie and Ian Shaw dropped a set each.

W. Rowlandson at No. 2 had a great double for the diddymen beating Jean Mackenzie in two straightsets and I Shaw at 18 in the third. The star of the night was P. Pownall at No. 1, who beat P. Fidler in two straight sets, game 7 in the 2nd and just lost to J. Mackenzie, 21-18, 20-22, and 19-21. Well done the diddymen!!

Some notable achievements have been I Shaw a lone winner for Colonsay and Alan Wych for Essemay, both against English Elec., W. Ellard and Tom Gordon being their victims. P. Metcalf had a peculiar double, he won 21-0 against Knotty Ash but lost in two straight to R. Fletcher (St. Patrick's), an extremely good win this, as Phil was playing in the 1st Division last season.

We have M. Jones (Rafters) with a good record, A. Metcalf, P. Fleming and J. Barton (Wav. Labour), all with good records, and for the last two this is their first season in the League. Colonsay provide three more with Alan Williams already a member of the Junior team, and Ian Shaw and Robin Corrie, who are also giving a good account of themselves, these three are also having their first full season in the League. I think it is safe to say that one of these players will win a Junior Closed Championship in the next couple of years, the most likely contender being Alan Williams.

DIVISION 4B

By JACK LAMBERT

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Mossley Hill A.	10	9	0	1	81
Bootle Y.M.	9	8	0	1	77
Pirates	9	7	0	2	61
St. Edward's A.	11	6	5	0	60
Stanley Hse. A.	9	6	3	0	57
Bath St. C.	9	7	2	0	56
Knotty Ash A.	8	5	3	0	41
Eng. Elec. E.	10	2	7	1	38
Orrell A.	10	2	7	1	36
L.P.A.S. D.	9	2	7	0	33
Palatine	8	2	6	0	28
Lussac A.	11	1	10	0	17
Vagabonds A.	7	1	6	0	15

As I anticipated the upper and lower fourth have soon sorted themselves out which unfortunately show up in a number of 10-0 and 9-1's.

A very interesting clash for the in-between spot saw Knotty Ash pip St. Edward's 6-4, despite a Page double, Weight scoring the vital two for Knotty Ash. Double wins by Lil Upton and Welsh helped Orrell to a draw with English Electric, for whom Evans (not H. Jones, quoted as a Liverpool Junior in the last issue) scored a nice couple of wins.

Police broke their duck against Lussac who had a lone winner in Cheetem. Mossley Hill proved their top of the table class with 8-2 wins over close rivals Bath St. and Pirates, although the latter card was not a true test. Bootle at the same time were giving tin hats to a few of the lower fourth. Which of these two will win the league AND CUP?

Smith, of Stanley House made Bath St. struggle for a 6-4 win but Marsh and Barrow pulled them through. Woods beat Ietch in a ding-dong struggle 19-21, 24-22 and 21-19.

Rotherham of Vagabonds and Fullard of Police were both on top form in the draw between the two teams. Palatine (O'Brien 2) lost to Police (Wilkinson and Anderson 2 each) 6-4, and then beat Lussac (Murphy 2) by the same score, thanks to Sanders and Wade.

Woods played a captain's game for St. Edward's against English Electric beating Ashburner 22-24, 21-18, 22-20 to complete a doubles for himself and O'Hagan, and a 6-4 win for his team.

Even the cup draw has been unkind to the minnows, not one with a semi-final chance. All the big guns having avoided each other.

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DIVISION 5

By KEVIN BAKER

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Odyssey	8	7	0	1	64
Sandforth	8	7	1	0	62
W'loo Pk. B.	6	4	1	1	43
L.Y.C.A. A.	8	5	3	0	41
Sandforth A.	7	3	4	0	34
Maghull A.	8	2	6	0	31
C.F. Mott A.	7	3	4	0	25
Knotty Ash C.	7	1	6	0	24
Mossley Hill B.	5	2	3	0	20
L'pool Para.	6	0	6	0	6

Too Many Walk-Overs

We start off these notes and finish the first half of the season on a black note as far as walk-overs are concerned. C. F. Mott have contributed 20 points to thankful Sandforth and Mossley Hill 'B', not that they wanted to gain these points in this way. Liverpool Paraplegic have also donated 10 points to Sandforth and Waterloo Park 'B' had a long and gameless journey to LYCA 'A' just to receive a walk-over.

It seems that these teams are not familiar with Rule 20 in the handbook. In C. F. Mott's case they would be well advised to study this rule!

K. Wright of Odyssey cannot go wrong with his game in this division and D. Rigby also of Odyssey has the game of a player ready for the higher divisions.

Liverpool Paraplegic are having a bad time up to now losing all their

games to date, quite convincingly too! But with the determination of S. Jones and D. Lynch they managed to take two sets from Odyssey, B. Parkinson being their victim. Maghull too seem to be having a lean run, they have won only one game at the commencement of the season and lost the others to low points.

Odyssey are still sweeping aside all opposition, except for a notable draw with Waterloo Park 'B'. D. Rigby did not play for Odyssey, otherwise the score might have been different. D. Bridge (Waterloo Park) had hard luck losing 15 in the third to G. Tatersall of Odyssey in this tough draw.

Waterloo Park 'B' are making a good fight for promotion but judging from the score cards 30 of their points are from three more walk-overs! Any team can be high up the table on three walk-overs. Sandforth must also be close contenders for honours but at this stage of the season who can be sure. Their record also includes 20 points from walk-overs, but they have also been winning their other matches with high score lines.

The cup draw for the 1st round of the Stamp Cup seemed very predictable with Odyssey beating Sandforth 'A' quite easily and Sandforth likewise eliminated C. F. Mott 'A' for an easy canter into the next round.

The next round of the cup should, whichever way the draw goes, be a real classic with Odyssey and Sandforth having the upper hand.

WOMEN'S DIVISION.

By MABEL FRANCIS

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Crawfords	10	9	0	1	87
Palmerston	10	9	1	0	80
Colonsay	9	5	4	0	56
Cadwa	8	6	1	1	52
Rafters	9	5	3	1	52
Crawfords A.	8	4	3	1	50
Bibby's	7	2	5	0	29
Bath St.	7	3	4	0	27
Jinnets	8	2	6	0	26
Jinnets A.	7	2	5	0	22
Colonsay A.	9	0	9	0	14
C. F. Mott	5	0	5	0	3

C. F. Mott, still with a few more matches to catch up on, won their first three points from their fifth match (which includes a walk-over to Crawfords 'A') versus Colonsay 'A'. A. Castelino won her two, plus the doubles with J. Stark—this being their first set to extend to three games—a slight improvement is now beginning to show.

The bulk of Jinnets' 26 points have been won by Carol Flood and Joyce Appleton, the former having claimed the scalps of Elizabeth Loughrey, Joyce Randall and Milly Harris.

Colonsay are more than holding their own having beaten Bibby's 8-2, Linnet's 7-3 and held Cadwa to 4-6 and Rafters to 3-7. The 3 points they took off Palmerston were unfortunately walk-overs. Their match with Crawfords was a well fought one, only Jean Mackenzie was able to save them from the debacle of a 10-0 loss by beating Margaret Collins game 15 in the third. Pam Fidler must be considered unlucky losing so many games so narrowly in the third being—19 each to C. Flood, J. Reynolds and M. Francis, then—23 to E. Loughrey—really tough luck. They have fielded the same four players throughout to date, occasionally alternating their order. Having been brought up to a very good standard of competitive Table Tennis by some excellent coaching and obvious hours of practice they at present appear as carbon copies of each other. My own opinion is that they must now look for that something extra within themselves to impress their individuality and for even greater improvement. If this 1st team improves as much as they have done since last season and the 2nd team likewise the 1st—well next year we'll have a stampede on our hands.

The gap between the second and third team plus those close behind, shows clearly that the battle for top place is between Palmerston and Crawfords followed by a more keenly fought fight for third place between the following four teams. Rafters are now included in this group especially after being inundated 10-0 by both Palmerston and Crawfords.

When Cadwa played Palmerston both fielded their strongest sides and Palmerston won 7-3, they in turn were beaten similarly by Crawfords. The draw which resulted when Cadwa played Crawfords was a fair result, as each were without their No. 1's. Of the 20 points lost by Palmerston 6 were forfeited as walk-overs (due to 2 non-appearances). They would undoubtedly be less than 7 points behind had these not occurred and I am sure they will take better precautions for future matches.

Barbara Hayton — Horsley (ex L'pool and Crawfords) since moving to Newport has been giving a good account of herself in the table tennis world down there. At a recent tournament held to assess the Monmouthshire County ranking list she was credited with fifth place, but says she intends to better this having already helped to raise their standard of play.

DIVISION 2A

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Cadwa	10	10	0	0	88
Crawfords A	10	8	1	1	68
Stanley House	11	5	3	3	62
L'pool Jewish	12	4	5	3	62
Wav. Lab. B.	9	5	2	2	57
Eng. Elec. A.	10	6	4	0	54
Linacre	9	6	2	1	53
Rafters A.	11	4	5	2	50
Colonsay A.	9	3	5	1	47
University A.	10	3	6	1	39
Lussac	10	1	6	3	37
L.P.A.S. A.	10	1	8	1	28
Linnets C.	9	0	9	0	5

Notes not received in time for publication.