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**TABLE
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LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

TABLE DIGEST TENNIS

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No. 2.

Editorial

In Table Tennis, as in other sports, we are surrounded by rules which govern the structure of the league. Many of these rules are necessary to ensure smooth running of the league and also as a guidance to all members. I feel it is safe to say that prior to the last A.G.M. we did not have any unnecessary rules which penalised members unfairly. Alas, since that meeting this is no longer the case. For an addition was made to Cup Regulation 7, following an incident last season. I felt then that this was a stupid addition which unfairly penalised multi-team clubs, and I have been proved correct, as members of Mossley Hill will willingly confirm. Those who sponsored this addition claimed it would have no effect on Cup matches until the semi-final stages at least. Try telling that to Mossley Hill!

It is often necessary for a player to move into a higher team due to sickness, etc., for a period of time, but still turning out in cup matches for his own team. Under this addition to Cup Regulation 7, any player doing this is barred after only six such matches from his own teams cup ties. The complete absurdity of this rule is exposed by the fact that if you play in a higher team and are subsequently demoted you are barred from cup matches for your new team, even if you are not cup-tied, if you played six or more matches as a higher player. Just how silly and inane can we get?

It is every player's job to assist his club as a reserve whenever required provided he does not exceed his quota of 30 matches. That he should also be penalised by being barred from his team's cup games as well is certainly ridiculous.

I am sure that many clubs are unaware of the full implications of this rule, and feel that the sooner it is voted out the better it will be for everyone. Rules we must have, but it behoves us to see that they are sensible rules and not added to willy-nilly after every "little" incident!

WAKE UP, LADIES!

Are the ladies really interested in doing anything about improving the position in their division? It would appear not. I have not received a single letter on this subject and at a meeting arranged to discuss this matter with representatives from clubs with a team in the Women's division only two representatives, Joyce Randall and Elizabeth Loughrey, turned up. Could the real trouble lie in the fact that far too many women are getting regular matches in the mixed divisions and consider the Women's division should take second place? The outcome of this meeting was the arranging of extra matches but apparently no-one is interested in playing these as the Fixture Secretary has received no score cards to date!

Lancashire & Cheshire League

By J. R. Green

The Men's 1st team have won only 1 match from 5 played in Division 1 and are hanging around the bottom of the division. To ensure their keeping their status they must win two of the matches remaining, against Stockport and Blackpool at home and v. Preston away, but this is within their capacity and they should keep well clear of relegation. Strangely, during the same period they have won 4 cup matches and still figure in both the Wilmott Cup and Norman Cooke Trophy. In the Wilmott Cup we now meet Bolton on January 8th and in the Cooke Trophy we are away to Stockport on a date yet to be fixed.

We have not lost all these league matches due to bad play alone, for we've had quite a run of ill-luck also. Gordon Birch and Peter D'Arcy have both had to miss certain games for business reasons and Peter has had the added worry of having his wife in hospital. However, we hope that the results will improve during the last two months. The team against Bolton in the Cup will be Gordon Birch, Bruce Cain and George Smith. Pete D'Arcy will be away on business. Against Stockport the team selected is unchanged and this match will be played at Eng. Electric on January 25th.

Frank Bailey (YMCA) leaves Liverpool on January 14th to live in Swindon. This means that the 'A' team will need a replacement, and the team selected to do battle with Nelson on January 10th is Ted Mandaluff (YMCA), Trevor Owens (Wav. Lab.) and Roy Jones (YMCA). A formidable combination. To date this team has won 3 of the 4 matches played and this line-up is certainly no weaker than previously. Since Ted Mandaluff came into the side he has maintained an unbeaten record and we hope he will carry on in this fashion throughout the rest of the season.

The Ladies 1st team have played only one league match since the last 'Digest', beating Oldham 8-1 at home. Next they travelled to Manchester for the Zone final of the Rose Bowl, but their hopes were dashed by finding Susan Lisle of Warrington included in the Manchester team. This is quite legiti-

mate since Warrington do not enter a team in the Rose Bowl. But our girls were somewhat shattered to find such a strong combination playing for Manchester. Mabel Francis beat Mary Leigh again and won two of her sets, Barbara Cain won 1 and Joyce Randall none.

At this point I would like to pay tribute to Judy Crafter who retired from table tennis for the rest of the season after the Blackpool match. Since then she has become engaged and at present intends to get married next summer, after which she will live in Brighton. Her ability will be missed from our representative teams, of which she has been a mainstay for some years, and we can only wish her well in the future.

The Ladies 'A' team, composed of Janet Rumjahn, Jean Mackenzie and Pam Fidler, lost their only match since my last notes, v. Preston away, by 4 sets to 6. They also lost, playing as our Junior girls team v. Birmingham in the Bromfield Trophy 3 sets to 6. However the same trio will do duty for us v. Manchester Banks later on this month. Congratulations to Janet Rumjahn on her selection for Lanes. junior team v. Cumberland at Bolton on January 12th. May this be only the first of many future honours for her.

The Junior team also lost their only match during December at Warrington, 6-4. In addition they went out of the Carter Cup to Bolton, 6-3, in a game in which John Barton (Wav. Lab.) showed up well, winning two of his three sets. For the next few games Dave Crispin (Colonsay) will replace Alan Williams, his clubmate, and together John Barton and Michael Jones (Wav. Lab.) should form a strong trio.

The Youth team also feel the pinch at the loss of Frank Bailey, but a strong replacement is available in Dave Roberts (Wav. Lab.). The team has experienced very mixed fortunes over the first half of the season, and we hope for better things to come in the second half. For the next match v. Salford Youth, away, the team selected is Alan Dean (Linnetts), Dave Roberts (Wav. Lab.) and Ian Wensley (Colonsay).

From the Secretary's Desk

By John McKim

COUNTY TABLE TENNIS IN LIVERPOOL

After a break of some years County Table Tennis returns to Liverpool on March 15th. As part of the Bootle Centenary celebrations Lancashire 11 play Nottingham in a County Championship, Midland Division match, at St. George of England school, Fernhill Road, Bootle, commencing at 7-30 p.m. Tickets price 2/- can be obtained from me or at the door on March 15th. The Bootle Corporation have kindly put these premises at our disposal and I hope you will support this event, a good turn out would help considerably when we negotiate for further matches.

In the next issue of the "Digest" we shall be including the entry forms for the Liverpool Closed, which will be held on April 8th to 11th at New Heys School, the same venue as last year.

The costs of running a tournament increase year by year, the committee are doing everything possible to keep costs down but we look to you to put the income up by entering. Playing conditions and canteen facilities are excellent at this venue for a successful tournament, all we need is a good entry. One last request, help the Referee and his staff by sending your entry early and DON'T forget the stamped addressed envelope.

Whilst on the subject of tournaments, we are looking for an equipment officer to take charge of the erection and dismantling of lights, microphone, etc., at our two annual tournaments. If any member of the League would like to carry out this most important task, please contact Brian Leeson or myself.

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Mainly about Brighton . . .

By Philip Reid

Nice to receive the "Digest" again. I particularly enjoy reading 'Net Cords.' Exactly the same type of happenings go on in my own league which just goes to show that table tennis is the same the whole world over. In the Leicester and District League we have twin-stream divisions after the first. So do Wolverhampton. But beyond that I don't know of any more. At one time we used to have one Division 1, two Divisions 2s, then four each in the third and fourth (A, B, C, D). We brought it down to two of each and that seems about right.

The English Open should provide a feast of table tennis this season. It will be on February 27th and 28th and March 1st. I don't imagine there will be a very big contingent from Liverpool going, but for anyone thinking of going, just look at the list of teams entering—Austria, Czechoslovakia, Netherlands, Federal Germany, Rumania, Sweden, Yugoslavia and Russia. With the four home counties also expected to compete this brings the list up to no less than thirteen countries. This is going to call for some pretty slick organisation to complete the programme in less than three full days, but knowing those responsible, I have no doubt at all the tournament will measure up to its usual success. Of all the tournaments I have been to I have never been to one which equals Brighton (where the English Open is held) for sheer enjoyment.

There was snow on the ground in 1965 when the English Open was held, but inside the Dome was white-hot with excitement. Two personalities stood out there. Marta Luzova, then a 17 year-old 'unknown' was giving the crowd a tremendous treat of hitting against the dour Marie Alexandru and when the Czech girl won the joy of the crowd knew no bounds. For a table

tennis crowd to get so excited was in itself unusual. That they should be so excited about a Czech girl was quite remarkable. At these Finals, too, Eberhardt Scholer showed his worth. The attacking Rumanian, Glurguica was strongly fancied to retain his title, but the West German would have none of it. Defending magnificently, moving with grace and deceptive speed, he completely cut his opponent to pieces winning by scores of 8, 9 and 11. Scholer's temperament, sportsmanship, ability and general demeanour are admired wherever table tennis is played. Anyone seeing him at Brighton for the first time (should he be there, which I hope he will) will be in for a treat.

Probably the shock of the 1967 Championships was the defeat of Chester Barnes by the jovial Irishman, Jim Langan. On his day Langan is capable of beating almost anyone. On this occasion he won in three straight. Mary Wright's victory in the Ladies' Singles was another glorious achievement. In the Final she beat the Hungarian, Eva Koczian. The latter possesses a defence which matches with the best in the world, but on this occasion, Mary, hitting superbly down both wings, emerged a well-deserved victor. Last season's finals were not up to the usual standards, but one could not fail to be impressed by the sheer speed of Gomoskov's backhand which demoralised Hungarian left-hander Peter Roszas. Earlier his Russian compatriot had fell to Les Haslam, a West Indian, who has now qualified (and been capped) for England.

Yes . . . Brighton truly provides many pleasant memories — I wonder what big names will fall this season, what shock wins we shall see. Because if it lives up to its reputation, shocks there will be!

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Net Cords

By John Molyneux

On behalf of the readers of this magazine may I express my gratitude to the Fixture secretary for his explanation of the new League structure. However there is just one small point, why weren't the rules of the League observed and the leading team promoted? I had the impression that was the original question.

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We must really do something to sort out this dispute between the two 3rd divisions, all printable suggestions would be welcome, but I must warn you that a duel at dawn between Messrs. Cameron and Hankin has been vetoed on the grounds that we might be left without anyone to complain about late score-cards.

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Now that the Y.M.C.A. have a Ladies team, my own club cannot be left behind in this matter and any interested young ladies should send their photographs to me, care of the Editor.

:: :: :: :: :: ::

It's nice to know that Rafter's reputation of laying on the best refreshments in the League is still true. In a recent match they had suffered a burst in their water-pipes, not to be put off one of them sallied forth with a shovel and they obtained water by boiling snow. They laughed off the inconvenience saying, "it was only a snow-storm in a tea cup."

:: :: :: :: :: ::

I think it's about time we banned wooden bats, mainly on economic principles as you use up far too many balls in the course of a match with anyone using one of these instruments of torture. Further, how can anyone concentrate with the continual 'clonking' noise coming from the other side of the net, and the way the ball behaves! I wonder if the Y.M.C.A. keep a special supply of balls for the use of Messrs. Mandaluff, Jones and Johnston?

:: :: :: :: :: ::

It is unfortunate that there are those amongst us who do far more than bend the rules, I don't mean "technical" foul serves, I mean deliberate foul serves, deliberate acts of "gamesmanship" to put opponents off, doubtful bats, etc. We all know these players, why not ask them to change their habits or their club?

:: :: :: :: :: ::

A rumour, yet to be denied, that Apple are sending a talent scout to listen to Jimmy Clewitt's singing talents has been received with interest. However, the alternative that the Y.M. are considering signing Mary Hopkins to join Jimmy in the Mixed Doubles at the "Closed" is much more preferable!

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Does your club secretary irritate you? Does he nag, moan, threaten to resign at the drop of a hat? Does he constantly point out faults, rant about tea not made and washing up not done? Does he claim all the credit when 'his sides do well, moan when 'your' side loses? He doesn't? Well then brother, get rid of him, he can't be much use in that job.

:: :: :: :: :: ::

Finally, a word of praise for Jim Green (picked yourselves off the floor now). Recently the selectors had to drop a player from one of our city teams due to loss of form. Rather than just announcing the revised team and letting the player find out that way, Jim took the trouble to sit down and write to him expressing his thanks for past efforts and hoping that the player would soon regain his form and team place. I happen to know that this was very much appreciated by the player concerned. Good old Jim!

Schools Table Tennis

By Alan Wych (Hon. Sec. L'pool Schools' T. Assoc.)

As secretary of the L'pool Schools' Table Tennis Assoc. I am writing this article to inform all readers of the "Digest" of our efforts. We are affiliated to the Lancs. Schools' Table Tennis Assoc. and in turn, to the English Schools' Assoc. We have three main aims: (i) to promote, encourage and improve table tennis in our schools; (ii) to organise competitions at all levels for schools; (iii) to establish table tennis in our schools as part of the school curriculum.

Firstly, however, we must convince the Headteachers of our schools of the value of the game, and unfortunately we have met with some reluctance and indifference. We tell them it is a game unaffected by our winter weather, and also a game in which everyone can participate. It is interesting to note that the youngsters who usually shine at table tennis are those who are below average in other sports. We have in my own school a boy who suffers from a bone disease, and who consequently cannot participate in strenuous physical games. Table tennis is the ideal game for him and he plays very well.

We have two divisions with eight teams in each, and very shortly we

shall be holding our first full-scale coaching session.

A good grounding in the Schools' League provides ample preparation for the Senior League—The Liverpool and District. Excellent juniors like Dave Crispin, Pam Fidler, Jean Mackenzie, Jean Lancaster, Chris Lavelle, Michael Jones, Philip Topping, and until quite recently, Alan Williams and Ian Shaw, play in both leagues. We are very lucky in having Les French and Brian Leeson amongst the staff of our schools for both are qualified coaches. My own school is the first in the city to enter a side in the Liverpool and District under the name of ESSEMMAY.

Prominent citizens in Liverpool are taking an interest in our efforts for they can see the benefits, both financial and otherwise, and last season one of the "Digest" advertisers, Jack Sharp Ltd., presented us with a League Trophy. This was won by New Heys Comprehensive and league members will be able to see this trophy should the Closed Championships take place there again this season as it will be on show.

With such a keen interest in table tennis and strong Associations in Liverpool, we must surely be on top of the country very soon.

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Around the Divisions

Division 1.

By Jim Green

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool Y.M.	12	10	1	1	102
Eng. Elec.	12	11	0	1	101
Wav. Lab.	12	7	2	3	73
Beauclair	12	7	3	2	67
Rafters	11	5	4	2	57
L'pool Y.M. 'A'	10	5	3	2	53
Cadwa	11	5	5	1	51
Bath St.	11	4	6	1	51
Colonsay	11	2	5	4	46
Wav. Lab. 'A'	11	4	7	0	42
L'pool YM 'B'	12	1	9	2	40
Mossley Hill	10	1	6	3	38
Wav. Lab. 'B'	11	2	8	1	29
Linnets	7	1	5	1	19

Isn't it marvellous how one match can alter the top of the table situation? There were the YMCA pulling ahead, set by set, when they visited English Electric where they went down 7-3. This meant that the two teams came out of it with Eng. Elec. breathing down the YMCA's necks, and either side can now win the league.

I feel that "order of play" played a great part in Electric's victory, for while the Y.M. team lined up in their normal order, the Eng. Elec. line-up was far different from normal, with only Peter D'Arcy and Bruce Cain in their customary spots. Eric Youd was thrown to the wolves at No. 1 where he met Ron Jones and George Smith. He did take each of them to the third set, but he lost both, as must have been foreseen. Pete D'Arcy won his two, both very close in the 3rd—22-20 over Ron Jones, and 21-17 over Ted Mandaluff. Gordon Birch, who must surely be the best No. 3 in the league, beat both George Smith and Roy Jones fairly comfortably, and the comparative ease with which he did it must certainly have enhanced his claims to a higher position! Bruce Cain had a double victory over Ted Mandaluff (two straight) and Peter Turtle (16 in the 3rd), and Eddie Clein lost to Roy Jones and beat Peter Turtle, both in two straight.

The following week Wavertree Labour held the YMCA to a 5-all draw, and in their next match played another drawn match with Eng. Elec. Details of these two matches have not yet reached me, but these two results underline what Wav. Lab. *could* have done had they

really buckled down to it earlier. It could well have been a threesome at the top instead of a twosome, on the evidence of these two matches.

These three games have had such a bearing on the championship race that I make no apology for having filled these notes with them. It will mean more of the other teams next month. All the very best to everyone for 1969.

DIVISION 2.

By Graham Reid

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Waterloo Park	12	10	2	0	87
Trinity	12	8	2	2	84
Linacre	12	5	5	2	66
Eng. Elec. 'A'	9	8	0	1	65
Crawfords	11	8	3	0	65
Eng. Elec. 'B'	11	4	4	3	57
Colonsay 'A'	9	5	3	1	54
Sparta	9	3	4	2	47
Stanley House	10	2	6	2	43
University	9	3	4	2	41
Police	9	3	5	1	38
Crawfords 'A'	11	2	7	2	37
Rafters 'A'	10	0	10	0	16
Linnets 'A'	6	0	6	0	—

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.

English Electric 'A' having beaten Trinity and Waterloo Park both 6-4 and as yet still undefeated are perhaps slight favourites, but Fred Pheysey, the mainstay of the team, seems to have lost his touch, although still 100% he has been struggling a lot recently, perhaps like Rod McPherson the lack of Division 1 match play is badly missed.

The first obvious case of a team not playing in merit order was in the Eng. Elec. 'B' v. Trinity match, when Electric promoted Harry Evans from No. 5 to No. 1, where as expected, he lost both his sets but the Electric team won the match 7-3. This unexpected reverse must have upset the Trinity team for the following week they crushed Crawfords 9-1, and it was another Evans, this time Les Evans, who prevented a whitewash, beating A. Southall in straight games and only

losing to Eric Bretherton 24-22 in the third.

TWO DOWN! - TWO TO GO!

Down at the bottom of the division Rafter's 'A' and Linnets 'A' both appear to be doomed for relegation and any two of 4 teams, Crawfords 'A', Police, Stanley House and University could join them. The Police with their greater experience should manage to keep their present divisional status intact and I think they have surprised themselves by their lowly position, especially after finishing 4th in 2B last year ahead of Eng. Elec. 'B', Crawfords, University and Sparta. University, having won 4 and drawn one of their nine matches look a safe bet to escape relegation and appear to be gaining in experience and confidence as the season goes on. Crawfords 'A' are unfortunate in the fact that every other match is at home because they seem to do better away, perhaps the manufacturers have stopped making the pumps which kept Eddie Cameron on his feet for so many years! Stanley House have been having difficulty in fielding a full strength side and conceded two sets to the Police which gave the Police a 6-4 victory, and those two sets at the end of the season might mean the difference between Division 2 or Division 3 table tennis next season.

DIVISION 3A. By Eddie Cameron

Knotty Ash	.....	11	9	2	0	76
Wat. Park 'A'	.....	12	6	3	3	73
Bath St. 'A'	.....	11	8	3	0	70
Sefton	.....	11	7	1	3	68
Liverpool Jewish	.....	11	4	3	4	62
Police 'A'	.....	10	6	3	1	59
L'pool YM 'C'	.....	12	4	6	2	59
Vagabonds	.....	11	4	6	1	49
Maghull	.....	10	4	4	2	48
Crawfords 'B'	.....	11	3	8	0	45
Cadwa 'A'	.....	10	4	5	1	43
University 'A'	.....	8	1	6	1	22
Coll. of Tech.	.....	10	0	9	1	16

I was wrong in my choice of prospective champions apparently, almost everyone has hastened to tell me that the title is destined for Knotty Ash. It seems that after the first few matches they imported a top-liner, good enough for a No. 1 but to play at No. 3. So, if you all say so, I stand corrected and acknowledge your choice—Knotty Ash for champions.

It is queer the way some clubs go,

ambition and the will to win often appears to take over the running of clubs. Bohemians was one, the stars came, success came, but what went? Was it club spirit? Or was it just a chance that the laws of the club were changed restricting membership to full club members only? English Electric took over the role of "star" collectors and are riding high. To me, English Electric, the old Eng. Elec., starts in the 'A' team, but of course there are considerable advantages to be gained from having these top-liners in the club with the benefit of coaching down the line. Thinking of these things aloud the other day I heard the suggestions once again, "Why not a 1st division just for the experts?" Four up and four down is no good I am told and yet very few would give up the chance of a crack in Division 1 even for one season. I would like to see a separate 1st division for quite another reason. I believe the best table tennis team is one of four players, with two singles and a game of doubles for all, this has constantly been opposed in the past by experts who were worried about the lack of space in some clubrooms.

The Hyde Cup promises to be one of the most interesting competitions for sometime, we in Div. 3A like to eliminate our top challengers for the championships, helps to spread the honours around. True to tradition we have lost Knotty Ash, Bath St. and Sefton, in addition to last season's winners, Waterloo Park. We have Cadwa 'A' and Liverpool Jewish our main standard bearers but, and I hate to say this, I have a sneaking feeling that we may have lost our main chances of lifting the trophy this year because there are a couple of useful challengers hanging around from "that other lot" Colonsay 'B' and Wav. Lab. 'C'.

Cadwa 'A' are perhaps the most intriguing team in our division, last year they finished well down in the league whilst always promising better things. This season they are at it again, currently they are third from bottom and yet they can beat Trinity, second from top of our neighbours 3B, and I understand that Mr. Hankin says that Trinity are a very good team. Cadwa have probably improved their team compared with last season—Ken Westhead is still No. 1 and skipper and still enjoying his game, but when I saw him he was not quite as devastating

with his forehead drive, no, that's wrong, he was as devastating but less frequently. He and I both think left-handed players should be barred, that is when we play each other of course. Don Davies at No. 2 is a fine stroke player and is capable of beating the best and Ron Craddock playing down should be winning a lot more than he has so far. The two imports, Val Lee and Ian Blore, from Knotty Ash are strong enough, but there it is—results count and Cadwa's are not so good, so far—maybe they are getting ready for a storming second half, and of course a good cup run!

Finally, I had a nasty little note from the Fixture Secretary (I hate him) saying "if your division is so good why have six of the teams played less matches than they should have played by now, or don't they send their cards in either? Come to think of it, I could not give a reasonable answer, can you? Let us prove to the Fixture Secretary that 3A are on the ball even if all those other divisions don't care!

DIVISION 3B.

By Colin Stock

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Colonsay 'B'	10	9	1	0	74
Trinity 'A'	9	7	2	0	58
Eng. Elec. 'C'	10	5	3	2	57
Bath St. 'B'	10	4	4	2	53
Wav. Lab. 'C'	9	4	4	1	49
Beauclair 'A'	10	5	3	2	49
St. Edward's	9	3	3	3	48
Hilltop	9	4	3	2	47
Panto	9	2	5	2	39
L'pool Jewish 'A'	9	2	6	1	35
Orrell	8	2	4	2	34
Palmerston	10	0	9	1	17

The pattern of the division is now emerging very clearly. Colonsay 'B' are forging ahead with Trinity 'A' in close pursuit. In the clash between these two teams, Colonsay won by 6 games to 4. Although I have no details of this game apart from the score-card, I can see from this that Temple made one of his rare appearances for Trinity winning his two by beating Spencer and Gavin, and John Hankin won his usual two, playing at No. 4. Colonsay's six sets came from Riding who won two, and Spencer, Sanders, Gavin and Guy who won one each. As this would appear to be the strongest team which Trinity can field it would

seem that this Colonsay combination is the strongest in the division and I predict that they will be comfortable champions at the end of the season.

English Electric and Bath St. 'B' who are at present third and fourth respectively in the division, fought out a draw at the Eng. Elec. Six of the games went to three, Glyn Jones and Albert Parker winning two each for the home club and Harry Barlow and Les Crossley two each for Bath St. Barrow and Parker are both proving difficult to beat this season, possibly because of their "awkward" styles. A clash between them would probably fill the Empire during the Pantomime season.

Panto are not having a great deal of success although any match against them is guaranteed to be one of the most enjoyable of the season. It seems strange to face a Panto side without Bill Cornthwaite or Ron Fowler as opponents. Ron Fowler has been seriously ill this season and I'm sure that all members of the division would like to join me in wishing him a speedy recovery.

STILL IN REVERSE.

Palmerston are still propping up the rest of the division, their best result to date being a draw with L'pool Jewish. The only player to win both his sets in this match was Eric Dorfman of Jewish who beat Telfer and Craine. It is not so long ago that Palmerston won promotion from the fourth to the second division in two seasons. As far as I can see the only member remaining of that team is Barry Alexander who used to win consistently at No. 3 in his second division days. I am not sure whether this means that the divisions are getting stronger or that Barry is getting older. Perhaps he will let me know when we play against him later in the season.

Finally, a mention for Hilltop who have had some good results in the last few weeks. They have beaten W'tree Labour 7-3 and Orrell 6-4, drawn with St. Edward's and narrowly lost to Colonsay 6-4. In all these matches that model of consistency Bobby Chew won both his sets. There aren't many steadier players in this division or, dare I say it in Eddie Camerons hearing, perhaps even in Division 3A as well!

DIVISION 4A.

By Ken Armson

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Colonsay 'D'	10	7	1	2	70
Eng. Elec. 'D'	10	6	2	2	64
L'pool Jewish 'B'	9	7	1	1	63
Colonsay 'C'	10	6	2	2	61
Police 'C'	9	6	2	1	60
Wav. Lab. 'D'	8	6	2	0	54
L.Y.C.A.	9	5	2	2	54
Beauclair 'B'	12	3	9	0	43
Knotty Ash 'B'	10	2	6	2	42
Essemmay	9	4	5	0	39
Coll. of Tech. 'A'	9	2	6	1	30
Rafters 'B'	11	2	9	0	28
Bath St. 'D'	9	0	9	0	21

I am starting off these notes on the relegation issue as a change from the usual practice of discussing the front-runners first. This is mainly due to the fact that I have heard, in a round-about way, that my mention of Rafters for relegation has upset Alan Malthouse (Rafters). This is understandable as since our last issue they have trebled their points total and climbed above Bath St. 'D'. These two teams meet this week and I should imagine that this will be a real "Cup-tie" type match. As they both meet again in the final match of the season we could possibly have to wait until then before this issue is settled. The main reason for Rafters increase in points has been the form shown by Brian Jennings who has collected a good 50% of their points in Nov. and Dec. and has recorded several good wins in doing so. On four occasions when they have lost 9-1 he has been the lone winner for his team. The present points system favours those teams who are prepared to fight for every set and if ALL of Rafters team are prepared to pull their weight as Brian is doing then they could well prove me wrong. However, there is a hard road ahead of them and their only consolation is that Brian need only get them away from bottom position at the end of the season for them to avoid the drop!

I was far more mistaken about College of Technology for they are doing well, mainly as a result of a real team effort. They have defeated those beneath them and have picked up useful sets against stronger teams, including four off L'pool Jewish. They also appear to be trying to outdo Eng. Elec. in players used. To-date the total for both is 12. Quite a large

number for less than half the season!

The pace at the top of the table has not slackened and very little separates the top seven teams. No team can be sure of their results when playing teams opposing them for promotion and all continue to drop sets to teams in the lower half of the table.

Police suffered their first defeat of the season at the hands, surprisingly enough, of Colonsay 'C'. A very good win for them and one which was no doubt warmly appreciated by their own 'D' team. The L'pool Jewish strengthened their claim with an extremely good win over Colonsay 'D' 6-4. In this match Dave Crispin (Colonsay) suffered his first double defeat of the season to Dave Blake and Eddie Johnson. I think Dave Blake must be the best No. 1 in the division and he is picking up plenty of points for the Jewish. The L'pool Jewish are going really well and I have a feeling that they already consider that the title will be theirs. But I am sure that the other contenders also feel the same way about their chances.

An interesting point about Dave Crispin who has turned out regularly and very successfully at No. 1 for Colonsay 'D' and has also done well for the 'C' team. Although a junior he is not a member of the L'pool team and yet Alan Williams, who plays at No. 2 for the same team is. I wonder why?

I suppose that I will eventually have to stick my neck out and name the top two, but so close is the position that for the time being I will be content to say it will be between L'pool Jewish, Colonsay 'D', Police 'C' and Wav. Lab. 'D', with the first two looking the most likely at present. But these four will be hotly pursued by L.Y.C.A., Eng. Elec. and Colonsay 'C' who are all capable of upsetting the others, so small is the difference between them in playing strength.

A sidelight on posting of score-cards, whereas several clubs try to deliver without postage charges and others make do with a 4d. stamp, Essemmay send their score-cards first class with a 5d. stamp! There must be a moral in that somewhere.

When playing L.Y.C.A. things could get very confused if the opposing captain nominated L.Y.C.A. players by

name, for with three Hughes in the team you are liable to find yourself with the wrong opponent, or worse still, faced with all three at once!

DIVISION 4B. By Jack Lambert

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Bootle YMCA	10	9	1	0	86
Odyssey	8	8	0	0	66
Police 'B'	10	6	3	1	61
Mossley Hill 'A'	9	6	2	1	50
St. Edwards 'A'	8	5	3	0	42
University 'B'	7	3	3	1	32
Bath St. 'C'	8	2	5	1	31
Police 'D'	7	2	4	1	29
Eng. Elec. 'E'	9	0	8	1	22
Orrell 'A'	7	1	6	0	21
Knotty Ash 'A'	9	1	8	0	20

The Bootle Y.M. v. Odyssey match turned out to be quite a clash as I had forecast, the latter gaining six valuable sets thanks mainly to an invaluable double from Illeston, although Ken Foulkes might consider himself and his team a little unfortunate to lose to him 21-19, 19-21, 22-24, after winning his first set against Platt, who in turn had beaten Ball 19 in the third. Rigby also beat Whorton 24-22 in the third so Y.M. might reasonably have thought a draw a more just result. As I consider both teams have a distinct home advantage I feel this was a good win.

Two good wins by McLeod of Police 'B' over O'Sullivan 15-21, 21-12, 27-25 and Godby failed to save his team from a surprise 6-4 defeat by Mossley Hill. Roberts clinched the game with an excellent double, but Susan Lufts 17 and 13 win over Garnett was outstanding.

Letch has now returned to strengthen the Bath St. team but Cunningham steals the limelight, in particular his double against Bootle who won 7-3.

Bottom of the table clashes have their moments—Eng. Elec. v. Orrell (Wright 2) was a top class game in every way. In the battle of the ladies, Janet Roberts beat Lil Upton and lost to Illidge 17 in the third. Games such as this are far more enjoyable to winners than such games as Odyssey 10, Eng. Elec. 0; E.E. 1, Bootle YM 9. I think this season's single 2nd division will bring positive proof that the thin-stream has outlived its stay.

University (Coles 2) did well to draw against Police 'B' (McLeod 2) and despite O'Sullivan and Pratt doubles Police 'D' forced a draw. Haigh and Dunning of Knotty Ash saved their side from a whitewash against Police 'B' and Mossley Hill respectively.

St. Edward's are fielding a healthy looking side lately with Townsend and Smith making a welcome return to the game but it was old faithful Theo Kelly who made the Police 'B' (Jeffrey 2) fight for their 6 sets. Crayston of University scored doubles when his side lost 6-4 to Mossley Hill (Godby and Williams 2 each) and when they beat Eng. Elec. 7-3.

DIVISION 5A. By Keith Fitzsimons

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Sandforth	10	8	1	1	80
Wat. Park 'B'	10	8	0	2	69
Sandforth 'A'	10	7	3	0	66
Bootle YM 'A'	10	5	3	2	61
Maghull 'A'	10	6	3	1	56
Police 'E'	11	7	4	0	55
Palatine	8	5	3	0	45
Vagabonds	9	2	7	0	36
LYCA 'A'	10	2	8	0	33
S. Katharine's	6	4	2	0	32
Cadwa 'B'	7	2	5	0	31
Trinity 'B'	8	0	8	0	15
Mossley Hill 'B'	7	0	7	0	8

I was sitting back in my chair reflecting on my last "epic" happy in the knowledge that someone else would be hard at work writing these notes this month, when it happened. The phone rang at work and when I lifted the receiver a voice growled down "Is that you?" I said "Yes," there being nobody else about at the time and the voice went on—"Go and get the score cards for 5A and have the notes delivered to me tonight." By this last remark I gathered that it was our worthy editor asking me in his usual polite fashion to write the notes for 5A again. After a few well chosen words of discussion I agreed, so here we go again.

On looking through Sandforth's scores I noticed to my surprise that amongst the 10-0s and 9-1s they have been chalking up was one which showed a 6-4 defeat by Bootle Y.M. A very good win this by Bootle, the main reason

for it being double wins by R. Lomax and T. Jones who gave K. Jones of Sandforth his first defeat of the season. This defeat did not seem to upset the Sandforth team very much for they won their next three matches 9-1, 10-1, 10-0, and K. Jones went back into his normal routine of winning 2 set. As far as I can see this is his only defeat so far, so well done, Tom Jones!

In the battle for honours Sandforth are leading the way and it looks now as if they will stay there, but the real battle is for 2nd place, now narrowed down to two, Waterloo Park 'B' and Sandforth 'A'. I am going to stick my neck out and say Waterloo Park will finish in 2nd place. They have a good No. 1 in D. Olsen, who so far has only dropped one set to D. Wildblood and the rest of the team win sets very consistently. They are undefeated, having won 8 and drawn 2, a record of which they can feel justly proud. I cannot really see this team finishing any lower than 2nd, although Sandforth 'A' will be doing their best to prove me wrong.

In my last notes I mentioned being surprised that Police 'E' had given away a walk-over; well now I am even more surprised for they have done it again, this time to Bootle Y.M. I hope no Police team will give away a 3rd walk-over for this would mean expulsion for the 'E' team, and this division being already one short can ill-afford to lose another team.

S. Kath's Coll. have made a reasonable start to their first season in the league. Their best results being victories over Bootle Y.M. and Police.

At the bottom it is still Mossley Hill 'B' and Trinity 'B' propping up the rest, but as they turn up every week to play they must enjoy the game and that's the main thing. I have noticed that while the bottom teams turn up with a full team every week the top teams occasionally turn out a player short. Sandforth have done it once, Waterloo Park once and Bootle Y.M. twice. This could have a bearing on who finishes where at the end of the season if it turns out to be a close finish. Those sets dropped by walk-overs might make the difference between 1st and 2nd places, and you will kick yourself if you lose the title because one player forgot about the match, or didn't tell anybody that he could not play.

DIVISION 5B.

By Theo Mills

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Sparta	8	8	0	0	75
University 'C'	7	4	3	0	50
Colonsay 'E'	6	5	1	0	47
L'pool Pirates	5	4	1	0	33
Nat. Giro	6	4	2	0	32
All Saints	7	3	4	0	29
Bradstones	7	2	5	0	23
Odyssey 'A'	6	1	5	0	20
Vagabonds 'B'	8	1	7	0	19
Cheshire Lines	5	1	4	0	14

As I forecast in my last notes, Sparta 'A' have taken a commanding lead at the top of the table and there is a clear indication that they intend to stay there. This is understandable. They are a very strong team and are working their way to promotion, in a manner which, I hope, will inspire others. Encouragement is what this division needs.

Colonsay 'E' have dropped from first to third position and University 'C' have leapt from sixth to second place. How amazing! Liverpool Pirates are now in 4th position and Nat. Giro have gone up to 5th.

This is a ridiculous situation. With the exception of Sparta, Giro and a few others, the rest have not won their positions on merit. In fact, the League table is not a true representation of the games actually played.

Defaulting teams are my main target in these notes because I detest "walk-overs" and feel sure that as sportsmen none of us, defaulters or claimants, get any real satisfaction from this.

I shall take University "C" as an example. They've played seven so far, winning only four, yet totalling fifty points and in second place. Is this usual? I say not. One may argue that the three games which they lost were close ones, compared with maximum points for those won. Unfortunately I don't see it that way. They lost one game to Sparta but, and this is important, they collected twenty points from Vagabonds 'A' and All Saints by "walk-overs."

Do not think I am 'getting at' University—quite the contrary—my aim is to bring to light the ugly figure which we have allowed to creep into this newly created division. Some teams, to my mind, are either finding

it too difficult to put out a regular side or, maybe, lack of interest and/or time might be the reason.

This is a major problem and my advice to Vagabonds, who unfortunately may be out of the League, and All Saints, also a defaulter, is to get re-organised and come out fighting. The organisers did their share, so let us do ours.

One last word to University. You have yet to play your first match against Nat. Giro. This match, scheduled to have been played since last September, was postponed several times to facilitate your unfortunate circumstances. It is hoped you can do better now.

Finally, a last plea to all players. Would you please turn up on time.

WOMEN'S DIVISION.

By Joyce Randall

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Crawfords	7	7	0	0	60
Cadwa	7	5	2	0	54
Rafters	5	4	1	0	41
Colonsay	7	3	4	0	35
Crawfords 'A'	7	3	4	0	35
L'pool YM	4	4	0	0	32
Colonsay 'A'	6	1	5	0	8
Vagabonds	6	0	6	0	3
Linnets	4	0	4	0	2

WOMENS EXTRA

Arranged at the special request of the Ladies—alas not a score card received.

Happy New Year to you all, hope 1969 is a prosperous one.

Two clubs have had 'walk-overs' so far—Rafters, when Colonsay 'A' failed to arrive, and Crawfords when Linnets failed to appear. Crawfords 'A' were also unlucky against Linnets, the latter only fielding two players, Marion Green and Eileen Harrison. Vagabonds only, turned up with 3 players at Rafters, S. Gunn failing to show up. Depressing isn't it?

The Cadwa v. YMCA match proved to be up to the usual standard of entertainment—and table tennis, of course. Pauline Lawrenson has taken the bull by the horns and bought herself a NEW bat in the shape of the old-fashioned 'Barna.' After I had played her I couldn't help wondering what would it be like if we all reverted back to our original weapons—those of us who could remember them, that is.

J. Mackenzie and P. Fidler (Colonsay) won the only two sets in their match against Crawfords, Jean beating Muriel and Pam beating Mabel. K. Myerscough (Vags.) did well to beat C. Lavelle (Colonsay) when their clubs met, the score being 9-1 for Colonsay.

Rafters forced Crawfords to a draw in their cup match, Janet Rumjahn beating Mabel. It must have been a very interesting and exciting match all round. However, in the replay at Crawfords, Rafters went down 9-1. They must have felt somewhat deflated having come so close in the first match. Never mind, girls—chin up, chest out and tails in—there's always next year (we hope).

The management committee have agreed to bring the 'Don Foulis' handicap trophy out of retirement, so we will have this tournament to look forward to. To elaborate—each lady a handicapped according to her ability, and one game of 31 up is played, on the knock-out system. The final is the best of 3, still 31 up. I hope EVERY-ONE will enter, and I can promise everyone will enjoy it very much.

TWO NEWCOMERS LOOK AT

DIVISION 5.

By Keith Hufferdine and
Tony Arthur

Since we are writing from the point of view of newcomers to this League we feel it would be of interest to all members of the League to put forward our first impressions upon entry. Having had no previous experience of play in this League we were surprised to find that the standard was so high for such a seemingly low division.

From the teams we have met it seems that the level of play throughout the division is fairly consistent and we feel that with a little inspiration the lower teams could achieve a standard on a par with that of the teams in the running for promotion. While we're on the subject, the teams which seem to have built up the biggest reputations are the two Sandforth teams and Waterloo Park 'B' as is evidenced by the League table.

Another notable characteristic of this division is the tendency on the part of the majority of players towards

defensive mode of play, so will all teams quickly change to an attacking game so that our "plonkers" can beat you . . . please!

At a time when the 'Japanese' reversed bat is commonly used throughout the world there seems to be an unusual number of ordinary bog-standard pimple rubber bats—let's hope Santa Claus was kind this year.

It may be of interest to some clubs

that a table of a colour other than green is within the rules. S. Kath's College made enquiries about this and have now acquired a purple table which is the College colour. Perhaps next season there will be a move away from the traditional green. Unfortunately the 2nd issue is not published until late in January so we must wish all members of the League a belated Happy New Year.

SOME MORE NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Bootle Y.M.—To get into the 3rd division—or else.

All electricians or other handy blokes—To volunteer for the job of Equipment Officer in the League to assist at Tournaments, etc.

Arthur Upton—To carefully vet all the applicants and select the most promising.

Gordon Birch—Not to make unkind remarks about his team-mates in the score book.

Everybody—To accept Table Tennis for what it is, just a game, that's all, just a game!

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