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**TABLE
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DIGEST**

Official Magazine

OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

TABLE DIGEST TENNIS

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Vol. 20

NOVEMBER, 1969

No. 1

Editorial

Although we started off the season with no changes in our rules or set-up the close season has not been void of events which have affected us. Most serious was the illness of our Chairman who suffered a serious heart attack and although he is now well on the road to recovery he has had, much to his regret, I am sure, had to give up playing. Besides being unable to Chair some of the Leagues meetings Arthur was also unable to carry out the many varied jobs he does in the service of our League and table tennis in general. The decision to award him the "Stamp Award of Merit" is one that I am sure will be welcomed by those of you who are aware of the vast amount of his time which our Chairman gives to our game both locally and nationally.

Another casualty, although in a different way, was "Dunbar", for Jack Pattison, whose nom-de-plume this was, has now "hung up" his pen after many years of writing about our League and many will miss his comments in our local paper. This job has now been undertaken by Ken Jones and although the article now has no writer's name to it I am sure that for a long time to come it will still be thought of as "Dunbar's" column. Jack has served table tennis for more years than most of us can remember and was the first Editor of the "Digest", a post which he held for many years and he was mainly responsible for making it the success it is today. We wish him a long and happy retirement and trust that we will still be seeing him at matches. To Ken Jones, we wish success, in his unenviable job of stepping into another man's shoes, never an easy task.

The question of the use of yellow balls is under consideration and recommendations on this may soon be forthcoming. This could be a great improvement to our game for, as many organisations and industries have already discovered, yellow is a colour which shows up very clearly under most conditions. This is of particular importance when playing in a league in which conditions vary so much in many clubs. Although its reception, if the go ahead is given, may be cool at first it should not take long for its value to be recognised. One of the strongest complaints when using the traditional white ball is that it is easy to lose sight of, this will not be the case when using a yellow ball. Although its use could possibly be restricted at first to tournaments it would soon be made available for general use when its possibilities are confirmed in competitive play.

We are continually searching for material to interest you, improve the magazine and keep you in touch with all aspects of table tennis. In this issue we have an article on the use of your money in a easily understood form, two articles on the new Graded Status for Open Tournaments and one on our Points System. We hope they may provoke some comment from you and, as always, ask for your letters. The more the better.

Should anyone like to try their hand at writing an article for the magazine will be only too pleased to print it, if it is found suitable.

From the Secretary's Desk

By John McKim

A NEW LOOK FOR TABLE TENNIS

We open a new season with a welcome to our only new members, Old Swan. We hope they will be with us for many years and enjoy their table tennis. They join our league at a time when table tennis in England is endeavouring to change its image and take what many of us consider its rightful place alongside other major sports.

Two main facets of this change are sponsorship and higher value cash prizes in open tournaments. Many of you will have already read about the sponsorship agreement with Coca Cola Bottlers Ltd. (if not you should buy "Table Tennis News"). The ETTA under this scheme will receive £5,000 this season, which is a trial or pilot season, and then £10,000 per year for the next 3 years, leading us to the World Championships, which will be held in England in 1973.

Prize limits for tournaments was increased by the ITTF to £100, mainly due to pressure from the ETTA, initially, however, the maximum prize value will be £25 at Open tournaments in England. Liverpool will present the maximum amount to the Merseyside Open Men's Singles winner, and we are hoping to obtain our own sponsorship to enable us to do this without running at a loss.

Graded Tournaments will, I have the feeling, be very well covered elsewhere in this issue, I will simply reinforce the Committee's appeal for assistance from any league member interested, and in particular bring to your notice that we are still looking for an Equipment Officer.

I opened this article by welcoming a new club, and close it with our good wishes to one which has worked long and hard in the service of table tennis in Liverpool, but has now retired. I refer to Mr. Jack Pattison, who under the name of "Dunbar" has kept you informed in the *Liverpool Echo* for many years. In addition, Jack was for many years Editor of this "Digest" and was a member of the Committee as Youth Representative. All members will wish him well in his retirement and will, I hope, give every assistance to his successor Mr. Ken Jones of Bohemians.

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Lancashire & Cheshire League

By Alec Davidson

The season was opened by the Men's 1st team with a comfortable away win, 8-2, against Mid-Cheshire and the following Friday saw four of our six teams in action.

Manchester 'A' was one of the three teams to visit us and they were beaten 8-2 by the wooden bats of Ted Mandaluff and Roy Jones, ably assisted by Trevor Owens. For their second engagement the 'A' team travelled to Blackburn and were again victorious to the tune of 7-3 against Blackburn 'A'.

Playing at home against Warrington the Ladies 'A' team also won 8-2 whilst the Youth Team triumphed against Wirral at Wavertree Labour by 9 sets to 1.

Our first set-back came at Chester where the Juniors lost to a team which included Ian Johns, but I hear that although Ian is eligible to play for his County as a junior he is over-age for the Lancs. & Cheshire League, and the match will have to be replayed. Here Dave Crispin and Diane Williams won one set each.

The Ladies 1st team suffered from a disastrous mix-up in the transport arrangements made for their away match at Preston. As a result they were left stranded in Liverpool and did not fulfil the fixture. In their next match they met the current champions Blackpool at Crawfords and lost 7-3.

In Cup matches, two of our teams, the Ladies and the Girls, drew byes, whilst the other two drew away fixtures. The Men's 1st team of Tony Clayton, Gordon Birch and Pete D'Arcy travel to Blackburn in the Wilmott Cup and in the Carter

Cup the Junior Boys travel to Stockport. The results of these matches should be in the "Stop-press news."

For the benefit of members wishing to see our teams in Lancs. & Ches. League matches, here is a list of home venues. I know the non-playing captains and the teams will be glad of your support.

Men's 1st

Venue: English Electric

Men's "A"

Venue: Beauclair

Ladies' "A"

Venue: Police

Youth

Venue: Wavertree Labour

Junior

Venue: Colonsay

Fixtures for December and early January are:

1st Team

12th and 19th December

v. Bolton at Manchester

10th January 1970

v. Hyde

Men's "A"

9th January 1970

v. Preston

Ladies "A"

12th December v. Oldham

At County level, John Barton and Diane Williams (Wavertree Labour and Colonsay) were chosen to play for Lancashire Juniors v. Mid-Ches. Although they did not meet with much success they acquitted themselves very well. Playing together they lost their mixed doubles, John also lost his singles, but Diane teamed up with Susan Lisle to win the Women's doubles.

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Graded Tournaments

By Philip Reid

Increasing the maximum prize money payable to winners in tournaments brings with it all sorts of other points, and clearly one of the first objectives of the ETTA was to select the tournaments with the best conditions etc., and set them apart.

The tournaments so selected would receive special benefits. The ETTA Selection Committee would send, at their expense, 4 men and 4 women out of the International Squad and they would additionally assist with sponsorship by negotiating with sponsors for prize money.

The increase in prize money has been handled carefully, and I think, wisely by the ETTA. Any tournament may this season give prizes up to £25 without permission but any prize between £25 and £100 (the maximum) may only be awarded with the permission of the National Council.

Graded tournaments will operate from the start of 1970-71 season, and already the Tournaments Committee are at work sifting information and attending tournaments to decide which shall be granted this status. Six or eight is the likely number to be selected, and twice that number of tournaments have applied for grading. Obviously, some tournament organisers are going to be disappointed, but clearly the number must be very limited.

What will be demanded of a Graded Tournament? First, the playing regulations must conform with those laid down by National Council, courts shall be separated by surrounds and adequate announcement facilities shall be available. Hot meals shall be obtainable. The playing schedule shall be timed and

displayed in the hall. As with the English Open and other big tournaments, players shall be notified of the times they will be required to play. Players will be allowed a rest between sets, never to be required to play sets consecutively. The maximum number of entries will be determined by allowing at least 17 minutes per set. Prizes will be given to winners and runners-up of all events and to the losing semi-finalists in the Men's Singles. A separate admission charge shall be made for each session and for the Finals (which shall commence not later than 7-30 p.m. in a properly arranged arena). A duplicated programme of events will be available for the finals and scoring machines will be used at the finals. Qualified umpires shall officiate at all games throughout the tournament.

These then, sound a pretty formidable list of stipulations, but it is obvious they will go a long way towards bringing exciting tournaments of a high quality presentation and top class play. Naturally, none of the best players will want to miss out on these events if they can help it and there should be a good spectator appeal at such events.

Teething troubles there are bound to be and in the light of experience various ideas may need to be altered.

But it is a step in the right direction. Will Liverpool qualify for a Graded Tournament? Nobody can tell yet. But the Tournaments Committee are sure to have a lengthy meeting before making any recommendations to National Council.

Wish them luck in their exacting task because they will certainly need it.

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By John Molyneux

Welcome back to all my regular readers, and I hope both of you enjoy the column this season.

:: :: :: ::

In the first match that Odyssey have lost since entering the League one of their opponents was continually on his hands and knees tying his pumps. The bloke he was playing bore this with great fortitude and tactfully advised him to buy a pair of slip-ones. Actually, he was just trying to undo the knots three young ladies had got him into at the Youth Trials the preceding Saturday.

:: :: :: ::

Once more the 5th Division Cup does not "merit" a mention in the Diary of Events in the Handbook. Could the Management Committee be trying to "Stamp" it out?

:: :: :: ::

A remarkable example of "double-think" has come to my notice. Last season Knotty Ash, for various reasons, found themselves unable to raise a team for their vital promotion game with Bath St. Naturally they requested a postponement. Bath St. refused and claimed a 10-0 walk-over, which was fair enough, rules are rules. However at the start of this season Bath St. had similar troubles for their 1st Division visit to English Electric and, surprise, surprise, they too requested a postponement, it was granted. All credit to English Electric for their sporting gesture, but none at all to Bath St.

:: :: :: ::

I hear that there is a certain gentleman in the 5th Division who is going around complaining that the lights at certain well-known clubs are too bright. It's the first time I've heard people complain that they lost because they could see the ball too well!

:: :: :: ::

Well, it had to come, the last great bastion of male domination has fallen, Wavertree Labour have signed on two girls from Colonsay. Could these be the latest victims of John Barton, the "Georgie Best" of Table Tennis?

:: :: :: ::

What are our League arrangers up to? They've placed the three strongest relegated sides from Division 2 plus the two strongest promoted sides from Division 4 into Division 3B. Poor Eddie Cameron, how can he justify his claim that 3A is stronger now? I bet he tries, though.

:: :: :: ::

The danger of relying on out-of-town players has been brought home to Colonsay and Cadwa. One can only admire those loyal members who have soldiered on in the lower divisions to accommodate these imported "stars" and now find themselves in the 1st Division. Good luck to them!

:: :: :: ::

Elsewhere in the magazine there is an article suggesting a new method of points scoring, despite the fact that the author just happens to be my team captain, I can heartily recommend it. Look at it, think about it, you might even like it.

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With the arrival of Tony Clayton, even our selectors should be able to choose a Men's 1st team which nobody can complain about. What a pity!

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I see congratulations are in order for Eddie Clein, as he managed to "push" his way on to the local council. Well done, Eddie, I hope you "chop" your political opponents into little pieces.

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I've just received the sad news that Tim McCoy, secretary of Panto, has contracted a serious illness. I'm sure we all wish him a speedy recovery.

How your Money goes

By Don Cameron

Although the League's Statement of affairs are distributed at the Annual General Meeting it is doubtful if many members actually see these, so for all those who would like to know what happens to their 10/- registration fee, here is a brief statement which I have tried to make interesting as well as informative.

The League receives its income from :

Fees from each club	£109
Players Registration Fees	380
Cup Fees	19
Fines (I'm sorry to say)	19
Interest from the Bank and Sundry	19
TOTAL from League	£546

We were also fortunate in making profits on :

the "Closed" Championships	28
and on the "Open"	4
also a profit for selling tickets for the ETTA draw	14

So our TOTAL INCOME was £592

And this is how we spent it :

On running the League, printing, postages, telephones and general expenses	£160
Printing of Handbook	69
Affiliation Fees paid to the ETTA and LTTA	96
Medals and Cups for League champions and Cup winners	62
The cost of keeping our six City teams, travelling expenses to matches supplying balls and shirts	45
Sundry items including Insurance	14
The cost of printing and posting our magazine less	£72
we recovered from our advertisers	133
Our TOTAL EXPENSES were	£579

We, therefore, spent within our income and had a surplus of 13
£592

This looks very satisfactory, but you will notice that if our Tournaments were run at a loss (as they sometimes are) and we didn't receive our share of the ETTA draw profit we would find it difficult to live within our Income.

Fortunately for the League we were able, years ago, to build up quite a reserve of cash and that is why we have been able to keep our fees pegged and absorb the losses that we have had over the past few years. It does mean, however, that we cannot spend quite as much as we would like on say, prizes, league and cup medals and training schemes.

I hope that these figures prove interesting and if anyone would like to comment we would be only too pleased to hear from them.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I have just returned from the 1969 League AGM and find myself disgusted with the Meeting. I hear all around me moans and complaints of team fiddles; 10 points for a win instead of 2 and people not turning up for matches. At the AGM before this I heard the same complaints. I think it's about time we, the players in the League, stopped moaning and took action.

We played in the League with a 2 points for a win system and had some fiddles, with 3 good players in a team you could put them at 3, 4 and 5 and hope to win 6 games or 5 and get a win or a draw, but this was the only fiddle. Now, in our existing system, with only 1 or 2 good players you can fiddle to win 4, 3, 2 or even 1 point. The answer can only be, change back to the old system. We would not be guessing, we know from past experience which is the better system.

Another way of stopping the fiddles and cutting down the amount of people who do not turn up is change the number of players in a team. Three players per team is the perfect answer, it is impossible to fiddle a 3 man team (each man plays each man), also, if a player does not turn up the team loses 3 sets, which means they have to win 5 out of six sets to win the match.

I realise the above idea would be impractical for some clubs who would not have enough nights to accommodate all their teams, so I would like to suggest 4 man teams, playing 8 singles and 2 doubles games (this would also give you less chance to fiddle), it would also mean if one man did not turn up a team would lose 3 sets leaving them to win 6 out of 7 for a win. It would also give players 3 games in one night (no

more going on at 7-30 for your first game and waiting until 10-15 for your second).

While we are about it, let's change the structure of the divisions and return to the old straight eight divisions, and give players in the lower divisions a more even game. If a league goes from 1 to 2, or 3, or 8 in divisions, it can only work out more even. If you are worried about the years it would take a good team to work its way to the top divisions; the Management Committee have the right to promote any team up to the higher divisions.

Above are listed some of the changes we could make to our League; please talk about them in your club, make your secretary come to the next AGM and vote on these changes. Let him know your feelings. Let action be your key word, not words; make this League of ours move on to better things and not stagnate or plod on in its old weary, old fashioned way. We are one of the very few leagues in the country with 5 man teams. County and International matches are not played with 5 man teams, what's good enough for Internationals and other leagues throughout the country must be good enough for LIVERPOOL!

W. A. SILL (Eng. Elec.).

: : : : :

Dear Sir,

A number of teams have had difficulty in finding our new premises. To assist future visiting teams may I point out that we play in the former Civil Defence Headquarters. These premises are situated in the North Yard, which is in College Rd. approximately 100 yards north of the Alexander Hall.

Yours sincerely,

BRIAN CUNNINGHAM,
Hon. Sec., Bath St. T.T.C.

The Merseyside Open

A GRADED TOURNAMENT ?

By Brian Leeson

The first Graded Tournaments will be held in the 1970-71 season and in preparation for this, the ETTA has invited all Tournament Organisers, who consider their venues to reach the required standards, to apply for Graded Status. The idea is to create a number of highly organised Super-Tournaments around the country and they will be clear of all other Table Tennis events to enable every top ranking player to participate.

The Liverpool League has decided to apply for the honour of Graded status to be conferred on the Merseyside Open. This means an official will attend from the ETTA to assess whether the standards at that tournament comply with the standards for Graded Tournaments. If they do comply, the Liverpool League may be invited to organise a Graded Tournament for the following season.

I believe that elsewhere in this magazine Philip Reid has already outlined the required standards in his article, so there is no need for me to repeat them. However, I must say that the Committee is reasonably confident that we can reach these exacting standards, but only with careful preparation and MUCH HELP from members of our League.

This season more tournaments are offering money prizes for their main events as this seems to be one way of bringing about a change in the attitude of those who regard Table Tennis as a minor sport. Major sports, it is argued, have cash prizes. Why not Table Tennis? At the Nissen Invitation Tournament on October 17th, the winner received £100.

It will be some time, I think, before the Merseyside Open can offer £100 as its top prize, but in order to compete with other major tournaments, we must offer cash prizes at our next occasion, even if at first we

record a loss of revenue. For example, at the Birmingham Open in Nov. the Men's winner receives £25, the runner-up £10, the Women's winner £8, runner-up £4, and so on, in every event. The total prize money exceeds £90, and then there remains the other costs to be paid, hire of playing premises, hire of tables and nets, dozens of balls, etc., etc. This is the problem we are faced with. Can we afford this amount of money to compete with others and keep our annual view of the country's leading players?

Where is all this money coming from? Of course, the first thing is the raising of the entry fee. To enter the Men's Singles at Birmingham costs you 10/-. To enter the Lancs. Open next January will cost you, I believe, at least 7/6d. In addition to the raising of their entry fees, however, all tournament organisers are endeavouring to obtain sponsors to donate money, in return for which, they will be given advertising time and space at the tournament. This is obviously the way it must be done, unless a League decides it can afford to splash upwards of £100 on its annual major event.

Usually we have made a slight profit at our Tournaments, but it seems that this season we must be prepared to accept a substantial loss, unless financial help is forthcoming. Can you help? Do you know a potential sponsor? Have you any other money-making ideas? Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have. We are all anxious that the Merseyside Open maintains its position amongst the leading tournaments of the country and that the keen followers of the game on Merseyside can continue to see the country's leading players for many years to come.

A Change for the better

By Ken Chambers

A few seasons ago the League changed its system of scoring from a "points for a win" basis to a "point a set" system to reward overall consistency and to preserve interest to the last set of each match. It is obvious, however, from the number of complaints heard last season throughout the League that there is a widespread feeling that this system has not been as successful as had been hoped.

The trouble is that too much can be gained or lost through "silly" sets being dropped as a result of sudden illness, match night mistakes, a player's loss of form in a match, etc. Half-a-dozen sets lost like this can virtually finish a team's participation in the championship race from early in the season.

A serious side-effect of the system is that "fiddling" is encouraged by the undue emphasis on individual sets as opposed to the match result. The point regarding this scramble for points at any cost has been made recently in the "Digest" (i.e. players being deprived of good match practice with disastrous results when representing the City in the Lancs. and Ches. League.

Last season John Hankin suggested that a remedy might be to register a player's position for the whole season. One of the major defects with this

idea is the trouble which would be involved in re-ranking every time a player has temporary loss of "form." Also, where there is a clash of styles between players in opposing teams, "fiddling" becomes an acceptable tactic PROVIDED that the aim is to WIN and not merely to "cheat" the other side out of an odd set which morally they deserve.

Probably the biggest failure of the existing system is that the old system frequently gave far more interest in the last sets since they often decided whether a team took all the spoils, or none. The general attitude now is that there is little difference between winning or losing 6-4.

In short, therefore, we need a new scoring system which combines the merits of the previous system but eliminates the defects.

The obvious solution is to place more emphasis on WINNING matches BUT to reward overall consistency at the same time.

A simple adjustment to the present system would be to add a 10 point "bonus" for a win and 5 points for a draw.

An alternative system (which is easier to calculate) would be to adopt a "points for a win or draw" system again and add a "bonus" point for every 10 sets scored.

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Around the Divisions

Division 1. By Wally Allanson

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool YM	6	6	0	0	57
Eng. Elec.	5	5	0	0	43
W'tree Lab.	5	5	0	0	38
L'pool YM 'A'	6	4	2	0	36
Rafters	6	2	2	2	30
Colonsay	6	3	3	0	29
W'tree Lab. 'A'	6	2	3	1	28
Eng. Elec. 'A'	6	3	3	0	26
Mossley Hill	5	2	1	2	25
Beauclair	5	1	3	1	24
W'tree Lab. 'B'	6	2	4	0	22
Waterloo Pk.	5	1	4	0	17
Bath St.	5	0	5	0	9
Cadwa	6	0	6	0	6

Once again our season is under way and the League is assuming much the same pattern as before, with L'pool YM and English Electric leading the way and W'tree Labour looking the only team capable of extending either of these two. At the other end of the table one must sympathise with Cadwa in losing all five of last year's team, and respect the courage and determination of their present players, but initial results would suggest that the club was ill-advised to maintain a team in this division.

New blood is always refreshing and players of the calibre of Tony Clayton, ranked No. 11 in England, and Brian Sarkinson and John Mason from Blackpool, are particularly welcome. It's a pity that they were all persuaded to join the three strongest clubs, as this greater concentration of strength can only lead to a diminishing competitive interest for the remainder, but this is one of the hazards of our present system. Another newcomer who is making his mark is young John McNee (W'tree Lab.). He hasn't won many to date, but has come close on a number of occasions, notably against Eddie Clein, and his results should improve with experience. Of the promoted teams Eng. Elec. 'A' started remarkably well in winning three out of the first four played, but Waterloo Sark found the going a little tougher, although they were unfortunate in having to face the Y.M. in their first match.

It was interesting to note that both W'tree Lab. 'A' and 'B' teams took points from their 1st team and although failing in their bid, Eng. Elec. 'A' did their utmost to do likewise against their seniors, even to the extent of "fiddling" their order. It now remains to be seen if the Y.M. second string adopt the same attitude!

The Rafters team gives the appearance of going on forever undisturbed, but a recent emergency saw the welcome return of Ted Rumjahn to league table-tennis, whilst another player to make a re-appearance after a long absence was K. Sandlebury of Mossley Hill.

Another pleasing feature has been the attempt to improve playing conditions. Bath St. have achieved this by moving to new premises, and Eng. Elec. and W'tree Lab. have acquired new tables. In this respect the W'tree players are to be particularly congratulated in raising all the necessary cash without any help from their parent club. Although it would be too much to hope that many other clubs could follow their example, it is something which might well be encouraged, for the dearth of good playing surfaces in our league is hardly conducive to a high standard of play.

Division 2. By Keith Fitzsimmons

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Linnets	6	6	0	0	54
Trinity	6	4	1	1	41
Colonsay 'A'	6	4	2	0	39
Knotty Ash	6	3	1	2	35
Police	6	3	1	2	34
Linacre	6	2	3	1	30
Colonsay 'B'	5	3	2	0	26
Crawfords	6	2	2	2	24
Sparta	5	2	3	0	22
Trinity 'A'	6	0	5	1	20
L'pool YM 'B'	5	2	3	0	18
University	4	1	3	0	17
W'loo Pk. 'A'	5	1	3	1	17
Eng. Elec. 'B'	4	0	4	0	3

Why is it that all divisional writers welcome you to a new season? As far as I am concerned the new season is not the least bit welcome since it always comes just as my golf

handicap is down a couple of strokes or my lawn tennis is improving. However, since it has arrived I can say to those of you who looked forward to it, welcome, and to those of you, who, like myself, would rather play golf or some other sport, there is only another seven months to bat hanging up time.

Very often you find a team determined to show all and sundry that they are the best team in the division. This season we have Linnets trying their hand, and very successfully too, as they have only dropped 5 sets after the first 4 matches. Last season they were relegated from the 1st division after a stay of many years and now, after signing two new players from Blackburn, they are making a great effort to get back there. Frank Thomas is still with them and playing as well as ever as I found out in the Linnets-Knotty Ash match, when, playing at No. 2 he beat myself with embarrassing ease and Bob Eden 21/15 in the third after a very hard fought game. This match had promised to be a close one but in fact was just the opposite and Linnets finished easy 8-2 winners.

Amongst the challengers for promotion are likely to be the Police. They have Reg Gray and Don Gauld at 1 and 2 and since last season have added B. McLeod at No. 3 and he will strengthen the side a great deal. In the first 3 matches they have drawn with Knotty Ash and Crawfords and beaten Eng. Elec. 'B' with McLeod winning 6 out of 6.

Trinity just failed by 4 sets to come second last season and they must have fancied their chance to make it this season. Well, I think it is going to be the same as last season—they won't quite make it. They still manage to do well against good teams but occasionally fall by the wayside when playing teams they should, on paper, beat, as a 7-3 defeat by Colonsay 'B' would indicate. However, it is early days yet and there is plenty of time to make up lost sets.

Now for the predictions, which will probably turn out anything but right. At the top of the league we will find Linnets. They have a very useful set of players and, providing they are available every week, I don't foresee much difficulty in their finishing in 1st place. Second

place could go to any one of 5 teams, Trinity, Linacre, Crawfords, Knotty Ash and the Police must all have a good chance, but, as I am very biased, I will say Knotty Ash will finish 2nd. Mind you, from where I am sitting I can't say anything else, two of the teams are behind me with hatchets in their hands. Now on to the bottom of the division, and here it will be a battle for who stays up. Firm favourites to go down are Eng. Elec. 'B' and Trinity 'A' with the other two places going to any two of 4 teams, Waterloo Park 'A', Sparts, L'pool YM 'B' and possibly University. These are my own opinions and I have no doubt you will all be doing your best to prove me wrong. By the time the next notes are due the position should be a little clearer.

Finally, commiserations to J. O'Connor of the YM 'B'. He was beaten by A. Iaw of Trinity 'A' 20/22, 22/20, 22/20. I know I'd hate to be beaten with that scoreline.

Division 3A. By Eddie Cameron

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool Jewish	6	6	0	0	51
Sefton	7	5	2	0	48
L'pool YM 'C'	6	5	1	0	40
Stanley House	6	4	2	0	36
Bath St. 'A'	7	4	3	0	34
Crawfords 'B'	6	2	2	2	30
Vagabonds	6	3	3	0	29
W'tree Lab. 'D'	6	3	2	1	27
Maghull	5	2	2	1	26
Linnets 'A'	5	2	3	0	24
University 'A'	4	2	2	0	16
Police 'A'	6	0	6	0	16
L'pool Jew. 'B'	5	0	5	0	14
Cadwa 'A'	5	0	5	0	9

Apart from the new teams Stanley House, Linnets 'A', W'tree Lab. 'D' and L'pool Jewish 'B' we are pleased to welcome a 'new' Cadwa 'A', Sefton and Bath St. Seldom have we opened a season with so much change.

I have noticed already, however, that the newcomers are as determined as the old hands to make it a happy, friendly season, without forgetting that each game will need to be won, the fighting spirit is as strong as ever.

I cannot really compare ourselves with old rivals in 3B, but grudgingly note that the balance is finer than of late, but more about that in later issues.

How about our champions for 1969/70? Sefton have pleaded with me not to mention them as they never seem to quite make the grade. However they have brought in Don Davies and Ken Westhead from Cadwa; I thought Ken at least a fixture in Cadwa and cannot believe he has moved over for the medals. Make no mistake, however, Sefton are determined to move up to Div. 2 next season and quite frankly it doesn't look as if anyone can stop them. Not that it follows Sefton will be champions, L'pool Jewish will have a say in that. The Jewish side have decided after all that their cup formation was about the best and into the permanent 1st team come Blake and Johnson. It will be an intriguing battle, with the Jewish club stronger at the top than Sefton and Sefton stronger at the bottom than Jewish. The match between these two teams could be even but I fancy the Jewish to gain the edge. Queer thing, however, is how the league fight will go, this will depend on whether the remaining clubs have good openers to steal points from the top of Sefton, or good tails to steal points from the bottom of Jewish. Experience has shown a weakness of strength at the top which will therefore favour Sefton.

Now how about the bottom two? I am afraid Cadwa are booked for one spot because not only did they lose their two to Sefton, but the rest of the team has been called upon to do duty upstairs and a new look Cadwa does not give me confidence to suggest anything better than the wooden spoon. Of course, we have the University, where the strength depends on the new intake, sad to record the bigger clubs have ALREADY been around skimming the cream from this year's talent, but who knows, may be there is enough left to do us proud in 3A, we must wait and see. L'pool Jewish 'B' look suspect, but an odd additional signing could make a difference and the Jewish seem to be able to do just that when necessary.

Of the balance, who are likely to challenge the top? Undoubtedly Stanley House and possibly Bath St. 'A', the latter only because their two old-timers Cyril Smith and John Coveney, will not lie down. Bath St. will not gain promotion, Stanley

House are unlikely to, and I cannot see any of the 'field' doing other than jockeying for the middle of the table respectively. Vagabonds could be in the top half and who knows what a club like W'tree Labour could do if I tried?

I have not yet played away and so cannot report on clubs and rooms, but I understand University have moved to the Victoria Buildings and that Maghull Community Assoc. have had a very busy close season preparing their room, they can now accept orders for any building work, garages, etc.

Division 3B. By John O'Sullivan

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
St. Edwards	6	5	1	0	49
Crawfords 'A'	6	5	0	1	42
Odyssey	6	5	1	0	40
W'tree Lab. 'C'	5	4	0	1	36
Bootle YM	6	3	3	0	33
Orrell	6	2	2	2	31
Colonsay 'C'	6	2	4	0	28
Bath St. 'B'	5	2	1	2	27
L'pool Jew. 'A'	5	3	2	0	24
Eng. Elec. 'C'	6	2	3	1	24
Hilltop	5	1	3	1	21
Beauclair 'A'	6	1	4	1	20
Panto	6	0	5	1	13
Rafters 'A'	6	0	6	0	12

It's a long time since I did any reporting on the play in any division. The fact that I know so little about the teams in 3B does not make it any easier. I have played in a couple of matches in this division and have met some players that before I only knew as a name.

The fact that 3B is so much the stronger of the two 3rd divisions is so obvious that it makes it a little unnecessary to even draw this to the notice of Eddie Cameron, who must have realised that this season you can more or less refer to one 3rd division and three 4th divisions.

St. Edward's are playing at the moment as if they should be the moment as if they should be in the 1st division—10-0 on their score cards seems to be the rule, with an odd 9-1 to break the monotony. But even so, 100% records are going to be few and far between. Both Cooke and Townsend were beaten by J. Ball of Bootle, who was in turn beaten by Burke of W'tree Lab., who lost to K. Black of Electric, who

lost to yours truly, who has lost to practically everybody.

The top half of the division will, I think, quickly settle into St. Edwards, Odyssey and W'tree Lab. as the three leaders, not necessarily in that order, followed by Bath St., Electric and L'pool Jewish. The rest of the division are going to find it tough to accumulate enough points to keep a healthy distance from division 4 and must rely on pinching them from one another.

It appears to me that it's not so much who has the stronger team but who can turn out their star players every week, and do not drop points because of having to play reserves when their top men are not available.

I have written these notes mainly from reading through the score cards, and I have always maintained that players do not want to read notes which are only stating the obvious, and would like to see more personal details such as John McKim was playing for Liverpool Junior team, or the Rev. Ian Paisley had signed for St. Edwards O.B.

As I have now been ranked by my club into another division I will only be able to write future notes in the same way and we are therefore asking for a volunteer from this division to take over the notes for the rest of the season—male or female.

So, what about all you moaners who claim your club never gets a mention? Write them yourself and be sure. And please, whoever writes them, they will not be psychic so keep them informed on any info. relevant to the division.

Division 4A. By Brian Jennings

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Bohemians	5	4	0	1	42
Palatine	5	5	0	0	40
Rafters 'B'	6	3	1	2	37
Knotty Ash 'B'	6	4	2	0	35
LYCA	5	4	0	1	34
Wa. Park 'B'	5	2	2	1	26
Eng. Elec. 'D'	5	1	3	1	24
Police 'C'	3	3	0	0	23
Pirates	4	2	1	1	21
Colonsay 'D'	5	1	4	0	18
Rafters 'C'	5	1	4	0	15
Palatine 'A'	4	0	3	1	13
Bath St. 'D'	6	0	6	0	11
Odyssey 'A'	6	0	6	0	11

Welcome to another season which I hope will be an enjoyable one. I'd like to start by welcoming the teams who have joined us from the 5th division. At present two of them, Bohemians and Palatine, are setting the pace at the top of the table, Bohemians, in particular, have only dropped three sets out of their first four matches, having had an easy 10-0 victory over Waterloo Park to whom they finished runners-up in 5A last season. Palatine have had comfortable victories over Rafters 'B', Colonsay 'D' and English Elec. and with Bill Jones as their No. 1 they look as if they can keep their good position.

The Police have begun the season in the same fashion as last year and if they can manage to play their strongest side every week they must be amongst the favourites for promotion. Another of the unbeaten teams are LYCA, although they have lost the services of A. Jones they still form a very strong side. Their No. 5 young Gerry Hughes, although a little unorthodox in his play is having a lot more success this season, he was the only double winner in their 6-4 win over Odyssey 'A'.

Once again Colonsay 'D' consists solely of juniors, their skipper, Diane Williams, has had the honour of being ranked No. 2 in Lancs. Junior Girls. She was their only winner in their 8-2 defeat at Palatine. Knotty Ash have re-ranked their teams since last season and the players from last season's 4B team now join us.

Bath St. 'D' avoided relegation last season due to Essemay and College of Tech. 'A' withdrawing from the league, however, after just playing them ourselves I feel they must be favourites for the drop to Division 5. Rafters 'C' have also made a poor start to the season, although I feel their position is mainly due to lack of experience rather than lack of skill and I hope to see them climb to a safe position during the second half of the season.

I couldn't close these notes without mentioning the dreadful start made by L'pool Pirates. In their first two fixtures they conceded no less than six walk-overs, and in the 1st Round of the Forrest Cup they conceded the match to Bath St. I hope by the next issue you will have solved your problems and are fielding full sides again.

Division 4B. By Jack Lambert

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Sparta 'A'	6	6	0	0	51
Bath St. 'C'	6	4	1	1	40
Bohemians 'A'	6	4	1	1	40
Police 'B'	6	4	1	1	37
Knotty Ash 'A'	6	4	2	0	33
Orrell 'A'	5	3	2	0	28
Giro	6	2	4	0	28
St. Edwards 'A'	5	2	2	1	27
Police 'D'	5	2	2	1	26
Coll. of Tech.	6	1	3	2	26
Mossley Hill 'A'	6	1	4	1	14
Eng. Elec. 'E'	6	0	5	1	13
Colonsay 'E'	4	0	3	1	11
University 'B'	3	0	3	0	6

We have had a more pleasant start than last season. We don't know who is going to win the division BEFORE the season starts and to date we have a full complement of teams.

Sparta 'A', Police 'B' and Bohs. 'A' have started very well and look strong teams in that order in paper. The names on the latter two cards bring back memories of Liverpool Cricket Club, Lussac and Leyfield. At second glance the Sparta wins have been very convincing. Bohs. and Police 'B' played a draw against each other. Grugel winning two for Bohs. and Dyson the same for Police. The latter had an interesting game with Wood of Giro, winning the first 21/10 and then losing 20/22, 20/22.

At the other end of the table Wylde saved the day for the newcomers, College of Tech. with two good wins, and young Sturgess (in new colours) and Pratt scored two apiece for Mossley Hill in a 5-5 draw. English Elec. and Colonsay had one of the few matches they will both really enjoy, when they also drew. Smeaton and Ashcroft scored good wins for Electric and Jean Rimmer a very good double for Colonsay.

Giro, another of our newcomers, have had a tough start, playing the three top teams, Wood with two doubles showed signs of better things to come.

Orrell have added another well-known female to their "harem" in Myra Lovelady, but Lil Jenkins is the heroine of the moment with a great win against Sparta. Knotty Ash started like bombs, winning their first three games, they had a tight one with Police 'D' winning 6-4,

thanks mainly to McCracken and Pownall. Police 'D' (Birch and Morris 2) in turn beat Bath St. (Georgeson 2) by a similar score. Garnett and Georgeson had quite a set-to, the latter winning 20-22, 22-20, 28-26.

Bath St. seem slightly weaker this season but had a nice win over College of Tech. (Patel 2) with Cunningham and Clark giving top class performances.

With the 1st, 2nd and 5th divisions playing normal and the 3rd and 4th still suffering the 'pyramid' system, isn't it time this farce ceased?

Division 5. By Tony Arthur

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
W'tree Lab. 'E'	6	5	1	0	50
Police 'E'	6	4	2	0	44
Old Swan	6	4	0	2	42
Stanley H. 'A'	5	4	0	1	39
Maghull 'A'	6	4	2	0	39
Vagabonds 'A'	7	4	3	0	38
Cheshire Lines	6	3	3	0	29
S. Katharines	4	3	1	0	28
Trinity 'B'	5	3	2	0	26
Cadwa 'B'	5	1	3	1	22
Linnets 'B'	6	1	5	0	19
Bradstones	6	1	5	0	10
Maghull 'B'	6	0	6	0	3
Bradstones 'A'	4	0	4	0	1

As I mopped my perspiring brow at the end of last season I was at peace in my mind at the thought that this coming season I would no longer be writing about teams and players that I'd never seen or played. I fondly imagined the articles flowing from my pen, as quickly and easily as a smash from a high bouncing ball at the net. However, my vain hopes were soon shattered upon my receipt of the handbook, in which no less than eight teams which were new to me, appeared before my despairing eyes. Thus my agile mind has to work overtime for yet another season attempting to conjure up interesting and amusing ways of commenting upon that which is above in plain black and white. I suppose at this point I must welcome, however grudgingly, the teams which are new to this division and hope that they have successful and enjoyable games against all teams save my own. Upon reflection I must admit that I am glad to see the other teams in a higher division (in which ambiguous

form it shall remain without comment).

I suppose it is customary at this time for the poor article writer to stick his neck out ready for the end of season chopping-block. There are two clubs from the results so far which will probably be battling it out in the points stakes at the end of the season, Old Swan and Stanley House. They have both gained a goodly number of points from their matches and drawing with each other at Stanley House. Not that I expect the others to stand by waving their bats as they draw away. The Police, for example, seem to have a solid team this year having only been beaten 6-4 by both Old Swan and Stanley House and comfortably beating Vagabonds 9-1. Also I had better mention the team of our worthy editor unless I wish to have this masterpiece pruned to the name at the top. To ensure his position in the team for the rest of the season it must be stated that the only match W'tree Lab. 'E' have lost, and that was 4-6, was when he wasn't playing. Thus there is going to be no lack of interesting matches as other teams are certainly on a par with W'tree Lab. and Police.

It remains only for me to wish everyone a very enjoyable season and to state my eager anticipation to join battle with you on our PURPLE table.

Women's Division.

By Joyce Randall

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Crawfords	5	5	0	0	43
Cadwa	3	1	2	0	20
Crawfords 'A'	4	1	3	0	18
Colonsay	4	2	2	0	17
Police	3	1	2	0	10
Knotty Ash	3	0	3	0	2

Here we are again, but not, I'm afraid as happy as can be. When I attended the Handbook Meeting the Ladies' division looked healthy and full of promise, eleven teams with a possible twelfth. But this

was not to be. After everyone had finished withdrawing teams, the Ladies section read like an obituary column, death due to lack of numbers—more like an epidemic! My own club, L'pool YM, being one of the casualties. We only lost one player, but she couldn't be replaced, we did try. The Management decided on the idea, which came from the meeting, to double up on all the matches. You are all aware of this now, but after it being drawn up and sent out Rafter's dropped out and being a strong side their absence will be felt. I think this has also made a farce of the cup draw—in the 1st Round Crawfords and Cadwa play each other. I hope something can be done to re-draw it!

Crawfords and Crawfords 'A' had a very good match, Crawfords won 6-4. Millie Harris and Amy Bell played well, both beating Margaret Collins. Lil Wynne had a ding-dong battle with Marie Lupton, Lil winning in the third 23-21.

I see Di Williams of Colonsay took a game from Mabel Crancis. Also Diane has made her debut for Zaucs., winning the Ladies Doubles with Susan Lisle, losing the Mixed with John Barton. I hope the ladies from the Police are enjoying their table tennis, perhaps next year they could turn out a second team.

Well girls, that's all the news: If there isn't much to write about next time I will tell you how I acquired a rocking chair! Really I did.

Score Cards

Will team captains when making out score cards please identify women players by showing them as Miss or Mrs. This is to assist in the compiling of players records.