

Volume 23
NUMBER 2



JANUARY, 1970

PRICE 9d.

**TABLE
TENNIS
DIGEST**

Official Magazine

OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

TABLE DIGEST TENNIS

All correspondence must be addressed to the Editor
"Table Tennis Digest"
21 Armscot Close, Liverpool 25
(Tel. HUN 3073)

Published during the months of November, January, February, March and May.

— Editorial Board —

Editor : K. A. Armson,

J. O'Sullivan, (Asst. Editor) A. E. Upton, J. C. McKim,

S. D. Cameron, R. Hebson

Vol. 20

JANUARY, 1970

No. 2

Editorial

Go to any recreation ground in this city on a Saturday afternoon and you will find, whatever the weather conditions, full teams of footballers engaged in giving their utmost for their clubs. Compare this with the creeping disease now spreading in this game of ours of late arrivals, late starts, late finishes—with very rarely two full teams in attendance—and walk-overs. These things do no good for the game and inevitably even conscientious players start adopting the same manners.

It is a known and accepted fact that a great many players have various commitments which prevent them arriving on time and every allowance is made for this by most clubs. Unfortunately those who have no reasonable excuse still arrive late. Add to this the time taken to get changed plus the inevitable knock-up which most players assume is their right whether they arrive at 7.30 or 8.30 and it is little wonder that few matches get started before 8 p.m. and even fewer finish before 10.30 p.m.

Few players seem to realise that the stated starting time of 7.30 is for commencement of play and not commencement of changing time. Everyone complains when matches finish late, particularly if they have a long distance to travel, yet no-one seems to appreciate the fact that most matches would finish before 10.15 if play was started at 7.30 p.m. No matter how many players are present at starting time no-one ever seems prepared to suggest getting matches started. This is a team game and except for exceptional circumstances all players should be present for the whole of a match and not just for the part in which they are actively concerned.

I know this has all been said before and will again be ignored, for what is really needed are a few captains who are prepared to make a stand and compel both their own players and their opponents to conform to the rules. This will probably never happen, but if it ever does it will be for the good of the game in the long run.

I don't know whether or not my last appeal for your letters was well received, but I have received six letters and space has been made for them all. Several interesting points are raised which might even encourage more of you to write. Tom Blunn (Hull & ETTA) has sent a very interesting letter to us on matters affecting us locally and another writer raises the question of the high price of T.T. balls. This is an important point for all of us and perhaps one of our advertisers may reply on this, that's if they bother to read the proof we send them. I have also received a Cross-word from one player and this will appear in the February issue (I hope).

Many players approach me at matches with complaints or ideas and I always suggest they write to me as editor. So far, none have, but I assure everyone that letters will be printed whether the subject be old or new and that nothing is ignored merely because it may not have my approval. Space is the only factor that counts and I do my best to find space for your letters and articles because this is **YOUR** magazine.

From the Secretary's Desk

By John McKim

AT A RECENT MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, WE WERE MADE AWARE OF A PARTICULARLY SERIOUS OFFENCE WHICH HAD BEEN COMMITTED BY THE LINNETS CLUB, WHEN IN A LEAGUE MATCH, THEIR "B" TEAM BEING ONE PLAYER SHORT, A MEMBER OF THE "A" TEAM WAS PLAYED AND A FALSE NAME (THE NAME OF A "B" TEAM PLAYER) WAS INSERTED ON THE SCORE CARD.

THE COMMITTEE'S DECISION REGARDING THIS INCIDENT WAS AS FOLLOWS:—

- (a) ALL SETS PLAYED BY THE INELIGIBLE PLAYER, TO BE AWARDED TO THEIR OPPONENTS.
- (b) THE LINNETS CLUB TO BE FINED £2.
- (c) THE "A" TEAM PLAYER, J. BIRD, AND THE CAPTAIN OF THE "B" TEAM, G. WILLIAMS, TO BE SUSPENDED FOR THE NEXT 10 LEAGUE MATCHES, AND FOR ALL CUP MATCHES FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON, AND DURING THE PERIOD OF SUSPENSION G. WILLIAMS NOT TO HOLD ANY OFFICIAL POSITION IN THE LINNETS CLUB.

We have also received recently one or two complaints regarding playing conditions, these have been investigated and I am pleased to say that in one case at least the complaint was unfounded. It is, however, a change to have clubs taking sufficient interest to even raise a query of this nature, but I would ask all clubs to take note of this item of news and check that their own conditions are up to standard, and that they are making the fullest possible use of the facilities at their disposal.

Lancashire & Cheshire League

By Alec Davidson

Pride and place this month must go to our Men's 1st team who have taken Liverpool to the last sixteen of the National Wilmott Cup competition by beating Bolton in the zone final and at the same time recording a great hat-trick of wins over Bolton this season. Congratulations to the team of Tony Clayton, Gordon Birch and Peter D'Arcy, and captain Vic Chesham.

Lack of space in this issue prevents me from covering all the teams this time and I will give more details next issue. I must, however, mention our two 'A' teams who are also doing us proud and are at this stage undefeated. The Ladies 'A' having played 3 and won 3 with a sets total

of 26 for and 4 against. The Men's 'A' has gone one step further and played 4, won 4 with a sets total of 29 for and 11 against.

Finally, a word of praise and thanks to our Junior girls for so ably representing us in the Bromfield Trophy at Birmingham. As the Lancs. & Cheshire Assoc. do not have a Junior Girls' league our young ladies only get the chance to show their paces in cup matches and the occasional junior match. The team of Di Williams, Kathleen Baxendale and Suzanne Manning, captained by John O'Sullivan traveled to Birmingham and were narrowly beaten by five sets to four, the match not being settled until the final set.

Net Cords

By John Molyneu

A hot discussion seems to be boiling up as to whether the league should switch from a five-a-side teams to four-a-side. Well, I'm going to plant my banner down, and say that I would love to play three-a-side. However, there are many pros and cons of argument to go through and I'll be happy to see how things proceed for the next few years.

:: :: :: :: ::

I see one gentleman managed to lose 21-17, 15-6; someone should tell him it's the first to twenty-one not the best of twenty-one!

:: :: :: :: ::

I see Jack Lambert has managed to add one more recruit to his array of correspondents in Wally Sill. Now, Wally, you wrote a beautiful letter making the point that five-a-side table-tennis is not only cumbersome but darn nearly unique, why spoil it with that old motto: "Back to straight leagues."

:: :: :: :: ::

You know there's a vacancy for a good honest unbiased writer for the 1st Division notes. Mind you, the successful applicant will have to be prepared to finish with the Liverpool League after one issue. Personally, I didn't think the efforts of Jim Bowden and Wally Allanson merited a fate so drastic.

:: :: :: :: ::

Unfortunately there are still those among us who think it amusing to behave like three-year-olds who have just had a lollipop stolen. The pity is three-year-olds would not be able to express their feelings in the exact vocabulary of these "gentlemen." Surely it's time these blokes grew up and realised that, above all, table-tennis, is a game. Few people object to a bloke cursing at himself occasionally, but a constant repetition of obscenities just embarrasses everyone present.

:: :: :: :: ::

Mind you, the scoring standard at the Wavertree Labour—L'pool V.M. match was enough to make a saint swear. I presume that most people in Blackpool count normally from one to twenty-one, but there are at least eight table-tennis players in this city who won't believe it.

:: :: :: :: ::

Even so, if all the players in Blackpool are as friendly and as sporting as John Mason and Brian Parkinson, I think I'll move there and start enjoying every game I play in once more.

:: :: :: :: ::

I've noticed that Steve and Dave Holland are proving too 'sticky' for some of their opponents in their initial season with Mossley Hill.

Telephone 2205 (2 lines)

COLBORNE TROPHIES LTD.

SPECIALISTS IN SPORTS PRIZES

TROWBRIDGE, WILTSHIRE

Also at 32/34 VITTORIA STREET, BIRMINGHAM 1.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

It is now over ten years since I left Merseyside but I still feel part of it by the receipt of the "Digest" at very regular intervals. I have often felt that I should make some contribution in return and the current issue offers quite a number of items on which I feel I could make some useful comment.

Ranking. I could never understand why in Table Tennis we punish ourselves by inflicting the need to rank our players at all levels. At best it can only be considered to be an attempt to produce a fair result, at worst it produces fiddling and distrust amongst teams, which is regularly in evidence in the "Digest." Does it therefore achieve its object? I doubt it, for it requires an assessment which in many cases is almost impossible and in most cases has got to be reduced to guesswork. Even though some rankings may well be genuine it presumes that conditions are consistent in every respect during the period. It does not take into account the physical condition of the players which, due to many causes, could vary tremendously from one week to another. The worst aspect, of course, is the manipulation which produces the exact opposite to the aims of friendly competition. It reduces the captain to a record keeper and eliminates intelligent tactics and counter tactics. At County and National level the repercussions are far greater and are a constant source of irritation (particularly to the chairman of a selection committee). Why do we do it?

I agree with your correspondent that the ideal combination is three-a-side but this brings its problems which I will comment on later. For the sake of national and international seedings and Open tournaments, rankings are very necessary, but is it really necessary to insist on league ranking for local competition?

Three or Five. I am sure that the advantages of three over five are so obvious that there is no point in going over them. The main and probably the only objection is the lack of playing facilities. It is not possible to run five teams of three with the same playing facilities

required for three teams of five. Some players have to be left out and regular team combinations are permanently disrupted. Quite understandably, this position is just not acceptable to the bulk of players, and it would be quite wrong to force a change against the will of a majority. Of the 80,000 league members in England, less than 3,000 attain league or county standard and play outside the weekly competition. But some leagues produce more and better players than others and I am convinced that in this connection, five-a-side leagues are at a definite disadvantage. I am about to make a detailed investigation into this particular problem and the findings will be published in due course.

The only solution I can offer is to bring the younger generation up to play 3-a-side; all junior divisions and youth clubs could play this method. A premier division would provide the opportunity for top teams and in time the change could spread through the league, though it would be a long term policy. But for juniors it is an urgent problem bearing in mind that over a short junior life of 3 to 4 years, a junior would have 50% greater experience.

Graded Tournaments. I am pleased to see that the 'Merseyside' has applied for Graded status. Sponsorship is the main answer but it is very difficult to obtain and a lot of hard work is needed. A graded tournament with top England players is a better incentive for a sponsor. Incidentally, any ideas for a better title than 'graded'?

Annual Accounts. I am very pleased to see that my old friend Don Cameron is still keeping his end up with the books. I regret that I do not hold his opinion that it is a good thing to keep affiliation fees down for such a long time. If good reserves were once available I feel a policy of financial assistance to juniors would have brought much more satisfaction to the members. I am fully convinced that only by continual competition in Open Tournaments will the juniors make the grade. I have had this brought home to me more than ever since I came over to Hull. We are isolated

here, and have an hour's journey before we really start to go anywhere. Nevertheless, we have always entered our juniors in open tournaments and given them as much competition as possible. The success of Hull Juniors in schools and cup competitions is written in the records for anyone to see!

The difference between Club fee and fees paid to the ETTA and LTTA is very small and works out at about 6d. per player: this compares with 2/- per player in Hull. In addition the ETTA fees seem to be about 6d. per player compared with 2/6d. in Yorkshire. But again, Yorkshire finance their juniors to a very great extent and the success of the seniors in the County Championships Premier Division is a satisfactory reward. I am afraid success has to be paid for by somebody. Why not a massive effort to sell the ETTA lottery ticket this season? One league makes a profit of about £100 per season. How about staging a first class international match? One league this season has made £300 for the ETTA and over £500 for themselves!

I hope I am not being too smug or critical but I am still a Lancastrian and am anxious to see Lancashire not only the biggest county, but also the best.

General. I enjoy the regular articles and feel that you have two very good contributors in Phil Reid and John Molyneux.

Regards to all, both sides of the river.

TOM BLUNN

:: :: :: ::

Dear Sir,

I think it should be put on record that the City team DID HAVE supporters for their two great wins over the strong Bolton side even though they were outnumbered by three or four to one by supporters who had travelled about 30 miles.

Also Bolton's 8-1 defeat was headlined in their local press as their biggest defeat in memory.

JACK LAMBERT
(Eng. Elec. TTC).

:: :: :: ::

Dear Sir,

In the November "Digest" Wally Sill mentioned some of the benefits to be gained from a change to three-a-side teams but unfortunately he passed over the suggestion because it "would be impractical for some clubs." This has always been the standard argument used to prevent a change but has no more substance in Liverpool than in any other big city. The short answer to the argument is to quote the examples shown by the many Leagues who have already chosen to convert to 3-a-side despite any difficulties involved. If this answer is insufficient, an examination of the handbook shows that this season:—

(1) **No club has more than six teams.**

Therefore even the biggest club could convert without being forced to deprive anybody of a regular match.

(2) **Only six clubs have more than three teams.**

Hence, the vast majority of clubs would not be embarrassed at all by a conversion.

Examination of the league structure shows that currently there are 14 teams in each of seven divisions. Reorganisation could be achieved by forming fourteen divisions, each containing twelve 3-a-side teams. The effects of this would be:—

(1) **Twice as many divisions.**

Consequently players in each division would be more equally matched.

(2) **Fewer teams in each division.**

Resulting in four more "free" weeks in which clubs having no spare match nights could play any re-arranged matches or cup-ties.

(3) **Matches would consist of 9 sets.**

Drain games would be impossible and there would be no possibility of fixture congestion through cup replays.

It now seems obvious that there is only a tiny minority (if any) who would be adversely affected by a re-organisation on the lines described and even these would still derive the direct benefit that each player would play three more equally matched opponents with no possibility of "fiddling."

In conclusion I would like to reinforce Mr. Sill's closing remarks with the comment that it would be a tragedy if general apathy resulted in failure to obtain the necessary

"two to one" majority over the few inevitable "dieheards" who will still vote to retain our outdated system. We will be far from the first to change either our team structure or our scoring system but PLEASE! let us not be the last!

KEN CHAMBERS
(W'tree Lab. TTC).

:: :: :: ::

Dear Sir,

In response to your request for views and opinions here are a few of mine.

I have been playing in the L'pool League for many years and in the past two years also in the Wirral League, but judging by what I have seen the organisation is not a patch on the one we have in Liverpool. It is one to be proud of and we owe a great deal to all concerned in running our League, we do have our problems but who hasn't these days?

One of the main topics is our points system. I would like to see us revert to the "two for a win and one for a draw" system again. Our present system has encouraged "fiddling" for the sake of winning sets at all costs, to the detriment of the game in general. Fiddling these days not only goes on in the lower divisions but also in the 1st division, which is supposed to be the "cream" of the league. It makes you wonder what is going on in the table-tennis world. They say it takes all sorts to make a world and it has proved right in this game of ours today.

In order to stop this fiddling I would like to see a system in operation where clubs register their team orders prior to the start of the season and if a team is then guilty of changing its order they would be penalised with so many points deducted from that match. It is a very sore point and will remain so until something is done about it.

During the season there are many players who do moan and grumble and if they would just send their views and ideas to the "Digest" instead of doing it on match nights, as most of them do, it would stop some of the bitterness that arises.

I have often wondered why such a big organisation as ours does not have an "End of Season" Dance. We make many friends during the

season and it seems a pity we cannot get together socially once a year. With over 700 members I cannot see anything but success for such a venture. Can we have some views on this from our Management Committee and players?

Last of all I must mention the cost of TT balls. It does not seem long ago that they were only 9d. each. Now we pay 2/- for them and the way things are going it could soon be three or four shillings. It would not be so bad if they lasted some-time, but it is nothing unusual for a new 3 star ball to crack after a couple of sets and at the price we pay this is just not good enough. Most firms blame S.E.T. but you don't pay this for using the same machine over and over again. Cost of materials, yes, but not to the extent of the price we pay. I would like to see more opposition to these price increases otherwise we will end up paying more for a ball than for a net!

DAVE COULSON
(L.Y.C.A. TTC).

:: :: :: ::

Dear Sir,

I would like to add a third suggestion to the two proposed by Ken Chambers in the last issue of the magazine!

He says we need a scoring system which combines the merits of the previous system but eliminates the defects, so here goes. Why not award two points for a 6-4 win, 3 points for a 7-3 or 8-2 win, and 4 points for a 9-1 or 10-0 whitewash. A draw would, of course, merit one point each.

ERNEST W. STURGESS
(Mossley Hill TTC).

:: :: :: ::

Dear Sir,

I should like to use the columns of your magazine to thank Eileen Mansell, Janet Rumlahn, Mabel Francis and Margaret Collins for the excellent table-tennis exhibition they gave at Broughton Hall School. Also Mr. Rumlahn for his very instructive lesson in umpiring.

For several years the interest in tabel-tennis in our schools has been

increasing, and Broughton Hall has been no exception to this general trend. We now have girls from every class from 1st Year up to 6th Year playing table-tennis and three teams in the Liverpool Schools League. Although we have achieved little success so far, there is a great deal of interest in the game, both amongst our pupils and parents. This was shown in the numbers who braved the icy winds to come to the school for our Parent-Pupil Tournament. Our parents and pupils enjoyed themselves playing table-tennis but the high spot of the evening was undoubtedly the exhibition given by

the Ladies. In spite of the poor lighting and slippery floor we saw some excellent play and everyone enjoyed the exhibition enormously.

After the exhibition Alec Davidson gave a short talk on the Liverpool League, which resulted in several enquiries by the girls about joining league clubs.

We must thank all members of the league who helped to make this evening such a success, and we hope that it results in even more interest in table-tennis in Liverpool.

A. P. CROSS
(Mistress i/c Table-Tennis).

TABLE TENNIS EQUIPMENT

We can supply Everything—

TABLES, NETS, POSTS, BALLS,

SANDWICH, SPONGE & STANDARD BATS—

“Barna” - “Jaques” - “Johnny Leach” - “Stiga” etc.

and—

CLOTHING for LADIES & GENTS

“Bukta” - “Louis Hoffman” etc.

VISIT OUR NEW UNIVERSITY BRANCH

Alsop Building, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool 3

Tel. ROYal 9355

WHITTY'S

15 BASNETT ST., LIVERPOOL 1

Open All Day Saturday

Tel. ROYal 3011

What a great Season it has been so far !

writes Phil Reid

Well certainly as far as I am concerned it has. All the shouting, groaning seems to be vanishing from our tournaments and they are the better for it.

I've attended two County Junior matches so far. Perhaps not the most exciting events in the world, but in both of them the sportsmanship was first class. The players played to win, played strokes all the time and gave the impression of really enjoying every minute. If this is County Junior table-tennis, then I can't see too much of it.

Around the tournaments things seem better than ever. I feared the increased prize money might bring out a spate of gamesmanship, doubtful services and the like, but so far I have seen no evidence of it. I have, however, seen some first-rate matches and if this sort of thing keeps up I forecast a return of the missing spectators. The North of England was excellently organised by Les Jones at Manchester. A pity so few of the top players were there but apparently they had checked on the prizes and found they weren't quite what they wanted. The North Middlesex Open was magnificently staged at Alexandra Palace and this fetched out nearly all the top players. When organisation in table-tennis is mentioned the name of Harry Spraggs springs quickly to the mind of many people. He and Mike Watts master-minded the Southend Open which had a strongish entry reinforced by the inclusion of the Hungarian team. They won nearly all the prizes. The trouble with this tournament was there was virtually no room for spectators. Players not actually required at that moment often enjoy watching other games but this was very difficult at the 'Southend.' The organisers even went to the extent

of booking people requiring overnight accommodation in a very reasonable hotel and the meals at the venue (and the hotel) were first rate. I understand a new venue will probably be used next season.

The yellow ball ! Well, I've played with them and as far as I am concerned it's going to be quite an improvement. Play with them when you get the chance—then make your comments, good or otherwise. Maybe you could let the editor know. I'm sure he would like to print YOUR observations (and not only 1st division players either). Who knows it might put a couple of points on *your* game.

An International match I saw recently featured England and Hungary. The best set of the evening, by popular consent, was that between Denis Neale and Janos Borzei. Denis had told me earlier how tiring the tour of Japan had been. He certainly showed no signs of tiredness in this match. All his enthusiasm and fire were there and the crowd rose to the two players. Perhaps a top class game between a hitter and a defender is all too rare these days. Denis won but it was a close thing. Trevor Taylor had earlier lost in two straight to Borzei and one or two people have since said since that the Hertfordshire left-hander hardly ever looked like winning. But to be fair—how often has Taylor had the chance to play against a defender of such class ? In any case Taylor redeemed (if that is the right word) himself when he beat the Hungarian No. 1, Tibor Klampar, in straight games after 20-13 behind in the first. The match was at Loughborough by the way.

Yes, it's been a great season so far. As far as I'm concerned anyway.

Around the Divisions

Division 1.

By John Wren

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool YM	13	11	2	0	109
Eng. Elec.	12	12	0	0	107
W'tree Lab.	12	10	2	0	82
L'pool YM 'A'	12	7	3	2	69
W'tree Lab. 'A'	13	5	5	3	68
Mossley Hill	13	6	3	4	64
W'tree Lab. 'B'	13	5	6	2	63
Rafters	13	5	6	2	61
Colonsay	12	5	6	1	53
Beauchair	13	3	8	2	52
Eng. Elec. 'A'	12	5	6	1	51
W'loo Park	12	3	8	1	43
Bath St.	12	1	10	1	38
Cadwa	12	0	12	0	10

Having been assured that Wally Allanson's departure to the North East was not the result of the column he wrote for the last 'Digest,' I have been persuaded to comment on the division as I see it. In one respect this is easy because it is not difficult to predict that either the L'pool YM or English Electric will win the league and that Cadwa and one other team will be relegated.

What I find disturbing at the moment is the present trend whereby the better players tend to be concentrated in a few clubs. Half the teams in this division come from three clubs and it is these clubs that seem to attract all the new 'talent' coming to the district. All credit to them, particularly W'tree Labour, for developing the potential of their existing members but surely the division would be more competitive if some of the middle of the table teams could attract some of the new good players. At the moment there are too few upsets of the kind caused when Mossley Hill beat the Y.M., weakened by the absence of Brian Parkinson, by six games to four. This seems to have been a real team effort with every member winning a game although the credit for the win must go to Alan Land for winning both his matches 21-19 and 21-18 in the third. Perhaps this will compensate Engl. Electric for losing three sets to Harry Johnston and Nick Gourley of Y.M. 'A.'

At the other end of the table the race is on to see who will avoid joining Cadwa in the 2nd division

next season. Bath St. have had a very poor first half and on current form look most likely to be relegated, although in Messrs. Taylor and Clayton they have two players who could very well lift them clear of the danger zone. Waterloo Park started off with matches against the top teams but recently have been accumulating points, including a very good six against Colonsay. English Elec. 'A' on the other hand started off well but seem to have found the competition much tougher of late. W'tree Lab. 'B' are not entirely out of the danger zone and Beauchair will no doubt miss Wally Allanson in the second half of the season. Perhaps English Electric will lend us one of their 1st team 'reserves' for the New Year.

To close may I wish all those team captains who intend a 'tactical arrangement' against W'tree Lab. 'A' the best of luck as I understand they are now picking their team order out of a hat. Most unsporting!

Division 2.

By Keith Fitzsimmons

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Linnets	13	13	0	0	119
Colonsay 'A'	13	8	4	1	78
Knotty Ash	12	9	1	2	76
Trinity	12	9	2	1	75
Linacre	13	6	6	1	66
Colonsay 'B'	11	7	3	1	60
Crawfords	12	6	3	3	59
Police	12	4	5	3	59
Trinity 'A'	13	2	9	2	53
L'pool YM 'B'	13	2	10	1	42
Sparta	10	3	7	0	41
University	9	3	6	0	36
W'loo Pk. 'A'	11	2	8	1	35
Eng. Elec. 'B'	12	2	10	2	31

With the season coming to the end of the first half the position is much clearer throughout the division. On top are Linnets, well ahead of their rivals and I can't see anybody catching them up. Their only weakness was a lack of sufficient reserve strength and to combat this they have signed yet another player from Blackburn in J. Baron who, so far, has played in five matches undefeated. Mind you, the whole Linnets team has an out-of-town

look about it, for of their regular team, only Alan Dean lives in Liverpool. Tony Green lives in Warrington and all the rest are from Blackburn. For myself, I think it is a great pity that a club like Linnets should rely on players from another town, for the past has shown that clubs relying on so many out-of-town players leave themselves very open should these players decide to stop coming so far from home just to play table-tennis every week. I only hope this doesn't happen to Linnets in the future.

The battle for 2nd place has narrowed to three teams, Knotty Ash, Trinity and Colonsay 'A'. The Colonsay club have re-ranked their players of late and now only Harry Nelson and Ron Evans are left from the team which started the season. Les French has come down from the 1st team and up from the 'B' team come D. Williams and J. O'Sullivan. I was a little surprised at their dropping Johnson in favour of O'Sullivan for Johnson has much the better record, although to be fair to John he has played higher in the order. Still, in general, the team does have a stronger look about it and I can see a real challenge from them in the second half.

One team determined to get away from the bottom is Trinity 'A', they

have a different order, and usually different players, each week, but credit must be given to them for beating Police 6-4, no mean feat this even though the Police were without Don Gauld. In addition they have received a 10-0 w/o from the University so they must feel they have a great chance of pulling clear.

L'pool YM 'B' are down in the relegation zone and I don't see much in their results to suggest any hope of them avoiding the drop. They have four regular players in D. Piper, C. Cox, P. Lewis and P. Liu with the fifth spot going to a variety of players, the most regular of which is Joyce Randall, who must be wishing she was back in the Ladies' division for she has not had much success in this. The most consistent set winner for the side is P. Liu who has won nearly half his team's sets and at the time of writing has yet to suffer a double defeat in a match.

My commiserations this month must, without a doubt, go to A. Southall of Trinity, who, finding himself in the No. 1 position against Linnets instead of his usual No. 5 spot, only lost to Phil Blake, the Linnets No. 1, 22-20, 22-24, 22-20—and as if this wasn't enough he was only beaten 21-15 in the 3rd by Frank Thomas. A very creditable performance.

THE SPORTS SPECIALISTS

The "STORE FOR SPORT" in the North

For the Largest Selection and the Best Service

All makes of named Bats and Tables supplied

JACK SHARP Ltd.

Telephone ROYal 4793/4

Visit our Showrooms—

36-38 WHITECHAPEL, LIVERPOOL 1.

or write for Illustrated Catalogue

Division 3A. By Eddie Cameron

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool Jewish	13	12	0	1	112
Sefton	12	10	2	0	92
L'pool YM 'C'	11	10	1	0	78
Stanley House	13	7	5	1	75
Maghull	12	7	3	2	73
Bath St. 'A'	12	9	3	0	73
Crawfords 'B'	13	5	6	2	58
Police 'A'	13	3	9	1	53
Linnets 'A'	13	3	9	1	51
Vagabonds	12	3	6	3	49
W'tree Lab. 'D'	11	3	6	2	38
University 'A'	11	4	7	0	36
L'pool Jew 'B'	12	0	11	1	29
Cadwa 'A'	10	1	9	0	23

Visiting the Police recently we were accorded our usual welcome, but although the room is good and the same table is in use it does not seem as cosy as the old Anfield Rd. club room. Sorry to say the team is not as good either, they miss Chalky, in the 1st team, and Conroy (with Jewish) and are finding it hard going near the bottom of the division. Police 'A' never did start well and seldom did the league position show a true reflection of the full strength team, but this time McMasters and Webster, the old hands, will need all their flair to keep clear of the bottom.

What has happened to OUR up this year? It is my sad duty to report that we have but one representative in the last eight. With L'pool Jewish certain of a semi-final place there is still a chance of us avoiding the disgrace of seeing it slip into that 'other lot.'

L'pool Jewish have all but tied the league up, they accounted for Sefton 6-4 in both cup and League, no other team has taken more than two sets from them, they even open up in time these days so cannot even forfeit sets for starting late. They would need to lose half their team with broken arms to surrender their lead. I seem to recall that Blake did just that a short time ago, but if I were Sefton I would not bank on a repeat.

John Doncaster not only plays No. 1 for the Jewish but brings a calm assurance to his side and is undoubtedly the mainstay of the team. Johnson is a hard man to beat and perhaps his greatest asset is that he does not look a hard man to beat. Blake was a useful improvement to

last year's side. Tony Cohen never gives in and plods his way to many a victory over some technical superiors. Dave Cohen is sometimes considered the light relief, to me Dave is Liverpool Jewish, his enthusiasm started the club and has brought it along from strength to strength, this same enthusiasm permeates the team and creates success. Dave Money, an import from English Elec., is standby, these six will be lining up for the league medals in April.

Sefton are likely runners-up and will get their much desired 2nd division position next season. They blame me for their failures as it appears that each year I have tipped them to win something which has apparently acted as a Jonah, even suggesting 2nd place may well jeopardise their chances.

Team of the month has been Maghull C.C., they were lying 9th in the last issue, now they are proudly up to 3rd place; they will probably finish 4th with L'pool Y.M. 'C' easing them out of their present place.

Visiting University earlier in the season was a bit of cloak and dagger, having to go around the back and through the security entrance, having been met by a University go-between in the main road, then up in the lift to the interrogation room. We had a bit of trouble keeping our feet on the slippery floor, but conditions were generally good and the team good enough to hold its own and spring the odd surprise. Our hosts have subsequently been working hard to get the polish off the floor, which will make their conditions as good as anyone's in the league.

Division 3B. By Rob Lock

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
St. Edward's	13	11	2	0	100
W'tree Lab. 'C'	13	12	0	1	100
Odyssey	12	10	1	1	84
Crawfords 'A'	13	9	3	1	72
Orrell	12	5	5	2	64
Bootle YM	11	5	3	3	61
Hilltop	12	4	5	3	59
Bath St. 'B'	11	4	4	3	51
L'pool Jew 'A'	11	5	5	1	50
Eng. Elec. 'C'	13	3	9	1	49
Colonsay 'C'	12	2	9	1	45
Rafters 'A'	12	2	9	1	42
Beauchair 'A'	12	1	10	1	36
Panto	11	1	9	1	27

As this is the first time I have written notes for the "Digest" I hope you will endeavour to bear with me until I get into the swing of things.

As we enter the New Year St. Edward's, Odyssey and W'tree Lab. are striding away from the rest of the field and seem to be having a very interesting battle of their own. These three are 18 points clear of the 'unpredictable' Crawford's side and I fancy W'tree Labour to win the league from St. Edward's with Odyssey a close third.

With THIS division being so strong (!) we have four or five good sides who are capable of upsetting the leaders. Bootle Y.M. would be very formidable opposition if they played their strongest side every week, so too I imagine would be Orrell, L'pool Jewish (if they turned up) and my own club, Hilltop. At the bottom end of the table Panto and Beauclair 'A' are really in trouble and will, in all probability, be relegated. I feel I must mention Rafter's 'A' who have really made an effort to haul themselves from bottom position by gaining 30 points from their last six games, as opposed to the meagre total of 12 points from the first six games.

Looking through some of the score cards I have found rather a surprise result, young Steve Hayes from Panto beating R. Cook, St. Edward's No. 1, 21-15 in the 3rd. I think this young gentleman has a great future in table-tennis, even if it is affecting his schoolwork.

There are no 100% records that I know of, but please correct me if I am wrong. J. B. Lynch, Orrell's No. 1, has only lost one game, and that was to Robbie Chew, Hilltop, 21-13, 21-19, in which the match was drawn.

As some of you may have read in the "Liverpool Echo", Bath St. defeated Hilltop in the Hyde Cup by the slender margin of 7 points, Bath St. winning by 931 points to 924 with the sets being squared 25-25. I must say I thoroughly enjoyed both the matches, but it seems rather an unfortunate way to make an exit from a cup competition. Personally I would suggest that in the event of the second match being drawn, there should be a third match, and then a 'outright' of sets and points. In other words a second

replay. If anyone has any feelings on this subject, then do not hesitate to write, as I am sure the editor would appreciate it.

Still on the Hyde Cup, W'tree Labour, Crawfords and St. Edward's have successfully carried the banner of this division by beating a number of teams from 3A, namely Vagabonds, Stanley House, Linnets and Maghull, just to mention a few

Division 4A. By Brian Jennings

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Rafters 'B'	11	7	2	2	75
Palatine	9	9	0	0	70
LYCA	11	5	2	4	66
Bohemians	9	7	0	2	65
Police 'C'	12	6	4	2	65
W'loo Pk 'B'	10	6	3	1	58
Eng. Elec. 'D'	12	4	6	2	56
Knotty Ash 'B'	10	4	5	1	47
Pirates	9	4	3	2	45
Colonsay 'D'	11	3	7	1	39
Palatine 'A'	10	0	9	1	27
Bath St. 'D'	11	1	9	1	27
Rafters 'C'	10	1	9	0	26
Odyssey---withdrawn					

---Record expunged

With only half the season behind us 51 sets have been conceded due to teams not turning up with full teams or not bothering to turn up at all. As you can well imagine this has already made a mockery of the league table, and as Ken Jones told us in the "Liverpool Echo" my own team, Rafters 'B', have been the main benefactors having been made gifts of 34 sets, hence our good position in the league. In the last six weeks Rafters 'B' have only played one league game (against our own 'C' team)—this could be compared with the Women's Division—PATHEPIC!

The league has already split into three groups, Palatine, Bohemians and Rafters 'B' fighting it out for promotion, although if Bohemians or Rafters are thinking of catching Palatine they will have to beat them pretty convincingly and as both of these matches will be on Palatine's table I can't see this happening. At the time of writing T. Barraclough and D. Evans of Palatine have still got 100% in the league and Bill Jones, their No. 1, has only dropped one set, surprisingly enough to J. Parks of their own 'A' team.

At the other end of the table Palatine 'A', Bath St. 'D', Odyssey 'A' and Rafter's 'C' are locked together in a desperate struggle to avoid relegation although conceding matches is not helping their causes.

Les French has done it again—five girls of amazing potential, despite their lack of experience, and in Brenda Williams case lack of inches are more than holding their own. Diane Williams had a good win over Dave Coulson of LYCA 21-11, 21-16 and Brenda Williams did well beating Alan Malthouse of Rafter's 21-16 in the third.

Knotty Ash are capable of upsetting any of the top teams as they proved when failing narrowly to share the points with Palatine, P. Dunning scoring a good double beating J. Parks 21-13 in the third and D. Lever 22-20, 21-19.

Liverpool Pirates do quite well when they field a full side sharing the points with LYCA and Police.

Division 4B. By Jack Lambert

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Sparta 'A'	13	13	0	0	112
Police 'B'	13	11	1	1	98
Bohs. 'A'	12	10	1	1	90
Orrell 'A'	11	7	4	0	69
Bath St. 'C'	11	8	2	1	65
Knotty Ash 'A'	13	7	5	1	61
St. Edwards 'A'	11	4	6	1	52
Giro	12	3	8	1	51
Police 'D'	11	3	6	2	47
Mossley Hill 'A'	12	4	7	1	46
Coll. of Tech.	12	2	7	3	41
University 'B'	9	4	5	1	39
Eng. Elec. 'E'	12	0	11	1	25
Colonsay 'E'	12	0	11	1	23

The "youngsters" from Sparta soon slammed my opening statement of the last issue. We might not have known who the champions were before the season started but I think most of us knew soon after.

Over the years as a correspondent I have always felt and understood that this was a local magazine covering local news. As such I endeavour to cover as many items of individual and team news as I can, with the odd personal opinion thrown in. Some correspondents seem to think differently, if you feel as they do let me know and I too will start wandering away from table-tennis!

Perhaps an introduction to our late starters, University is one. While they had close wins over the bottom teams, their six points from Sparta and Bohemians, despite defeat, were really good points, Jarzecki winning three of them.

Knotty Ash, with a very nice start to the season have lost their No. 1, Pownall, who has broken a leg, may it mend quickly, as I am sure we all wish him a speedy return to our scene. His team had two nice 6-4 wins over Giro and Mossley Hill, with Rowlandson taking top honours.

A triumph for Police 'D' when they held Sparta, who were without strong man Leeming, to 6-4. Bonner and a "youngster" named Heague who shows great potential were mainly responsible, but it was "young" Demain who saved Sparta.

Two good wins by Hughes of St. Edward's, with 7 sets going to 3, they lost to Orrell who had Brint back in action, but Billy Illidge and Walsh won two apiece. College of Tech. scored their second win against Giro (Harper 2) with Patel and Worrall hitting top form. Every Police 'D' card I pick up seems to be loaded with news, mostly good, but I have to pick one bad, when they got in a right tangle with Colonsay and eventually won 5-4 after extra time.

Bath St. (Spencer 2) and St. Edward's (Kelly and McCann 2) had a 5-5 battle royal, six games to three.

Bohemians and Police 'B' continue on their merry winning way but the latter only had sets from Dyson and Christian 21-19 in the third to show against Sparta on their own table. Mossley Hill won their first game of the season against Police 'D', Susan Luft and Pratt winning two apiece of their sides 7. For the wooden spoon fighters Curtis and Hands did well to take two of English Electric's 3 against University, incidentally, you will find that Victoria building is the original University building with the tower, you go into the quadrangle behind this, enter by a locked door in the left-hand corner and the room is on the 3rd floor.

Bohemians 'A' have a tough tie with Palatine and our other two representatives meet each other in the Forrest Cup Quarter-finals.

Division 5.

By Tony Arthur

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Stan. House 'A'	11	9	1	1	83
W'tree Lab. 'E'	11	6	3	2	75
Old Swan	9	7	0	2	65
Trinity 'B'	10	7	2	1	64
S. Kath's	8	6	1	1	59
Police 'E'	8	5	2	1	57
Vagabonds 'A'	12	5	7	0	52
Maghull 'A'	9	3	5	1	44
Cadwa 'B'	9	2	4	3	42
Cheshire Lines	9	2	7	0	25
Linnets 'B'	10	1	9	0	21
Maghull 'B'	11	0	11	0	3
Bradstones and Bradstones 'A'					

—withdrawn, Records expunged.

As in my present condition I am unable to think of any brilliant or amusing way to begin this article I suppose I'd better wish everyone a belated Happy New Year. Have you ever noticed what a horribly loud noise a table-tennis ball makes when it hits the table? If you ask me they should have invented the sponge ball when the sponge bat came in.

Ah well, I suppose I'd better get down to squeezing more blood out of the grindstone, or something. Unfortunately the match results to date confirm what I said in the last issue, which leaves me with nothing to write. Old Swan and Stanley House have clocked up a few more points with W'tree Lab. 'E' and Police 'E' not far behind. However

in the last issue I refrained from mentioning my own team S. Katharine's College, as it would have seemed like counting the proverbial unhatched chickens, with only a few score cards sent in. At the moment they aren't flinging many points down the drain. They drew with W'tree Labour at S. Kath's and beat Stanley House 6-4, though it grieves me to point out that Stanley House were one man short. If S. Kath's manage to get their confused match arrangements sorted out they stand a good chance in the promotion stakes.

As far as the Cup stands, although I haven't got all the score cards or the draw, those left in to the best of my knowledge are Police 'E', W'tree Lab. 'E', Cadwa 'B' and Maghull 'B.' Police well deserve their place in the semi-final as they have fought and beaten Stanley House and Old Swan to get there. W'tree Lab. have beaten Maghull 'A' and Cheshire Lines and Cadwa have beaten Trinity and Bradstones. Alas, I am afraid Maghull 'B' will have to actually play a match, if they wish to get any further.

As several hefty chunks of good literature were carved out of my last manuscript I shall offer this in its present form in the hope it shall remain uncensored and unabridged.

(*Editor.* It has, but I feel that "good literature" is a rather optimistic description!).

Women's Division

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Crawfords	10	9	0	1	83
Cadwa	9	7	1	1	73
Crawfords 'A'	10	4	6	0	52
Colonsay	9	5	4	0	45
Police	9	2	7	0	22
Knotty Ash	9	0	9	0	5

ROYal 4231

ROY 4213

GLOVERS AUTOMOBILES

39 LEECE STREET, LIVERPOOL 1

Liverpool's Centre for the discerning Motorist

PERSONAL ATTENTION AT ALL TIMES

Always a selection of low mileage one owner cars in stock

Hire Purchase arranged - Immediate Insurance

Part Exchanges welcomed

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER —NOVEMBER ISSUE.

In the above article Ken Chambers suggested two alternatives to our present scoring system and gave two examples of these. Unfortunately these were accidentally omitted and we are therefore printing them below :

5 and 10 Point Bonus System

	P	W	D	L	Sets	Pts.	Bonus Pts.	Total Pts.
Team "A"	20	17	3	0	155	155	185	340
Team 'B'	20	16	2	2	170	170	170	340

Points for Win or Draw System Plus Bonus Point for every 10 Sets Won

	P	W	D	L	Sets	Pts.	Bonus Pts.	Total Pts.
Team "A"	20	17	3	0	155	37	15	52
Team "B"	20	16	2	2	170	34	17	51

This particular example brings out fully the merit of the proposed system in that both teams would have a chance of the championship right up to the last match, whereas under either of the previous systems one of the teams would have had it "sewn up."

CON GRATULATIONS

On January 23rd was the Silver Wedding anniversary of Don and Jean Cameron. As Chief accountant of a prominent Shipping Co., Don relaxes by being Treasurer of various Societies and we are happy that ours is one of them.

We wish Don and Jean many more happy years.