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Table Tennis Digest

Volume 24

Number 1



Official Magazine

OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Table Tennis Digest

All correspondence must be
addressed to the Editor
"Table Tennis Digest"
118 Sheil Road, Liverpool L6 7UA

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

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Vol. 24

No. 1

Editorial

I am afraid that I must begin my first editorial with an apology for the late arrival of this issue due to an unfortunate set of circumstances which nobody could help. Anyway I hope you will think the wait has been worthwhile when you have read the magazine.

One thing you will notice is that although Ken Armson has retired from the 'hot seat' he is still continuing to distribute the Digest and has very kindly written some divisional notes for this issue. However he has assured me that he will be too busy to do this again so that the next issue, which is due out soon, will be without some divisional notes unless someone from the divisions concerned volunteers to write them. It does not take too long and is a good means of finding out what is going on in your particular division. It also means that you can get your own point of view across in this wildly successful 'international' magazine for sportsmen-women. (I send a copy to the U.S.A.).

This is a point to which Ken Armson has given much space in the past and to which I am devoting the editorial. In simple terms this is your magazine and it should contain what you want in it. My views on table tennis are no better and in many cases a lot worse than yours, and as regards the Liverpool league I do not pretend to know much about it, having been here a relatively short time. So please let me know what you would like included in future issues. Better still write something yourself and send it to me at 118 Sheil Road, Liverpool L6 7UA.

If you doubt the effectiveness of the Digest as a means of putting your views across just think of the publicity the 4-a-side system got last season. Would it have got the necessary two-thirds majority at the last A.G.M. if the issue had not been discussed in the Digest? I doubt it as most representatives know how they are going to vote at the A.G.M. before they get there. One small letter in the Digest reaches a vastly larger audience than the most brilliant speech at the A.G.M. Having experienced the new system for half a season now you must have some comments you would like to make about it. Has it stopped the 'technical arrangement' of teams? Has it sacrificed two games of singles for half an hour of high farce (Hereafter referred to as 'doubles') or has it introduced a new skill into the game? Are conditions suitable for playing doubles? Has it stopped people arriving late and leaving early? I await your comments with interest.

Two new items appear in this issue. The first is a review by Phil Reid of Denis Neale's new book, and the second is an account of the history of the Linnets club by Barry Meyer. My thanks to them both, as to all the contributors in this issue for the time and trouble they put into their articles. I only hope they think it is worth it. Last but not least congratulations to Tony Clayton for his recent well-deserved successes. Not only is he an exceptional player, he also has his head screwed on the right way which is more than you can say for a lot of other players with less ability but a higher opinion of themselves.

From the Secretary's Desk

We will be well into a new season before you receive this, the first issue of our Digest, in this case neither the Editor or the Printer is at fault. You may remember that the committee asked on many occasions during the later part of last season, and during the close season, for someone to take over the duties of Editor, following the retirement of Ken Armson, we have a very difficult task sorting out the rush of volunteers, but eventually persuaded John Wren to accept the position. I am sure you all join in wishing him success in this new position, a success which can be immensely helped along the way by your co-operation.

It is with regret that we must start the new season by reporting the passing of two Table Tennis personalities. In July Lancashire Table Tennis was made the poorer by the death of our President Mr. Jack Livingstone. A memorial trophy has been instituted by the County, to which we in Liverpool have subscribed and this trophy will be used for presentation to the Junior Division Champions in the Lancashire and Cheshire League. Nearer home we record with deep regret the loss in a boating accident last May of Don Gauld, a member of the Police Table Tennis Section for the past 20 years, and a highly respected member of the league.

You will shortly receive a quantity of draw tickets with a letter asking you to sell them on behalf of the league, we do ask for your co-operation in this, as in these times of rising costs, this is a foolproof way of making a profit for the league with no risk attached, a profit which could well mean the difference between a rise in fees next year or our ability once again to keep the cost of Table Tennis in Liverpool at its present low figure.

JOHN McKIM.

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NET CORDS

A word in praise of Wavertree Labour with the Editor's permission. Like most clubs we have one or two players whose temperament is on the hasty side, but unlike most clubs we have done something about it, one player is now suspended until the end of the season! You know it makes sense!

* * *

A pity to see this season that one of the best players produced by Liverpool is literally 'only here for the beer'.

Elsewhere I am sure you will see at least one reference to walk-overs being conceded. I'd just like to say that not once this season have I played in a match where one side was short of a full team, caught short possibly, but played short, never.

* * *

I'd like to wish you all a Happy New Year, but I'd like to come back in the next issue.

Congratulations are also due to Sue Manning for her triumph in the frozen North. Les French was so chuffed he almost had a hair cut in celebration, trouble was he couldn't decide which one.

(There will now be a short intermission for groans).

* * *

One has to admire the spirit of one club new to the league this year. In their first match they claimed a 20-1 victory. Pity they thought a bit small, they must have won at least 210 points in the course of their 20 games.

* * *

One point about the new four-a-side structure nobody thought of is the number of long standing friendships which have failed the ultimate test of Doubles. Nothing more aggravating than watching your partner fail to counter hit returns of your service.

* * *

I took part in a match recently where we had to bring the Expedite rule into force, we had no choice really, the score was 3-2 in the first when time was up. As the Electric Iron (Mr. Klein to his friends) once remarked in a similar situation, 'This is not Table Tennis'. True, a rule amendment making the Expedite rule obligatory in league matches as well as cup-ties, would save everyone a lot of boredom.

* * *

How about Tony Clayton, then? He's a nice bloke, too, he let me have twelve points in the set I played against him. Mind you, rumours that Jack Lambert has been negotiating with the English Electric management on behalf of one C. Barnes can be safely ignored I think.

JOHN MOLYNEUX.

Book Review

'The Way To The Top' — by Denis Neale

When I first saw the book I must confess my first impressions were 'Not much there for twenty-five bob'. And I said so to Denis. 'Read it first and then tell me whether you think it's worth it' he said.

Well I did read it and I say without hesitation one of the best books on table tennis I've ever read. Denis is above all honest. He says exactly what he thinks and gives his reasons. He doesn't ask you to agree with him, he leaves it to you, but I think when you have read it you will have to agree. Denis is a remarkably deep thinker about the game and anxious and eager to help others who want to be good.

I found his life story interesting although not very detailed or lengthy. By far the biggest proportion of the book is devoted to telling you how to improve your game. His advice will not suit all the purists but it is sound, helpful advice. As one who has done (or tried to do) a considerable amount of coaching I found much of what Denis said I had already been doing. I also found a considerable amount of advice which I will attempt to put to good use in the future. The photographs are first rate and the advice on training, etc., is bound to be helpful.

In no way will the book be regarded as controversial and I feel sure this is the way Denis intended it. Denis is really concerned with one thing—winning. Winning fairly at all times—but winning. Denis has never been one to use a paragraph when a sentence would do and so it is in the book.

I have a feeling that if you buy this book you won't want to put it down until you have finished.

PHILIP REID.

*Published 1970 by Arthur Barker Ltd., 5 Winsley Street, London W.1.

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HERE AND THERE

The 'Midland Open' lived up to its reputation as a great tournament—well organised, exciting play, good conditions. One incident stands out in my mind. Denis Neale playing Graham Davies. Who would back Graham to beat Denis? Not many, even fewer after Denis won the first at 10. Graham took the second at 21-19 then came the third. Neck and neck, Denis fell behind, recovered and the match reached 20 all. It was a set Denis desperately wanted to win—who is going to turn £25 down (apart from the honour of winning). Davies leads 21-20. A quick hitting rally follows and Denis forces Graham away from the table, hits straight down the middle. Graham manages to get a bat to it and returns it deep near the centre line. The ball drops, apparently straight down. The umpire could have been in a dilemma. Did it touch or didn't it? No hesitation from sportsman Neale. Quick as a flash he says 'Touched' and is half way round the table to shake hands with Graham before the Welshman moved. After shaking hands with the umpire he sits down—disappointed but his reputation as a sportsman enhanced. I spoke to him later. 'Did he think the umpire saw it touch?' 'I don't know' Denis told me 'But I KNEW it touched. If I had only been 50% sure I would have waited for the umpire's decision. But if the ball definitely touches I always say so—what ever the score.' In any sport amateur or professional—there is always room for the true sportsman. Denis is certainly that.

The Nissen Tournament was a big success at Loughborough with in the region of 350 watching. A disappointing one-sided final was won comfortably by Neale over Barnes. The best game was Barnes v. Taylor in the semi-final. Taylor seemed more aggressive than usual. Both in play and outlook. He seemed gritty, determined, and he could so easily have won. Keep it up Trevor!

Whilst on about Trevor. I was speaking to him about the Chinese at the Scandinavian Open in Sweden. Trevor thought their men weren't playing too well but was very impressed with the play of their women. My guess if they play in the World's they will sweep the board in the Men's events but miss out on the Women's. (I fancy one of three—Alexandru (Rumania), Rudnova (Russia) or Vostova (Czechoslovakia) to take the Ladies Singles title. Trevor thinks their women will take the lot and their men won't do so well. Anyway we shall see—assuming of course they enter!

PHILIP REID.

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A History of . . .

L i n n e t s

The inaugural meeting of the club was held on the 6th February, 1951 and the original members consisted of 15 players from other mixed activity clubs who wanted a club formed solely for the purpose of playing table-tennis. Don Brown, Jim Green and Mr. and Mrs. Sturgeon were among these founder members. Premises were found at 14a Linnet Lane, (hence the club's name), and the club entered two ladies' and three men's teams in the league. Jim Green was elected secretary after this first season—a position which he held until his death.

By 1953 the club was getting on its feet financially when it was found that the treasurer had absconded with £72 in cash belonging to the club and had also paid himself prizes in the club pool to which he had not been entitled. The cash was eventually repaid in instalments but it was a severe blow. In the 1954/1955 season the club moved its premises to Christ Church in Hesketh Street and continued to grow in membership. It is worth noting that even at this time Jim Green had to write to all the clubs in the league regarding players arriving late at matches so this is not just a recent curse!

More successes followed in the 1956/1957 season when three teams were promoted and the 'A' team won the Rumjahn Cup. Two members were chosen to play for Liverpool and several local closed championships were won by our players. Two years later we were on the move again! This time it was to a garage in Lucknow Street, but this was not particularly satisfactory so in 1962 we moved to our present premises (the 'ice box') in Aigburth Cricket ground. This meant the members building a new hut, a process which took over six months but which finally gave us premises we could call our own.

This also helped the membership figures to soar so that we have over 70 players in 1964 and were the biggest table tennis club in the North of England, entering 8 men's and 3 ladies' teams in the league. At the same time we had 20 women table tennis players and in the 1963/64 season the women's team created what must be a record of consistency in the league for this was the seventh consecutive season that they had played together without ever having to have a reserve! We nearly had another club record the next season when Ken Foulkes went until his very last set of the season before being beaten.

All good things come to an end however, and in 1968 there was a mass exodus from the club leaving us with 5th division standard players playing in the 2nd division. All three teams finished bottom of their respective divisions, winning a grand total of two matches between them—and one of those was a walkover! This bad patch has not lasted long though and last season the first team walked away with the 2nd division and the Rumjahn Cup. Now fourth in the 1st division this team is composed of Blackburn players. Last season John Baron became the first player in the history of the club to have a 100% record—both league and cup—ably supported by Frank Thomas, Keith Jackson, Phil Blake and Dave Cottrell. The club can also boast of three firemen (to cool down things!) and Eddie Owens, who is the only player I know who plays with his cap on! One thing is certain we all enjoy our table tennis, even when we lose, and hope that you get as much pleasure out of playing us as we do from playing you.

BARRY MEYER.

RUMOUR HAS IT THAT . . .

- if you disagree with your team's score as shown in this Digest you should contact E. Cameron, 44 Wavertree Green, Liverpool L15 6TA (722 6456).
- Someone is going to write to the Digest soon.
- all the best Yorkshiremen are called Luigi these days.
- there will be a rule amendment in favour of 3-man teams at the next A.G.M.
- Pete King of Beauclair is getting married in February. Congratulations.
- the fine for sending in score-cards late will be increased to £1 at the A.G.M.
- scorecards will still come in late.
- people are going to help divisional writers by putting Christian names on scorecards.
- Tony Clayton won the Universities Athletic Union singles and the doubles with Chris Brewer of Wavertree Labour.
- someone will explain why trousers can be worn during play but not track suits.
- Chester Barnes received £25 for winning the sponsored British Closed. Sponsored?
- these notes are nowhere near as good as Netcards.
- the University have won the North Western Division of the Inter-Universities competition with a team composed of players none of whom play for University in the League—Tony Clayton, Chris Brewer, John Wren, Pete King and Mike Newton.
- the phrase 'braces if worn must not be visible' will be omitted from the next handbook. Bad for the image!
- the England table tennis squad is only to be allowed to drink one particular type of soft drink. Scccch.....
- a degree is not essential to play for Beauclair but it certainly helps.
- people will mark the order the games are played in on the scorecard to help research into a theory that the doubles are left to the end of the night to provide some light relief.
- Keith Fitzsimmons will receive a Valentine from the Management Committee.
- University will have to withdraw from 4B.
- table tennis is the only sport never to have distinguished between amateur and professional players despite the impression given in the handbook.
- if you want to receive all returns of service on your forehand stand on the left hand side of the table and serve straight down that side. The return must come back on your forehand if you are right handed.
- inside John Molyneux there are two Ken Armsons trying to get out.
- Chris Brewer is now ranked by his County.
- the best table tennis on T.V. is in a commercial for beer.
- if you have read all this you will have indIGESTion.

Around the Divisions

FIRST DIVISION

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Eng. Electric	12	11	1	0	104
Liverpool Y.M.C.A. ...	12	11	0	1	96
Wavertree Labour ...	12	10	2	0	93
Linnets	11	9	2	0	82
Y.M.C.A. "A"	12	5	5	2	59
Wav. Labour "B" ...	11	6	4	1	57
Wav. Labour "A" ...	10	5	3	2	51
Eng. Electric "A" ...	11	4	7	0	47
Rafters	12	4	8	0	46
Trinity	12	4	8	0	43
Beauchair	12	2	8	2	40
Colonsay	9	0	7	2	25
Mossley Hill	10	1	8	1	25
Waterloo Park	10	0	10	0	14

FIRST DIVISION

As a change from that lot at the top let's start with the tangle at the bottom for it's all happening down there, new signings, unexpected results and the commencement of the "silly" season. This makes efforts to sort things out extremely difficult for with results like Liv. Y.M. 'A' 2 M. Hill 8; Wav. Lab. 7 W'loo Pk. 3; and the silliest of them all, Trinity 5 Eng. Elec. 5.

One sure thing is that W'loo Park will be relegated to the 2nd Division, but the problem of who will accompany them may not be clear for some time yet. Many were convinced that Trinity would not be able to hold their own but with a points total of 48 from 13 matches to date they are more than holding their own. They are the only team involved in the relegation issue who have made no new signings and it remains to be seen whether or not they can continue gaining sets off the strengthened teams of their opponents. Their star player is Ricky Brown who is having a very good season ably supported by others of his team-mates in bringing off surprise victories.

Colonsay must surely be out of trouble for they have now added L. Barclay to their recent signings of Mercer and Haycs. Their actual points total is unknown as four of their first half results are not yet known to me. Mossley Hill have brought John Kenwright back but for them it may be too late to avoid the drop unless Beauchair, whose results have improved since S. Kaufman commenced playing

regularly, fall away again. The main complication stems from the fact that these strengthened teams will improve on 1st half results and probably overtake teams who thought themselves safe. Rafters, for instance, could possibly find themselves caught up in this struggle.

It is a good thing for the 1st Division that new, and not so new, faces are coming in, for it makes for better matches, but it is a sad reflection on the strength of our league that this is necessary. No club seems to have any new players coming through and the future prospects seem very bleak, particularly for our representative teams.

A few words about the front-runners to stifle their complaints. Eng. Elec. look certainties for the double again for although the Labour Club have narrowed the gap they do not seem consistent or strong enough to take over the lead, although with Eng. Elec. in such a generous mood as to give Trinity 5 sets I suppose anything is possible. Their only defeat, however, was by Wav. Lab. when without Tony Clayton, and thus exposed as just another good team, they lost 6-4. This was not a night for the faint-hearted for the match was not settled until the last set of doubles. Tony Rigby emerged as the star with two good victories over Birch and D'Arcy and taking away their 100% average at the same time.

The Y.M. seem to be declining as a major team and with no new players in view they can have little hope of regaining any titles for a while. The team to watch is Linnets, who have made a successful return to the 1st Division and future prospects for this team look very good indeed. They look likely cup finalists and will not finish lower than 4th. If they stay together next season they should emerge as really strong contenders for the title.

Not being a fortune-teller I will not make any forecasts, but I will say that Dame Fortune can be very fickle as we all know and I have the feeling that Trinity may be needing a lot of fortune during the next few weeks.

KEN ARMSON.

DIVISION TWO

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Wavertree Labour 'C'	12	10	1	1	97
Bath Street	12	9	1	2	88
Crawfords	11	7	2	3	70
Colonsay 'B'	12	5	3	4	65
Colonsay 'A'	11	7	4	0	63
Linacre	12	6	5	1	62
Sparta	12	6	4	2	60
Police	12	4	8	0	58
St. Edwards	11	5	5	1	57
Liverpool Jewish	11	3	6	2	51
Trinity 'A'	11	3	7	1	43
Sefton	9	4	4	1	41
Cadwa	11	2	9	0	35
Knotty Ash	12	0	12	0	10

It seems a little strange to be writing the first notes in January when almost half the season has passed and by now many of the season's topics have been resolved, including the promotion issue.

There is no doubt in my mind that Bath Street and Wavertree Labour 'C' will go up to the first division. There was a slight doubt about Bath Street's chances at the beginning of the season but now that Arthur Taylor and Bill Clayton are playing regularly the doubles have disappeared. Wavertree too have some good players in their team, including the steady Norman Chaloner and Ron Barke. I see John Molyneux also plays for this team—you have to be most polite when playing him or else you may find yourself as a star feature in his column. Which of these two teams will finish first is at the moment uncertain. At the time of writing the Labour Club have a slight lead but whether they will hold it remains to be seen.

As usual we have a small group of teams chasing the leaders hoping they will slip up. These are Crawfords and the two Colonsay teams. The Colonsay club baffle me. No doubt they have good reasons for splitting their strength and I realise that it is difficult to grade the amount of good players they have, but it does not look very good on paper when the 'A' team is beaten by the 'B' team, especially with a scoreline of 8-2. It is interesting to see Les French in the 'B' team as he started last season in the first team. I noticed too that John O'Sullivan was back in the 'B' team after last season's promotion from the 'B' to the 'A'. Still, as I have said, no doubt they have excellent reasons for all the change.

Down at the bottom Knotty Ash and Cadwa are certain to go down unless they sign new players, although I see that Cadwa have lured Billy Crafter back. He will be most welcome although I feel that they will need more than Bill to keep them in the division. Who goes down with them is anybody's guess at the moment, a number of teams could find themselves in a fight to stay up, with Trinity 'A' and Sefton having things a little bit harder than most.

Four-a-side is now with us and most people I have asked seem to prefer it to Five-a-side. One reservation I have is playing Doubles in small cramped rooms—and there are some of those in the league! So far I have not come across such a room in this division as yet, but I would be interested to hear from those who have. It does, however, give us more Table Tennis and that cannot be bad.

This year I have decided to have a congratulations note as well as commiserations so here goes: Congratulations to J. Dancaster of Liverpool Jewish, D. Goodwin of Colonsay 'A' and F. Farquharson of Wavertree Labour 'C' all of whom beat Arthur Taylor. No mean feat this, as most of the First Division were unable to manage it last year. My commiserations go to Les French of Colonsay 'B' who lost to clubmate D. Goodwin 23-21, 20-22, 22-20.

One final point. I have noticed two players have given away walkovers in the early part of the season—this now means the loss of three sets which is a lot of sets for a team to lose in one match. Think about it.

KEITH FITZSIMMONS.

DIVISION 3A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Wavertree Labour D'	12	9	2	1	81
English Electric 'B'	9	8	1	0	68
Palatine	10	7	3	0	60
Linnetts 'A'	9	6	1	2	56
Liverpool Y.M. 'C'	11	5	5	1	51
Rafters 'B'	11	3	4	4	50
University	8	5	2	1	49
Cadwa 'A'	11	3	7	1	48
Police 'A'	9	3	5	1	43
Maghull	10	2	7	1	35
Bath Street 'A'	7	2	5	0	31
Vagabonds	7	1	5	1	27
Crawfords 'B'	10	1	8	1	21
Stanley House	Expunged				

The battle for the two top spots in this division must be the most interesting in the league for six teams are battling for the opportunity of playing 2nd division table tennis next season and at the moment it is still wide open. At one time the Labour Club were the pacemakers closely pursued by Eng. Elec. 'B' and it almost seemed safe to predict that these two would finish at the top in that order. The last four matches for the Labour Club have changed all that and from possible winners they have gone to outsiders. This was not so much a slide as an avalanche, the result of two defeats (6-4, and 7-3) a draw and a 6-4 win in four successive matches. They have fallen to Linnets 7-3 and University 6-4.

Linnets themselves would be in a much stronger position if they could strengthen the 3 and 4 positions where they are losing most of their sets. Their strength is at 1 and 2 where Alan Dean and Ray Lavin are having a very good season including a very successful partnership in the doubles. With better support their chances of promotion would be pretty high. University appear to be the strongest team in the division but are denied their proper place in the table due to the fact that they have to complete their matches by 9-45 p.m. as this is almost impossible they are having to concede unplayed sets to their opponents which has resulted in possible victories becoming defeats. This happened in their matches against Wav. Labour and Eng. Elec. when they had to concede two sets each time and lost 6-4. In the return match away to Wavertree Labour they won 6-4. This surely speaks for itself.

English Electric have taken full advantage of the Labour Club's defeats and have moved into top place but they could find themselves hard pressed to stay there. They have defeated all the contenders with the exception of a 6-4 defeat by Wavertree Labour. Theirs is a strong steady team and if I had to make a forecast I would put my money on them but would not be surprised if proved wrong. With strong outsiders such as Palatine and Rafters to provide the stumbling blocks a lot can happen in the second half of the season so it is a case of perming any two from six.

Police, Liv. Y.M. and Maghull are all having a season of mixed fortunes, they are all potentially strong teams but their results have not been as good as we would have expected. Perhaps the second half may bring an improvement in their results.

With Stanley House dropping out only one team will be relegated and this doubtful honour will fall on Crawfords 'B' who are just not strong enough to hold their own in this division.

Having read this report and not seen your name mentioned it may occur to you that a volunteer from this division is required who can write much better rubbish. If so, please contact the editor immediately, as the next issue is due out shortly. Should no offer be forthcoming then my next three articles will be exclusives on the Wavertree Labour Team !!!

KEN ARMSON.

DIVISION 3B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Liverpool Y.M. 'B' ...	11	8	1	2	73
Orrell	11	7	4	0	67
Rafters 'A'	11	7	4	0	64
Sparta 'A'	10	6	2	2	57
Crawfords 'A'	9	5	2	2	50
Liverpool Jewish 'A' ..	9	7	2	0	49
Police 'B'	9	4	1	4	49
Eng. Elec. 'C'	11	2	7	2	46
Colonsay 'C'	10	3	7	0	42
Waterloo Park 'A' ...	9	2	4	3	42
Hilltop	10	2	7	1	41
Bohemians	11	1	8	2	40
Bath Street 'B'	9	1	7	2	34
Odyssey					Expunged

As this is the first digest of the season, and we are already half way through the fixtures, my plan of analysing 2 or 3 clubs in detail every issue has now been abandoned, due to lack of space and time. However I will endeavour to mention as many players and clubs as possible. This column is your column and as I have said before please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any information or statistics you wish to have printed.

We extend a welcome to Liverpool Y.M., Sparta, Waterloo Park, and Bohemians, but have unfortunately lost one club--Odyssey. Looking at the league table Liverpool Y.M. do not seem to have made any arrangements about staying in this division.

At the time of writing they are top with 73 points from 11 games followed by one of the founder members of this division—Orrell—who have collected 67 points from 11 games. I am not boasting, but I think I mentioned Gordon Kirk and Co. would be there or thereabouts because of a few signings they have made. And much improved Rafterers are in 3rd place. Following a 6-4 defeat by Orrell in the Hyde Cup, the two teams met again 5 days later, with Rafterers hammering Orrell by 7 sets to 3, so it shows just what a little determination can do. The most peculiar feature was that both teams played exactly the same players in exactly the same order, and both games were at Rafterers.

At the other end of the table Bath Street had 34 points and were a bad last, until Liverpool Jewish decided that as it was snowing and rather cold, table tennis was the last thing they wanted to do so Bath Street gained 10 pts., this division suffers its first 'Thrown' match, and the Jewish club lose many friends especially from the lower reaches of the division. Colonsay, Eng. Elec., Bohemians, Hilltop and Bath Street, are all 'scraping up' as many points as possible, and yet they are only 20-30 points behind Liverpool Y.M.!! So I think the form book can be forgotten for most matches.

The doubles are seemingly being enjoyed by all, and personally I do not know why the 4 man team was not introduced earlier. Wading through 4 months of score cards Cyril Callaghan comes out tops with 96% having only lost one game, that being against G. Gaskell of Rafterers 21-15, 21-14.

Finally, may I thank all club secretaries who helped to re-arrange the Hilltop's fixtures, especially Roy Thomas and the lads at Bohemians who have allowed us to use their premises for our matches. If it were not for their kindness, the league would have lost another club from this division.

ROB. LOCK.

DIVISION 4A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Old Swan	12	12	0	0	102
Police 'C'	11	9	1	1	77
Waterloo Park 'B'	11	6	2	3	62
L.Y.C.A.	10	6	2	2	62
Police 'E'	11	5	1	1	55
Eng. Elec. 'D'	10	4	2	2	55
University 'A'	9	5	3	1	49
Colonsay 'D'	10	2	5	4	46
Bath Street 'D'	9	1	4	5	43
Rafterers 'C'	10	2	6	2	39
Liverpool Jewish 'B'	9	2	6	1	33
Pirates	9	0	7	2	25
Knotty Ash 'B'	9	0	9	0	14
Bohemians 'A'	Expunged				

With the introduction of 4-a-side many new faces were to be expected in the lower divisions but one which was not expected was that of Dave Crispin who has returned to his former club Old Swan, and swopped a 1st division place with Colonsay for a 4th division with Old Swan. John Linforth has also returned with him and together they spearhead a team which is sweeping all before them. Ably assisted by Steve France and Ken Kinnear at 3 and 4 they are unbeaten and most of their sets are won in two straight and only once have they conceded more than 3 sets in a match. The team to do this were University. Dave has won all his sets in two and lost only once—also in two—to D. Olsen, Waterloo Park, who completed a notable double with a victory over Linforth. Crispin and Linforth are also undefeated in the doubles and the France/Kinnear partnership had lost once. Altogether a strong team and one that will take some stopping in this division. I have no doubt that they have already cleared a place on their trophy shelf for the Forrest Cup.

The battle for second place is slightly more difficult to make out but I would think that Police 'C' will be the team to accompany Old Swan into the 3rd division. This will be a well earned promotion for this team have been playing together for some time and have always been up near the top of the table. They have strong contenders in L.Y.C.A. who, like themselves, have played together for some time and always been in the running but never quite made it and I think that this season it will be the same again for them as Police seem capable

of holding off their challenge. They have met this week and the result of this match will have made the position much clearer, perhaps.

What is confusing the position for the whole division is Pirates. This team were supposed to have dropped out but have now started playing matches again. How this has come about I do not know but be warned, make sure of your fixtures with them as you are liable to find yourselves on the wrong end of a walkover.

Bohemians 'A' have definitely dropped out and so only one team will be relegated and providing there are no more drop-outs the relegated team will be Knotty Ash 'B' who are having a pretty rough passage.

A volunteer from this division is required to take over these notes for the next issues as writing three lots of divisional notes is just too much even for anyone as talented as myself. Anyone interested please contact the Editor.

KEN ARMSON.

DIVISION 4B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Colonsay 'E'	11	9	0	2	82
Bath Street 'C'	12	7	3	2	79
Trinity 'B'	10	8	1	1	75
St. Edward's 'A'	11	4	3	4	60
Wav. Lab. 'E'	10	5	2	3	55
Liverpool Poly 'A'	10	3	3	4	52
Beauclair 'A'	11	3	4	4	50
Knotty Ash 'A'	10	4	3	3	49
Eng. Elec. 'E'	12	3	7	2	45
Police 'D'	10	2	7	1	42
University 'B'	9	5	3	1	42
Orrell 'A'	11	2	6	3	41
Giro	9	1	6	2	34
Mossley Hill 'A'	10	0	9	1	22

With half the season completed Trinity and Colonsay Ladies, sorry 'E' team, appear to have the top two spots in their pockets. Their meeting resulted in a draw which left the honours even. This was Colonsay's second draw with no defeats but Trinity have lost one to Wav. Lab. 'E'.

Beauclair, Bath St., Giro and St. Edward's have all strengthened their teams since the season started and although they will all do well the gap is too great to pull back. The introduction of 4-a-side has led to a strengthening of most teams in this division and results are much closer. This is

much better than the succession of 10-0 defeats we had before. At present there have only been about six such defeats. I wonder if anyone has ever given a thought about evening things up completely by having straight divisions?

University have a good team but their impression on the league positions has been disastrous as far as most of us are concerned. They have conceded two 10-0 walkovers, both of which were to Colonsay and Trinity, so while we all have to battle against University the top two get a 10-0 gift to make their task much easier. Should they concede another walkover they will have to withdraw this team and with quite a few matches outstanding this could easily happen.

Although the struggle for supremacy at the top may have been settled the one at the bottom has not. Mossley Hill will definitely be relegated but who will accompany them? The most likely team appears to be Orrell 'A'. They have a good points total at present but it is highly unlikely that their second half total will equal their first as they are unlikely to have the same results against the teams which have been strengthened. This also applies to English Electric and possibly a couple of others.

A bit of advice for the New Year is never to retrieve the ball if it goes near the stage when playing at Beauclair. I did and tripped over a table and fell heavily on my left arm—I am left-handed. I have not yet recovered completely and am still receiving treatment. Mind you, it's the best excuse for losing I have ever had and it's good for a few more matches yet. In my second set my opponent fell also and injured his knee. He spent the game hopping round while I endeavoured to try and move my arm sufficiently to make contact between bat and ball. I have heard it said that I wished this injury on him, this is not so, I was merely expressing the hope that the gods would equal the odds. Is it my fault if I am one of the favoured ones!!

As well as being injured this season I have also been conned, or at least I suspect I have. Giro asked if we could start our match early, 6 p.m. was the time mentioned, due to work commitments. Being such a decent, cheer-

ful and obliging person I agreed and at considerable inconvenience got all my team there early. Alas for good intentions, the only player who was eager to get away was Theo Mills, their best player, and he was going to a party! We would probably have agreed even for this reason, but it is hard to avoid the thought that we had been conned.

KEN ARMSON.

DIVISION 5A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Liverpool Y.M. 'D'	12	12	0	0	113
Cadwa 'B'	11	7	3	1	71
Crawfords D'	9	8	1	0	67
Liverpool Poly	10	7	2	1	59
Maghull 'A'	11	6	4	1	58
Orrell 'B'	11	6	4	1	57
Cadwa 'C'	11	4	6	1	51
Eng. Elec. 'F'	9	4	4	1	41
Bedford House	10	4	6	0	40
Linnets 'B'	11	2	8	1	40
Vagabonds 'A'	9	4	4	1	40
St. Hugh's	10	2	8	0	33
Beauclair 'B'	10	1	8	1	30
Cheshire Lines	10	0	9	1	20

Seasonal greetings to you all and a particular welcome to the new teams in this division, although with half the season gone I expect you feel like seasoned professionals already. This involves, amongst other things, knowing all the cold and draughty club-rooms and most important those that

have bars as opposed to those that brew-up in the tea-break. Sad to relate I know none of these things as I don't happen to play in the division. What is this imbecile doing writing our notes then? (you may well ask). What indeed! All I can promise is that I won't be writing them in the next issue —so if you want some divisional notes please 'volunteer' someone to write them for you (not Ken Armson). Honestly it doesn't take too long and is a good way of finding out exactly what is going on in the division.

The most obvious success story at the moment belongs to Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'D' who are sweeping the opposition aside. They are unbeaten as yet and with 113 points from 12 matches seem intent on a record-breaking run. Congratulations to Messrs. Smith, Ginley and Lee and Wishart on a fine team performance for the first half of the season. A good few points below the Y.M.C.A. there is a most interesting duel taking place between Cadwa 'B' and Crawfords 'D'. Cadwa are on top at the moment but I imagine the positions will be reversed when Crawfords complete all their fixtures as Cadwa have been dropping valuable points. They only managed to beat their 'C' team 7-3 and they also lost 6-4 at home to Liverpool Polytec. This latter game could have gone either way however

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and as with so many others this season the doubles was crucial for they lost both. Hughes and Roberts lost to Choong and Patel 15, 16 and Davies and Henshaw lost to Keen and Smith 19, 20. Polytec themselves are having a good first season in the division and would no doubt do even better if they could play their regular team all the time.

In the nether reaches of the division we find Cheshire Lines and Beauclair 'B'. Mumford seems to be having a good season for Lines and it is good to see a regular turnout by the team, apart from the walkover conceded to Beauclair. It must be discouraging to turn out only to get beaten every week so all credit to them. Slightly above these two is St. Hugh's Youth Club who seem to be lacking experience of league play, although they obviously have talent. In the Stamp Cup they had a very fine 6-4 win over Maghull 'A' and this despite losing both doubles, while in the league they only just lost to Vagabonds 'A' with honours being even in the doubles. Rooney and Phillips beat A. McAlle and Begley 13, 19, 19 while Mitchell and G. McAlle beat Harper and Ridgeway 21, -11, 20.

Apologies to all the teams I haven't found time to mention. No doubt whoever writes these notes next will be an active member of the division and will have a much better idea of what is going on.

Hoping that you have some divisional notes next issue.

JOHN WREN.

DIVISION 5B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Crawfords 'C'	11	11	0	0	95
Old Swan 'A'	12	9	2	1	90
Norris Green	11	9	1	1	82
Woolton	11	7	2	2	69
Cadwa 'D'	10	5	3	2	61
Police 'F'	10	7	3	0	56
Trinity 'C'	10	3	5	2	50
Colonsay 'F'	10	5	4	1	49
Liverpool Jewish 'C'	11	2	7	2	40
Palmerston	11	3	8	0	35
Bath Street 'E'	11	1	10	0	27
Eng. Elcc. 'G'	10	1	9	0	21
Maghull 'B'	11	0	10	1	18
Waterloo Park 'C'	...	Expunged			

With half a season's result for perusal it is difficult to know where to start so I will start where I should have started some time ago by saying how good it is to see our average age dropping with the advent of the boys' clubs and many other young players. However despite the excellent performances of Norris Green, Woolton and Old Swan 'A' we find Crawfords 'C' forging ahead, adding a wealth of experience to the skill shown by all four clubs.

Palmerston — Monday; Woolton — Wednesday; Trinity 'C' — Tuesday. Please note these match notes down then you can't blame your secretary if

... !!! Also remember the rule about walkovers. This is a red hot rule—look at Waterloo Park. The last of the technicalities—how about filling in the last line of your cards?

Most games have gone according to plan and the avalanche of cards means no statistics are available but Norris Green seem to have given Crawfords their toughest game to date with Thatcher losing his 100%. Cameron beat Ashcroft 19 in the third. The doubles tend to be a bit of fun until you lose the match by losing them both as Norris Green did in this instance.

Julie Black (a familiar table tennis name) led English Electric 'E' to their first win over Liverpool Jewish 'C' with three wins. A warm welcome back to Mike Cohen who won his two in this game.

Three good draws: Cadwa 'D' and Colonsay 'F' (Jean Rimmer 2); Trinity 'C' (Hankin 2); and Woolton Boys' Club (Steveson 2) Woolton won both doubles but met a tough No. 1 in Hankin; Old Swan 'A' (both doubles) and Norris Green Boys' Club (Duffy and Allen 2 each).

Hall was mainly responsible for an excellent Police 'F' win over Old Swan Boys' Club (Wild 2) and Butchart led Waterloo Park 'C' to a great victory over Trinity 'C' although of course this doesn't count anymore. Kelly was, Maghull's sole winner against Cadwa who have had a few solid wins.

JACK LAMBERT.

WOMEN'S DIVISIONAL NOTES

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Crawfords	7	7	0	0	58
Colonsay	6	6	0	0	50
Rafters	6	5	1	0	45
Colonsay 'A'	7	4	3	0	42
Cadwa	7	2	4	1	34
Crawfords 'A'	7	2	4	1	28
Police	7	2	4	1	28
Crawfords 'B'	5	2	2	1	27
Maghull	7	1	6	0	19
Crawfords 'C'	7	0	7	0	2

(Fixture Secretary's Note: Will club captains please check their records and let me know if they disagree, better still post the missing cards!).

Happy New Year to everybody and a belated welcome to the new players in this league. I had hoped that this season would see a full division encouraged by the three a side rule we courageed by the three a side rule, we have a slight improvement, I regret, courageed by lack of available match nights.

The championship was expected to be a close fight between Crawfords, Rafters, Cadwa, and Colonsay, but neither Rafters or Cadwa are able to regularly field their strongest team so Crawfords and Colonsay are the main contenders.

V. Mullin won the first game for Crawfords 'C' when she beat M. Duncan of L. & B.P.A.S. 21-17, 15-21,

31-29. Congratulations! I hope the girls in this team continue to enjoy playing table tennis as much as they do at present. Sandra Carter has been winning useful points for Maghull, including the only three games in the seven three defeat by Crawfords 'A'.

The semi-final stage of the Bartholomew Cup has been reached; Colonsay after beating Cadwa (the holders), in the first round lost to Rafters conceding three walkovers, Brenda Williams won two singles, Kathy Baxendale won one single and they teamed to win the doubles. Both Colonsay teams have been eliminated from the cup as Colonsay 'A' awarded Crawfords a Walkover. Crawfords 'B' defeated Maghull 8-2; while the L. & B.P.A.S. beat Crawfords 'A' 6-4, Sue Anderson and Val Ward won two singles apiece and the doubles, while P. Green won the remaining single: Reg Jones was unlucky to be on the losing side as she won her three singles.

Following the cup match I awaited the result of Rafters/Colonsay league match with interest only to learn that it was abandoned due to flooding! Jean Reynolds thought she would make a pot of tea to warm everybody before the match, a tap broke and water erupted everywhere necessitating the Fire Brigade and the Water Board to stop it. No details yet of the Crawfords/Colonsay match, although I understand it ended in a draw.

VAL LEE.