
Table Tennis Digest

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Table Tennis Digest

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No. 3

Editorial

Surprise! Another issue of the Digest and it is only June. Not long to wait now for the October edition, providing someone can be persuaded to edit it.

I am afraid that it really has been rather a "non-year" as far as editions of the Digest are concerned. Still as I pointed out in the first issue you only get the magazine you deserve. Perhaps the next editor will be better able to conquer the apathy so rampant in our League. I certainly would not have allowed myself to be "volunteered" had I realised just how widespread it was.

The task has not been totally unrewarding however. It has been a pleasure to work with Ken Armson, without whose enthusiasm and help I would have found things much more difficult. He has written four sets of divisional notes for this issue, which is three more than I would have bothered to write. My thanks go also to our regular divisional writers—Val Lee, Jack Lambert, Keith Fitzsimmons, Roy Smith and Rob Lock—and to Pete King and Barry Meyer for their contributions in past issues. Also to the printer for the good work done in turning the notes I give him into something intelligible.

This issue is somewhat larger than usual to compensate for the missing editions this year. In addition to the extensive divisional notes we have Brian Leeson's account of the Closed and Alec Davidson's Lancashire and Cheshire Notes. Keith Fitzsimmons has been looking through old issues of the Digest and an anonymous writer has contributed his thoughts on the traditional practice of sending scorecards in late. The play-off for Division 3A is described by Jack Lambert, while Phil Reid, to whom incidentally I also owe a great deal for his contributions, has written an article on the English Junior Open. Then with the aid of a few lagers, I have persuaded Tony Clayton to tell us something of his activities over Easter. Last but certainly not least there is another bumper edition of Netcorde from the indefatigable John Molyneux. For me these have always been the highlights of past issues of the Digest. Long may he continue to write them.

By way of a finale, I should like to comment on the League as I see it at present. There can be no doubt that generally standards are rising. The first division, which is the standard by which any league is judged, is stronger than it has been for some considerable time. It is a pity that this has been achieved by the importation of players rather than by the rise of local talent, of which we have seen a few particularly fine examples this year.

If this position is allowed to continue then the league will stagnate. Young players must be given the chance to progress to the higher divisions for if they are kept down they will lose interest and give the sport up. This would be a tremendous pity for the game has much to offer in terms of sportsmanship, particularly in the lower divisions where fewer pressures make for a friendlier atmosphere. What is needed is a more progressive attitude on the part of both club management and the League Management Committee. I only hope that this comes before Liverpool becomes a backwater for table tennis.

GOOD PUBLICITY ?

Never in my memory has table tennis received so much publicity as it has done over the recent Chinese invitations to United States of America and England to visit their shores.

Let's be honest and admit it is a wee bit gimmicky. 'Ping-pong players visit China' is the type of headline we have seen. But we haven't had to look on the back pages — Table tennis — our game — has been headline news. The Americans were in China for the first time in 22 years! Good publicity? Of course it is! I don't agree any publicity is good publicity and I never have done. One can have very bad publicity. But has there been anything at all out of these recent developments which has harmed our game? I would say— nothing at all. It has been good publicity. Table tennis has infiltrated where other methods have failed. Drawing-room image? Doesn't sound much like it to me! There have been photographs in the papers, long articles, quotes by Derek Tremayne, Charles Wyles and Dennis Neale. Other sports must have envied the publicity we received. Did not people at work say to you 'I see England are in China then?' or 'What about the Americans going to China?' I know they did to me.

Table tennis was recognised. Recognised in the National Press. And we've certainly strived to get this sort of recognition. And then. Out of the blue as it were. Thanks to China—we are headline news. Ping pong. Or table tennis. We were NEWS.

Whilst on about that side of the world. Permit me to say how delighted I was that Trevor Taylor became Commonwealth Champion. They don't come any more modest than Trevor and they don't fight any harder either. I am expecting him up for a celebration night out when he gets back, but if you think Trevor will get high—think again. Two halves of shandy will last him an evening.

Finally. Did you notice? The England mens team consisted of three left-handers. Trevor Taylor, Alan Hyde and Tody Clayton. I bet that has never happened before. And—whilst on about the records department. I THINK (and if I'm wrong somebody is free to write in) Tibor Klampar (Hungary) is the YOUNGEST man ever to win the English Open and Marie Alexandru the OLDEST lady ever to win it this season at Brighton. I wouldn't dream of asking a lady her age. Hist. I'm right . . . I think.

PHILIP REID.

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NET CORDS

A current rumour that all 1st Division matches will be played at Wavertree Labour next season can be safely denied. We have to leave one night free in order that our 5th team can gain promotion from the 2nd Division.

* * *

Sad to relate that one item of information would appear to be true that Tony Clayton won't be playing in the league next season. However, he can relax. Ted Mandaluff considers the distance to Bolton too much to travel for an easy win.

* * *

It is easy to sit back and laugh at the current battle developing between two of our leading clubs for the signature of one player who performed rather spectacularly at the 'Closed'. Easy to laugh, darn sight easier to cry!

* * *

Tightest league finish of all time must be the one in Division 3A between Wavertree Labour D and English Electric B. They finished equal on sets over the season, and the play-off was decided by seven points! One member of the winning team managed to gain six points in succession with netcords (another plug, folks!), however, as he modestly pointed out, if you do it that consistently it cannot all be luck.

* * *

Talking of Division 3A, haven't you missed Mr. Cameron's stirring it up this season. Mind you, after the result of the Stamp Cup Final, it's probably just as well he controlled himself this year.

* * *

Colonsay are busily searching for a new home. Purile suggestions about the North Pole will not be welcomed, especially by the penguins, although, no doubt, Les French would have a go at coaching them.

* * *

After yet another success by a 'foreigner' in the Closed. Wouldn't it be nice to see someone who lives in Liverpool winning it, or at least someone who learnt his table-tennis here. Not that I would welcome any move to place any sort of residential qualification on entries for the event. All these players can only improve the overall standard.

* * *

I have never heard so many complaints about the quality of balls as I have this year, especially about one particularly well-known make. As one bloke put it 'I've seen well-soaked toilet-paper bounce better'.

* * *

I see Keith Fitzsimmons, that charming gentleman from Division 2, sympathizes with Ken Armonson over the impossible task of keeping any sort of records for the doubles. I know of one team where the other three players drew lots every week to see who has to play with the fourth member.

* * *

I assume that this will be the final Digest of the 1966-67 season, and I would just like to wish all our readers a happy summer, and I trust that you will all be looking forward to our next issue due sometime in the Autumn 1975.

JOHN MOLYNEUX.

PLAY-OFF DIVISION 3a

Wavertree Labour 'D' v English Electric 'B'

Having won two of their previous three encounters Wavertree started firm favourites in this match that should never have been played, according to our rules.

The first game gave an indication of things to come when in a fast and furious game George Moon beat Steve Fewtrell 21/12; 16/21; 21/18; Gordon Nevins then had a clear cut win over John Hoban 21/11; 21/18; to give the non-favourites a clear 2-0 lead. Wavertree were brought back into the game by Ken Jones with a three set win over Phil Godby. George Moon did a whiz kid set with a breathtaking win in two straight over Rod Bulmer. This was followed by a top class doubles game—Nevin/Coughlin beating Jones/Fewtrell 21/13; 14/21; 21/18; giving Electric a 4-1 interval lead.

Fewtrell brought the score to 4-2 by beating Paul Coughlin in two straight but Godby quickly made it 5-2 and then a rather easy win by Bulmer and Hoban over Moon and Godby made it 5-3. Even in this game players were fighting like trojans for each point and Wavertree were really fighting back, none more so than Hoban who took the first game against Coughlin 21/19; and was 19/13 down in the second and with the atmosphere absolutely electric he caught up to 20-all what a magnificent fight back, he won the set and match 26/24 (ask John how he got his six points!). With the score at 5-4 Jones and Nevins battled out one of the most nerve-racking games I have seen, at ten past twelve Ken Jones emerged the winner 21/19; 20/22; 22/20; and made the score 5-5.

This must have been one of the most sporting and exciting encounters I have witnessed. The table tennis was good, you could cut the atmosphere with a knife and the sportsmanship was superb. The game was a credit to all the players but on this night there was no doubt that both captains, Ken Jones and George Moon, really played a captain's part.

This report would not be complete without a word of thanks from both clubs involved to Palmerston who staged this match at short notice, were perfect hosts and accepted without complaint the extremely late finish. Without their co-operation the match could not have been played to a finish that night.

JACK LAMBERT.

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The English Junior Open

Perhaps of all the aspects of table tennis, attending Open tournaments which foreign players attend gives me greatest delight. In the circumstances when asked to accept the post of Hospitality Organiser I couldn't say 'Yes' quick enough. The English Junior Open was held at Canterbury—a city I had not previously visited. When I went to Brighton for the senior Open I had met the Yugoslavians, the Swedes, the Rumanians and the Hungarians but on this occasion I was required to meet only one team en route—that from the United States of America. So I travelled to London on Easter Saturday and called round at their hotel. They had brought a party of eight players (four boys, four girls) and a non-playing captain, namely Dell Sweeris. The next move was to arrange for the removal of their considerable luggage to Victoria Station. This was accomplished by placing the luggage of all nine and Dell Sweeris in one taxi whilst we caught the Underground. On arrival there was another game to play—find Dell Sweeris. If you've ever been to Victoria Station you will have some idea of the size of the place but we found him O.K.

There were no problems in getting to Canterbury but it was soon evident that Dell was a very deep student of the game. When I mentioned the number of left-handers who were in the game Dell promptly whipped out pencil and paper and produced several sketches to explain why he thought they were so numerous. One of the American boys, Danny Seemiller looked very interested in all Dell had to say. 'He's keen' I murmured, 'He's left-handed' Dell replied. Talking to various members of the team the time to Canterbury went very quickly indeed and soon the mini-bus was there to take them to their Guest House. One must give them every credit for keenness. No sooner had they deposited their luggage than they were up to the University Sports Hall to practice. And what a superb Sports Hall it was! It accommodated twelve tables, perfectly and the unusual and outstanding feature was the wonderful lighting in the ceiling which gave perfect lighting in all parts of the hall.

I then went to Canterbury Station again to see if the Irish team had arrived on the train I had guessed they would. They had! But so had the Scottish team. However that was duly settled and I next went to see if the Belgians—who were travelling by car—had arrived. They had in fact just arrived and were busy settling in. Back at the Sports Hall the Dutch and Swedish teams had arrived and I could breathe a sigh of relief—everyone was here! But what about the West Germans? Oh, they will be on later on—playing an International this afternoon against England at Newbury. The Americans were still knocking up shortly to be joined by the enthusiastic Swedes. And Dell was there. Advising. Urging. Demonstrating.

A 7-45 breakfast on Sunday and we were off to the Hall. Unfortunately England's progress was not very marked in the team events although there were some good individual performances. The girls first team had no trouble with Belgium but crashed 3-1 against Sweden. The set they won, however was a very noteworthy performance. That of Janet Hellaby who beat Anne Christine Hellman 21-9, 21-19. It was Miss Hellman's only defeat in the two days the tourney was played. England girls second team, meanwhile beat Netherlands 3-0 before losing 3-1 to Federal Germany. Their victory in this event was in the Girls Doubles where Lynda Chesson and Sue Beckwith won two straight.

The boys, too, failed to reach the final. The 3rd team were first out—predictably beaten 3-1 by Netherlands. The 2nd team beat a rather weak Irish team 3-0 and the 1st team received a bye. Round Two saw England II defeated 3-0 by Federal Germany but it was disappointing in some ways. In each set the host country won the first game before losing the next two. This left only England I in the running and it brought forth a really great match with Sweden II. Jimmy Walker lost his opening set but then Nicky Jarvis—always a terrific fighter—levelled the scores by beating Andersson in two straight. England lost a terrific doubles but once again the scores were evened when Nicky Jarvis turned in a tremendous performance. It was a display of discipline as well as ability. Finding his well-famed loop was not bringing the desired

results, Jarvis went on the defence against Isaksson to record a superb win. The score was 21-18 in the third but he clearly deserved his win. It all then rested on Jimmy's game with Andersson. Even with the crowd—small though it was—behind him Jimmy could rarely hold the Swedish hitter who won in two straight.

Amongst other tasks I had organised meal tickets, etc., lunch being taken in the spacious University Dining Room. These breaks served as a lull between continuous action in the Sports Hall where referee Bill Goldfinch was quite unflappable. He gave the impression of really enjoying every minute. The quietest member of the Irish team—Robert Turner spent a considerable time practising with a girl he told us 'Was Dutch and speaks no English'. Sign language seemed the only means of communication but knowing the Dutch flair for languages I was surprised to learn she could speak no English. It eventually transpired she came from . . . Middlesbrough!

The finals were preceded by a parade of the teams. This part of the proceedings is one I personally always enjoy. It gives the tournament a sort of air of tradition. The High Sheriff of Canterbury then welcomed the teams and the finals commenced. The Swedish teams completely dominated these events for their Boys 1st and 2nd teams played for the championship of this event, the 1st team winning 3-0. The Girls team beat Federal Germany 3-1.

Monday brought the individual events—an all together more hectic sort of day. The match I remember most of Nicky Jarvis v. Peter Taylor. This was a third round fixture and the marked contrast in styles was one of the features of the game. Jarvis, running round on his forehand and backhand to loop everything. Taylor, standing close at the table half-volleying everything. Jarvis made the game look very hard work indeed. Taylor made it look easy. At one game all anybody could have won but some superb play by Jarvis—who had a spell when he missed nothing—brought him victory.

The big result for England in the individual events was the eclipse of favourite Ingemar Wikstrom in two straight by Jimmy Walker in the semi-final. At one all in the final against Manfred Baum our hopes were high of the top prize being won by England but at the change of ends in the third Walker trailed 10-0. Even then he fought but it was a comfortable win for the German. Manfred, incidentally is yet another left-hander. He loops and hits from below the table quite frequently with long sweeping shots. They look risky but he is so adept at executing them that he obtains some really good results. This title was the only one which escaped the victorious Swedes. The fitness of the Swedish team had to be seen to be believed.

PHILIP REID

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RUMOUR HAS IT THAT . . .

- John Molyneux has got engaged in the record breaking time of 11 days! Congratulations John and best wishes for the future.
- There are no controversial amendments tabled for the A.G.M. apart from Bath Street's 2 points for a win and 1 point for a draw. Incidentally they still have teams with scorecards outstanding!
- A letter from Michael Crawford in the Observer has suggested that rubber was first stuck on wooden bats because one player had a headache! The story is that about 1900 one player going to a tournament had a headache so he went to a chemist's shop for aspirins. While idly fingering the small rubber mat on the counter he suddenly thought what a difference this would make to ball control if fastened to his bat. He bought the mat, cut it up, gummed a piece on each surface of the racket and won all his matches. So next time you have a headache Mandy
- The University managed to keep a team in the League (and nearly won a division).
- Warwickshire county player Brian Burn is doing a thesis on "The Social and Economic reasons for the growth of Table Tennis in England and Wales between 1923 and 1939". He would appreciate the loan of any relevant material which would be duly returned from his home at 99, The Quadrant, North Shields, Northumberland.
- Dick Heath, ex-University and Linnets player is alive and well and living at 8, Sunnedon, Basildon, Essex.
- Next season sees the start of Lou Hoffman's Super League, formed of six teams comprising the strongest players in the south. Every team must have a leading junior in the No. 3 spot and will be sponsored by a company. Matches will be before paying audiences. Prizes range from £300 to £15 a team.
- Trevor Owens is looking for a driving instructor.
- English Electric beat Boston Penmaen 6-3 in the quarter-finals of the National Club Championship. Tony Clayton won his three, Wally Allanson added two and Pete D'Arcy one. Congratulations and the best of luck in the semi-finals when I understand you will have to play Ormesby (Middlesbrough) including Dennis Neale.
- Our Division Two writer seems to have acquired a 100% record, although he seems to want to keep this quiet. See what writing for the Digest does for you. (as opposed to editing it!).
- Essex have won the Premier Division of the County Championship with a maximum of 14 points. Yorkshire are second with 10 points and Middlesex third with 8. Lancashire have won the Second Division North from Cheshire on games—both having 11 points from 6 matches. Lancashire also came third in the Junior Premier division—behind Middlesex and Yorkshire.
- Tight matches for Pete D'Arcy and John McNee in the Doubles quarter-finals and finals. They beat Messrs. Thomas and Cottrell 21/16, 20/22 and 22/20 and Messrs. Barclay and Allanson 25/23, 23/21.
- This will be the first issue of the Digest that Chris Brewer hasn't been mentioned. Oops I've done it again!
- Those of you who remember the University club back in the 'good old days' when the gym was in Grove Street and the club managed to keep three teams in the League will no doubt be interested to know that Roger Howard, the guiding-light of those days, is now an Assistant Professor in America, living at 139, Denrose Drive, Tonawanda, NY 14150.
- The next issue of the Digest will be published sometime this year, providing someone "volunteers" to do it. Those wishing to "volunteer" may do so by charting the well-worn phrase "when is the next issue of the Digest due out?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

During the recent Closed Tournament, two points of interest arose which I would like to explain now as they concern both players and umpires, at all levels of play.

The first was the question, who decides which player is going to serve in the second and third games of a doubles match, or is the order of service decided right from the first point of the game? The answer is quite simple. Once the order of play has been established in the first game, the order in all subsequent games is automatically defined, although in each game the pair serving first may choose which of them shall do so. The umpire must, therefore note carefully the servers and check that he is serving to the correct opponent.

The second question was, when should the umpire call the score? Should he wait until the server has the ball in his hand ready to serve? Here again the rule is quite clear on this. The umpire must call the score as soon as possible after the completion of a rally. A good umpire would not normally wait until the server has the ball in his hand ready to serve the next point, unless some loud, prolonged applause or other circumstance would make his voice inaudible. Normally a good umpire calls the score immediately the point is decided.

Often in Club Matches, debatable decisions are made, awkward situations arise for embarrassed umpires and often, such an occasion is the topic of conversation during the interval. As one of the very few active County Umpires in this area, I would be interested to hear of any controversial situations which may have occurred, perhaps even read about them in the pages of subsequent issues of this magazine.

Anyway, I hope my explanation of the two points of contention will help some readers to know what to do next time the situation crops up in their own matches.

Yours sincerely,

BRIAN LEESON.

21, Armscot Close,
Liverpool, 25.

Dear Sir,

My wife was much amused on reading the comment in 'Netcords' re. two Armsons and remarked that if such an opportunity existed she would definitely claim the privilege of being first to press the button. The other button would be used to despatch all the Wav. Labour players and ensure a permanent 'LET' for her. I had not realised that it was open season for shooting down Armson. I only hope that all those who indulge in this sport will be ready to buy me a drink when we meet for use of my name to brighten their contributions!!

I would like to thank Alan Nolan for his very kind comments re. myself in this letter, I have always been in favour of co-operating with any club whenever it is in my power to do so. I miss far too many matches as it is due to shift work and consider a w/over to be poor consolation for a missed match for I play for enjoyment—unkind members of my own club often remark that the way I play it is the only excuse I could have for playing, but I put this down to professional jealousy.

I must congratulate you on having done such a fine job as Editor since being 'pressed' into the job. I know that the delays have been no fault of yours and think that everyone should know this. Your own contributions have proved once again that many members have the ability to contribute material but for some reason are reluctant to do so.

Yours sincerely,

K. ARMSON.

Letters to the Editor cont.

47, New Fields Avenue,
Braunstone,
Leicestershire.

Dear Sir,

Nice to see my unexpected mention but what perhaps surprises some people is that when they say "What do I do in my spare time?" the answer is I write for a football magazine (Inside Football) sometimes!

On 'Ping pong or Table Tennis' (page 4) surely it is the World Championships, not the English Open Championships to which the writer is referring. I have an idea that since the war only Ian Harrison has won the English Open amongst Englishmen and that was when there were virtually no foreign entries.

Yours sincerely,

P. REID.

(Whoops! It seems that I have dropped a veritable clanger. Phil is of course quite right. Surprising that nobody else has bothered to write in about it—Ed.).

Found any good scorecards lately?

Saw our Fixture Secretary and his wife at the 'Closed' Tournament again this year going round with that list of missing score-cards. Queer chap, thinks we believe all those stories about cards not turning up. Just as if that could happen when we all know we do post them. After all, look how easy it is. Address already printed on the back, stick on the stamp you take to the match with you and pop it in the post on the way home.

Mind you, we do make it easy for him to pretend they never arrived by not posting them straight away or leaving it to someone else and we all know how reliable team-mates are for posting score-cards. Not that that matters for who ever heard of anyone forgetting to post a card after being asked to do so. Trouble is that when the F.S. asks about it we are just that little bit uncertain. Playing right into his hands.

He was telling me about one chap who he asked for a missing score-card. Poor chap was quite indignant, claimed he had never forgotten to post a score-card. F.S. asked him to have a look in his bag and the chap was amazed when he found the missing score-card there. Like I said, queer chap this Fixture Secretary, thought I didn't know he had put it there when the bloke wasn't looking. Just as if anyone would put a card in his bag and forget to post it!

Another time he asked me about one of my own club's cards which he claimed was missing. I made enquiries and team captain definitely remembered posting it. Of course he did. Imagine his surprise when clearing out his office drawer a few weeks later he came across the missing card. Can't say I was surprised for it was obvious that F.S. had found out where he worked and slipped in during his dinner hour and put it in the drawer.

He really enjoys going round the tournament seeking out all the missing results. Not really missing, but he pretends they are so that he can spend plenty of time chasing club secretaries and team captains around for results. It really makes his night when someone enters into the spirit of it and admits his guilt.

Saw him again later ready to go home a gleeful smile on his face and really worn out. Apparently it had been a successful night as quite a few had admitted their guilt and yielded up results. Mrs. Cameron was also full of joy as apparently they were still sticking to their story about 50 missing results and she was quite looking forward to spending the next few days on the phone tracking them down. Eddie had even agreed to go to South Africa so that she

would have the job to herself.

Now all this bothers me for I hate to see people looking so happy and I got to wondering how we could put a stop to all this tomfoolery about missing score-cards. The answer is so obvious I am surprised no-one has ever thought of it before. Next season we will all make absolutely sure we post the cards immediately after the match or deliver them by hand. The F.S. won't be able to claim they haven't arrived for we will all remember having posted them due to our new system.

I can just imagine his face when he arrives home on the first day of next season's deliveries. Mrs. Cameron will meet him with those words he will come to dread hearing: "All the score-cards which were due arrived today dear". Imagine his frustration and annoyance as day after day he hears those words repeated. His world will be shattered for we will have made his job easy and pleasant. His league tables will have to be up-to-date, he won't be able to waste hours chasing around after missing cards. Club secretaries will be pleased to see him. Management Committee meetings will become a nightmare as he will have to admit he has nothing to report. The A.G.M. will become his 'Waterloo' as he will have nothing left to talk about. That list of jobs Mrs. Cameron wants doing will have to be done as he will have no more excuses left.

Mrs. Cameron will suffer as well for there will be no more happy days on the phone tracking down the ones Eddie missed. Instead she will have to be like other women and visit friends, play golf and listen to "Women's Hour". Imagine her distress on finding she has time to visit the hairdressers and have a good gossip with her friends under the driers instead of chasing missing results.

Yes, if you all co-operate we can really make their life a misery and the final blow will come at the tournament when Eddie will find himself with time to watch all the good sets, perhaps even enter himself. Veteran's event of course! The sheer frustration in being able to watch the Men's Singles Final instead of chasing some elusive secretary might even give him nightmares.

UNO ISCENTIT.

A LOOK BACK IN TIME

How many of you, I wonder, keep a collection of all the Digests that are printed? Obviously some do, but probably not very many. For most people the Digest is read as quickly as possible and then discarded. This is a great pity for, to me, there is a great deal of pleasure and amusement to be gained from looking through past issues of the magazine to see what was said a few years ago.

My own collection of Digests started in November 1962, which may not seem a long time to some of you but to me seems an eternity. You may have heard recently the cry of 'bring back straight divisions'. Well in the 1962/63 season we had them together with another old faithful 'two points for a win' and a special three-a-side division. It will not surprise you, I am sure, to know that players were not very happy with any of them. We never are!

The three-a-side division was admittedly an extra division brought in as an experiment, but the late Jim Green called it an abortive division. He spoke of teams playing reserves in many of the matches because the top players did not want to know. In fact two clubs resigned from the division. Yet only last season I heard many people calling for the league to become three-a-side all through!

People were also dissatisfied with the two points for a win system then in operation. One point for a set was therefore suggested, and carried through at the 1963 A.G.M. In the new season the first reactions were disappointing. It was, in fact, condemned as an utter failure by the players. In one issue of the Digest John McKim claimed that the points system had been well received while in the next Tony Green wanted to know who by? He said that the positions of a great many teams would be different if the old system was still

in operation. The next issue included a letter from Ernest Sturgess who wanted to know what Tony Green was getting so hot under the collar about since not many teams were placed differently. All good controversial stuff!

Mind you we have made progress since then. Last season Ken Chambers wanted a change of scoring, saying that the present system was not as successful as had been hoped. Very guarded tones—better than calling it an utter failure. The final word on the subject goes to Dave Coulson of LYCA who, last year, wanted a return to the two points for a win system because the present system encouraged fiddling. I was under the impression that teams will fiddle their order whatever the scoring system. There's no satisfying some people is there?

What else was happening at this time? Ah yes! that old favourite—'straight divisions'. Most people at that time wanted a change, mainly because it took so long to get to the first division. The 'Pyramid League' was introduced in 1963 but also proved unpopular so that a year later the twin-stream system was introduced. This has since become established as an excellent system but as usual there are a few who don't like it. I refer in particular to Tom Gordon, Jack Lambert and Wally Sill of English Electric. What is it about the Electric Club? They seem to be against every arrangement the League has. There is only one solution—they will have to form their own League, the 'English Electric three-a-side and straight divisions League'.

As I looked back through the pages of past Digests gathering material for this article one fact became glaringly obvious. The names and faces may change but the topics of conversation invariably remain the same. Look back yourself and see, you will find it most interesting.

KEITH FITZSIMMONS.

EASTER 1971

Easter, 1971, was the occasion of the 31st World Table Tennis Championships in Nagoya, Japan. In the competition, England was well represented by a ten-strong party, which included seven players and three officials. Perhaps I was a little fortunate to be included in the party; this was entirely due to the surprise withdrawal of Denis Neale and Chester Barnes because of a disagreement at the airport.

Prior to Japan, the team had spent a very successful week in Singapore competing in the Inaugural Commonwealth Championships. The team dominated the entry, winning both the mens and womens team event and all the major titles. In the mens team event we had some close moments, particularly when we were trailing 4-1 to India and needed the remaining four sets for victory. This was indeed our darkest hour for, on another table, with the match score at two-all, Karenza Mathews was down 20-17 in the deciding game to Miss Nesnkaitis of Canada. However, miracles do happen, and both teams came out of seemingly impossible situations to win the events, which, in temperatures of 90 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit was no mean feat.

The main individual event of the tournament, the mens singles, was won by Trevor Taylor when he comfortably overcame Ali of India. The Indian had formerly been responsible for putting out our No. 1, and No. 1 seed for the tournament, Alan Hydes. The womens singles was an all English affair with Jill Shirley getting the better of Karenza Mathews by three games to one.

In Nagoya, we were not so successful; the men finished tenth and the women eighth in their respective competitions. Success did not come our way in the individual events, also; we were all eliminated in the early rounds. Alan Hydes, who had sustained a stomach disorder due to dehydration in Singapore, had to scratch from all events.

It was during those two weeks in Japan that the English Table Tennis Team received an unexpected invitation to make a tour of China for a period

of two weeks directly following the World Championships. This invitation, was certainly received with much enthusiasm and we all looked forward to the visit. However, before we embarked on the trip, we first played a match in Sendai, a city of northern Japan, against a Japanese squad. Both the mens and womens matches were lost, but nevertheless valuable experience was gained by all who took part.

We left Tokyo on Easter Monday, bound for Hong Kong and then China; we stayed one night in Hong Kong and on Tuesday, 13th April, we crossed the border and entered the Peoples Republic of China. Our first match was in Peking, and what a match it turned out to be. The gymnasium had a seating capacity of 18,000; however for the match 23,000 had crammed in, many people sitting in the aisles and between other peoples legs. But still many more people wanted to see the match; so we had to play an extra match in Peking to accommodate a further 18,000! The first match was very entertaining, and from being 4-1 down, we fought back to win 5-4. Not so, in the second match, however, where we lost 5-3. From Peking, we went on to play other matches in Shanghai and Tientsin. The playing halls in these latter cities were somewhat smaller, however, accommodating a mere 6,000! We played four matches, three of which we won. In all, the series was won by England four games to two. We left Peking for home on Wednesday, 28th April after a most enjoyable trip.

TONY CLAYTON.

The Liverpool Closed

13th to 16th April, 1971

The Finals of the various events in this year's Closed Tournament produced several new, but not unexpected Champions. It was certainly pleasing to see the success of the younger players throughout the four days and to witness the more established players really struggling to maintain their reputations.

The new Men's Champion, David Cottrell, (Linnets), seeded 4, took the title by defeating the top seed, Peter D'Arcy, in the Final. The progress of the unseeded Philip Blake of Linnets, however, deserves special mention. Blake defeated the second seed, Tony Rigby, in round 4 and John McNee in the Quarter Final, before going out to his team-mate, Cottrell, in the Semi. The third seed, Wally Allanson, lost in round 3 to Eddie Moran, in a lengthy, unattractive pushing game in the privacy of an almost empty gymnasium.

Suzanne Manning became the new Women's Champion, disposing of the first and second seeds, Mable Francis and Val Lee, without any real difficulty. Then, with Brenda Williams, she secured the Women's Doubles title, although in the Semi Final against Jean Reynolds and Myra Lovelady, the result was never a foregone conclusion.

Brenda Williams then continued her winning sequence with Liam Barclay and took the Mixed Doubles title with a Final win over Dave Roberts and Jean Reynolds, both these pairs being unseeded. Brenda and Liam had earlier defeated the fourth seeded pair, Tony Rigby and Suzanne Manning, while Dave and Jean had knocked out the third seeds, Peter D'Arcy and Kathleen Baxendale.

The first and second seeded pairs had both been eliminated very early on, in their first match in fact. Eric Hardman and Gill Simm beat George Smith and Val Lee, while Eddie Moran and Myra Lovelady disposed of Wally Allanson and Barbara Kirkman.

In the Men's Doubles, both top seeded pairs met in the Final, D'Arcy and McNee gaining a very close decision over Barclay and Allanson to take the title. Third seeds Roberts and Rigby lost in round 2 to Mandaluff and Brownlee, while fourth seeds, Taylor and Clayton were defeated in the Quarter Finals by Tolson and Owens.

John McNee, as expected, took the Junior Title, while Ted Mandaluff retained his Veterans' crown.

Mike Truman, also unseeded, had earlier knocked out the top seed, Alan Dean, in the Semi Final.

It was unfortunate that it was necessary to cancel both the Consolation events, but as the entry was bigger than last year's, when play went on until 11-00 p.m. and later, time obviously would not permit these extra events to be held. Actually, we were supposed to have the building cleared by 10-30 p.m. and, except for Thursday with the heavy programme of Doubles events, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday more or less finished on time.

As Tournament Secretary and Referee, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who contributed in any way to the success of this Tournament. Many hours of work were put in by numerous people, League Officials and Club Members, boys and girls of New Heys School, and the caretaking staff, before, during and after the actual hours of play. I do thank them all for their help and I can assure them that their assistance was very much appreciated.

BRIAN LEESON.

LIVERPOOL CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS — 1971

MEN'S SINGLES

Last 16:

P. D'Arcy bt D. Holland
L. Barclay bt D. Roberts
E. Mandaluff bt P. Liu
A. Tolson bt E. Moran

D. Cottrell bt T. Owens
G. K. Smith bt N. Gourley
J. McNee bt K. Jackson
P. Blake bt A. Rigby

Quarter Finals:

P. D'Arcy bt L. Barclay 16/21; 22/20; 21/17.
E. Mandaluff bt A. Tolson 12/21; 21/16; 21/17.
D. Cottrell bt G. K. Smith 21/9; 21/11.
P. Blake bt J. McNee.

Semi Finals:

P. D'Arcy bt E. Mandaluff 21/17; 21/10.
D. Cottrell bt P. Blake 21/12; 21/17.

FINAL:

D. Cottrell bt P. D'Arcy 13/21; 21/13; 21/13.

WOMEN'S SINGLES

Quarter Finals:

Miss M. Francis bt Miss K. Baxendale 21/19; 21/14.
Mrs. J. Reynolds bt Miss B. Williams 17/21, 21/18, 21/17.
Miss S. Manning bt Mrs. M. K. Cox 21/14, 21/13.
Miss V. Lee bt Miss B. Kirkman 16/21; 21/18; 21/18.

Semi Finals:

Miss M. Francis bt Mrs. J. Reynolds 21/9; 21/13.
Miss S. Manning bt Miss V. Lee 21/10; 21/11.

FINAL:

Miss S. Manning bt Miss M. Francis 22/20; 21/10.

MEN'S DOUBLES

Last 16:

L. Barclay/W. Allanson bt R. Burke/G. Nevins.
G. K. Smith/E. Gilmour bt J. Marshall/S. Fewtrell.
A. Tolson/T. Owens bt D. Williams/N. Fagan.
A. C. Taylor/W. Clayton bt E. W. Owens/W. L. Evans.
J. Hodges/R. McPherson bt E. Mandaluff/G. Brownlee.
P. Blake/K. Jackson bt E. Moran/F. Farquharson.
F. Thomas/D. Cottrell bt F. Pheysey/G. Edmunds.
P. D'Arcy/J. McNee bt P. Lee/C. Cummings.

Quarter Finals:

L. Barclay/W. Allanson bt G. K. Smith/E. Gilmour 21/18; 21/8.
A. Tolson/T. Owens bt A. C. Taylor/W. Clayton 21/19; 22/24; 21/19.
P. Blake/K. Jackson bt J. Hodges/R. McPherson 21/18; 21/16.
P. D'Arcy/J. McNee bt F. Thomas/D. Cottrell 21/16; 20/22; 22/20.

Semi Finals:

L. Barclay/W. Allanson bt A. Tolson/T. Owens 16/21; 21/4; 21/17.
P. D'Arcy/J. McNee bt P. Blake/K. Jackson 21/14; 21/16.

FINAL:

P. D'Arcy/J. McNee bt L. Barclay/W. Allanson 25/23; 23/21.

WOMEN'S DOUBLES**Semi Finals:**

Miss M. Francis/Mrs. M. K. Cox bt Miss K. Pemberton/Miss V. Lee
21/18; 21/23; 21/16.
Miss S. Manning/Miss B. Williams bt Mrs. J. Reynolds/Mrs. M. Lovelady
21/19; 20/22; 21/14.

FINAL:

Miss Manning/Miss Williams bt Miss Francis/Mrs. Cox 21/11; 21/10.

MIXED DOUBLES**Quarter Finals:**

L. Barclay/B. Williams bt E. Hardman/G. Simm 21/14; 21/7.
A. Rigby/S. Manning bt W. R. Smith/P. Lawrenson 21/13, 21/11.
P. D'Arcy/K. Baxendale bt A. C. Taylor/B. Taylor 19/21; 21/15; 21/12.
D. Roberts/J. Reynolds bt E. Moran/M. Lovelady 21/7; 21/16.

Semi Finals:

L. Barclay/B. Williams bt A. Rigby/S. Manning 24/22; 21/15.
D. Roberts/J. Reynolds bt P. D'Arcy/K. Baxendale 21/16; 21/19.

FINAL:

L. Barclay/B. Williams bt D. Roberts/J. Reynolds 21/16; 21/14.

JUNIOR SINGLES**Quarter Finals:**

J. McNee bt Miss B. Kirkman 21/12; 21/4.
D. Holland bt Miss B. Williams 16/21; 21/15, 21/13.
J. Marshall bt P. Topping 21/4; 21/18.
Miss S. Manning bt C. Field 21/14; 20/22; 21/19.

Semi Finals:

J. McNee bt D. Holland 21/19; 21/19.
J. Marshall bt Miss S. Manning 21/19; 23/21.

FINAL:

J. McNee bt J. Marshall 21/9, 22/20.

VETERANS' SINGLES**Semi Finals:**

E. Mandaluff bt A. Byrne 19/21; 21/18; 21/16.
F. Lacey bt A. Davidson 21/9; 21/19.

FINAL:

E. Mandaluff bt F. Lacey 21/18; 19/21; 21/16.

RESTRICTED SINGLES**Quarter Finals:**

A. Dean bt G. Nevins 18/21; 21/15; 21/14.
M. Truman bt E. Hardman 21/12; 21/6.
P. Tsang bt S. Fewtrell 21/10, 21/19.
R. Lavin bt C. Crossley 21/11; 21/5.

Semi Finals:

M. Truman bt A. Dean 21/17; 21/13.
P. Tsang bt R. Lavin 21/8; 21/17.

Final:

P. Tsang bt M. Truman 21/12; 21/14.

LANCS. & CHESHIRE LEAGUE NOTES

Final League tables show that once again the Liverpool League has had a successful season.

With a winning percentage of 80, (from 6 teams), we compare very favourably with Bolton, (55%, 4 teams), Manchester, (79%, 5 teams), and Preston, (65%, 4 teams).

Whether our 'success' should be measured by playing results, or the fact that we are taking part and also gradually introducing younger players into this higher sphere of table tennis, is a matter of opinion, but I can't help feeling that our policy of fielding teams in all divisions, and not just those divisions where we think we can be successful, is a good one, and might profitably be copied by some of the other leading Lancashire and Cheshire Leagues.

Our Mens' first team finished rather lower than was anticipated, due, no doubt, to the absence of Tony Clayton for the latter portion of the season. Bolton won the title by virtue of having a better sets average than Manchester, each team had lost 1, drawn 1, so you can see it is tough at the top.

Apathy on the part of the Blackpool League cost them the match against our Ladies' first team. Here we finished 3rd, behind Stockport and Manchester, and were the only team to take a point from the Champions. Had we managed both points, there would have been a triple tie at the top, and sets average would once again have decided the final placings.

A Toast to the 'A's'

Our two A teams, finished Champions of their respective divisions, the Ladies' only dropping an average of one set per match in doing so. Suzanne Manning went through the season undefeated, and was ably supported by Brenda Williams, Barbara Kirkman and for the earlier matches, Kathleen Baxendale.

In direct contrast, Ted Mandaluff, George Smith and Trevor Owens, who compose the Mens' 'A' team, are, dare I say it, nearing the veteran stage. Nevertheless, they only lost one match in winning the title. In their last match, however, they were given quite a shock by Bury, who had previously gained only 2 points from 6 matches. Playing away, they were 3-1 down to a team which included a "Mandaluff" type wooden bat player (Hymanson). We rallied well to run out winners at 7-3.

Brian Leeson's Youth Team finished third in their division, losing only to Manchester and Mid-Cheshire. In a division of ten teams, the largest in the League, they were never really extended in any other match.

In Junior circles, John Marshall, won 19 of his 24 sets, and was mainly responsible for our finishing 4th in a division of 9 teams. As the Juniors are divided into two leagues, (north and south), the difference in playing ability between the top and bottom teams is considerable, but it is interesting to note that in neither division did the champion team manage a 100% record. In fact in all 12 divisions of the Lancashire and Cheshire League, only 4 teams went through the season without dropping a point, one of these was, of course our Ladies' 'A' team.

FINAL LEAGUE PLACINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.	Pos. in League	No. in League League
Men's 1st	8	3	—	5	32	48	6	6	9
Men's 'A' (north)	7	6	—	1	50	20	12	1	8
Ladies' 1st	6	4	1	1	41	19	9	3	7
Ladies' 'A'	8	8	—	—	72	8	16	1	9
Youth	9	7	—	2	65	25	14	3	10
Junior (south)	8	4	—	4	45	35	8	4	9

The following players have been awarded their City Badges.

Ladies 1st team—Miss Val Lee.
 „ A „ —Miss Suzanne Manning.
 „ A „ —Miss Brenda Williams.
 „ A „ —Miss Barbara Kirkman.

Finally I would like to thank all who have helped to make this a successful year, especially the non-playing captains, club secretaries and various other people who have either transported teams or worked to ensure the smooth running of the organisation.

ALEC DAVIDSON.

Around the Divisions

DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Eng. Electric	26	21	2	3	207
Wav. Labour	26	22	2	2	198
Liverpool Y.M.	26	20	3	3	190
Linnets	26	22	4	0	183
Wav. Lab. 'B'	26	12	9	5	134
Eng. Electric 'A'	26	11	11	4	125
Wav. Lab. 'A'	26	10	11	5	117
L'pool Y.M.C.A. 'A' ..	26	10	13	3	114
Colonsay	26	8	15	3	111
Rafters	26	7	16	3	103
Mossley Hill	26	6	17	3	101
Trinity	26	7	16	3	98
Beauclair	26	5	18	3	95
Waterloo Park	26	0	24	2	44

Another season over and no more of those predictions from me, I can tell you. The way some of the results turned out it's easier to pick the winner of the Grand National which, incidentally (not boasting), I did. As we have plenty of space in this last issue I would like to give each team a mention as we go along.

Congratulations yet again to English Electric, who have now added the league title to their Readman Cup success. Even without Tony Clayton Electric won the title much more comfortably than final figures suggest. Another great season for Mr. Consistent, Gordon Birch, who only lost three times all season, it's a pity we don't see Gordon at the Closed Championships any more. With P. D'Arcy and W. Allanson losing less than ten sets between them how could Electric possibly fail to take both honours?

My own club, Wav. Labour, will have to be content with 2nd place, but they can boast to be the only

team Electric did not beat in the league. Once again Tony Rigby has proved their best player finishing the season with over 90% at No. 1. Also doing more than their share were T. Owens and A. Tolson, who has had his best season for a long time. But for losing J. Barton early in the season I'm sure Wavertree could have won at least one trophy.

Not the best of seasons for the Y.M. who seem to have lost their bite these days. With G. Smith and E. Mandaluff losing more sets than usual the team has struggled more than once this term. A player who should make all the difference is F. Bailey who, I learn, will be signing on again next season.

The team they will all have to keep up with next season is Linnets who, I believe, will be adding another fine Blackburn player to their already strong squad. Star player this season was David Cottrell who lost only four sets and I am sure even this will be bettered next season. The remainder of the Linnets team have had some very good wins, but have also suffered some bad defeats. Such is the case of Phil Blake who played so well to reach the semi-final of our Closed Championships, but in the league his play was well below par.

Not being biased I would like to say how well Wav. Lab. 'B'—my own team—did in the league, finishing in 5th place. All four Wav. 'B' players played in 99% of the games which I am sure accounted for the successful season. I cannot say the same for Wav. 'A' who hardly turped a full

team out all season. This team must have broken all records by playing a reserve in at least twenty of their matches. However, full credit to team captain Ted Gilmour for being the only consistent member of the side. He must have been a bit fed up, and who can blame him. Let's hope this does not occur again.

With so many big names in the club English Electric 'A' players must feel a little out of it, but these four players hardly miss a match and proved their full worth by playing a draw in their last match with Wav. Labour. Geoff Edmunds gaining two good wins over T. Owens and E. Gilmour.

Since they beat Wav. Labour, Y.M. 'A' have lost to almost every team in the division and have ended the season rather poorly due to lack of support from team members.

The shock team of the season were Trinity, who were given no chance of staying up. Most teams have underestimated them and because of this Trinity have had some good wins beating Beauclair, Wav. 'A' twice and best of all getting a draw from champions English Electric.

I'm sure if Colonsay would have played the same strong side all season, which was L. Barclay, G. Wilson, A. Heyes and A. Mercer, they would probably have finished in the top six, but they failed to do this so regularly that they had to struggle a bit to maintain 1st division status. I hear several of their players are leaving next season which could prove very costly to them. The experience in the Rafter's team played a big part in their fight to stay up and with their help young John Marshall looks to have a very fine future.

Mossley Hill just about stayed in the division after a long struggle and will have to do better than this next term. It's nice to see the team always on time for matches even though they have to travel from a long distance. A very poor finish from Beauclair means relegation. Ted Birch must be very disappointed because he alone seemed to be the only consistent player among them.

Waterloo Park, who just stayed in the division the previous season, have been a very poor team all this season and finished well behind any other team. Most of their sets have been won by Alan Reid who would surely

be a much better player with a stronger club.

ROY SMITH.

DIVISION 2

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Wav. Lab. 'C'	26	22	2	2	203
Bath St.	26	21	3	2	192
Crawfords	26	16	3	5	154
Police	26	15	10	1	154
Colonsay 'A'	26	16	8	2	152
Colonsay 'B'	26	12	7	7	140
Linacre	26	13	11	2	138
Sparta	26	10	10	6	130
St. Edwards	26	10	13	3	123
Sefton	26	10	13	3	117
Liverpool Jewish	26	6	18	2	109
Cadwa	26	6	20	0	97
Trinity 'A'	26	6	17	3	93
Knotty Ash	26	0	26	0	18

And so, as we expected, Wav. Labour 'C' and Bath St. win promotion with the Labour club finishing in top place by the margin of 9 sets. Congratulations go to the regular players Norman Chaloner, Ron Burke, Frazer Farquharson and John Molyneux. The margin was a little smaller than it might have been for they dropped a few silly sets including a 7-3 defeat in the last match by Crawfords. This match was played in a most unusual atmosphere, a happy one. Whether this can be attributed to the end of the season, or the fact that the Labour club team had been celebrating the coming wedding of Eddie Birch, I don't know, but apart from a few sets the competitive spirit appeared to be lacking. Bath St. came in second and but for a few somewhat surprisingly dropped sets by Arthur Taylor could well have given the Labour club a closer fight.

Joint third come Crawfords and the Police. Crawfords have, throughout the season, been unable to field their full team and I am sure they would have given the top two a bit of a fight had they been able to do so. Les Evans is playing very well this season and along with Ernie Owens, Mike Newton and a really brilliant player who shall remain nameless, they form an effective combination which should do well next season. The Police have been in the same position being unable to field their strongest team regularly. They finished this season with a flourish including a 6-4 win over Bath St. and I fancy that next season could be a useful one for them too.

Next come the Colonsay teams with Linacre close behind. Colonsay have been having clubroom troubles but in spite of this both 'A' and 'B' teams reached respectable positions in the league proving once again the general all-round strength of the club's players. We all hope, I am sure, that they find a place to play before the start of next season for we can ill afford to lose them. Linacre, on the other hand, seem to go on forever and keep turning in useful performances every season. Although they are not getting any higher in the league order I fancy they will be in this division for a few years yet. They are one of the few clubs left that still regard a table tennis match as a social evening and not as a death or glory event. All credit to them for this.

Further down come Sparta, St. Edwards and Sefton. Sparta have two main set winners in George Saunders and Ted Barnes and their position in the order depends on where the captain thinks they are best employed to win the maximum number of sets possible. A legal tactic, maybe, but not especially sporting. St. Edwards appear to have team troubles and have fielded a variety of players of which the most regular have been N. Shaw, B. Townsend, P. Byrne and J. O'Keefe. Sefton won promotion from the 3rd division last season and must feel satisfied to have stayed up. The team has come from a pool of players, D. Murray, A. Biggs, D. Davies, D. Sayle, B. Cookson and R. W. Davies, all of whom are useful players who can win sets fairly regularly. I often feel that although having a pool of players is handy at times, a settled team can bring better results.

Down at the bottom Liverpool Jewish, Cadwa, Trinity 'A' and Knotty Ash have all qualified for relegation. It has been obvious from the start that Knotty Ash would finish bottom and pretty clear that Cadwa and Trinity 'A' would accompany them but it is a surprise to me that the 4th team to go is the Jewish club. On paper they appear to be quite strong enough to stay up and they have one or two useful reserves, so I wonder what happened?

So much for the league and on to the cup. This season Wav. Labour 'C' beat Colonsay 'A' 6-4 and so completed the double. The Labour club

brought in Eddie Birch and although he won his two singles he had to fight very hard against D. Williams only winning 21/19; 19/21; 23/21. For Colonsay 'A' Les French played and won one of his singles beating John Molyneux two straight. Both doubles were won by Colonsay and their other set was won by D. Williams beating Norman Chaloner two straight.

A few reflections: The player I most enjoyed playing was Ted Barnes of Sparta. The player I least liked playing was Les French of Colonsay. I must congratulate Sue Manning, also from Colonsay, on winning the Ladies' Singles at the Liverpool Closed. Nice to see a member of this division winning something. As for the averages I do not know any due to the fact that Ken Armson has been so busy writing silly comments about my notes he has not been able to find the time to work them out. I do know, however, that I came top with 100%; which is a good note to finish on. See you next season.

KEITH FITZSIMMONS.

DIVISION 3A

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Wav. Lab. 'D'	24	20	3	1	171
Eng. Electric 'B'	24	20	2	2	171
University	24	19	4	1	167
Linnets 'A'	24	16	6	2	144
Police 'A'	24	10	9	5	122
Police 'B'	24	10	14	0	120
L'pool Y.M.C.A. 'C'	24	11	11	2	113
Bath St. 'A'	24	9	12	3	113
Raffers 'B'	24	5	14	5	94
Cadwa 'A'	24	5	17	2	90
Maghull	24	5	15	4	86
Vagabonds	24	4	17	3	86
Crawfords 'B'	24	4	14	6	83

In the first issue I promised to write about the Labour club team if no-one took over these notes and now I am going to keep that promise with a few words thrown in for dual champs English Electric 'B'. The Labour club have been in some tense matches and controversial issues this season. They lost in the semi-final of the Hyde Cup—a match which I felt they should have won on paper—won the replay, which was necessary due to Crawfords having used an ineligible player, and finished off the season after beating English Electric 'B' 7-3 in the Cup Final, by playing them again in a play-off for the title as they both finished with

171. An all 3A final ensured that the Hyde Cup which we loaned to 3B for a season duly returned to this division.

The Cup Final was a very good match played in a very sporting manner between two teams very closely matched and the final score does Electric an injustice as it was not as easy as the score would suggest. And so to the play-off and the events leading up to it. University took some of the tenseness out of the title fight by not getting their scorecards in regularly and as a result of this Wavertree and Electric had mistakenly written them off, whereas only a 4 sets difference prevented a triple tie. Electric came a cropper in their last match against Y.M. 'C'. A little bit of controversy here as Y.M. turned out their 'D' team and Electric could only manage a draw. I believe they were a bit upset about this. News of this setback arrived at Vagabonds where Wavertree were playing their last match for the Electric players came to watch the match. Their news meant that Wavertree had to win 9-1 to take the title and having beaten Vags 10-0 last time it looked good for them, unfortunately they had forgotten to tell Vags about this and so could only manage to win 8-2, so it was a tie. The play-off was a draw with both sides having equal sets and a decision is now awaited as to who is the winner.

University surprised everyone by going on to complete their fixtures

and how near they came to clinching promotion. The matches which spoilt their bid were obviously against Electric when they lost 8-2 with a full team out. A good win by Electric which they were quick to point out to me was against the best team, according to me. The other two were against Cadwa and Y.M. 'C' when they had a reserve out who lost his 4 sets. Taylor and Clarkson were their two best players.

For Electric's benefit, 6 days after beating University they lost to Linnets 6-4, who lost to University two days later 6-4, so pick the bones out of that!!

Linnets finished in 4th place and their challenge failed due to lack of a good supporting player. The strain of carrying this team began to tell on Dean and Lavin towards the end but theirs had been a remarkable performance for between them they have won two thirds of their teams total sets and their doubles partnership has met with only one defeat. A steady No. 3 to go along with E. Owens would have done the trick for them.

Police 'A' were always there and a threat to any team but just not strong enough to force their way higher up the table. Some good performances by the four regular players, Wood, Hough, Chalkley and McMasters. Their main weakness was the doubles for their partnerships were not consistent enough against the top teams.

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Palatine fell right away after their early season threat and finished a disappointing 6th when they had the ability to do much better, the non-appearance of Barraclough—their best player—and Rodney had a lot to do with this. Wade and Parks did their best but with their 1 and 2 missing they had little hope.

Y.M., Bath St., and Rafter's finished in the middle group. A reasonable season for the Y.M. who were good enough to take sets off any team. Bath St's. outstanding feature was their ability at not sending in score-cards, several of which are still missing. Rafter's re-ranked team did well and Jean Reynolds was a good replacement, winning fairly regularly. She shook the Labour club with two good wins over Fewtrell and John (Wide boy) Hoban, (Shame on you Jean). Cadwa had a very indifferent season their best player being K. Pemberton.

Vags finished up like Maghull, battling to avoid relegation and only 3 sets between them and relegation made a close finish at the top and bottom. Maghull literally clawed their way out of the danger zone thanks to some good work by Draper, Dorman and Howarth, but there must have been times when they thought they were not going to make it. I am surprised that this should have also happened to Vags for this team is good enough to warrant a higher placing.

Last, but by no means least, come Crawford's, it's relegation for them but what a terrific fight they put up, if only they had shown the same spirit early on how different it would have been. They suddenly woke up at the halfway stage but the leeway was too much for them in the end. Having only 3 regular players may have hampered them, but Conley, Harvey and Roper did enough to show that their spell in the 4th division should be a short one.

KEN ARMSON.

DIVISION 3B

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
L'pool Y.M.C.A. 'B'	24	20	2	2	171
Crawford's 'A'	24	17	4	3	156
Rafter's 'A'	24	16	6	2	154
Orrell	24	14	8	2	145
Sparta 'A'	24	10	10	4	119
Colonsay 'C'	24	10	11	3	114
L'pool Jewish 'A'	24	14	10	0	108

Eng. Electric 'C'	24	7	13	4	107
Police 'B'	24	6	12	6	104
Hilltop	24	6	13	5	103
Waterloo Park 'A'	24	7	11	6	102
Bath St. 'B'	24	6	16	2	100
Bohemians	24	2	19	3	77

Believe it or not, this is the final edition of the Digest, already, you may say after receiving your first issue only a few weeks ago!! Well I have a surprise for you. Ken Armson has most kindly asked myself and other divisional writers to DOUBLE our contribution for this last bumper edition, which is to be called 'ARMSON'S NEWS' with a portrait of our beloved ex-editor on the front cover holding his table tennis bat aloft! Seriously though there would not be a Digest if it wasn't for Ken and his contributions.

Congratulations to Liverpool Y.M. and Crawford's on gaining promotion to the 2nd division. Extremely hard luck to Rafter's and Orrell who just missed out, but gave so much to make the tussle so interesting and exciting. Commiserations to Bohemians who return to the 4th division after only one season with us.

Rafter's, who were a mere two points behind at the finish, should have clinched promotion when they met Crawford's at home. Crawford's being without Mabel Francis, Mike Truman and Les Singleton and facing the formidable line-up of Pete Rumjahn, Reg Hetherington, Graham Gaskell and Eileen Mansell in that order. The result was a 5-5 draw and it is to Crawford's credit that they have reserves capable of fighting for every set. P. Carney had excellent victories over Pete Rumjahn 21/12 in the third and Graham Gaskell 21/15 in the third. Andy Byrne beat Reg Hetherington 20/22; 22/20; 21/18 and had that game gone the other way, who knows Rafter's could well have been in the 2nd division next season. Other victories were gained by Stan Harvey beating Eileen Mansell 21/7; 21/15 and Carney/Roper beating Gaskell/Mansell. So well played Crawford's.

Orrell's challenge faded in the run-in with 7-3 defeats by Colonsay, Liverpool Y.M. and Crawford's. D. Brookfield (2) and S. Brooke (2) were the stars for Colonsay with J. Martin (1), R. Brooke (1) and a Brookfield/Martin combination taking the rest of the points. It must be noted that Orrell were without Cyril