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Table Tennis Digest

Volume 25

Number 1



Official Magazine

OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Table Tennis Digest

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addressed to the Editor
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— Editorial Board —

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A. E. UPTON

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S. D. CAMERON

Vol. 25

No. 1

Editorial

The Editor feels that the best editorial possible for this month is the following:—

TRIBUTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Apart from being the first publication of the current Season this particular issue has the added distinction of representing the "Coming of Age" of the official Journal of the Liverpool and District Table Tennis League, and in wishing the "Digest" Many Happy Returns, I am indeed pleased to have the opportunity of paying tribute to that group of industrious members whose efforts throughout its 21 years existence have been instrumental in ensuring the provision of an essential service to its readers.

The heaviest burden naturally falls upon the shoulders of the Editor who not only bears the final responsibility for what is or is not published but also has to pull out all the "stops" to ensure that the copy reaches the printers in good time to meet a delivery schedule. In this respect, the League has been indeed fortunate to have had the services of such people as Des Loughrey, Jack Pattison, Eric Caird, Albert Montgomery (now occupying the "Editorial Chair" for a second term of Office), the late Jim Green, Ken Armson and John Wren, and we are indeed grateful to them for a "job well done".

I am also mindful of the important role played by the contributors of articles, the writers of Divisional notes, etc., and of course the mammoth task performed by Ken Armson as "Charge de Affaires-Distribution". Our Advertisers also make a valuable contribution and the financial assistance derived from their support has enabled the Digest to be provided for members at a price which is by no means untoward in these times of rapid escalating costs. To each and all of these a very sincere thank you for your help.

Since its formation in 1926 the Liverpool League has had reason to be proud of many of its achievements; the "Digest" is indeed one of them.

ARTHUR E. UPTON,

Chairman.

Secretary's Notes

The cost of Table Tennis has risen considerably over the past few years and will no doubt continue to rise in the next few years, you have only to consider the increases in postage rates, telephones and fares over the past few years, to realise, how great the increase has been, printing costs have also increased, this 'Digest' you are reading has cost the League almost 100% more than an issue published three years ago.

Despite these increases the Liverpool League have kept fee increases to a minimum, but the time has arrived when we must look to our bank balance with a critical eye and we ask you the League members to play your part in keeping down League fees.

Your club secretary will shortly be receiving a supply of draw tickets for the E.T.T.A. Lincolnshire Handicap Lottery, and the sale of these tickets is the ideal and least painful way of improving League funds, 50% of all money taken by you for tickets sold is returned to this League, the E.T.T.A. provide the tickets and the prizes, and with the balance of the money help to keep down affiliation fees, you can gain two ways by selling these tickets, you can help to keep national affiliation fees down, and if each player in Liverpool sold only 4 books of tickets, the Liverpool League would benefit by about £100, this would enable your committee to provide the kind of Table Tennis we want to see in Liverpool, at no extra cost to you the player.

J. McKIM.

—oOo—

HANDBOOK ALTERATIONS

Page 2. A. Davidson phone No. 924 8905.

Page 4. Merseyside Open date now 27th November.

CLUB DETAILS

Beauclair 1st team match night Monday.

Bedford House delete A team.

Cadwa. New address for Secretary, 98 Liverpool Road, Lydiate. Tel.: 526 8834.

Knotty Ash 'A' team Thursday. 'B' team Monday. 'C' team Friday.

Liverpool Jewish 1st and 'A' teams on Wednesday. 'C' team withdrawn.

National Giro. New Secretary, Mr. J. Nolan, 46 Mount House Close, Freshfield, Formby L37 3LJ.

Tel.: Business 928 8181. Ext. 3445.
add 'A' team div. 5B.

Norris Green Match Night Tuesday.

Orrell New Secretary, Mrs. M. Lovelady, 32 Spooner Avenue, Liverpool L21 8NF.
Tel.: 928 1136.

St. Hugh's. Secretary's phone no. 2990.

St. Edwards Match night Thursday.

Sefton General 'A' team match night Monday.

Waterloo Park new Secretary, Mr. A. H. Reid, 1 Litherland Park, Liverpool 21.
Tel.: Office 236 5611; home 928 8655.

Woolton match night Tuesday.

Add 2 new clubs Barker & Dobson, Liverpool 6 in Div. 5A. Monday.
and H.U.C.A. who play at Liverpool Jewish, in Div. 5B. Monday.

In Div. 5A Barker & Dobson take 'A' Fixture.

In Div. 5B H.U.C.A. take 'A' fixture, National Giro 'A' take 'B' fixture.
Liverpool Jewish 'C' and Bedford 'A' drop out.

Divisional Notes

DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Wav. Lab.	5	5	0	0	45
English Elec.	5	4	0	1	43
Liverpool Y.M.	5	5	0	0	42
Bath Street	5	3	0	2	36
Wav. Lab. 'A'	4	4	0	0	33
Rafters	5	2	0	3	31
Colonsay	4	1	2	1	21
English Elec. 'A'	4	2	2	0	21
Liverpool Y.M. 'A'	5	1	4	0	16
Wav. Lab. 'C'	5	1	3	1	15
Linnets	5	1	4	0	8
Trinity	5	0	5	0	7
Wav. Lab. 'B'	5	0	5	0	6
Mossley Hill	4	0	4	0	6

With the season now well on the way the big three, English Electric, Wav. Labour and Liv. Y.M.C.A. have already opened up a big gap at the top. However, Colonsay could still be a big threat if they could field a regular team. With players of the standard of English international Mike Johns and his two younger brothers signed on plus the three Chester players, Barclay, Potts and Wilson, add to these several other out of town players, they must have the strongest squad of players ever to be signed on by one club in the league.

Helped by the much improved John Marshall Rafters have had a better start to the season for a long time losing only once out of the first five games. Bath St. back in the division after a season's absence, have also done well due to the fact of the added strength of Roy Jones and L. Guy who have both come back after a few seasons absence.

The big question down below seems to be, can Wav. Labour 'B' and 'C' both stay in the division? Wav. Labour 'B' are now beginning to pick up sets after a poor start and should now climb up the table. Their 'C' team will have a much harder struggle and after a 9-1 defeat by Linnets cannot feel very confident of avoiding relegation. The players themselves seem determined to help this along by failing to turn out regularly.

After losing all five Blackburn players Linnets now have a very weak team and will be fighting for every set they can win. Trinity are

finding it much harder this season and will be hard pushed to stay in the division.

The Readman Cup produced no real shocks in the 1st round. Wav. Labour 'B' had a good 6-4 win over Rafters, thanks to Mick Tierney who won both his singles. In a real thriller Wavertree Labour beat Colonsay 6-4. thanks to double victories from Tony Rigby and Dave Roberts. With three teams in the last eight Wavertree look certain to have one in the final with a bit of luck in the draw.

Only four players are still unbeaten, Peter D'Arcy and Gordon Birch (Eng. Elec.) and Tony Rigby and John McNee (Wav. Lab.) while Ted Mandaluff (Liv. Y.M.) has only lost one set.

ROY SMITH.

DIVISION 2

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Liverpool Y.M. 'B'	5	5	0	0	40
Waterloo Park	6	4	2	0	34
Colonsay 'B'	5	3	1	1	33
Crawfords 'A'	5	3	1	1	33
Crawfords	5	2	1	2	29
Colonsay 'A'	4	3	0	1	26
Police	5	1	2	2	25
Sefton	5	2	2	1	26
Wav. Lab. 'D'	5	3	2	0	26
Linacre	5	2	3	0	24
St. Edwards	4	1	2	1	17
Sparta	5	0	4	1	14
Beauclair	6	1	5	0	11
English Elec. 'B'	5	0	5	0	11

As the season is well under way it seems a little pointless to say welcome but since tradition expects it, welcome.

Usually in the first set of notes I give my predictions for promotion and relegation but after the first five matches the position is far from clear. On the evidence of the first few matches at least five teams will feel they are in with a real chance of promotion, the two Colonsay teams, the two Crawfords teams, and the Y.M.C.A. 'B' team. Also in with a chance are Police, Waterloo Park, Wavertree Labour 'D' and possibly Sefton. This only leaves five teams to battle out relegation and since they include Linacre, St. Edward's and Sparta none of whom look much like

relegation sides to me you can see the problems facing any early predictions. As such I shall leave the predictions until the next issue of the Digest when I hope the position will be much clearer.

The Police have made their usual bad start to the season; I have never known them start playing until the second half. This year two defeats and two draws was the opening run before a 9-1 victory over English Electric 'B' opened their account. In R. Petit they seem to have a man who delights in going to three games, for against Jack Davidson he won 21-6 in the third, against Bill Crafter 21-6, and against Don Davies 21-3. There must be a moral in there somewhere, possibly to lose two straight rather than go to three.

Waterloo Park, down from the first division, opened the season with a good 6-4 win over Crawfords 'A'. I see Alan Reid is still with them, and although beaten 21-19 in the third by Ernie Owens in a set that I would liked to have seen, he is a very formidable opponent. I well remember the last time I played him, it was a massacre, only one bloke played Table Tennis. Unfortunately it wasn't me, so I hope to get my revenge when I come up against him. The team has slipped a little with two defeats in the next three matches but will provide stiff opposition whoever they meet, and I expect to see them well up the division in the coming weeks.

The first round of the cup has now been completed and although I have not all the results in the following clubs are through to the next round, Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'B', Selson, Linacre, Wavertree Labour 'D' and Crawfords. The team I feel most sorry for are St. Edwards. They played two five-all draws against Crawfords and then found they were out of the cup by the immense margin of one set. Although the Crawfords team were relieved to get through to the next round, they did not feel any satisfaction in winning this way. As far as I am concerned all cup matches should be played until a team has won the match and there should be no counting of sets to decide if matches are drawn. If five games are needed then five games should be played; let's have a WIN-

NER, that's what we all play for after all.

Commiserations this month to Bill Neary of Wavertree Labour 'D' who found himself promoted from the No. 4 to the No. 1 position. He then proceeded to beat Crawfords No. 2 21-16 in the third and only just lost 23-21 in the third to the Crawfords No. 1. (Editor: I wonder who that can be). Bill played some fine table tennis in this match and was most unlucky not to win both singles.

KEITH FITZSIMMONS.

DIVISION 3A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Trinity 'A'	5	5	0	0	46
Bath Street 'A'	5	5	0	0	41
Police 'A'	5	4	1	0	31
Maghull	5	3	1	1	30
Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'C'	3	3	0	0	22
Rafters 'B'	5	1	4	0	19
Linnets 'A'	5	1	3	1	17
Police 'C'	4	0	2	2	15
Bath Street 'C'	5	1	4	0	13
Liverpool Jewish	3	1	2	0	13
Colonsay 'D'	3	1	2	0	12
Vagabonds	5	1	4	0	12
University	2	0	2	0	10
Cadwa 'A'	3	0	3	0	9

Trinity having defeated Bath Street 'A' are now nine points clear, which is a very good start to the season. Apart from Bath Street 'A' I expect to see Liverpool Y.M.C.A. and Liverpool Jewish as the other challengers for promotion. At the other end of the Division Vagabonds, Bath Street 'C' and Police 'C' will have to improve if they are to avoid relegation.

Players who have played in more than one match and remain undefeated are K. Lightfoot and G. Wilson, University and P. Topping of Colonsay. There are a number of players winning consistently, namely D. Money, Liverpool Jewish; R. Watson, Maghull; D. Chalkley, Police 'A'; E. Hardman and C. Gould, Bath Street 'A'; A. Southall and L. Carmichael, Trinity and P. Liu, Liverpool Y.M.C.A. I expect all these players to have very good averages at the end of the season.

In two matches this season seven of the ten sets have gone to three games. The first was the private battle between Police 'A' and Police

'C' which the 'A' team won 6-4. The other was at Vagabonds where Maghull decided it was as good as playing at home and extended the evening accordingly, eventually winning 8-2. In contrast, in the University v. Linnets match all ten sets were decided in straight games. I understand they had to be out by ten p.m.

For the teams at the lower end of the Division. How about a competition "keep a '0' off your score card". Only two qualifiers so far Ratters 'B' and Vagabonds. Eight near misses to date. One club, who shall remain nameless, managed one set on three consecutive weeks. Who will be next to join Ratters 'B' and Vagabonds. Dare I stick my neck out and suggest Colonsay or one of the Police teams. I will only be too pleased to be proved wrong.

Longest game of season G. Marsh, Bath Street 'C' v. A. Chase, Trinity which the latter won 30-28 in the third.

Will Trinity still be undefeated when I next write notes for the Digest. On the other hand will Cadwa and Police 'C' have recorded their first victory. Speaking personally I do not think a few unexpected results would do any harm.

BRIAN CUNNINGHAM.

DIVISION 3B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Colonsay 'C'	5	4	0	1	41
Ratters 'A'	5	3	1	1	38
Old Swan	5	4	0	1	36
Cadwa	5	3	0	2	34
Police 'B'	5	4	0	1	36
Hilltop	5	0	1	4	24
Liverpool Jewish 'A'	5	3	2	0	24
Orrell	5	2	3	0	24
Waterloo Park 'A'	5	2	2	1	23
Bath Street 'B'	5	1	3	1	22
Trinity 'B'	5	1	3	1	16
Sparta 'A'	5	0	4	1	11
English Elec. 'C'	5	1	4	0	11
Knotty Ash	5	0	5	0	10

May I take this opportunity of welcoming Old Swan, Cadwa, Trinity and Knotty Ash to this division, as well as the 'regulars'.

We are greatly honoured this year in having Old Swan amongst us. After winning two divisional titles in successive years, having been talked

about throughout Merseyside—everybody's whispering "can they do it again in 3B", this division is now virtually certain of a write-up in the "football echo"!!! . . . Joking apart, I'm sure the club are capable of doing it again. D. Crispin, J. Linforth, K. Kinnear and S. France are the main four, the only apparent flaw in the side seems to be at No. 4 where quite a few odd points have slipped away, but they have only lost one game of doubles.

Colonsay are in top spot at the moment, having dropped 9 points out of 50, 5 of them being in a top of the table clash with Ratters. Ratters have the same team as last season, which is packed with experience, and after being so close last year I think they should gain promotion this year, but it's early days yet. Cadwa are also in the running, and must be in with a chance. D. Piper is unbeaten, but has gone missing for the last couple of weeks and consequently Cadwa's performances have somewhat suffered. The final team in the top five is the Police and it's good to see one of their sides at the top. George Wright has left Orrell and strengthened the Police team, he also is unbeaten — but as I said last season, they find it hard to play their strongest team every week, so I cannot see them going up.

The top five are followed by the "regulars" Liverpool Jewish, Orrell, Hilltop and Bath Street, which is headed by guess who,—yes Hilltop, who also made a close season signing in Alan Rycroft, Bohemians No. 1 last season. Rumour has it the fee was £10,000 . . . and as we couldn't give him his 5% cut, he was given the freedom of the bar!! . . . so beware opponents, he's only lost 3 out of 14.

At the bottom end of the table Knotty Ash seem to be struggling as do English Electric, but Electric always seem to be round the bottom of the table and they never get relegated anyway, and besides they played the top three teams in their first four matches. One team I don't understand is Sparta. They lost 10-0 to both Ratters and Police, then played the top team Colonsay and only lost 7-3 losing three matches 21-19 in the third and then DREW 5-5 with Old Swan—weird.

In the Hyde Cup Police 'C', Hill-top, Linnets 'A', Rafters 'A', Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'C' have all been successful.

While I remember, a Happy Christmas to all my readers, i.e. Myself and Ken Armson. Ken knows that if I pack up, he will be left with 6 sets of divisional notes!!!—I now know why he keeps telling me how good they are—and also while I think on—a HAPPY EASTER!!!

ROB LOCK.

DIVISION 4A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Liverpool Y.M. 'D'	5	5	0	0	44
Crawfords 'B'	5	0	0	0	39
Liverpool Poly.	5	3	2	0	33
Crawfords 'D'	5	3	1	1	30
Rafters 'C'	4	3	0	1	29
English Elec. 'D'	5	2	1	2	28
Maghull 'A'	5	2	2	1	24
Colonsay 'E'	4	3	1	0	23
Police 'E'	5	0	3	2	19
Bath Street 'D'	5	1	4	0	16
Cadwa 'B'	5	1	3	1	15
English Elec. 'F'	5	1	4	0	15
Liverpool Jewish 'B'	5	0	4	1	14
Knotty Ash 'B'	5	0	4	1	11

The editorial staff were right on the beam with an early request for notes and provision of material, let us hope the rest of the flow line carries on as sweetly and the Digest regains some of its lost face.

With so many explosions it is difficult to know where to start, so we will commence with the team who thought they were going into the second division and finished up in 4A—Crawfords 'B', with 5 wins in a row and Singleton undefeated they have made an excellent start. So have the less experienced and youthful Liverpool Y.M.C.A. team who are also undefeated at the time of writing and all look good prospects with Allen (ex Norris Green) and Jones R. leading the way.

The English Electric derby was won by the 'D' team, Hunter retaining his 100%. They were without 'Captain' Simister who sprained his back against Maghull 'A' who very sportingly allowed a "substitute" and drew 5-5. Let's hope Ron is soon in action again.

It's a bit sad really how soon a division sorts itself out. At this early stage the tops, middles and bottoms

have soon sorted themselves and I bet the league table shows little difference at the end of the season.

I know politics and sport should not mix but 'Black Power' was certainly to the fore when Cadwa 'B' and Electric 'D' drew 5-5. Three Powers played for Cadwa (Power J. E. 2) and two Blacks—Betty and Julie for Electric.

A good start by Polytechnic was spoiled by Maghull 'A' who beat them 6-4 Jones A. and Jarzicki starring for their respective teams. A couple of good draws Police 'E' and Liverpool Jewish 'B' with Catterson showing a return to form losing 19 in the third to Cohen M. who won his two. Rafters 'C' (Johnson 2) and Crawfords 'D' (Watson 2) also drew.

Davies R. had a hand in Knotty Ash 'B' three wins against Colonsay 'E' for whom the old (or should I say young) firm still operate Jean Rimmer and Kehoe winning two apiece.

Bath Street 'D' (Mills 2) gave Crawfords 'B' their toughest game to date losing 6-4 and Maghull 'A' (Jones A. 2) stretched the strong Y.M.C.A. side to the limit with six games going to three before losing 7-3.

Hall of Knotty Ash saved his side from a whitewash on three occasions. Callaghan Electric 'F' returned after a four years absence with two bomb wins against Colonsay 'E'. Taylor of Jewish is also doing a bit of bombing. It's great to see so many new faces on our scene—may the Davey's, Jaegers, Cummings, etc. play and ENJOY their table tennis as long as the Winstanley's, Camerons and Byrnes have done.

IN MEMORIUM

Since compiling the notes for division 4A I have received the sad news of the very sudden death of Les Singleton of Crawfords 'B' team. I am sure I speak on behalf of all players and particularly those in 4A when I say how we will miss him as a formidable but quiet and sporting opponent — a 100% man in every way. No doubt the Crawfords boys will miss him most of all. To his family from his many table tennis friends we offer our deepest sympathy.

JACK LAMBERT.

DIVISION 4B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Old Swan 'A'	5	5	0	0	38
Crawfords 'C'	5	4	0	1	37
Giro	3	3	0	0	23
Wav. Lab. 'E'	3	3	0	0	23
English Elec. 'E'	5	2	2	1	25
Cadwa 'C'	5	1	2	2	21
Beauclair 'A'	4	1	2	1	17
Police 'D'	5	1	3	1	17
Norris Green	3	1	2	0	17
Trinity 'C'	5	1	4	0	17
Knotty Ash 'A'	4	1	3	0	13
Mossley Hill 'A'	4	0	4	0	9
Orrell 'A'	3	1	2	0	13
Colonsay 'F'	Withdrawn				

Welcome back to another season and with only four issues this time we will have to cover as much ground as possible each issue so without further preamble I will get started.

Although the season is only 5 weeks old 3 teams have already emerged as co-favourites they are Crawfords 'C'; Old Swan 'A'; and Wav. Labour 'E'. The big crunch will come in the next two matches when Crawfords play Old Swan and Wavertree. I have a feeling that ability in doubles will be the eventual overall decider between these three and Old Swan are leading at the moment with only one doubles defeat, Crawfords and Wavertree having lost 3 each. It was weakness in doubles that lost Wavertree their chance last season and it will be interesting to see whether or not they have managed to overcome this fault. Although it is a bit early for predictions I think if I had to pick I would go for the Vet's of Crawfords. They have the experience and have played as a team for several seasons and are eager to get back into the 3rd division from which they were rudely ejected by their club with the advent of 4-a-side.

Eng. Elec. will also be up there and they have already made their presence felt by drawing with Crawfords and just losing to Old Swan 6-4 and it was they who inflicted on Old Swan their first doubles defeat. Wavertree beat Electric 8-2 and will probably claim this must make them favourites for the title. Giro must also be counted as one of the front-runners and could even turn out to be

one of the challengers as their results to date (3) are very good.

With Colonsay 'F' dropping out only one team will be relegated and on present form this looks like being Mossley Hill 'A'. They escaped the drop last season as we were two teams short and as the team has not been strengthened they seem certain to finish bottom.

Norris Green, who came up from 5B with Crawfords and Old Swan, are holding their own but are obviously still feeling the effects of the loss of their No. 1 who has defected to the Y.M.C.A. I hope I am able to play for the Labour club when we visit them as it was at Norris Green that I first learnt to play table tennis and made my debut as a competitive player. Not a very successful one, I'm afraid, and before anyone else says it let me say it myself, it was a very long time ago and I haven't improved much since then!! Incidentally, I have just played my first game since my accident and came through with flying colours so I will be looking for my place back in the Wavertree team.

Nobody has yet had a 10-0 victory which is a good thing as it shows that the strength of the division is gradually levelling out and from the teams with at least 4 match results to hand no player remains unbeaten. On the question of averages I will really stick my neck out and say that I think C. Hall (Old Swan) will probably finish top in the averages with A. Harrison (Crawfords) very close behind, I will mention in the final issue how my forecast comes out.

Cadwa's results don't seem to match up to the teams strength and they are struggling harder than I expected, could be they are due for an improvement. Beauclair were expected to be one of the main challengers but they have been considerably weakened as a result of loss of players in their 1st team and their results indicate a bottom half of the table for them unless Dave Berry can play more often. The battle of the big brass took place in their match with Crawfords and John McKim (Org. Secretary) emerged the victor in straight sets over Eddie Cameron (Fixt. Secretary).

KEN ARMSON.

DIVISION 5A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Bedford House	5	5	0	0	45
St. Hugh's	5	4	1	0	36
Orrell 'B'	5	2	2	1	31
Rafters 'D'	4	4	0	0	28
Maghull 'C'	5	2	3	0	25
Vagabonds 'A'	4	2	1	1	21
Linnets 'B'	3	2	0	1	18
St. John's	5	1	3	1	17
Barker & Dobson	3	1	2	0	16
Knotty Ash 'C'	5	1	4	0	14
Goodlass Wall	4	1	3	0	11
Woolton 'A'	4	0	4	0	8
Liverpool Poly 'A'	2	0	2	0	0

DIVISION 5B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
H.U.C.A.	4	4	0	0	36
Giro 'A'	4	4	0	0	30
Woolton	3	2	1	0	22
Maghull 'B'	3	2	1	0	20
Police 'F'	4	2	2	0	19
English Elec. 'G'	3	2	1	0	18
Bath Street 'E'	4	1	3	0	14
Cross Inter.	3	1	2	0	11
Sefton 'A'	1	1	0	0	10
Goodlass Wall 'A'	4	0	4	0	8
Vagabonds 'B'	5	0	5	0	2
University 'A'	Withdrawn				

No notes have been received for 5A and 5B at time of publication.

Editor

LADIES' NOTES

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Rafters	2	2	0	0	19
Crawfords	2	2	0	0	18
Crawfords 'B'	3	2	1	0	15
Crawfords 'A'	3	1	2	0	10
Police	4	0	4	0	8
Colonsay	Withdrawn				
Crawfords 'C'	Withdrawn				

I'd like to welcome everybody to the new season and I hope it will be a friendly season but a hard fought one. It was with regret that I withdrew Cadwa's team but with Kathy Pemberton now married and teaching in London and Pat Brackley unavailable because the recent death of her mother has meant her attempting to run two homes, it would have been impossible to fulfil all our fixtures. However, I don't think many of us will mind missing Cadwa's Bingo Night when our new premises become available I hope we will be able to re-enter. While on the subject of playing quarters I think a better name for Colonsay would be 'the Nomads'. I hope the club is paying Les French's phone bill, at the time of writing the girls are supposed to be playing at Bohemians on no fixed night but so far haven't played any matches.

I don't think we are going to see many new faces in the league this year although it's nice to welcome Jean MacKenzie back, now playing for Rafters, from early results she seems to be playing well.

Colonsay must be favourites for the cup and league but I'm sure Crawfords and Rafters are going to make them fight for the points. Crawfords 'A' gave Rafters an early shock when Monica O'Donnell beat Jean Reynolds, a match which Rafters won easily on paper but each point was hard fought.

I can't help but wonder what the committee are "cooking up" for us in the second half of the season, some sort of handicap, but the rules won't be released until after we've played the games and I can assure you that it is a well-kept secret, so we will just have to wait and see.

VAL LEE.

Letter to the Editor

44, Wavertree Green,
Liverpool 15.

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on the 21st birthday of the 'Digest'. I could hardly believe it, which just goes to show how 'young' we keep in our table tennis activity. I wrote notes for Division 3 in those days 21 years ago. I was writing notes for Division 3 two years ago when the four-a-side demoted me, or was it because 3B won the cup that I crept away ashamed? Clubs have come and gone, Old Swan, Colonsay—Balfour, Victoria Park, Anfield. Clubs have risen and fallen, English Electric, Wavertree Labour—Cadwa, Knotty Ash. Stars have arrived and departed Susan Manning, Moira Jones, Ralph Gunnion, but the body of the league seem to soldier on, Faces disappear, re-appear, move from club to club or maybe stay put. Reg Hetherington, Jack Lambert, Cyril Smith, The Rumjahns, The Davidsons, The Owens, The Cohens and even the Camerons.

The League is a great institution, the first division for the ambitious and keen, the second division accommodates the talented-with-limited-time folk, the fifth encourages the old and the young to re-capture glorious wins or to break ground and move to stardom but the third and fourth accommodate the dozens of dedicated, never-quite-made-the-top-grade, — meet-the-people, — socialise—don't-win-medal brigade who turn up year in, year out to demonstrate their dedication. Different clubs, different people, different aims, different approaches—and the link which unites this happy band? The Digest of course, long live The Digest!

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The First 21 Years

The Table Tennis Digest celebrates its 21st birthday this year and it is not inappropriate that someone who attended its birth and did much to nurture it in its infant years should now take over its care.

Mr. Albert Montgomery—Monty to most of us—was an enthusiastic nurse at the birth and continued to be so for many years as a member of the Editorial Board. Everyone will, I am sure, join with me in wishing him well in his new task, with its many problems.

Twenty-one years is a long time and it says much for the popularity the Digest has acquired that it has withstood the ravages of time and the many problems it has faced; that the demand for it is, if anything, even greater today than when it was first published.

My mind naturally flies back to the afternoons spent by an enthusiastic half dozen in the basement of Monty's Antrim Hotel in Mount Pleasant, then the editorial and publishing office of the Digest. There were no passengers; everyone had their specific job to do and everyone pulled their weight in those jobs to get the editions out on time.

But my mind goes still further back to the moment when the idea of a magazine devoted to the activities of the Liverpool League was first conceived. It happened during a discussion one evening in the home of Frank and Edna Moore, those former stalwarts of the old Oakhill club. With them were Dr. Des Loughrey and myself and our conversation had ranged widely over table tennis topics.

One of the points which arose was the lack of publicity in the national magazine to the Liverpool League. It was almost a natural sequence that someone—and if my memory is correct it came from Dr. Loughrey—should suggest that Liverpool should have a magazine of its own, but just how he and I decided that we should produce one if we could get the backing of the league, is something I just can't remember.

However, we took the idea to Bill Stamp, then the league's organising secretary, who immediately fell for it, but with one big difference—that it should be the official magazine of the league and published by it. Although he got the agreement of the Management Committee readily enough, there was plenty of opposition at the annual general meeting when he insisted that every member of the league must be a subscriber.

Continued on next page

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THE FIRST 21 YEARS

Bill Stamp, however, was nothing if not a fighter and he got his way and Des Loughrey and I were invited to be its co-editors, an invitation we accepted on being given an undertaking that while it would be the official magazine of the league it would be a forum through which every member of the league could have his or her say.

That provision has, I am glad to say, continued over the years and it is pleasing to think that the Digest has provided a platform for numerous voices and numerous ideas. It has, to my mind, been one of its most valuable attributes and I am sure that under Monty's editorship it will continue to be so.

By comparison with today's more glossy appearance, the early editions were on the drab side, but we were proud of it, and rightly so for it quickly established itself among the members of the league and won praise from many parts of the country.

The credit for this naturally goes to all those who contributed to its publication, not the least of whom were the divisional contributors undertaking a task which was completely alien to them and whose articles always reached the editorial board on time.

But there is one aspect of the Digest I have always regretted—the lack of pictures. How often I wished we could afford them, but the cost of making picture blocks was, and still is, prohibitive.

In publishing its own magazine the Liverpool League have given a lead to every other one in the country, but few have had the courage to follow it. Perhaps we shall see more of them take the plunge during the next 21 years, for it seems that the Digest will go on and continue to be the voice of the members of the Liverpool League.

JACK PATTISON.

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Did you know that this is the 21st year of publishing the "Digest"? By my reckoning that makes 38 issues so far!

* * *

I wonder if Colonsay think their trouble was really necessary. One of their members made a special trip to the wilds of Mid-Cheshire to bring one of their "imported" stars to play in a cup-tie, the team lost 6-4 and he lost both his sets. He was later observed asking the best place to hitch a ride home.

* * *

Talking of Colonsay, they've settled playing arrangements for this season. I don't know whether they have prepared a dossier on the playing preferences of their opponents but they seem to have a separate venue for everyone. Should be worth a few sets by default at least.

* * *

Any amount of confusion is caused in doubles when right and left-handed exponents of the "loop" play together. Especially as they appear to stand in the wrong places at service, two of our lads were so confused that they kept on letting the service go between them. As usual the right-hand not knowing what the left-hand was doing.

* * *

It begins to look as though the Y.M.C.A. "B" team are going to make the 1st division seem even more of a closed shop for the "Big 3". There must be a simple solution somewhere, but I can't think of one, the bloke I'll feel sorry for next season is the Fixture Secretary, life will be a complete confusion of initials. Mind you he'll only have three people to ask for missing cards in the 1st division, must be a small consolation.

* * *

I see Linacre have new challengers in the veterans competition, Bark Street have thrown their lot into the ring with Messrs. Taylor, Clayton, Roy Jones and Gould. I wonder how many 1st division sets that lot have played between them.

* * *

Yet again I have to report that no progress has been made in the matter of holding an Annual Dinner Dance. I hope this doesn't develop into a similar situation to the "Digest", everybody agrees it's a good thing, as long as they don't have to do anything to help.

* * *

Everywhere I play these days I seem to see people either wearing coaching badges, or talking about joining a course. As we have a number of qualified people, isn't it about time the E.T.T.A. organised some sort of course locally. Out of three flourishing leagues on Merseyside, I'm sure we could enrol sufficient numbers to make it worthwhile.

* * *

At the time of writing, the major clash of the national table-tennis season is about to happen. I don't mean that trifling tour of the Chinese, but the question whether Mike Johns can succeed where Tony Clayton failed against Ted Mandaluff. Can "Mandy" do it again? You'll know by the time you read this, but I'm afraid my money is on Johns.

JOHN MOLYNEUX.

Rumour has it that . . .

- With our new editor having a reputation for speaking his mind we can look forward to some outspoken comment on our behalf.
- Our previous editor is now somewhere in Derbyshire with high hopes of finding himself a big fish in a little pool. Table tennis wise of course.
- Colonsay have a bigger 1st team pool than Liverpool or Everton.
- Some of our city 'A' team opponents are overjoyed at the news that our Selection committee are reducing the age in the 'A' team as the first to be retired is that ace destroyer of hopes Ted (woodchopper) Mandaluff.
- Keith Fitzsimmons has promised not to try and obtain a 100% average by avoiding all the best players in division two.
- Val Lee and Ian Blore have finally fixed a date. Congratulations.
- This season opponents of Wavertree Labour 1st team might actually be lucky enough to be offered proper refreshments.
- Unless you have a good secretary you will be lucky if you see a "Digest" this season.
- Ernie Sturgess was not exactly pleased when he received his first mention in the "Echo" as this recorded the fact that he was the first member of his team to drop a set.
- Harry Holmes has had a spell in hospital and will probably not play this season. Speedy recovery, Harry.
- Anyone hailing from Blackburn will not be welcomed with open arms at Linnets.
- Colonsay intend to double their quota in the 1st division next season.
- English Electric won their appeal against the Play-off for 3A and are now joint champions.
- The Treasurer was not very pleased with this as it involves buying more medals.
- There is no danger of any club ever paying their fees before Liverpool Jewish. Guess why?
- The Men's Singles Cup for the 'Closed' will again be won by a non-resident of Liverpool for the 4th successive season.

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