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# Table Tennis Digest

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*Volume 25*

*Number 3*

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*Official Magazine*

OF THE

**LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE**

# Table Tennis Digest

All correspondence must be  
addressed to the Editor  
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## *Editorial*

The sudden resignation of the editor due to business commitments has flung me back into the hot seat and although this places us in a very awkward position I am hopeful that this issue will reach you before the season ends.

One of the most disturbing trends of recent seasons has been that of clubs getting out of town players to register for them with the obvious intention of winning awards. I find this extremely alarming for many reasons, not the least of which is that it must surely have a detrimental effect on younger players trying to break through.

In its early years this was a strong thriving league and our players could hold their own with the best and commanded respect wherever they played. This was achieved by seeking out and giving help and encouragement to promising players. It is true that the standard in our 1st Division is not as good as it should be for a league as large as ours, but are imported stars the answer? I think not. I don't think they do anything for our league and they must do even less for club spirit. By pandying to these players we are in danger of making our league a branch line instead of remaining a major league.

The after effects of what can happen have been painfully obvious the last few years. On one occasion a player played his first ever game in this league in a cup final. In the replay he failed to arrive. A change of rules was necessary to prevent this occurring again. Another club brought in a complete team and were promoted to the 1st Division and won a place in the Readman Final. This season they failed to appear and the club were in the position of having a 1st Division place with no recognised 1st Division players. Again this season more big names have appeared with the avowed intention of sweeping the board and again a farce is made of the league.

Results of this invasion, strong teams turn out in major matches and when the players are unavailable or a weak team is being played a different team turns out. One relegation candidate was made a present of nine points. Another result was the deliberate "fiddling" by a club playing against them in a lower division because they were convinced that their opponents were also "fiddling". Although the club had acted quite fairly. Nevertheless, what happened was a direct result of the importation of players.

Do we really want players who play in our league providing they have nothing more important to do? Do we want to become a league where players come along to win a trophy and then disappear after spoiling things for everyone else?

*Continued on next page*

I do not think our players have gained anything from this nor do I think they will in the future. Ambition will be stifled as young players find themselves pushed to one side in the race to win success at all costs, even if club spirit has to be sacrificed to do so.

Why bother coaching or bringing in promising youngsters when it is easier to bring in outside players. Would John Marshall, for example, have made such progress if his club had followed this pattern? Surely not.

This is no reflection on the out of town players who have played regularly for the same club and treat our league as their own and are accepted as being regular league members.

Let's get back to being the Liverpool and District League and get on with the job of improving the standard of our young players and give them every encouragement and let these, so called, "stars" shine elsewhere.

In conclusion let me say that these views are my own and have nothing whatsoever to do with any views which may be held by my own or any other club.

EDITOR

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## From the Secretary's Desk

It is regrettable that after producing the last two issues of the 'Digest' our editor Mr. Montgomery has found it necessary for business reasons to relinquish the position, and we are fortunate that Ken Armson has agreed to carry on until the end of the season.

If you require the 'Digest' to continue, it is up to you to help in the search for a new editor, most present members of the Committee have heavy Table-Tennis commitments already, being involved in Tournaments, City teams, cup fixtures, etc., besides the more obvious duties of the Officers. Now is the time for you to start thinking about nominations for next year's committee, with the Editor of the 'Digest' in mind.

It is with great regret that we have to note the recent death of Victor Barna, holder of many World titles in his playing days, and a former winner of our own Merseyside Open Men's title. He was a player whose great playing ability was surpassed only by his impeccable conduct both on and off the table.

JOHN McKIM

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# Letters to the Editor

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Dear Sir,

It was interesting to read the comments in the last two issues regarding the rule about counting points if teams are level on sets and games at the end of two cup-ties.

Having had great experience of borrowing rooms and tables for inter-city matches, I feel that I must point out the difficulties involved in going to a 3rd match. I find that club secretaries are most obliging when asked to make arrangements for special matches. They postpone league matches (often to an accompaniment of grouses from their own players), they provide refreshments (quite often free), and at the end of the evening's play, they brush the room, wash the dishes, etc., etc.

In the event of a drawn semi-final, the league official in charge is instructed to try and arrange the replay **at the same venue**, the following week. This, of course, imposes more hardship on the club secretary, and I suggest that to ask him to provide facilities for a third meeting is like going to the well too often.

The answer appears to be a 'sudden death' semi-final. This could be done in many ways, for cup competitions we could reduce the number of players to 3-a-side, each player playing 3 sets and exclude the doubles. An alternative way would be to play four-a-side as at present and exclude the doubles unless the scores were level at the end, when time would be available to play one deciding doubles.

Yours faithfully,

ALEC DAVIDSON,

(Linacre T.T.C.)

Dear Sir,

What a fuss over a few wrongly numbered issues, surely humour as in 'Net Cords' was more appropriate to the situation. The simple explanation is that the printer wrongly numbered the covers and the error, although noticed, could not be corrected as the covers for the complete volume had been printed. John Wren was unaware of the mistake and carried forward the printer's error last season.

Norman Cooke does not seem to know what he really wants, for in his 3rd para. he bemoans the fact that he has lost his copy of the first ever issue, yet in the 5th para. he suggests we do away with the 'Digest' altogether. Incidentally, how good of him to assure us that No. 1 was the first printed. I assume he thinks no-one would realize this obvious fact.

Certainly the tables appear out-of-date, but in view of the time-lag between commencement and final delivery this is unavoidable. Obviously we must now consider dropping the tables except for the final issue. If members wrote in with constructive, instead of destructive, criticism we could improve things. Such remarks as "adverse comments" do no good at all and reflect little credit on those who make them.

One point of interest, the average gap between receipt of Jack Lambert's notes and the stragglers is TEN DAYS!! Some never do arrive. All this adds to the time-lag mentioned.

As far as cost is concerned, I think everyone was aware of the pressure of constantly rising prices and printing is well to the fore-front in this field.

Yours faithfully,

KEN ARMSON,

(Wav. Labour T.T.C.)

# Ungentlemanly Conduct

When I go out for the evening to play table-tennis, I go with the hope that I will spend it with a friendly crowd. Consequently, there are certain things which may mar the enjoyment. I will enumerate some of these, not necessarily in the order of importance to me.

- (A) The disappearance of all players in a team other than the man who is playing, who in turn disappears to be replaced by another.
- (B) The next is a very small thing which annoys me, probably out of all proportion, and that is when a player serves off or into the net and his opponent says "Thank you!" Surely, if anything need be said, the gentlemanly thing would be "Bad luck" or something similar.
- (C) Another is a player who, through his own lack of control or ability, loses; then comes off loudly blaming the lights, the noise, the ball, the table, his new bat; anything in fact except that he was beaten by a man who was better than him on the night.
- (D) Then there is the one who only knows swear words and uses them frequently, even in the presence of ladies.
- (E) Encouragement of one's team-mates is one thing, coaching during the game is surely another.
- (F) Arguing with the Umpire about a decision which he has made is another thing which causes unpleasantness; you know what happens in Football if the same thing occurs.
- (G) Have you ever played against a player who kicks the ball to you, instead of picking it up and passing it; or worse still, kicks or hits it anywhere but towards you? I have and it's not very pleasant, is it?

I know that to win is the object of the game and that if you lose it is disappointing, but surely a gentlemanly approach to the game isn't going to reduce your ability or concentration or enjoyment. I am not a paragon of virtue, but at least I try. DO YOU?

BILL CRAFTER

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# On meeting the World Champion . . .

One of the great joys I get out of my annual visit to assist at the English Open at Brighton is meeting so many players. This year Sweden were amongst the contestants and in their team was the World's Men's Singles Champion, Stellan Bengtsson. This was not the first time I had met Bengtsson—I was at Middlesbrough for the European Youth Championships in 1970 when the Swedish left-hander dominated the scene. Before then I had always been impressed with his modesty—surely being World Champion must have changed him.

On the face of it one would think—what does a World Champion look like? Well—this one I am quite sure would never seek the limelight. At a guess I would say about 5ft. 8ins., long blondish hair and a look of urgency about him. As if he wants to get somewhere quick. With a sort of shortie mohair coat he arrived carrying five bags, two in each hand and one hanging round his neck. He had been, with the rest of the party, to the West German Open.

At the tournament itself Bengtsson is no trouble. He complains about nothing. The table. The balls. Everything is the same to him. He looks happy to be there. There are plenty of people wanting the World Champion's autograph. He never refuses. I was able to interview him for the 'Table Tennis News' and if George Yates doesn't put it—the interview—in there then it will certainly be available for publication in here.

Interviewing Stellan Bengtsson was the easiest thing in the world for he speaks almost perfect English. In the interview he not only showed what a fine grasp of the English language he has—he also showed he has a phenomenal memory where table tennis is concerned. As we walked back through Brighton's rather crowded streets I thought that here he was able to walk, unrecognised—something which would surely not have been possible in his home town of Falkenburg.

At dinner that night I was sitting with Jill Hammersley. Stellan was on the next table and a young family were also having their meal there. They had three young children aged about 3, 6 and 9. The youngest of the three was gurgling contentedly at all she could see and Jill was laughing and joking with the child. Bengtsson—who loves children—was asking the child its name. The mother of the family was saying "They are table tennis players". Since there was nothing on their track-suits to signify they were I assumed the parents must at least know something of the game and they did. They did not, however, know that the young man who was so successfully making conversation with their young daughter was World Champion until I pointed it out. They were quite obviously taken back that they were in the company of so famous a personality. By this time Bengtsson was preparing to leave for the Dome and the mother remarked "my daughter would love to get Bengtsson's autograph—do you think he would sign?" I replied that nothing in the world was more certain and I asked Stellan if he would mind waiting a few moments whilst the girl fetched her book. "Yes, of course I'll wait" he replied. Unfortunately the operation of finding the autograph book proved rather more lengthy than had been anticipated but at no time did Bengtsson show any sign of impatience. The book at last being located Bengtsson went to the trouble of asking the girl her name so that he could do the thing in style. It may not have been much but it certainly showed something of the character of the man.

Last word on Bengtsson from A. K. Vint (better known as 'Bill')—"Such modesty these days is very acceptable and he has shown the mantle of World Champion rests lightly on his shoulders. For his age he is a remarkably mature young man". They are sentiments I echo to the core.

PHILIP REID

## Divisional Notes

### DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Eng. Elec. ....	22	20	0	2	184
Wav. Labour .....	21	18	1	2	167
Liv. Y.M.C.A. ....	21	17	3	1	149
Colonsay .....	19	13	6	1	122
Wav. Labour 'A' ....	21	12	7	2	117
Rafters .....	22	8	9	5	107
Bath St. ....	19	6	8	5	93
Eng. Elec. 'A' .....	20	8	10	2	93
Liv. Y.M.C.A. 'A' ..	20	6	9	5	87
Wav. Labour 'B' ....	21	7	13	1	83
Mossley Hill .....	21	6	12	3	77
Linnets .....	23	4	17	2	68
Trinity .....	22	3	17	2	61
Wav. Labour 'C' ....	20	1	16	3	52

English Electric will win the league and cup, or there again Wavertree Labour may win both. The position is still so vague that we will most probably have to wait until the final match of the season to find out who. Fortunately the league has seen fit to make their final match versus each other, and as their last meeting resulted in a draw, even this might not settle the final league placings. In the cup semi-finals they both easily disposed of their opponents Elec. 'A' and Wav. Lab. 'B' 8-2 and 10-0. The final itself promises to be an extremely 'tight' affair as games between these two teams often have been in the past.

The Y.M.C.A. have dropped out of the reckoning for the title, as have Colonsay, although Colonsay's demise seems to have been due to some of their 'imported' players not playing regularly, as their 9-1 defeat by Linnets proves. On the other hand the Y.M.'s downfall appears to have been the crushing defeats by Colonsay (9-1) Eng. Elec. (8-2) and Wav. Labour (7-3). These have almost certainly made their chances of winning the title slight to say the least.

The middle order teams, Rafters, Wav. Lab. 'A'; Bath St. and Eng. Elec. 'A' are all having good seasons. The Rafters team, with John Marshall having an exceptional season with defeats being a very rare feature of his game, are playing very well and

John is getting good support from D. Ferguson, R. Rumjahn and P. Short.

One of the best results of this year was Y.M.C.A. 'A's 6-4 loss to Wavertree. Taking four sets off the title contenders is no mean feat especially as the Y.M. 'A' team included a reserve. This fixture seems to give Wavertree great cause for concern, as last season they lost 6-4 to the Y.M. 'A' team, thus losing all hope of winning the title. I hope this setback is not an omen for the following weeks.

Bath St. v. Rafters proved to be an interesting and enjoyable match, ending in a draw. In this match Arthur Taylor proved that he is still a force to be reckoned with by beating John Marshall 21/19; 12/21; 21/18. Dave Ferguson won his two singles and his doubles for Rafters.

Eng. Electric 'A' have had some good results of late, defeating Trinity (9-1) and Mossley Hill (8-2) as well as reaching the cup semi-finals. Their team of Pheysey, Hodges, McPherson and Nevins are all winning their fair share of sets and they should finish well clear of the struggling teams in 7th or 8th place.

As I said in the previous issue the relegation issue is almost settled, but not quite as I suggested. Wav. Labour 'C' are doomed for the drop to division two and I fear Trinity will accompany them. Linnets on the other hand have had some great results, Colonsay (9-1), Wav. Lab. 'C' (9-1 & 6-4), drawing with Wav. Labour 'B' and losing 6-4 to Y.M. 'A' and Eng. Elec. 'A'; not bad for players who last season were playing in the 3rd division. The man who has helped their cause most is Ray Lavin, he has had some great wins this season with Mandaluff and Youd amongst his many victims.

Another player with some good wins this season is Sammy Holland of Mossley Hill. His best to-date was a two-straight defeat of Eng. Electric's Gordon Birch, thus removing his 100%. Electric won the match 8-2, but the result must be Sammy's personal glory for the season.

RON BURKE

DIVISION 2

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Liv. Y.M.C.A. 'B'	21	16	4	1	149
Crawfords .....	19	13	2	4	133
Waterloo Park .....	23	14	8	1	132
Police .....	22	12	6	4	126
Colonsay 'A' .....	17	13	2	2	114
Sefton .....	19	11	6	2	111
St. Edwards .....	21	9	8	4	102
Linacre .....	20	10	8	2	99
Colonsay 'B' .....	20	7	9	4	99
Crawfords 'A' .....	20	7	11	2	91
Wav. Labour 'D' ....	20	6	12	2	85
Beauclair .....	23	6	15	2	80
Eng. Elec. 'B' .....	22	1	21	0	51
Sparta .....	16	1	13	2	46

The promotion race has narrowed down to three teams with the Police appearing to have given up the chase. Colonsay 'A' have pulled up a few sets thanks to some big wins, and the regular inclusion of Ian Johns will make a difference to their chances. Crawfords are the most consistent of the three teams, but have yet to play Colonsay 'A' in a league fixture, although they did beat them 6-4 in the cup semi-final. In addition they also beat the Y.M. 'B' 6-4; so they must feel they have a good chance. The Y.M. 'B' suffered a big set back when they were beaten 8-2 by St. Edwards. I have no details of what happened or of what sort of team they turned out, but they cannot afford to have any more results like that one. They are still top of the division but with the pressure really on from the other two they will be hard put to stay there. They are due to play Colonsay 'A' in the last week of the season so it is possible that the promotion issue may not be settled until then.

Beauclair gained their revenge on Linacre for the cup defeat when they beat them 6-4. The reason for their improved form is not hard to see for they appear to have found something approaching a settled team at last. It is no longer Ted Birch versus the rest. K. Harrison has started to play regularly and so has D. Berry and joining them is Frank Murphy whom I remember playing against some years ago when I first started playing. They are making a great bid to avoid relegation and it will be interesting to see how close they come or if they do, in fact, succeed. In the Linacre match D. Berry and F. Murphy were the main set winners, each winning

two, with Berry having a particularly good win over Frank Lacey.

Wav. Labour 'D' are another team making a determined effort to avoid the drop and 5-5 draws with Colonsay 'B' and Crawfords and only losing 6-4 to the Y.M. 'B' must give them the feeling they have a good chance of making it. The regular team is K. Jones, R. Bulmer, S. Fewtrell and J. Hoban, and these four are swapped around in the order each week in order to gain the maximum number of sets.

If the Labour club do avoid relegation it will almost certainly be at the expense of Crawfords 'A' who started the season so well. They have lost two of their players and another, Geoff Wilson, is at University and so his season will finish early. This means playing three players from lower teams each week and I feel sorry for Bob Rohrer, the only member left, as he has no idea who will be playing in the team with him as the reserves are usually different each week.

Eng. Elec. 'B' and Sparta have no chance of avoiding the drop. Both have played short on at least two occasions and Sparta did not turn up at all for the match at Beauclair.

At the time of writing Sparta have not yet sent in a single score-card. This makes keeping records very difficult. When Crawfords played them at Sparta, Les Evans, the Crawfords captain, sent a card in himself just to make sure the Fixture Sec. received one. As far as Sparta are concerned this just isn't good enough and it is time members of the team sorted something out. Let's face it, Eddie Cameron's job is hard enough without this sort of thing happening.

The cup semi-finals were won by Sefton who beat Linacre and Crawfords who beat Colonsay 'A' 6-4. This last was a tremendous match in which 7 of the 10 sets went to three and the result was in doubt until the last set. This was a nerve tingling affair between Mike Truman and Dave Williams, with Mike eventually hitting Dave off in the third game, much to the delight and relief of the Crawford's team. Now to the final in which Crawfords beat Sefton 8-2. Apart from the early stages the result was never in doubt. Sefton had trouble in turning a team out, Bill Crafter was in London and could not play, Don



Davies had to come from York, arriving at 8 p.m. with a train to catch back at 11 p.m. These sort of upsets don't help your chances much, and apart from Duncan Sayle who played better than I have ever seen him play, the Sefton players did not play as well as their league position would suggest. For Crawfords Mike Truman won two, Ernie Owens two, Les Evans one and myself two. The doubles were shared and Sayle won Sefton's other set by beating Evans in one of the best games of the evening. At the end of the match the cup was presented by Ronnie Rumjahn.

Commiserations this issue for the first time goes to a doubles pair, Birch and Murphy (Beauclair). They were beaten 22/20; 21/23; 21/19 by Reeve and Lacey of Linacre.

### KEITH FITZSIMMONS

#### DIVISION 3A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Trinity 'A' .....	22	18	3	1	172
Liv. Y.M.C.A. 'C' .....	20	19	1	2	166
Bath St. 'A' .....	20	18	2	0	154
Police 'A' .....	24	14	8	2	136
Maghull .....	22	11	7	4	117
Liv. Jewish .....	20	10	8	2	115
Rafters 'B' .....	22	9	10	3	114
Vagabonds .....	22	9	11	2	91
Cadwa 'A' .....	19	8	11	0	90
Linnets 'A' .....	21	5	12	4	82
Bath St. 'C' .....	20	6	13	1	68
Colonsay 'D' .....	18	3	13	2	63
Police 'C' .....	21	3	15	3	62
University .....	23	0	20	3	50

I wrote in my last notes that I did not think Trinity would repeat their 10-0 victory over Rafters. I did not expect Rafters to reverse the result but they did and it must be considered their best victory of the season.

I think it would be of interest to record the details, Rafters first: B. Jennings lost to A. Chase 16/21; 17/21; beat A. Southall 16/21; 23/21; 21/17; J. Reynolds beat A. Chase 21/18; 21/14; and L. Carmichael 21/19; 21/13, P. Lawrenson lost to A. Southall 21/14; 17/21; 19/21; and D. Newton 14 and 12; J. MacKenzie beat Carmichael 21/15; 19/21; 21/16; and Newton 25/23; 21/8.

In the two weeks prior to Rafters success over Trinity both of these clubs played Bath St. 'C'. Rafters

were defeated 6-4 whilst Trinity won 10-0. On the strength of these two results who would have predicted a Rafters victory.

Equalling the performance of Rafters was Cadwa's draw at the Y.M.C.A. Cadwa have to thank J. Henshaw (2), T. Hughes and I. Fletcher for this excellent effort. A less surprising result was the defeat of Trinity by the Y.M. 'C'. What was surprising was the score of 9-1. C. Cummings, R. Jones and J. Donnelly two each. A. Southall obtained the solitary set for Trinity defeating B. Cullen in the 3rd 21/19. Nearly a whitewash for Trinity and a set-back for their championship hopes.

Bath St. 'A' continue to make the running for the championship. With the experience of A. Gould, A. Walton and C. Smith, plus the improving Eric Hardman they are difficult to beat. They are winning consistently and will be hard to dislodge from their top position. Trinity took a four set lead in their match against Bath St. 'A' but eventually lost 6-4. The championship may hinge on the final match of the season between Liv. Y.M. and Trinity.

Another experienced and sporting team, Police 'A', continue to hold a good position in the league. Unfortunately Police 'C' are struggling to keep away from the relegation zone. However, their cause is being helped by Colonsay who on at least two occasions have played short. At this stage it looks as if Colonsay will join University in the 4th div. next season. No doubt this has been one of University's poorer seasons with only K. Lightfoot capable of winning regularly. Part of their difficulties seem to be administrative. They do not seem to have anyone holding the reins from one season to another. I am sure the league secretary would be delighted if University advised him at the end of this season who will be their secretary next season. Surely a member of the current team can be prevailed upon to be secretary next season. From thereon it is only a question of handing down season to season.

Maghull have introduced A. Jones into their side and as yet he is undefeated. Liv. Jewish having taken four sets off the Y.M. early in February could only manage three

against Linnets two weeks later. Linnets, however, have been showing signs of improvement. Vagabonds have shown the most improvement and are now well clear of the relegation threat which was very real earlier in the season.

As these will be the last notes before the end of the season I will predict that Bath St. 'A' will win the championship and that Colonsay and University will be relegated.

On reading the notes for div. 3B I observe that Rob Lock was recalling a Hyde Cup match between Hilltop and Bath St, which Bath St. eventually won by seven points in the replay. Both he and I played in both matches and I think he would agree that the replay was one of the most tense in which either of us has played. The sides were so evenly matched that I doubt if a second replay would have resolved it and I am therefore not altogether in agreement with his view. I would certainly think the details would make the Guinness Book of Records.

Bath St. 'A' have drawn with Old Swan in the final of the Hyde Cup and the result of the replay I would not like to forecast.

### BRIAN CUNNINGHAM

#### DIVISION 3B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Rafters 'A' .....	22	17	3	2	162
Old Swan .....	18	15	1	2	138
Police 'B' .....	22	14	3	5	136
Cadwa .....	21	12	5	4	127
Colonsay 'C' .....	18	11	2	5	125
Orrell .....	20	12	7	1	121
Bath St. 'B' .....	21	13	5	3	119
Sparta 'A' .....	22	6	11	5	96
Trinity 'B' .....	21	5	13	3	84
Hilltop .....	21	2	13	6	81
Waterloo Pk. 'A' .....	23	4	16	3	72
Liv. Jewish 'A' .....	21	7	14	0	68
Eng. Elec. 'C' .....	22	3	16	3	67
Knotty Ash .....	20	3	15	2	64

Due to power cuts, lost score cards, postponements, etc., I now have in front of me one of the most fascinating and interesting league tables I have seen for quite some time. Rafters are well clear, but Colonsay 'C' and Old Swan have plenty of games in hand. Police and Cadwa are waiting for any slip-ups that may occur. Liverpool Jewish and Knotty

Ash's records both include 10 points from claimed matches, which have to be deleted, as I hope these matches will be replayed in true, sportsmanlike 3B manner—and so relegation is wide open.

In the big "Crunch" match Rafters defeated Colonsay 6-4. Pete Rumjahn had no difficulty in beating Brenda Williams and Barbara Kirkman, but found it rather tougher against the two girls in the doubles. Playing with Reg Hetherington they scraped home 19/21; 21/19; 25/23. Other victors for Rafters were Reg Hetherington, Eileen Mansell and Jack McCaig (making a welcome return!!) all one apiece, and for Colonsay—Kirkman, Williams, Field and Field/Leeson were successful. Incidentally, that was Colonsay's first defeat, and maybe they were suffering from the previous week's match against English Elec. which resulted in a magnificent performance by the Electric team in holding Colonsay to a 5-5 draw. The best game here probably being Ken Black's victory over Barbara Kirkman 21/19 in the third. Having mentioned Eng. Electric in the last issue of the 'Digest' as being too good a side to be relegated, surely this result proves me right!!

Old Swan seem to be yet another club out to prove my predictions wrong!! From a possible 30, they have taken 26 points and that is championship form. One result I have noticed was the 5-5 draw which Sparta held them to. Hero for Old Swan was C. Hall winning his three sets. Crispin lost to Leeming 22/20; 21/19; and also lost to Bill Holmes 22/20 in the third. Linforth lost to Leeming 21/18 in the third and to Harry Holmes 21/10 in the third, Kinnear lost to Jim Lightburn 21/14 in the third.

Bath St. are playing very well at the moment. This is due to Ted Jane's new formula which I shall now expose to all readers . . . It's quite simple really—M. Moran and C. Thompson have switched from No's. 3 and 4 to No's. 1 and 2 and Jack Letch and Ted have switched vice-versa. Hilltop were the first club to suffer at Bath St's, hands when they were well and truly "laced" 8-2. (I wasn't playing . . .) Stu Pratt and Ken Horton winning for Hilltop.

Waterloo Park have slipped back into the relegation zone due to them:

only taking 16 points from their last seven games. Their best result being a 6-4 victory over Hilltop (again I wasn't playing . . .) their worst a 10-0 defeat against Cadwa.

There are no 100% records—Cyril Callaghan (Orrell) is the best player this season. His only defeat this season was by D. Rimmer (Police) 21/12; 21/23; 21/16 in only his second game of the season. So maybe Cyril would still be unbeaten if he had done some close season practice!!!

Finally, in reply to Keith Fitzsimmons' article in the last issue—we have ALWAYS known that division 3B is much stronger, better and of a higher class than 3A (although Eddie Cameron may contest that point). And it is good to see that the teams leaving this division are meeting with some success in other divisions.

ROB LOCK

DIVISION 4A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Liv. Y.M.C.A. 'D'	20	19	0	1	166
Crawfords 'B'	21	19	2	0	164
Crawfords 'D'	20	13	4	3	134
Maghull 'A'	22	9	8	5	125
Liv. Poly	18	11	4	3	123
Rafters 'C'	20	10	8	2	112
Eng. Elec. 'D'	20	11	6	3	108
Police 'E'	19	4	10	5	84
Eng. Elec. 'F'	20	6	12	2	81
Cadwa 'B'	21	7	13	1	71
Bath St. 'D'	19	5	13	1	65
Liv. Jewish 'B'	20	0	18	2	34
Knotty Ash 'B'	20	1	17	2	33

Thank you, Editor, for a competent and explicit reply to my last months opening query regarding the 'Digest'.

English Elec. 'D' stole the headlines with a draw at Polytech and a win at Crawfords 'B' great stuff and then lost their way to Knotty Ash and spoiled it all! Add a 6-4 defeat by their 'F' team and you certainly have a mixed grill. Lewis (2) showing a welcome return to form.

Polytech crashed at home 8-2 to rivals for the No. 2 spot Crawfords 'B'. Carney and Gilbert our No's, 1 and 2 in the averages both having an excellent season. With such an unsettled side Crawfords 'B' have done well to sustain the challenge of Polytech and their own 'D' team, who are still in the running for the number two position. They took a good three

points off the strong Liv. Y.M. 'D' team who have the division's top man Allen on top form and carrying on last season's good work.

Police 'E' started the year with a bang winning against Electric 'F' (Arris 2) and Cadwa 'B' and a very good draw against Maghull. Wilkinson winning his six games in the break through.

Cadwa 'B' and Bath St. fought a dour battle with Cadwa's strength in the doubles winning the match. Williams beat Georgeson 23/21 in the 3rd and Power M. beat Doris Martin 21/19 in the 3rd.

I believe our bright prospects, Davey and Williams, K. (Rafters) and Sill, A. (Elec. 'F') have been given a chance to shine (or otherwise) in higher sphere. Good luck to them.

Was the expedite called when Winstanley beat Georgeson 18/21; 21/18; 21/19? Lone star heroes—Biggs 2 (Cadwa) v. Elec. 'D'; Pownall and Davies (Knotty Ash) v. Crawfords 'B' and Polytechnic, Jones, A. 2 (Maghull) and Clarke (Bath St.) v. Crawfords 'B'. Good to see Jones, K. (Crawfords 'D') back in the fold after a couple of years absence. A few more individual walk-overs than usual and a few 10-0's knocking about—a pity.

JACK LAMBERT

DIVISION 4B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Crawfords 'C'	22	15	6	1	142
Wav. Labour 'E'	20	15	3	2	140
Norris Green	20	14	5	1	133
Old Swan 'A'	20	15	3	2	130
Orrell 'A'	21	13	5	3	126
Beauclair 'A'	21	8	10	3	95
Eng. Elec. 'E'	18	9	7	2	94
Giro	18	10	6	2	92
Cadwa 'C'	20	5	11	4	85
Trinity 'D'	18	4	12	2	75
Police 'D'	19	4	13	2	70
Mossley Hill 'A'	18	1	16	1	45
Knotty Ash 'A'	19	1	17	1	43

What a hotch-potch at the top, shock wins, surprise defeats, walk-overs, you name it and the promotion battle has it all. The odds are still very slightly in favour of Wavertree but after a series of slip-ups Old Swan are right on their heels and Crawfords are still in there with a

good chance. It looks as if it will need 170 sets to take the title and both of them can reach this total. Wavertree blotted their book when after a fine 10-0 win over Beauclair (no w/o's here) they went down to Crawfords and Old Swan 7-3 and 6-4. To help even things up Old Swan lost to Orrell and Beauclair whilst Crawfords lost to Beauclair and Old Swan. Add Norris Green, who have pulled right up thanks to two well-timed 10-0 walk-overs and a 10-0 victory against a very weak Mossley Hill team, and you can see it's still wide open.

Giro have gone from bad to worse and have recently conceded 2 walk-overs to Beauclair and Cadwa, although I am glad to say at least one of these may be replayed. Their team keeps changing and they have dropped down very rapidly. They could still have a say in the title for they have to play Crawfords, Old Swan and Wavertree and a lot may depend on what sort of team they turn out against these three.

I don't think the set-backs suffered by the top four means loss of form etc. it is just an indication of just how little separates the teams in this division. Take Orrell, for example, they are now showing what we all knew they were capable of with a run of victories which include Crawfords, Old Swan and Norris Green, and a draw with Wavertree. Dave Batty and Myra Lovelady are really playing well and to-date have only dropped one set in seven matches. Myra has not yet lost two in a match and Dave's only nought was in the first match and in a cup game. Add their regular wins in the doubles and you get a very redoubtable pair. Against Wavertree they won all Orrell's sets. With good backing from G. Brint and W. Illidge they take some stopping. Trinity are another team who cannot be taken lightly but seem to have problems with availability of players and this has sometimes affected their results. With their best team out they are a match for anyone as they showed when they drew with Old Swan.

Two matches which could have a bearing on the title are Old Swan v. Cadwa, which was stopped by a power cut with Cadwa leading 3-2; and Wav. Labour v. Trinity which was postponed. Neither team can be looking forward with any confidence

to these matches and it will be interesting to see the outcome of them.

Down at the bottom Knotty Ash and Mossley Hill continue to battle to avoid relegation and the odds seem to be in Knotty Ash's favour at the moment they have the points in, whereas Mossley Hill seem to be in arrears with their fixtures. Both have a hard run-in and perhaps their clash at the end of the season may have to settle it.

Wavertree gained their revenge when they beat Norris Green in the cup semi-final but their hopes of a cup win were crushed by a strong Y.M. 'D' team 10-0 in the final. The score does not truly reflect the match, but I think 3 sets was the most they could have taken.

My sympathies to Myra Lovelady who lost to A. Speed (N. Green) 19/21; 26/24; 21/23; and C. Pitt (Giro) who lost to T. Hall (Police) 23/21; 21/23; 22/20, you can't get any closer than that without winning.

Finally, a word about the walk-overs, when the season has ended and you haven't got what you wanted by greedily claiming walk-overs due to a mistake over match nights will it really seem worthwhile when you look back? I don't think it will, do you?

KEN ARMSON

#### DIVISION 5A

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Bedford House .....	21	21	0	0	184
Linnets 'B' .....	20	16	2	2	136
Orrell 'B' .....	21	12	6	3	130
Liv. Poly 'A' .....	21	14	5	2	127
Rafters 'D' .....	21	14	6	1	125
St. Hugh's .....	19	13	5	1	123
St. John's .....	21	8	11	2	102
Vagabonds 'A' .....	20	8	10	2	97
Maghull 'C' .....	21	4	16	1	77
Woolton 'A' .....	20	5	14	1	60
Knotty Ash 'C' .....	18	4	14	0	54
Barker & Dobson .....	18	3	15	0	50
Goodlass Wall .....	19	1	18	0	35

AT LAST! here they are, our first divisional notes of the season. Due to a little misunderstanding, along with a lack of communication, we were not represented in the first two issues of the magazine. Now we must make every effort to make sure our notes are printed, and every co-operation given to the new editor.

Let me begin by giving a belated welcome to all the newcomers to our division, especially to those spending their first season in the league. It is heartening to see the enthusiasm of a lot of players has not waned, even if they have been on the receiving end of some heavy defeats. I believe the reward of this spirit is starting to be seen in some of the performances of the newcomers, and the experience they have gained is bound to prove invaluable in the future.

Bedford House, who seemed to have benefited from last season's experience when they finished halfway up the division, seem a sure bet to become champions. Their No. 1 Dave Owens still has a 100% record, and has only lost one of his doubles with partner Pete Roberts. The only newcomer to the team is a familiar face to those who have played in the league before, Ernie Sturgess, and it could be his steadying influence that has been a decisive factor in his team's success.

Of the other contenders for promotion, Linnets 'B'; Rafter's 'D'; Orrell 'B' and St. Hugh's all seem closely grouped, and it will be very interesting to see how this group finish. Linnets and Orrell have had two very exciting draws this season, the second one in particular when seven sets went to a close third game. The doubles typified the game, first of which Stevenson/Wake of Orrell lost to the Meyer brothers, 21/15; 17/21; 15/21. Then Walsh/Mullarky evened things up by beating Gavin/Morgan 21/19; 20/22; 21/16.

Rafter's 'D' have done very well up to the time of writing, the only cloud over them being a rumour that they might lose their best two players, Graves and Kelly, to a higher division. St. Hugh's, although having the distraction of moving premises earlier in the season, have been quite consistent and I believe will show even more improvement. They had a good 7-3 win over St. John's, who, I think, are the best of our new recruits, the McAlle brothers winning their four singles. John McCloughlin and Alan Gillespie have both had good first seasons for St. John's. Alan must have been surprised to get a mention in the 'Echo' after only his second match, for beating Ernie Sturgess.

The fact that Vagabonds 'A' can-

not seem to play a regular team every week seems to have affected their chances. If they had their strongest team regularly they could be in a much stronger position, as they have very experienced players in Ridgway and Harper. Polytech 'A' got off to their usual late start to the season due to the beginning of the term not coinciding with the start of the season. I think the team suffered early on because of this, but have now settled down quite well. Noel Kelly has turned in some useful results for them, notably a good double win over Ridgway and Harper (Vags.) to give Poly a 7-3 win.

Maghull 'C' seem to have their fair share of the female contingent at the moment, Mrs. Lloyd-Davies in particular is putting up some fine displays, as yours truly found to his cost when losing 21/16; 19/21; 24/26.

Of the teams lower down, Knotty Ash 'C'; Barker & Dobson, Woolton 'A' and Goodlass Wall, are all putting up a tremendous battle to avoid the wooden spoon. Of these, Knotty Ash seem to be the better placed at the moment, Linnets only just beat them 6-4 and J. Robinson has a fine win over B. Meyer. If they can continue to turn in results like that, they must climb up the table. Woolton 'A' must be the youngest team in the league and they have stuck to their task this season. Improvement is being shown, as it must in players so young, and in none more than young P. Hargreaves who had a tremendous 21/14; 21/18 win over Roberts of Bedford House.

The other two teams fighting to avoid bottom place are also in their first season, but they are not quite so young as Woolton, they are Goodlass Wall and Barker & Dobson. The latter showed to have the edge in their recent encounter, winning 6-4; Robinson winning both his singles over Taggart and Heatley and also winning his doubles.

To finish with, can I just be a little selfish and talk about my own team, Bedford House. We have reached the final of the Stamp Cup, where we play a very strong Sefton General team from 5B. We shall be doing our best to see the team from 5A comes out on top.

KEN BRADY

## DIVISION 5B

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Sefton 'A' .....	15	15	0	0	141
H.U.C.A. ....	16	14	1	1	131
Woolton .....	16	11	4	1	111
Linnets 'C' .....	15	11	4	0	108
Giro 'A' .....	15	7	7	1	65
Maghull 'B' .....	14	6	7	1	64
Bath St. 'E' .....	15	5	10	0	60
Police 'F' .....	16	5	11	0	50
Eng. Elec. 'G' .....	16	3	11	2	45
Cross Inter .....	16	2	14	0	38
Vagabonds 'B' .....	12	1	11	0	17

I must admit I had hoped that Linnets would have made Sefton fight for their title, but it was not to be. Sefton proved their strength with wins of 7-3 and 8-2. Murray of Sefton retained his 100% and, of course, is No. 1 man in the division. I expect them to beat Bedford House in the 'Stamp' Cup final. Did I hear someone say Rule 22, last para?!!!

HUCA and Woolton fought an even battle, with W. Hargreaves living up to his No. 2 ranking in the division by winning his two. Hughes, J. E. of Huca also shares this spot together with Biggs of Sefton, I must give Hargreaves bonus points as the only one to be on the way up and claim a place in the top four, the other three have all COME DOWN to 'achieve fame'.

Vagabonds gained their first win over Police 'F' (Foulkes 2) 6-4. Police then put up their best performance of the season by beating Woolton 6-4; thanks mainly to Williams, F.J. Police have defence in depth with 14 players called on to date, in contrast Woolton have used but four. Bath St. had a good win over Linnets (Brown and Mikulla 2 apiece), O. Lloyd taking singles and doubles honours.

A couple of good draws for Eng. Elec. v. Maghull (Pattinson 2) and Giro. Postles is having a good season but doubles are their real strong point. Julie Black and Connor, G. are beginning to shine brightly for Electric.

Maghull and Police lost their way to Sefton and Giro respectively—fancy the Police getting 'lost'? Thurlow and Lavery came good for Cross Inter against Linnets, Brookfield of Bath St. back in the fold had some good wins to his credit, none better than his 21/15; 23/21; over Biggs of

Sefton. Barnes and Smith, F. saved a rout for Maghull against Woolton. I believe you get 'Ham and Heagues' when you go to the Police—whoops, sorry!?

A couple of close ones—Adams and Smith beat Ashburner and Pickard 22/20; 18/21; 22/20; and Murray (Sefton) beat Mikulla (Linnets) 22/24; 22/20; 21/18.

JACK LAMBERT

## LADIES' DIVISION

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Colonsay .....	9	9	0	0	80
Rafters .....	10	6	3	1	72
Crawfords .....	9	6	2	1	60
Crawfords 'B' .....	8	4	4	0	29
Crawfords 'A' .....	10	2	8	0	26
Police .....	10	0	10	0	13

The Bartholomew Cup Final will be played at the English Electric club and the finalists will be Rafters and Colonsay and following their two close matches in the league it should be an interesting match.

Colonsay have now clinched the league as I forecast, (John, remind me to lend you my crystal ball sometime!), it is a pity that Colonsay are not contesting the handicap, but I understand that there are difficulties, with their new clubrooms.

An interesting and close league match was played at Rafters between Rafters and Crawfords resulting in a draw. Pauline Lawrenson and Jean MacKenzie winning two singles apiece and the doubles. Mabel Francis and Blore each won two singles for Crawfords.

We don't yet know the rules of the Handicap which is being played, but I'm afraid Crawfords have thrown their chances away by playing short against the Police, and against Rafters with a reserve as I was unavailable.

I hope to see a good entry from our division in the 'Closed' this season.

VAL BLORE

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**“Due to the power strike the season has officially been extended to Friday, 14th April, 1972, Home teams failing to play by the 14th will forfeit the match 0-10”.**

# Lancashire & Cheshire League

Congratulations to our junior girls on winning their way through to the semi-finals of the National, Coca-Cola sponsored, team championships.

Having beaten Stockport and Millom in previous rounds, they met and defeated a strong Leicester side in the quarter-finals. What a pity there were only five Liverpool people present to see this nail-biting, doggedly contested and splendidly played match.

In the semi-final we play either Sheffield or Cheshunt, again at home, and I hope I will be able to give clubs better notice of this match so that we can turn up in our thousands (Jack Lambert won't mind), to support our team.

Against Leicester, as in all previous rounds, nine sets were played (there are no doubles, it is a sudden death affair), Suzanne Manning won one, Brenda Williams two and Barbara Kirkman two. It was an occasion for strong nerves, the score-board showing, (Liverpool first), 1-0; 2-0; 2-1; 2-2; 3-2; 3-3; 3-4; 4-4 and finally, unforgettably, 5-4.

In the other National team competitions, the Men were defeated by Manchester in the Wilmott Cup. The Ladies' beat Manchester 5-4 and then lost to a Stockport team which included Susan Lisle, who plays for Manchester in the Lancs. and Ches. League (work that one out). The Junior Boys, in the Carter Cup, also lost to Manchester.

The Lancs. and Ches. League run their own "Norman Cooke" knock-out competition and in this, after a bye in the first round, we were presented with the 2nd round by Oldham, who could not field a team. In the quarter-finals we were defeated by Farnworth (away), who are currently leading Division 2. This competition is a handicap one, teams consisting of 3 men and 1 woman. Six men's singles, one ladies' single, one men's and one mixed doubles are played and the teams finishing in the bottom half of Division One concede six points per game to the teams finishing in the top half of Division 3 last season, and as the Farnworth team included B. Farnworth, C. Heap and R. Kelly, we did well to run them so close.

Lancs. and Ches. League Match Results:—

Men's 1st 4, Stockport 6	Youth 10, Nelson 0
Men's 'A' 0, Farnworth 10	Youth 10, Youth 'A' 0
Ladies' 1st 10, Preston 0	Youth 'A' 6, Crewe 4
Ladies' 1st 7, Stockport 3	Junior 3, Stockport 7
Ladies' 'A' 8, Macclesfield 2	Junior 7, Oldham 3
	Junior 2, Manchester 8

ALEC DAVIDSON

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## Poor Conditions: - Habit or Indifference?

I was playing in a match recently which was interrupted both at 8 o'clock and 9 o'clock by a number of people clocking on and off work, chattering nineteen to the dozen as they did so. The noise was so bad that the match had to be stopped for about ten minutes each time. The club were apologetic but said there was nothing they could do about it. This incident set me thinking about conditions in other clubs and I was surprised by the number of clubs that play in adverse conditions throughout the league.

It is easy to talk about poor conditions, the problem is to do something about them. The simplest method of improving things is to do it yourself, it is usually quicker and cheaper that way. If, for example, your club has inadequate heating and you are just about to throw out an old electric fire, why not take it to the club instead. It may not be much but at least it's something. You may have noticed that there are one or two clubs which could be described as a trifle chilly, but if only one or two players in a season took an old electric fire to their clubs the fight against players getting frostbite would be well under way.

Poor tables are in abundance throughout the league and why more clubs haven't done as Wavertree Labour and bought a new table themselves I don't know. The cost per player, per week, would depend of the size of the club, but a club with only ten players could have a new table in one season if they started at the beginning of a season and each member contributed 25p each week. This may seem a lot to pay EVERY WEEK but it is by far the easiest way of providing a new table. If, of course, your club has twenty players the sum to pay each week is only 12½p. The more players the cheaper it becomes. One other method is to raise the subscriptions by a set amount, but this usually takes much longer to raise the money, probably a few seasons in fact. The main problem is to get the money out of the players, one way would be for the team captain to collect the money at each match. There are, of course, other ways of raising money, such as having a jumble sale or some form of social event, and although they take a great deal of organising they are usually well worth it in the long run.

At some clubs poor lighting is a problem, although in some cases this is not the fault of the clubs themselves. I remember one incident a few seasons ago when I visited a club with poor lighting, only to find on closer inspection they were using light bulbs that were too small. On this being pointed out their faces turned various shades of red, but at least the next visitors to that club had good lighting to play under. Twice in the last few weeks I have played at clubs where one of the bulbs had broken. The first club had plenty of spares, but all much too small, although fortunately their lighting is very good and fitting a smaller bulb did not make very much difference. The second was in the Rymjahn Cup Final and here the club concerned had no spare bulbs at all and in the end had to take one from the changing room. How many clubs, I wonder, do carry spare bulbs? Not many, I'll bet. Next time you visit your club check the size of the bulbs and see if there are any spares, you never know, you might find your light bulbs are too small.

How many clubs have you been to where every so often the door opens, a head pokes round, has a quick look around the room and disappears? After this has happened two or three times it gets very annoying. There is not much a club can do, although they can try notices on the door and word of mouth. It may have some effect. If not, you could always try what is politely termed 'a punch up the bracket'.

Do any of the problems mentioned apply to your club? If so, why not see if there is anything you can do to help make table-tennis a little more pleasant. It's difficult enough just playing the game without having to put up with poor conditions as well, so see if there is something you can do, every little helps.

KEITH FITZSIMMONS



## Net Cords

First the good news, I have heard from a usually impeccable source, that when Tony Clayton graduates from the University there is a good chance of him staying in Liverpool. This should at least prevent the premature retirement of one of his clubmates.

\* \* \*

Now the bad news, He's back, just glance at the Editorial for once and you'll know what I mean. Mr. Cooke, did you realise what your letter meant? The quick withdrawal of "Monty" and the return of Armson. Gawd help us all!!

\* \* \*

May I just express my sympathies for the "Dick Turpin" of Sefton, Don Davies, as all his efforts in dashing from York to play in the Rumjahn Cup Final were in vain. He lost. Still, it was only to be expected of a "reserve".

\* \* \*

I see the annual search for score-cards is being undertaken by Uncle Eddie. I see he suggests that the match will be awarded to the visitors when he doesn't receive a card. The mind boggles at the ideas this will put into the heads of some of our less scrupulous members.

\* \* \*

A word of protest, Colonsay resigned one month, League champions the next! Trust a bunch of women not to know their own minds. My apologies and congratulations to Val Blore, who managed to see through this trap for unwary columnists.

\* \* \*

To put the record straight English Electric did grant Wav. Labour 'B' the favour of 4 sets in the Readman Cup semi-final, by conceding the remaining games when leading 6-0. Their reason officially being that the premises were a bit chilly. Everybody say "Aaahh!"

\* \* \*

No, John Molyneux will not be organising a dance. Yes, he has named the day, and no he will not be pelted with T.T. Balls by his victims. His last one happened so long ago, the poor bloke has convinced himself it was just a nightmare.

JOHN MOLYNEUX

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