



Table Tennis DIGEST

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

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EDITORIAL

I hear that before the Digest goes into print a letter will be received advocating once again that a rule amendment will be put to the A.6.H. making our League a three aside outfit or alternatively Divisions One or and Two - three aside.

The first question to be asked is the rule being put forward to benefit the League or to help clubs out who are short of good players?

If it is the former, one has to say that three aside would reflect the true merits of teams playing each other and cuts out the fiddles which it is nice to note are becoming less frequent. If you included a doubles, three players would play three best of three singles plus two of the three playing a doubles. It would also - particularly in the top Divisions - mean top players always getting games whereas quite often the mug reserve is thrown away at one and a waste of night for Joe Champion.

Regarding the very relevant point of 'true merits' this would also be achieved with four aside each playing one game and two sets of doubles, the doubles could be best of three to make the total games similar to which they are at the moment.

On the other side of the coin there has been no outcry for a change. Only one or two senior clubs seem keen for change. Many clubs would have to make players redundant - clubs with a large membership and clubs with limited club nights. We don't want to tell players they cannot play, when our League membership is at an all time low.

Utilisation of rooms is important, would organisations allow three members to use a room for one night or more, and if you are hiring a room it once again adds to the cost of table tennis as only three have to share the cost.

Contd.

On finance again - my club for instance would have to enter 10 teams (fortunately we can) instead of eight (and sack a few players) does our once low cost game take another rise with additional team fees?

I had a chat with a couple of experienced players (separately from Div.1 and Div.2) and they were convinced that the change must start with Div.1 only. Many Division 1 individuals will be against this as I find that many players once having played in Div.1 think it is their God given right to play there, but it must be appreciated that a 25% movement from Div.1 down will lead to considerable improvement in standards lower down the League. This applies more so if the League as a whole goes 3 aside. You would eventually get a situation where say the new Div.4 would be stronger than the old Div.3.

I have written this before receiving the three aside proposal and have tried to put as many relevant points forward as possible. Think about it, it is important.

DIVISION 1

LES FRENCH

The very powerful Rafter's side are well on target for the grand slam this season - the League, Cup and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Trophy for sleuthing.

Only Bootle have beaten them to date and recently they have had a string of 10-0 wins, showing their strength in depth. Alan Timewell has tasted defeat only 3 times in 15 matches. Trevor Manning and Sherlock have lost only 4 times to date in 15 and 19 matches respectively. Paul Ashcroft has 31 wins and 6 defeats. Wayne Percival has played in only 7 matches winning 10 and losing 4. Sleuthing apart, they deserve to be champions for their consistent performances. Bootle have only a remote chance of catching up and need a huge win over Rafter's in their return match - it should be quite an occasion. Palmerston's challenge ended when they conceded a 10-0 walk-over to Maghull, who gratefully accepted the 10 sets to boost their chances of avoiding relegation. Palmerston and Wav. Labour should now have a great battle for third place. I think Vernon Sangster will just pip Eng.Elec. for 5th spot with Y.M. a disappointing 7th. The relegation position has changed with Y.M. 'A' increased team strength. Steve Green is playing some brilliant table-tennis and must be one of the best prospects in the League. With Francis Lay and Jeff Huntington available and Ahmed Thabet back again the team should escape IF the team plays regularly. It looks like Wav.Lab 'B' and Jewish will go down, but Maghull are still in danger.

Jewish seem to struggle against the better teams but kept their hopes alive with a 7-3 win over Maghull, despite fielding reserve John Finnigan in place of Eddie Clein. John Henshaw and Julian Quirk both won their singles. Jewish also drew with Y.M. (minus Peter Lee), Richard Stevenson starred this time with wins over Jeff Huntington and Alan Pickering. They also held Wav.Lab 'A' to 6-4 with Quirk beating Rob Bevan. Eddie Clein and George Smith relived former glories in this match with Eddie winning 21-18, 20-22, 27-25.

Wav.Lab 'B' **have been** struggling from the start, in my view, unnecessarily. Mick Tierney, with a new pair or rubbers, could be the player of old, and Les Molyneux in a successful team would do much better. Wins over players of the calibre of Peter Taylor 21-15, 21-23, 21-19 shows what he can do. Ray Jackson has had some good wins too. With George Smith in place of Mick Feerick, they could pip Y.M 'A'.

Mick tells me that they've had no luck and I can well believe it. When they played us they lost 10-0 and six sets went to 21-17 in the third or closer, and they lost the lot. Ray Jackson lost 19 in the third to Peter Flint and Les Molyneux held match point against Peter before losing 23-21.

Y.M. 'A' held Palmerston to 4-6 with Steve Green beating Mal McEvoy 23-21, 21-14. Steve was also within two points of a win over Keith Williams. He lost the first 20-22 after leading then took the second easily 21-11. Then Keith asserted his authority to win 21-H in the final game.

Keith has been playing some great stuff this season, he has been Captain of the Lancashire second team and it seems to have matured his game. To date Keith has won 37 and lost 3 to top the League's averages. Graham Parr (21-11) and Brian Davey (22-12) have had a good season but Mal McEvoy has been disappointing with 24-14.

I'm short of information about Bootle but Tony O'Connor 21-3 and Paul Hutchings 14-4 are doing well with Laurence Kenwright 15-9 giving them good support. Kicky Brown (12-12) has difficulty with the top players and this will be vital in the final reckoning for the championship. A special word about Roy Smith, Captain of Wav.Lab. is called for. What a great team and club man he is. A model sportsman on and off the table, a great fighter and a thoroughly nice fella. Take a bow Roy, you deserve it. Roy's record (36-8) is topped by only a few in the League. Dave Roberts 32-10, John Hook 24-10 and Phil Luxon 28-16 are all in good form to keep Labour in the top four.

English Electric's leading set scorers have been Phil Thomson 19-5 and Fred Pheysey 17-8. Their 'A' team has dropped into the relegation zone, often fielding weak sides, although Tommy Williams' recent form promises better things. Its strange to see players of the calibre of Graeme Black with only one win from 12 sets. George (Cheng) Lennon (what a pity his name wasn't John) has won only 3 from 16 and the promising Nigel Conquest only 1 from 14. The danger signs are there.

A few good individual efforts are worthy of note. Julian Quirk beat Graham Parr 12,19 as did Billy Wardle, 15 in the third. Graham had his moment when he beat Trevor Manning 21-15, 10-21, 26-24. Paul Gittins beat Wayne Percival 15,17,16. Tommy Williams beat Dave Roberts 24-22 in the third, and Colin Powell for good measure. Rob Bevan beat Peter Flint 18-21, 21-17, 23-21 and John'Hook 21-19, 17-21, 22-20. Chris Ford beat Phil Luxon 19-21, 25-23, 21-15. Steve Green beat Peter Lee 20-22, 21-19, 21-15. Jeff Huntington beat Mal McEvoy 18,12

Mick Tierney beat Roy Smith 18,18. Neil Royden beat Steve Green 1#,18. Nigel Conquest beat Lawrence Kenwright 21-18, 18-21, 21-19. John Rankin, back to better form, beat John Hook 8,14 and Roy Smith 13 in the third. Les French beat Phil Luxon 11,15. John Greene beat Peter Taylor 13,12 with some fierce hitting.

To close, I'd like to welcome back to the First Division two players who have been very special to me. It's about 8 years since Sue Manning (I could never get used to her being Alexander) graced the division. Sue's now a proud mum and she's won 5/6 on her return. Brenda Buoeay (Williams), also back after a long absence, returned with a victory over Bill Harris, 18 in the third. Sue and Brenda started with me at Holly Lodge when 11 years old and won the English Schools under-13 Title twice as well as being England ranked as juniors, Brenda reaching No.3 and Sue No.6. It's nice to have them back together.

DIVISION 2

FRANK MURPHY

As predicted by your previous correspondent Maghull 'A' playing under the cloud of the sad loss of their club friend Gordon Brownlee, look nailed on to finish Champions and are determined to achieve a 'first' as Second Division leaders to win every match. I feel this will prove beyond them judged by the recent assaults made by several sides to dislodge them. Palmerston, (now read Huyton L.C. as another piece of our heritage evaporates) - are a most improved side and have cleverly arranged the ladies keep-fit to disturb the many veterans in this division, who are 'shaky' at the sight of an abundance of moving female flesh. Therefore, Maghull were bound to hit trouble and were under constant pressure with Paul Kinsay having an impressive match for Huyton with wins over the rejuvenated Mick 'giz-a-job' Allen and the ultra experienced but mellowing Ted Birch. Mike Mahoney beat Alan Chase, for the second time this season and his match against the writer was interrupted by the caretaker wanting 'out' which gave the defensive player a distinct advantage, so Maghull ran out 6-4 winners.

Huyton hammered Jewish to emphasise the progress Mike Mahoney and especially Paul Kinsey have made during the season. Jim Riding, with his changed rubber and Neil Jennings are gritty fighters who give the young players encouragement so they could well win the Rumjahn Cup but my preference is still with the more experienced Jewish outfit despite the League set-back, in Bob Hudson they have a Captain for the big occasion, Bob has his critics but he is a great competitor a good reader of the game and a wily old campaigner, I fancy Messrs. McMillan, Bradbury, Hudson and Burrows and I am willing to put my money where my mouth is!

Plessey are a strong side but were another side to throw away a winning chance against Maghull. They led early by taking two from an out-of-sorts Alan Chase and should have consolidated the position but the close sets swayed Maghull's way with Trevor Owen's losing a winning lead in the third against the writer. Bob Edwards plays an open game and is enjoyable to play and watch and, with Peter Wass **showing a** better form now than in the early stages of the season, Plessey can provide plenty of problems.

Electric Supply have split their strengths and could have been in a challenging position with the right breaks. They have Paul Baker, Alan Cameron, Alan Biggs and Peter Carney in their first team with Les 'give it to me simple' Evans, Martin Tate, Alan Kelly, Rob Brackley and currently Tommy Lynch and Wally Lewis in their second team. Martin Tate a University graduate from Tyneside, looked the best player in the division against Maghull but he has now deserted the ranks without an explanation - perhaps Les Evans' Liverpool sense of humour was too strong for him!

Bath St. have players that should have nestled them among the leaders, Dave Butterworth is a quality player who should not lose many in the division but his kindly nonchalant temperament puts himself up for grabs on occasions. He certainly has the support of war horses Bill Clayton and Jack "loose elastic" Letch, young Karen Gibson and Alan Waddington. In their second team Fred Bainbridge fully tests the theory that "Draught Guinness is good for you" my advice to Captains is take the whirlwind early before he lubricates that forehead! Matches against Bath St. are savoured on and off the table. I hear the 'Happy Wanderer' Val Franco has rejoined Bath St. alongside Fred, Peter 'Grip and Swing' Ross and the 'Grays'. Rafter's 'A' have used twelve players so far and are a side that should be well clear of relegation. They have Don Davies, Duncan Sayle - (enjoyed his win over Alan Chase) Clive Roberts, Bill Crafters, Janet

Le Page and Mike Mercer (when Don Davies decides to kill!) with stars of yesteryear Peter Rumjahn and Dave Ferguson. They lack motivation and it could be due to lack of heat to the essential organs every other week - albeit the quality of their refreshments! Police are in mid-table and would have consolidated their position if Dave Crispin had not missed several matches. Dave has been in fine form this season although his excellent average is exaggerated by his Houdini skill in missing the hard matches. It's nice to see Gareth Jones back after his pools win and he is making his presence felt with his fancy rubbers - I will be waiting for you next time Gareth - but well played. Poor Chalky has broken his bat and lost his way, but you cannot keep a fighter down, Don, so no doubt you will bounce back next season with something up your uniform, when you add the unusual but effective style of Tom Purcell Police can be useful. Trinity are in a similar league position as Police but appear to lack interest. Their best player Mike Keane is not always available, maybe the years of playing in the Holy Ice Box are finally getting to those great stalwarts Tom Killip and John Higham who have become inseparable over the years - the Hoad and Rosewall of the Table Tennis world!

English Electric provide shocks at both ends of the division. Their 'B' side continues to challenge at the top and their 'C' team the wooden spoonists. They use Jimmy Lynch from Wigan as a floater and if he was a regular in their 'B' team then they would be promotion certainties, but loyalty wins the day so Brian Crolley, Kevin Parker, Frank McCann and Alan Jones **must-** fight it out with Jewish. With Jewish up for the cup, I feel Electric with Brian Crolley's great battling qualities (Brian's walkabout between points is based on royalty) will show more grit and the greater desire for Division 1 Table Tennis. Their 'C' team are doomed, but they are keen and enjoy their matches with Ritchie Craggs claiming some good scalps including Dave Butterworth and Alan Chase (Alan does win occasionally).

Joining Electric 'C, Rafters 'A', Supply 'A' will probably be Bootle 'A'. They could overhaul Bath St. 'A' if they parade both Ian and Keith Miller every week. However, Keith, one of the best attacking players in the division is something of an enigma with his results varying but he is particularly effective against the slow and overweight veterans in this League!

Finally, I have been advised that the following results were subject to a Steward's enquiry:- Neil Jennings beat Dave Butterworth 21-7; 21-13 (must have been the ladies keep fit, Dave) Bob Edwards vs Jim McMillan 21-18; 21-19; Ritchie Craggs vs Dave Butterworth 21-9; 23-21; Ray Lavin vs Alan Chase 21-19; 21-18; Les Evans vs Paul Baker 21-15; 21-13; Alan Kelly vs Mike Mahoney 21-H; 22-20. All these results now stand and congratulations are in order for some great individual efforts.

DIVISION 3A

BRIAN LEESON

The 3A Divisional Notes in the January issue, compiled by our worthy Editor, contained a list of "Stalwarts and backbone of the League" and ended with a veiled challenge to someone 'to write' a sequel to this dramatic and exciting story. It is some years since I put pen to paper as a Divisional Correspondent and, as Jack has included me in the aforementioned list of long serving members - nearly thirty years in my case - I have allowed my arm to be twisted and herewith humbly submit a few observations on the results to hand.

Courtauld's seem to be rooted at the foot of the division, although R.Wright had two

good singles wins against Kirkby, while Police 'A' may now begin to move out of the danger area, especially after their 9-1 win at Colonsay 'A'. The Police four - George Wright, Alan Wood, Rickie Winkle and Alby Baker, if they stay together, must surely reach a higher position. Harry Nelson secured the one success for Colonsay, following two singles wins against Liverpool Jewish and two wins against Elec.Sup. 'B'. E.S.B. picked up two double events in this fixture.

Ken Foulkes of Trinity 'A' is winning useful points for his team, two against Eng.Elec. 'D' and two against Argot. Billy Hargreaves, Argot's number one maintains his impressive record of wins, although he did have to accept second best against Bobby Owen at the Vags. The Vagabonds team held the strong Vernon Sangster 'B' side to a five-all draw in which Sue Manning and Ian Wensley each recorded two singles wins, while each Vag. player achieved one win, plus one doubles. John Armstrong of Maghull 'B' played well against V.S. 'B' to record his sides **two points**, beating Sue Manning and Paula French, while Dave Cunningham appears to be Bath St. 'C's most consistent player, registering his side's two points against Argot and two more against Elec.Sup.'B'. Ray Tagg and Ron Craddock each recorded two wins in the drawn clash between their sides, Maghull 'B' and Eng.Elec.'D' Jimmy Lynch, Eng.Elec.'D' s number one, missed this match but Dave Croot stepped up with some success. Electric's team does seem to vary from week to week, while Kirkby is able to put out the same four regularly:- S.Collins; N.Chaloner, N.Travis and I.Douglas. In their match against Colonsay 'A' they had to forfeit one event, the first doubles, as it was too late and the Sports Centre Manager wanted to close the premises, unfortunate of course, but the Kirkby side still managed a 6-4 win.

The only team I have not mentioned up to now is Cadwa and my final thought is that for me, their four regulars must win this division - as long as they don't slip up - if you see what I mean!

DIVISION 3B

BARRY MEYER

First, thanks to my old mate Ken Armson for doing the last notes; it isn't true that I became ill through looking at the League Table. Well Brownmoor Park seem all set for Division 2 after many years in the third. Colonsay are the most likely team to join them. Consistency is the name of the game with both these sides as well as strength right down to No.4. Following these come Wav.Lab., Y.M.C.A. and Linacre with Vernon Sangster not far behind.

The big question of the division is who goes down with Aigburth 'A'? That's presuming my team goes down, although I believe we'll shock everyone by winning our last five matches 10-0! Seriously though folks, the penultimate spot must lie between English Electric, Jewish, Bath St.'D', Bath St.'E' and Aigburth with my money on the East Lancs, team, despite some occasional heroics by Colin Fyles including an incredible 21-2; 21-11 defeat of John Ashley (Wav.Lab).

Bath St.'B' are having a funny season with results such as a 6-4 away win against the strong Linacre outfit sandwiched between a 6-4 win against Bath St.'E' and a 6-4 defeat versus their own 'D' team, with Alex Gould losing all his three games. Bath St.'E' would soon pull clear of the relegation zone if they could find a reasonable No.4 to go with John Bolton, Dave Ainson and Andy Armstrong who has one of the best spin services I have ever encountered in any division. Their number four position has produced only

two points so far from the cards I have to hand. On the subject of Bath St. it's a pity they lost their old club room which was one of the best in the League and are now in what must be the coldest place to play in now that Aigburth have found better premises. I'm struck by the amazing number of veterans in this division, most of who have rarely, if ever played in either the first or lowest divisions. I think Aigburth first, must have the oldest combined ages in the League with a total of 237 years between them although Linacre must be running **them** pretty close. I remember playing against Linacre at Moore St. about twenty years ago and the team was the same as we played this year - even the result (a 10-0 defeat) was the same. Thank God I'll be in the fourth next year! Aigburth now have the appearance of a 'Linnets revival' of eleven registered players, six (Bill Leeming, the Holmes brothers, the Meyer brothers and the ever youthful Eric Wood) all played for Jim Green's club twenty years ago.

I'd better mention Cadwa as they might think I am ignoring them. They've been regularly taking points off all the teams without looking like going anywhere, up or down, and the regular team of Peter McAdam, Rob Davies, Tony Moon and Ian Fletcher have all had their share of wins each. Probably their best individual win was Rob Davies's three setter over Dave Riley (Colonsay).

Other good wins throughout the division have been Roy Lussey (Jewish) 21-13; 18-21; 25-23 versus Alan Williams (B/Moor Pk.) Harry Holmes against Ted Mandaluff 21-16; 14-21; 21-16. A double for Fraser Farquharson (Bath St.'D') over Alan Williams and Bill Spencer in an 8-2 defeat; Andy Armstrong 21-11; 22-20 v Mabel Neary (Wav.Lab.). Rob Davies again 19 in the third against Bill Spencer; Dave Cohen a surprisingly easy 21-19; 21-9 over Brenda Buoey (V.S.) a double for Ray Lussey over Val Franco and Eric Ferguson (Bath St.'B') - result 2-8 and (pride of place) 21-18; 22-20 by Peter Knight (Aigburth 'A') against Alex Gould.

Finally a mention for the match between Vernon Sangster and Colonsay. This was a 5-5 draw with never more than one set between the teams, yet there were only two three setters and very few close games, typified by the doubles which went 16 and 13 to V.S. and 7 and 10 to Colonsay.

DIVISION 4A

STAN CLARKE

It looks as though the two promotion spots are settled with the two Bootle teams pulling clear of the group. It only needs a loss of form and the whole picture can change.

At the time of writing Bootle J.C. have a twelve point lead over Bootle 'B', who have a game in hand. The two games between the teams produced a stalemate, each team winning 7-3 on their own table. I have no details of the second game, but I understand the Job Centre were able to introduce a stronger player enabling them to reverse the 7-3 defeat they suffered in the first game, when they included Mal Dixon who was on vacation from University, Job Centre's three points came from Tony McDonald with a good win over Brian Aldred and Mal Dixon and Dave Graham who both beat Jackie Wilson, Derek Sullivan and Dave Wilson both produced double wins against Tony McDonald and Dave Graham and Dave Burton and Mal Dixon respectively, then Bootle 'B' won both doubles games. The unusual factor in this game was that Bootle 'B' did not field their strongest team, had they had Mark Patterson playing they may well have improved on their winning margin. As **the two teams** have been drawn in the semi-final of the Forrest they will have the chance to prove which is stronger, and that is one

match I would have loved to have seen.

In third spot Maghull 'C' are kicking themselves over two disastrous results which effectively destroyed their season, first a 7-3 defeat away to Trinity 'B' when a combined loss of form hit Andy Howarth and Dave Berry on the same night, then a draw with Cadwa 'B' when Stan Clarke slipped and hurt his back. However, the Maghull boys seem to be fairly comfortable in third place and will be hoping for a third vacancy in their third division to produce the promotion they have been chasing for a couple of years. Fourth spot is currently held by Vagabonds 'A' with a good lead over Eng. Elec. 'F' and Maghull 'E' who are level on 82 points each with Trinity 'B' only two points behind these two but with three games in hand of Vags. 'A'. If Trinity can turn out their strongest team every week, they could well give Vags. 'A' a hard task to hold on to the fourth spot. The fact that only thirteen points separate their six teams from fourth to tenth places shows how close the standard of competition is outside the top three, I have never seen so many draws in a division as this one has produced this year. There are so many good players that I could pick three or four teams who would do very well in the third division, a few who spring to mind are Mike Power of Cadwa, Stan Draper and Albie Parker of English Electric, Mark Whittaker, Mike Gallagher, Ken Ray and Dave Batty of Vagabonds, Clive Roberts and Alan Nisted of Rafters, Fred O'Sullivan and Les Travis of Barker & Dobson, John Southworth, Ray Parry and Stan Royden of Trinity, Alan Smethurst, Dave Berry, Harry McGarrity and Peter Brownlee of Maghull are but a few and there are many others.

It seems to me that there have been a large number of reserves playing in almost every team this season, added to those teams that play with a squad of more than four players and the strength of the team can vary enormously from week to week. This seems to me to be a little disconcerting and can make promotion and relegation something of a lottery, imagine how annoying it would be if your team is desperate for points to avoid relegation and your opponents are turning out their strongest possible team but when another relegation team play them they turn out a much weaker squad, annoying would be putting it mildly. Talking of relegation it looks as though Rafters 'B' are doomed to the drop, having only 51 points from 16 games, I still cannot understand how Rafters have got themselves in this position with the playing strength at their disposal. Who will accompany Rafters if they go, is very difficult to assess, at the time of writing University are next to bottom, but they have so many games in hand that they will pull themselves out of relegation zone and that means a fight between Vagabonds 'C' and Barker & Dobson, what a pity it would be if we lost the enthusiasm of Tim McCoy and Dave Batty and Fred O'Sullivan and his colleagues have enough to worry about with the imminent loss of their jobs, and their playing premises without the threat of relegation. I notice that the two remaining 100% winning records have fallen **in the last few** weeks, first Brian Aldred fell to Tony McDonald then Dave Wilson the last remaining 100% winner fell to Alan Smethurst of Maghull 'C'.

With not many cards in my possession there are bound to be many games worthy of mention that I have not seen but there are some which I feel must be rewarded with a mention in print.

The first will surprise you, it's not often a team gets mentioned for losing 10-0, but poor Cadwa 'B' without Mike Power were whitewashed by Bootle J.C. but seven of the ten sets went to three and poor Les Griffiths must wonder what he has to do to win, he lost to Dave Burton 26-24; 20-22; 14-21 then to Tony McDonald 21-18; 20-22; 20-22. In 9-1 defeats Jeremy Piggott, Warwick Bolan beat John Gratton, Vags 'A' 21-17; 21-18;

Dave Batty, Vags. 'C beat Roy Parry, Trinity 21-15; 21-12 and Jerry O'Keefe, Rafters beat Melanie Ringrose, University 21-13; 21-18.

In 8-2 defeats Fred O'Sullivan, Barker & Dobson beat Ken Black and Ted Jane, Eng.Elec.'F'. Dave Batty, Vags, beat Dave and Sylvia Graham, Bootle J.C. Peter Brownlee, Maghull 'E' beat Stan Clarke, Maghull 'C in the singles and combined with Brian Taylor to beat Andy Howarth and Dave Berry in the doubles.

For University M.Foster beat Gordon Langshaw and C.Parker beat Ken Roberts of Vagabonds 'A' and finally Stan Royden scored in an impressive pair over Derek Sullivan and Jackie Wilson then combined with Mike Truman to beat Derek Sullivan and Mark Patterson for Bootle 'B'.

DIVISION 4B

MIKE GRIFFITHS

Not many scorecards to work from for this set of notes. An intriguing battle is developing at the top of this division, with Trinity and Plessey beginning to pull away, Maghull slipping back and Colonsay still there with a chance if they produce a good run. My comments re Plessey not getting enough 9 and 10's has as usual inspired them to do just that. An 8-2 win over Colonsay 'B' was also an excellent result for them. Wavertree Labour however have really mixed things up at the top by beating Plessey 6-4 and Maghull 7-3, and they still have to play Trinity. The recent Trinity v Plessey match ended in a 6-4 win for Trinity with Mike Corcoran's three wins earning him the Man of the Match award. For excitement though, Stan Royden's win over Stan Harvey will take some beating. As I said, the Maghull challenge has faded a bit in the new year. They too suffered at the hands of an in form Trinity 8-2, but in the first match of 1983 drew with Colonsay 'B'. Brian Gregory and Wilf Gibson both had good wins over Alan Guy, and Colonsay were grateful for a Julie Baker double over Frost and Whittaker.

I'm sticking by last year's promise not to make any more predictions, but my hope is that the friendly rivalry seen so far this season will continue till the end. Our last 100% record was lost just prior to Christmas when Mike Corcoran was .beaten 21-18; 14-21; 21-18 by Muriel Cox of Colonsay 'C, in what was an excellent double for her over the League leaders.

Wavertree Labour's form has been erratic all season. As mentioned above they beat both Plessey and Maghull but have failed to find the consistency to put them in a challenging position, as a 6-4 win over English Electric shows -Les Harper two wins over Bill Stanley and Ian Massie. They depend a lot on John Ashley at number one to give them strength at the top. Vernon Sangster have been involved in two interesting draws against Colonsay 'C and Rafters. In the latter, G.Daw and D.Evans won two each for Sangster but Rafters won both doubles and Pauline Lawrenson beat Martin Finnegan 21-11; 22-20. Gary Daw again won two against Colonsay 'C along with Paul Beesley, but Colonsay probably felt happier about the result. Tony O'Neill beat Martin Finnegan and Kristina Cox and Colin Rourke both beat Dave Fisher.

Some useful mid-season performances:- Marty Finnegan beat Brian Gregory 23-21; 8-21; 21-17; Les Griffin of Cadwa 'C beat Wilf Gibson of Maghull for his sides only point in that match. Danny Every (Courtaulds 'A') two wins against Colin Birch and Les Harper of English Electric in his sides 7-3 win; Ron Worthington of Kirkby beat Bill Stanley (Wav.Lab.) 16-21; 21-16; 21-16; Jan Davies (Rafters) a double over Kathy Haydon and Mike Hughes of Courtaulds 'A' in her sides 6-4 defeat. Pauline Lawrenson

also of Rafter's beat Muriel Cox as part of a double over Colonsay 'C'. Cadwa 'C' are improving all the time and may yet avoid relegation if they repeat the form shown in their 8-2 win over Liverpool Jewish. Neil Hodson beat the difficult Ken Dutch 25-23; 21-15. Cadwa also won 8-2 against Kirkby 'A', for whom Arthur Brindle, beat Gareth Jones 21-7; 19-21; 23-21.

DIVISION 5

EDDIE CAMERON

Whilst Fords are majestically moving towards the championship and the cup there is more of a scramble for the second position. Currently occupying this coveted position is Maghull, not Maghull 'F' as you may expect but Maghull 'G'. Maghull 'G' are a friendly lot of lads, McGanity, a couple of Salters, young and old, Leece and a secret weapon. George Frost, Maghull claim is their David Fairclough or super sub. George is an import from the business houses league's second division and joined Maghull after Hygena folded up. George has apparently a need to serve his apprenticeship in the lowest team although not surprisingly he has had a few games as reserve in Maghull's higher teams. The 'G' team now have added a look of dedication to their ability, conferences between games and many minutes pondering on the choice of next man on has become a feature. They look down on their seniors Maghull 'F' lingering in the bottom half of the division but with Alan Rycroft, Cockcroft, Mullin and Newsham this lot is quite capable of pulling up to a more respectable place when they play off their outstanding games.

As these notes are written, Brownmoor Park 'B' are above Brownmoor Park 'A', but the 'A' team have games in hand. I am assured by **•eater of the 'B'** team that the teams are not chosen on strength, more on social lines which of course is fair enough. To prove the point the teams drew 5-5 when they met but in fairness to the 'A' team, the 'B' had ground advantage. Norman Cooke, who has been around almost as long as me is sampling Division 5 after wandering around the higher divisions and a number of clubs over the years, Miller, Luxford and Walsh make up a useful combination and proved their point with a 6-4 win over Waterloo. In fact, Brownmoor 'A' are quite confident that they can join Fords in the promotion stakes. Those upstarts Maghull 'G' may have other ideas however. Strange thing in Division 5, over the years is the constant fight for the top two places with the pangs of disappointment on coming third, followed by a glorious summer when all thoughts of table tennis are forgotten, then the anti climax at the handbook meeting when resignations mean three or four are promoted. Don't bank on it though - who would have thought that we would have played a full season with a full compliment of teams in this Division?

But what of Brownmoor Park 'B'? T.Luxford is their star at No.1, No.1 A.Blackburn and T.Mathews complete the team and they will certainly finish in the top half. Waterloo are not likely to concede second place easily, they had a great battle with Fords in the semi-final of the Stamp Cup, Ken Nelson, an old adversary of mine in the past has more or less a family team at Waterloo, I used to play him under the gas lights at the old Waterloo but to see him reduced to No.4 in the fifth division was a sight I never expected to see, he did win his two singles so maybe he is not senile, maybe it was just a tactical move, if it was it nearly did the trick because Fords were limited to a 6-4 scoreline, the number one Nelson, A.M. won one and the stranger in the camp M.Doyle won the other, his win against D.Garbe was a real cliffhanger going to 26-24 in the third.

Bootle J.C. 'A' and Brownmoor Park 'B' are the other semi-finalists. Argot have shown considerable improvement in the second half of the season, the name which seems to puzzle everyone is the name of their holiday home in Wales and is pronounced, I am told, without the 't'. Argo did a little reshuffle mid-December when Geoff Blackburn became fully available again he moved up to their first team and down came S.Ward who is more than a useful fifth division player. In fact Argot 'A' only just went down 4-6 to Fords at home, unfortunately S.Ward at No.1 failed to win a game that night having done so well in his previous games. The same Argot team lost 0-10 at home to Wavertree Labour 'E' only to prove that this game can be unpredictable at times. Argot play in a spacious room in Harthill Boys club in Wavertree but the team is a mixture of youth and experience, P.Highton, D.Grimes, N.Wilkinson and P.Satorius make up the squad, they expect to make a real challenge next season - but then won't we all?

This month I received a few notes from one of our teams for inclusion in these notes, if you feel neglected or if you wish to add your views please feel free, let me have your ideas and I will do my best to incorporate them in the next issue, I'm off now to get the League Tables up to date for this one.

LETTERS

21Armscot Close

Dear Sir,

At the League A.G.M. we shall be raising that hoary old subject of a 3-a-side. It is several seasons since clubs last had a chance to vote on this and we feel it is time to try again.

The purpose of this letter is to give early warning of this to clubs in order that there will be ample time for them to discuss this subject and mandate their delegates accordingly. Past proposed Rule changes on this have generally been confined to 1st & 2nd divisions only. We intend this time to give a choice of all divisions; 1st and 2nd; 1st only. For cup matches we shall be proposing two alternatives of 9 singles plus 1 doubles or 9 singles with no doubles. This latter proposal, if adopted, would put an end to the problem of cup replays.

A few words on the subject of 3-a-side. We are one of the few Leagues who continue to cling to 4-a-side in the same way that for many years we clung to 5-a-side. The argument most used has been that of the increase in teams allied to playing venue restrictions. Other Leagues grasped this nettle and it is now behind them and their players have profited from the benefits 3-a-side has brought. You will find it difficult to find any one who plays 3-a-side who dislikes this system.

It gives each player a chance against all the opposition. No more 'fiddling' as we call it. No more sacrificing reserves to allow the other players to pick up sets down the order. An end to the jockeying as players try to pick the players they can beat. All this brings playing benefits to all players as they can improve their game by opposing all types and strengths of players.

The list of for's and against's is probably a lengthy one, but one fact we should bear in mind is that sooner or later this change will have to come. Better we make it now willingly, rather than have it forced on us by circumstances later.

In the long run nothing but good can come of it and whilst we must never accept

change for change sake, neither must we be frightened of change which brings improvement merely because it will also bring teething problems.

I am certain, as are all who favour 3-a-side, that once we have taken the plunge we will look back and wonder what took us so long.

There are obviously many other points which I have not covered, but lack of space prevents my going deeper into this subject. The intention of this letter is to give you early warning and hopefully get players talking about it now in order that the vote when it comes will more truly reflect the views of the majority of players instead of the minority view of A.G.M. reps. The time has come when change is necessary, for Table Tennis in this city needs the impetus that 3-a-side can inject.

Yours faithfully,
K.Armson

11 Ellerslie Road

Dear Jack,

Whilst accompanying Keith Williams and Paula to a County match recently (a home match at Burnley, no expenses paid) we had a good chance to talk and came to the conclusion that it's about time somebody initiated the formation of the MERSEYSIDE TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION. As we are now a County it seems odd that our players still play for Lancashire. It seems to me too obvious that the possibility has been overlooked, or has it? Having made enquiries, we have discovered a strong body of opinion amongst leading players agreeing that the formation of a MERSEYSIDE county set-up would be a great opportunity for our better players to gain County experience and it would be a new challenge. Naturally we'd like to keep strong ties with the Lancashire £ Cheshire League but it would be a golden opportunity for expanding our local table-tennis. I realise that there's a lot more to running table-tennis than just playing. Finance, Organisation, etc would need to be looked at carefully. I'm throwing down a challenge to our own Liverpool Committee to make their own enquiries about local player's opinions, discuss the financial and organisational side of things and if they decide that the idea is viable CONTACT THE OTHER LEAGUES IN THE MERSEYSIDE COUNTY AREA WITHOUT DELAY.

To League members in general I'd like to suggest that if you agree to the above idea make your opinion known to Committee members, Club secretaries etc., so that they have a good mandate for action.

Yours in sport,
LES FRENCH

5 Green Park Drive
Maghull.

Dear Editor,

Can anyone advise me as to the fate of the national publication "Table Tennis"?

Regular trips to Smiths in Church Street when I'm in **Liverpool reveal** numerous copies of "Body Builder", "Guns and Ammo", "Pony Trekking", etc., etc., but no "Table Tennis".

Personally, apart from being kept in touch with national events and trends, such as the development and controversy surrounding the "Combination" bat, I found that the mail order offers actually produced a net saving over the cost of the magazine, e.g. Jill Hammersley's offer of two sheets of Friendship 729 for £8 last year. I also discovered that it is possible to obtain British made rubbers of what appears to be a reasonable quality, i.e. Lentec, for which there was an offer of £7 per sheet in November 1982. With over 3 million unemployed in Britain, I suggest that we should give British products serious consideration.

If the above magazine has ceased publication due to insufficient sales, it ' would not surprise me. So far as I am aware, none of my T.T. acquaintances ever bought a copy and this introverted or Scroogelike attitude seems to pervade the sport. I feel sorry for young talented lads who have been drawn into it. They are probably just as gifted as the Keegans of Football and the Faldos of Golf, but if they ever receive 1/10th of the prize money, they will be very lucky!

Table Tennis appears on the tele about as often as the Olympic Games, once every four years or so! Who would have dreamed that comparatively boring games like bowls and darts would provide regular viewing at our expense? With the advent of Channel 4 there should be a greater opportunity for the E.T.T.A. to promote the sport, but this is not likely to happen without pressure from below. Perhaps the licencing of rubbers will provide the necessary promotional revenue. I should like to hear the views of our Management Committee and any other members on the question of promoting Table Tennis.

Bill Salter

TABLE EDGES

Sylvia Graham and the Bootle Job Centre boys (two teams) sold 400 books of ETTA Draw Tickets. Alex Fasting and the Carnegie Boys (one team) 40 books. What magnificent performances. How did you and your club fair? Did you a ticket? - 5p each. The Chairman thanks Bootle J.C., Carnegie and all who « helped our League finances by selling tickets.

Our hard working financial genius Don Cameron has had a few months in hospital and under the doctor - a recent bulletin says he hopes to be able to drive his car again shortly which proves he is on the mend and is good news. Keep it up Don, we sincerely hope you will soon be 100% again.

Derek Sullivan of Ashcrofts, Victoria Street, is fast becoming our city centre publicity agent and is more than willing to publicise any Table Tennis news (management note) available. He not only sells Table Tennis equipment but will also help, advise and suggest.

DIVISION 1	P	W	L	D	Pts.	DIVISION 3B	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Rafters	21	20	1	-	182	Brownmoor Park	21	19	1	1	157
Wav.Labour	21	15	5	1	144	Colonsay	21	16	2	3	150
Huyton L.C.	21	16	5	-	138	Wav.Labour'C	21	14	4	3	133
Bootle	18	17	1	-	137	L'pool YM'B'	21	15	2	4	131
Eng.Electric	19	10	6	3	115	Linacre	21	10	9	2	128
Vernon Sang.	19	13	4	2	113	Bath St.'B ¹	21	13	8	-	121
L'pool YM.	21	8	10	3	106	Vernon Sang.'C'	21	11	6	4	120
Wav.Labour ¹ 'A ¹	20	8	10	2	99	Bath St.'E'	21	7	12	2	104
Vernon Sang.'A'	21	7	12	2	90	Cadwa 'A'	21	6	11	4	90
Maghull	21	5	16	-	66	Bath St.'D'	21	6	12	3	83
Eng.Elec.'A'	20	5	14	1	65	L'pool Jewish 'C	21	6	15	-	82
Wav.Labours ¹	22	2	18	2	57	Eng.Elec.'E'	22	3	16	3	80
L'pool YM'A'	20	3	16	1	56	Aigburth	21	5	12	4	78
L'pool Jewish	20	3	14	3	52	Aigburth 'A'	22	-	21	1	23
DIVISION 2	P	W	L	D	Pts.	DIVISION 4A	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Maghull 'A'	21	21	-	-	165	Maghull 'C	22	15	5	2	142
L'pool Jewish 'A'	21	16	3	2	143	Bootle J.C.	19	18	1	-	141
Eng.Electric 'B'	21	18	3	-	141	Bootle 'B'	19	18	1	-	138
Elec. Supply	22	11	7	4	117	Vagabonds 'A'	22	13	5	4	130
Plessey	19	11	5	3	116	Eng.Electric 'F•	21	7	9	5	98
Huyton L.C. 'A'	18	12	5	1	109	Trinity 'B'	19	7	9	3	96
Bath St.	21	11	10	-	108	University	20	8	10	2	93
Police	21	6	12	3	91	Maghull 'E'	20	5	10	5	91
Trinity	19	4	9	6	86	Cadwa 'B'	20	4	9	7	90
Bath St.'A'	20	6	12	2	83	Warwick Bolam	20	7	9	4	84
Bootle 'A'	21	4	16	1	79	Vagabonds 'B'	18	4	12	2	82
Rafters 'A'	20	5	13	2	77	Vagabonds 'C	20	4	11	5	69
Elec. Supply 'A'	22	2	18	2	62	Rafters 'B'	20	2	13	5	69
Eng.Electric 'C	20	1	17	2	53	Barker & Dobson	18	3	11	4	67
DIVISION 3A	P	W	L	D	Pts.	DIVISION 4B	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Cadwa	20	19	1	-	173	Trinity 'C	19	17	1	1	151
Vernon Sang.'B'	20	18	1	1	157	Maghull 'D'	20	16	3	1	142
Argot	21	13	6	2	124	Plessey 'A'	19	15	4	-	141
Vagabonds	21	13	6	2	122	Wav.Labour 'D'	19	12	7	-	112
Eng.Electric 'D'	20	9	5	6	114	Colonsay 'B'	16	11	2	3	109
Elec. Supply 'B'	21	7	10	4	108	Courtaulds 'A'	19	11	6	2	107
Kirkby	20	10	8	2	104	Rafters 'C	18	8	8	2	95
Trinity 'A'	20	10	9	1	99	Vernon Sang.'D'	16	8	5	3	92
Maghull 'B'	20	9	9	2	98	Colonsay 'C	18	7	10	1	78
L'pool Jewish 'B'	22	6	12	4	87	Eng.Electric 'G'	20	6	14	-	76
Colonsay 'A'	19	4	8	7	82	L'pool Jewish 'D'	21	2	18	1	52
Bath St. 'C	21	6	12	3	81	Cadwa 'C	19	1	18	-	39
Police 'A'	22	3	19	-	53	Kirkby 'A'	19	-	19	-	26
Courtaulds	22	-	22	-	40						

DIVISION 5	P	W	L	D	Pts.	FIXTURE SECRETARY'S NOTE:-
Fords	20	18		2	164	
Maghull 'G'	21	14	5	2	135	Information is still required re dates of
Waterloo	22	13	7	2	132	outstanding matches.
Brownmoor Pk. 'B'	21	12	5	4	130	It is important to clear these
Wav.Labour 'E'	22	10	9	3	128	prior to the Trophy Dance on Friday
Brownmoor Pk.' 'A'	19	14	4	1	127	April 8th at Plesseys.
Elec.Supply 'C'	20	10	7	3	116	
Argot 'A'	21	9	7	5	116	
Bootle J.C.'A'	20	10	9	1	104	
Maghull 'F'	18	6	9	3	100	Tickets for the Dance at
Carnegie	21	6	13	2	80	Plessey's
Kirkby 'B'	22	3	18	1	51	
L'pool Jewish 'E'	21	2	18	1	40	on Friday April 8th
L'pool Jewish 'F'	18	1	17	-	27	ARE LIMITED