



Table Tennis DIGEST

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

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VOL. 38 37

FEBRUARY 1984

No.2.

EDITORIAL

There have been no comments on the Circular from E.T.T.A. to support their request for increased fees. As far as we are concerned in the North West I thought it was pathetic - their interest would have been better served with no circular.

Of course we have to have a governing and co-ordinating body - yes I think we would all like to see an English World Champion again and a top flight English team. In Liverpool we have an excellent governing body and apart from forgetting that English Table Tennis continues north of Watford or Birmingham the E.T.T.A. seem to do a fairish job. So what about additional fees for the North, particularly the North West and excluding the Teeside area. The English Open and Closed, English Junior, Commonwealth Championships with no increase these may have to be curtailed. When were any of these held in the North West or within easy access to the North West, Team Training and coaching were in the N.W.? What will the Leagues get out of it is the question: Answer: If the E.T.T.A. prosper the Leagues will benefit with increased income and increased activities - YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS - The fact is that as fees have gone up (to a degree this is fair enough) players have decreased - this is a fact at local level and I quote an E.T.T.A. member who says countrywise Tournament entries and League membership has decreased.

Over a third of our annual personal sub goes to the E.T.T.A. and Lancs. T.T.A. By far the smallest portion goes to Lancs. for which we see a

reasonable return, once again a good governing and co-ordinating body. We have seen internationals at Bolton, Preston, Warrington, St.Helens, Kirkby etc., and pretty good tournaments within easy reach and coaching schemes from time to time. With hotbeds like Bolton, Preston etc., knocking about and major cities of Liverpool and Manchester, one might think that once every 25 years or so we might see a major championship held here.

DIVISION 1

LES FRENCH

The Championship has developed into a two-horse race between Wavertree Labour and Vernon Sangster.

When they met the first set went against the call, when Dave Roberts and Roy Smith beat John Rankin and Peter Flint, unbeaten in Liverpool League matches until then. Vernon Sangster struck back when Steve Green and Les French defeated Keith Williams and John Hook. Peter then beat Roy to put Sangster 2-1 up and things looked ominous for Labour when Les, playing at 1, took the first game, 17, against Keith and had a 13-11 lead in the second. Keith took over from then on to level the match at 2-2. John Rankin and Dave Roberts, next both 100%. John took it, 18 in the third. Wavertree fought back again when Welshman John Hook beat Steve Green 20,17. Peter Flint beat Dave Roberts, Peter won 23-25, 21-19, 21-18 (4-3). Keith, Liverpool No.1 and Lancashire No.6 played John won 21-19; 15-21; 21-13 to put Sangster 5-3 up. John Hook beat Les, 19,13 to set the scene for the final set between Steve Green and Wavertree's Captain, Roy. Steve had Roy pinned up against the wall for the whole set, winning the first 17, but Roy, with some incredible returns, 4 and 5 at a time, took the next two games, 13,15 to force a draw for his side. A great match, in fine spirit, with a good 'crowd' to watch it (more than at Goodison).

The following week, Labour drew with Bootle, Keith beat Tony, 15, 18 but lost to Paul Hutchings, 13, 16. Paul also beat Dave Roberts for good measure, creating problems for the Liverpool selectors. Tony beat John Hook, who replied with a victory over Lawrence. Ricky Brown won the final set by beating Roy, 11,14 to force a draw.

Vernon Sangster had to play Rafters without Peter Flint, with the fast-improving Chris Ford deputising. John Rankin maintained his 100% by adding Trevor Manning to his scalps and combined with Chris to beat Trevor and Alan Timewell, 11,15. Paul Ashcroft won two for Rafters, beating Chris and yours truly, 19-20, 19. The match ended in a draw.

Wavertree Labour removed Rafters' last chances with a great 7-3 victory, including a victory for Keith Williams over his 'hoodoo' (or should it be 'voodoo') Trevor Manning, 14-21, 21-14, 21-14. John Hook won his two but Roy Smith lost both of his, narrowly, to Ian Smith and Graham Parr. Dave Roberts beat Ian but lost to Trevor 19,19. Keith beat Paul Ashcroft 15,20, with Labour taking both doubles.

The final match paired Vernon Sangster with Bootle. Bootle were without Paul Hutchings, who was off-colour, and decided not to play. In a one-sided match John Rankin completed his nap-hand of victories over Liverpool's best players with a superb 22-20, 21-13 win over Tony O'Connor. Tony was in good form, as shown by his 14-9 victory over Peter Flint. Ricky Brown beat me 15-18, 19 for Bootle's only other set in an 8-2 defeat.

At the other end of the table the situation is far from resolved. Plessey are still rooted at the bottom. Maghull 'A' improved considerably in the closing weeks and recorded an 8-2 victory over that Jekyll and Hyde team Wav. Lab.'A' to hoist themselves above Eng.Elec.'B' for the first time. Wav.Lab.'B' have had some good results recently, including a win over their 'A' team 6-4. No comment. This has left the relegation struggle to Electric 'B' and Maghull 'A' to avoid joining Plessey.

Plessey can claim victories of 7-3 over Labour 'B' and 6-4 over Maghull 'A'. Bob Edwards and Ray Lavin both won 2 against Lab.'B', Trevor Owens won his two against Mag.'A', with Mick Allen replying with two for Maghull.

Eng.Elec.'B' also beat Maghull 'A' 6-4. Kevin Parker beat Alan Chase and Ted Birch, with Alan Jones beating Mick Allen and Frank Murphy. Brian Crolley had a great set with Alan Chase, who won 16 in the third.

Finally Mag.'A' drew with Wav.Lab.'B'. Labour were one short but won all of the singles played except for Alan Chase's win, 17, 7 over Keith Fitzsimmons. Mick Tierney beat Alan and Ted Birch for good measure.

There were quite a few 'Derby' games worthy of comment. Wav.Lab. beat their 'A' team 10-0. This included a win 21-8, 21-2 for Keith Williams over Billy Wardle. Keith played the last part of this match with his left hand. This attitude leaves a lot to be desired as Billy won a singles against my team. No reflection on the Labour first team, who are all fine sportsmen in the best traditions. I'm sure they regret the action as much as we do. Full marks to Phil Luxon for giving his all in this match before going down narrowly to John Hook and Roy Smith.

The Eng.Elec. v 'A' match was a spirited encounter and ended in draw. Jimmy Lynch starred for the 'A' team, beating Tommy Williams 19,14 and Fred Pheysey 20,17. Tommy beat Joe Green 19,16 to make amends. Rod McPherson is having his worst season for many years with 8 wins and 20 defeats. He lost his two to Joe Green and Graeme Black. Fred and Alec Sill both had narrow victories over Richie Cragg. The first team winning both doubles.

The Maghull Derby also ended in a draw, Eric Hardman, despite a recent tragedy in his family life (my sincere, deepest sympathies, Eric) won his two. Neil Hoyden won his side's only other singles by beating Mick Allen. Alan Chase and Ted Birch won two each, with Frank Murphy beating Dave Tagg to square the match.

The best individual performances to date:- Pride of place goes to John Rankin, with 29 wins and no defeats, including all of the top players. He must wonder what he has to do get into the Liverpool first team. Peter Taylor has performed heroics for YM and has 22-6 to date, giving excellent support to Peter Lee, 22-4. Biggest upset of the season must be Kevin Parker's 9,16 win over Peter Flint. Well done Kevin, even though I hated every minute of it!

Another great performance was Ted Birch's 19, 20 win over Joe Green. Mark Royden must have played well at Rafters to beat Alan Timewell and Paul Ashcroft. Don Davies must have been impressed because Mark was selected to play for the Liverpool 'A' team shortly afterwards, despite having only won 8 and lost 10, mostly at number three. Best of luck to Mark, who's a nice lad, but it does seem a strange choice. Paul Kinsey beat both Royden brothers for his side's only sets against Maghull. Richie Cragg, who has lost so many matches by narrow margins, did extremely well to beat Martin Tate 15, 11 and Jeff Huntington 19, 10 in a 7-3 defeat by YM.

Leading averages, from cards received:- John Rankin (V.S) 29-0, Paul Hutchings (Boo) 22-1, Alan Timewell (Raf) 20-2, Tony O'Connor (Boo) 17-2, Keith Williams (W.L) 23-3, John Hook (W.L) 19-3, Peter Lee (YM) 22-4, Peter Flint (VS) 18-4, Dave Roberts (W.L) 23-5, Peter Taylor (YM) 22-6, Steve Green (V.S) 20-6, Paul Ashcroft (Raf) 17-7, Roy Smith (W.L) 19-9, Tommy Williams (E.E) 17-8, Les French (V.S) 21-10, Ricky Brown (Boo) 16-8, Eric Hardman (Mag) 13-9, Billy Wardle (WLA) 14-10, Jimmy Lynch (EEA) 15-11, Paul Gittins (VSA) 19-15, Fred Pheysey (EE) 17-14, Chris Ford (VSA) 18-18.

A list of players who are great fighters. People who give their all for just about every point and have no temperamental moments. Top of the class comes Brian Crolley, closely followed by Roy Smith, Ricky Brown and Richie Cragg. Tommy Williams gives nothing away without a fight and Peter Taylor, Bill Harris, Ted Birch, Ray Lavin and Paul Ashcroft are others whose determination has put them where they are today.

DIVISION 2

DON CHALKLEY

Halfway stage reveals Electric Supply out in front with Bath St., Jewish and Cadwa all still in contention. Y.M.C.A. are just outside the promotion stakes. At the other end of the table Wav.Lab.'C' appear doomed and Jewish 'A' have been playing a more settled team and have averaged 5 points over the last 7 games.

Linacre are likely to be relegated and others fighting for survival are Bath St.'A', Police and Brownmoor Park. For Elec.Supply, Malcolm McEvoy is unbeaten over 22 games and with good support from Brian Davey 19-22; Les Molyneaux 16-20 and Paul Baker 15-22. They thrashed Jewish 9-1 with Clein beating Molyneaux in 2 their only loss. Electric must remain firm favourites for the title.

Bath St. have improved with the return of Peter Ross 11-14 and Ian McIlwee has remained very consistent 16-20. Alan Walton 15-20 and Dave Butterworth 8-16 are the other players. When they clashed the result was 5-5. Peter Ross 2-2, Ian McIlwee 2-3 with R.Hudson winning his two for Jewish.

Bath St. nearly had a clean sweep over Brownmoor Park but S.Wellman and A.Williams won the doubles 22-20 in the third game. Colonsay went to Bath St. and came away with a draw. Taylor beat McIlwee in 2, Peter Ross beat Taylor and Barbara. I notice that Billy Clayton played No.2 for them in their 7-3 victory away over Vernon Sangster 'B' and he beat another 'funny bat' player Ian Wensley 23-21; and 21-17. Jewish have E.Clein 21-24 and R.Hudson 20-24 supported by J.McIlwee 13-18 and Roy Bradbury 12-20. Jim has to go in hospital soon and is likely to be out for the rest of the season, best of luck Jim, we hope to see you soon. This must be a blow to their ambition but who knows, we may see Paul Morgan re-appear or will J.Hodges return again, with a funnier bat than ever. After the draw with Bath St., Y.M.C.A. 'A' brought back G.Smith and M.Iate to win all 5 games in a 7-3 win. D.Tai also won his games, beating R.Bradbury and R.Hodson in 2. Jewish haven't faltered since although I must express pleasure in Police managing 4 points at home without the services of Dave Crispin. Gareth Jones beat Roy in 2 and then expedite was called in favour of Eddie Clein at 14-15. Eddie used his knowledge well and reached 20-18 only for Gareth to come back to win 22-20. Gareth also won the doubles narrowly with myself. Tom Purcell had an excellent win over Jim McMillan.

Cadwa are probably the most serious threat to Bath St., if Jewish don't obtain an adequate replacement. Mike Mahoney (15-16), Neil Gravener 17-16, Neil Jennings (11-10) and Alan Radcliffe (8-10) have continued to be consistently successful. I notice that in their 8-2 win over V.S 'B', Neil beat Paula French 22-20; 22-20, sounds exciting, Ian Wensley beat 26-24 in the 2nd game. 9-1 over Colonsay away and 10-0 over Wav.Lab.'C', 10-0 over Linacre; 8-2 away at Liverpool Jewish 'A' (Radcliffe beating Hodges 22-20 in third) shows the threat they offer. Y.M.C.A. 'A' have played 11 players and if George Smith (6-6) and M.Iate (8-8) are more available they could catch the other contenders. Other players are D.Tai (9-10); F.Lay (13-20); C.Brown (5-8) and T.Kendal (9-16). I note in their 7-3 win over Colonsay F.Lay beat Barbara Kirkman 22-20 in 3 and T.Kendall beat G.Fletcher 24-22 in 3. Then in their 8-2 win over V.S. 'B', Ahmed Thabet made a good return at No.1 winning all three games, T.Kendall winning his two.

Trinity have Mike Keane 15-18, supported by Tom Kelly (11-20) and John Higham 12-20. Mick beat Jim McMillan and Roy Bradbury for their only win against Jewish. I felt sorry for John Higham in their 6-4 win against Police. He lost 22-20 against me. Vernon Sangster with Sue Manning 12-20; Steve Gittins 10-18; Paula French 10-24; and Ian Wensley 12-22; appear safe from relegation. S. Gittins beat W.Clayton and A.Walsh in 3 in their 7-3 defeat by Bath St.

Against Colonsay at home they lost 7-3 with every game but one going to three, the other game didn't lack anything with Sue Manning losing to A.Taylor 21-23; 20-22; John O'Sullivan beat A.Radcliffe in 2 in a 9-1 home defeat by Cadwa. Only Gareth Jones has shown consistent form for Police. Dave Crispin came back this year in a 6-4 away win over Bath St. 'A' and won his three games. Should he be available it might help Police once more to just escape relegation. Bath St. 'A' have only Billy Clayton and Val Franco holding their own and I believe the 10-0 walkover they claimed earlier against Colonsay is to be replayed. Colonsay have A.Taylor with 13-14; D.Riley 10-14; Barbara Kirkham 6-16 and G.Fletcher 5-14. Taylor's only loss was the 21-16;21-13 defeat by P.Ross in the draw I mentioned. Brownmoor Park have picked up slightly but only S.Wellman 11-18 and T.Bainbridge 6-12 are holding their own and like Police they are struggling to stay up. They did well to draw at home with Y.M.C.A. 'A' with W.Spencer and Fred Bainbridge beating F.Lay in 2. S.Wellman beat Kendall and the home side won both doubles despite George Smith. A 9-1 win over fellow strugglers Bath St. 'A' helped their cause, though I note that only J.Bolton remained from the Bath St. 'A' team that we played.

Against Jewish 'A' John Henshaw lost to Jack Davidson and A.Harwood and J.Aaron lost to F.Lacy and K.Ainsworth in a 6-4 win for Jewish 'A'. As stated Hewish 'A' might improve. Richard Stevenson, John Henshaw, Ian Burrows and J.Hedges could and should do better.

Wav.Lab. 'C' are a nice bunch of players who keep struggling against all odds, John Ashley beat P.Baker in 2 in a 9-1 defeat by E.P.Supply, Jim Madigan beat Aaron and D.Cohen in a 6-4 defeat by Jewish 'A'.

DIVISION 3A

MIKE ELSON

Well, my first set of notes seemed to get a favourable response, so here we go again.

Two teams have broken away from the pack, Bootle 'A' and Eng.Elec. 'D', as I said in the last issue this Bootle side is a very strong side but when they lose Keith Miller from their side they seem to struggle, this was the case vs. Bath St. who took 4 points off them, a couple of good wins for Reg Edwards and Karen Gibson, mind you take somebody as good as Keith out of any side and they will struggle, Bob Owen (Vags.) brought Keith's unbeaten run to a halt in two games 9 and 18. Ted Barnes picking up Vags. other point.

Eng.Elec. are playing some steady stuff and are pressing Bootle hard but by the end of the season I don't think they will have caught them. They went down 1-9 to Bootle but it was over Maghull (10-0) Bootle J.C. (7-3) and Plessey (10-0) have maintained their strong position as likely runners-up. Elec.Supply have slipped a little in recent games losing heavily to both Bootle and Elec. but they should finish in the top five. My own team Argot have shown a little

improvement recently, good 5-5 at Elec with good wins for Billy Hargreaves, who at the time of writing has only lost 2 games (Miller/Owens).

Vags. have been a little disappointing but they should be there at the death results such as 3-7 (Maghull) 5-5; (Trinity) and 6-4 (Elec.Supply) show that they are vulnerable.

Maghull, with the help of a couple of walk-overs, have moved up the table, they seem to be a hard team to beat at home but they don't seem to 'travel' well, this could also be said of Colonsay. Trinity and Bath St. are playing well and Bootle J.C. are holding their own. Down at the bottom we have three teams - Plessey, Rafters and Liverpool Jewish. It would be a good judge to decide who will go down because all 3 are capable of improving dramatically, results such as 6-4 (Argot & Trinity) didn't do the Jewish any harm, Plessey had good results as well as Colonsay (5-5) and Trinity (7-3). Rafters seem to be the more steadier of the three but who knows?

There have been some good individual performances, as mentioned Bob Owens fine wins vs. K.Miller; Steve Collins 21-19 in the third vs. G.Blackburn (Argot), Stan Harvey (Plessey) two wins vs. Vags, Ray Austin (Plessey), (Maghull), D.Graham double vs. E.Elec. Arthur Harrison (Elec.Supply) picking up the only point vs. Bootle. I have noticed that many teams seem to lose both sets of doubles, is this bad pairings or bad play because it makes a lot of difference when points in this division are very hard to get.

Some close games, D.Graham/B.Hargreaves 20-22; 26-28, John Watson (Bath St.)/M.Patterson (Bootle) 17-21; 25-23; 21-19. B.Leeson (Colonsay)/Sylvia Graham (Bootle J.C.) 21-18; 25-23. K.Obedai (Rafters)/S.Collins (Kirkby) 21-23; 20-22. Julie Prince (Elec.)/B.Gregory (Mag.) 21-19; 22-20. R.Pevall (Elec.)/M.Elson (Argot) 21-13; 21-23; 24-22. If you think they were close here is the best to date:- Norman Challoner (Kirkby)/Frank Brady (Bootle) 22-20; 20-22; 21-23, three good close games here, nerve wracking.

If there are any funny stories knocking about, give us the nod because we could all do with a little bit more fun brought into the game.

DIVISION 3B

STAN CLARKE

I suppose you thought you were getting shut of me, especially after the Editor's heartfelt plea, but it occurred to me that the only way I would see my name in print was to write the notes.

The promotion and relegation positions are now becoming more clear cut. The battle for the Champions spot is almost certainly between Electric Supply 'A' and Cadwa 'A'. At the time of writing the "Biggs Boys" are in top spot, four points ahead of "Trevor's Tribe", with a 7.92 sets per match average, Cadwa though in second place, do have a game in hand, are the only undefeated

team in the division and have the best sets average at 8.23 per match. I must go for the boys from Cadwa to be collecting the trophies at the presentation dance, it's a pity that the runners-up will not get a trophy in recognition of their efforts over the season. It's surely time that we altered our rules to provide runners-up trophies for League performance as we do for Cup runners-up. It is patently ridiculous that we should provide a trophy for second place in a competition which can be all over in as little as three or four matches, but not for a twenty six match season, I hope that if such a rule amendment is proposed at the next A.G.M. that you will all urge your clubs to vote in favour.

The team who should be in third spot are English Electric 'C' with an average of 6.91, did you hear that when they played Maghull for the second time they 'fiddled' the order, George Lennon dropping down to avoid the Maghull No.1, how daft can you get? Bath St. 'B' have improved their position enormously, mind you with their line-up they should. Y.M.C.A. 'B' have tailed well back on the leaders, having lost two and drawn four matches, their sets average 6.28, only just above Vernon Sangster 'C' who are in sixth place with an average of 6.0. The inclusion of John Cowley, and 'Long John Lussey' alongside Mark Reed and Neil Montague has improved their line up; nice to see Basil Townsend appearing as a reserve against Maghull recently and very well he played unexpectedly beating Chris Roberts.

Only seven points separate Maghull 'C', Bootle 'B', Bath St. 'D' and Trinity 'B'. Of these four Bootle have the best average at 4.5 sets per match, followed by Maghull with 4.38, Bath St. 'D' 4.0 and Trinity 3.84. Maghull currently top of the group must be the happiest of the four, their ambition for the season being to avoid relegation, being in the middle of the division is a bonus. Bootle 'B' have a game in hand over the other three of this group, it really is a surprise to me that Bath St. 'B' haven't produced better results with such an experienced and talented squad. Equally surprising to me is the position of Aigburth, another team with a wealth of experience, but with an average of only 3.30 they are only just above the relegation zone, but unless the bottom three can produce a minor miracle, Jewish 'C', Colonsay 'B' and Bath St. 'E', I think Jewish are the more likely to survive, the recent acquisition of Roger Bennion from V.S. will certainly help to strengthen and stabilise their squad, unlike Colonsay and Bath St. 'E', both of whom seem to find it impossible to turn out the same in two successive weeks, from what I can see Tony O'Neill is the only player to have played in all of Colonsay's games to date, Damian Turner, Paul Manning, and to a lesser degree, Alan Guy seldom seem to be avoidable, with the result that some of their reserves seem to be almost ever present, Bath St. 'E' are in an even worse position, their most regular player is Steve Armwright with an ever changing combination of any three from six or seven, could this be the result of an abundance of Southport players? I am very much afraid that unless the bottom two can quickly

do something to strengthen and stabilise their teams, then it's going to be Division 4 next season. Mind you with the number of walk-overs being conceded, anything can happen.

The usual roll of honour of those who performed heroically in the face of imminent disaster:- Les Travis, Trinity 'B' beat Ted Mandaluff V.M. 'B' 17-21; 21-15; 21-18, a remarkable result and only 'Mandy's' second defeat of the season. John Pilkington, Bath St. 'D' beat Mark Petersen, Bootle 'B', 18-21; 21-17; 21-18. Bath St. playing two reserves in this game. Alan Guy, Colonsay beat Nigel Conquest Eng.Elec. 'C' 21-18; 21-14; Neil Montague V.S. 'C' beat Mike Power, Cadwa 'A' 15-21; 21-10; 21-12, strange scores there, Jim Lightburn, Aigburth beat Ian Lunt, Eng.Elec. 21-16; 17-21; 21-17, Bill Holmes, Aigburth beat John Cowley, V.S. 'C', 21-17; 21-19, sorry about that John, even more sorry about this, John also lost to Jackie Wilson, Bootle 'B' 17-21; 15-21. Denis Hudson, Bath St. 'E' beat Stan Clarke, Maghull, 21-19; 21-18; there is a rumour that Denis is using his bat to frighten little kids, the rubber is so perished, and finally in this group, Derek Sullivan/Mark Petersen, Bootle, beat Ken Hartley/Peter Dobbs, Cadwa 14-21; 22-20; 21-19. One final remarkable set of results from the Bath St. 'B' vs. Colonsay match, Alan Guy beat John Letch 23-21; 21-15, not so remarkable but Tony O'Neill beat Alec Gould 13-21; 21-15; 21-18 and to add to Alec's misery, Colin Rourke also beat him 19-21; 22-20; 24-22 very close, well done Colin.

DIVISION 4A

JACK LAMBERT

A convincing 7-3 win by Fords over Police 'A' confirmed them as firm favourites for the title, Ken Emmett (still 100%) and Arthur Pierce were undefeated in this vital win. An unusual aspect of Fords' success is their large squad, this generally applies to less successful sides - but we work "vicky verky", as to date our heroic wooden spoonists Brownmoor Park 'B' have called on a lone reserve - good team spirit here. Their only near success was a 4-6 against Maghull 'F' with Adrian Blackburn winning both his singles and the Doubles with Dave Condillac. Ron Makin won the fourth set and Harry Blackburn completing this very commendable foursome. Let's be fair Maghull 'F' did win 6-4 thanks to a splendid Bill Slater treble. There is no doubt that Vagabonds 'A', Cadwa 'B' and University are challenging my Police 'A' selection for the number two spot.

A crushing 9-1 by Vags. over a weakened Eng.Elec. 'F' (Wally Sill 1) boosted their challenge. University (Jenson Oh. 2, a 100% reserve) drew with Fords (Ken 2 again and Bill Proffit 2) and a 5-5 against a strong Eng.Elec. side with doubles for Neil Parker and Steve Denison. Perhaps if we were all turned out as smart and as athletic looking as the University boys and the attractive Mel, our sport might get a higher ranking. The Cadwa 'B' challenge is led by Cadwa stalwarts Peter McAdam and Neil Hodson with Ian Fletcher one of the few who has won at least a game in every match.

Some good performances by Rafter's 'B' without the results coming - 4-6 against Maghull 'F' (Leece 2) despite conceding through a Jan Davies injury 3-7 against Fords (doubles from Jack Wilson and Bill Proffitt) 4-6 Eng.Elec. 'F' (Keith Wright and Wally Sill trebles). And then they call on a young charming young 'beginner' against University (Mel Ringrose and Tony Montague trebles) and she calmly wins her two! Jean Reynolds - I seem to know the name!

Maghull 'E' 100% - 10 out of 10 for attendance - not a reserve in sight - great stuff. 6-4 against Vagabonds 'B' (Ken Ray and Dave Batty 2 each) 5-5 against Warwick Bolam who also have a 10-10 for attendance. Peter Brownlee and Harry McGarrity won both their singles, Warwick relying on their two doubles wins as they did against Eng.Elec. - a good clean card this, Wright 2, Sill 2, Parker 2, the top six and then Dave Davies and J.Piggot followed by two Warwick doubles wins. Holy Wright is having a good season for Courtaulds, a lone double against Vags 'A' (Mark Whittaker and John Grattan trebles). Another double against Police 'A' (George Wright and Albie Baker 2 wins each).

Bill Salter, Maghull 'F' beat Stan Draper, Eng.Elec. - 16-21; 21-16; 21-18, a lone winner. Dave Rooney (Vags. 'B') put paid to Rickie Winkles (Police 'A') 100% winning 16-21; 21-19; 21-19, pretty close to complete a good night's work, Dave beat Albie Baker 28-26; 12-21; 21-18. Peter Brownlee (Mag. 'C') beat Alan Wood 25-23; 18-21; 21-19; just that little extra puff needed Alan. A real battle at Maghull 'E' 4 (Brownlee 2) with Courtaulds 6 (Danny Every 2) nine games going to three. Trinity 'C' unfortunately have dropped out and University play on Monday - a bit late here with the info.

Just to take the heat off Ken Bennett, 100% apart from Ian Fletcher, the following also have yet to lose both singles in a match Albie Baker, Richie Winkle (Police), Gordon Langham (Vags. 'A'), Albie Parker and Wally Sill (Eng. Elec.), Mel Ringrose, Steve Denison and Colin Parker (University), Geoff Mao, Bill Proffit and Jack Wilson (Fords), Dave Davies (Warwick Bolam).

DIVISION 4B

BARRY MEYER

With the season half way through we are now getting a somewhat clearer picture and Cadwa seem certainties for the No.1 spot, but Wav.Labour have slipped considerably since the last issue and seem unlikely to gain promotion. Waterloo and Vernon Sangster have both had great runs recently and seem likely to contest the runners-up position, with possibly the former just having the edge. Eng.Elec. 'E' may even push Wavertree down as far as fifth position.

The greatest improvement since the last Digest has been shown by Brownmoor Park who have come from bottom place to a mid-table placing. This has been due in no small part to the inclusion of Norman Cooke. Jewish 'D' have also picked up some useful points recently with Ken Dutch showing signs of former glories with several good wins including a double against Elec. 'E', beating Colin Fyles 21-15; 16-11; 22-20 and Colin Pratt 15-21; 21-19; 21-17.

After a reasonable start of three wins in five matches, Aigburth have fallen away rather badly recently and have slipped near the danger zone with only one win since although the team has been weakened by the loss of Alan Harding to the first team squad. This has led to the inclusion of Robert Tweedie, who in his first ever competitive game lost 21-1 to Martin Finnigan of Vernon Sangster; however, he learnt quickly and only lost 19-21 in the second! Eng.Elec. 'E' seemed to have passed their special disease of three set-itis to their own 'G' team, who have also had some long matches recently, such as versus Maghull where seven sets went to three. My heart bleeds for them after their match at Cadwa where they took five sets into the third but lost the match 10-0. There was probably an electric (!!!) atmosphere in their Derby game with six deciders needed - the 'E' team finally triumphing 6-4. The sparks were probably flying as Margaret "Live Wire" Collins lost to Ted "The Flash" McGiveron 19-21; 21-17; 19-21. But enough of these shocking statistics sorry but I just had to give them a plug!

Waterloo and Aigburth fought out a superb match with some brilliant play on both sides. The home team eventually won 7-3, but six of Waterloo's seven needed a deciding game.

The odd problem of foul service has reared its head in several games I've played recently. It galls me to see unpires allowing players to get away blatantly gaining advantage by not serving to the rules. I have called against my own players on occasions, but I cannot remember ever seeing an opposing umpire doing the same thing. But then I can't see much chance of that even when a qualified coach suggested at one game that it is perfectly legal to shield the ball from view as you serve!

Well, off my hobbyhorse and on to the face-savers:- Norman Cooke defeated Ken Armson and Peter Woods (Wav.Lab.) both in two: Elton Hillman (Jewish 'D') beat Ken Whittaker (Maghull) 21-14; 13-21; 21-10; Peter Lee (Kirkby) overcame Dave Evans (V.S) 21-19; 12-21; 24-22: John O'Sullivan (Colonsay) beat Alan Cameron (Cadwa) 11-21; 21-18; 21-19: Bert Rivers (Courtaulds) won 22-24; 21-16; 21-15 against Mike Belson (W'loo), Alan Thompson (Elec.'E') defeated Ken Nelson (W'loo) 15 and 19: Les Walsh (Cb/Moor) lost to Eric Wood (Aigburth) 20-22; 22-24: and last but not least, Peter Lee (again) beat Jeff Banks (Maghull) 21-14; 12-21; 21-19. Margaret Collins (Elec) beat Captain Colin (Elec).

Now for the nail bites:- Richard Blackburn (Jewish) vs T.Leary (Kirkby) 21-23; 21-16; 21-19. Martin Finnigan (V.S) vs. Arthur Birch (W/L.) 21-18; 19-21; 22-24. Colin Pratt beat Arthur Birch 18-21; 21-19; 21-18. Colin lost to E. Preston (Courtaulds) 21-11; 23-25; 21-23; in the same match Ted McGiveron lost to Tony Shelborne 21-16; 18-21; 20-22. Geoff Frost (Maghull) beat Tony Moon (Cadwa) 21-17; 18-21; 23-21. Finally, Muriel Cox (Colonsay) defeated Andy Armstrong (W'loo) 19-21; 21-18; 23-21 in a match which was Colonsay's best performance of the season as they pulled off a 5-5 draw, with young Kristina

Cox having a great 23-21; 21-19 win over Mike Nelson and Colin Rourke doing a double over Ken Nelson and Andy as well as winning his doubles with Kristina.

DIVISION 5

EDDIE CAMERON

Visits to the University have always been unpredictable to me, they have had many venues, the balcony of the swimming pool, Grove Street Church, now the old Student's Union. All have had problems, early finishing regulations, competition from other activities etc. This latest excursion into the League by the University appeared more promising, true the lighting and background wall colours left a little to be desired last year but this year there were two new tables with superb lighting. Maybe I bring the worst out of premises, last season we were partly through our match when a fire alarm had us all out in the street, this year we played our cup match at the University and were delighted at the improved conditions. Trouble was the superb new lights had a faulty switch and could not be used. Visiting them again this week we wondered what was in store for us this time, as it happened it was third time lucky, everything was perfect. With term times not fitting in with League fixtures it is a tough job running the University teams, this year they are lucky to have a hard working secretary and in Colin Parker they have a Division 5 Captain knowing the ropes from last season and managing all the complicated re-arrangements for his team. He usually plays No.1 and with Dennis Noble at No.2 they form the backbone of the team, six other players share the other two places with John Trevethon and Chris Shepherd the main support. Steve Gaunt, Bup Parmar, Ray Ford and Udo Reckman make up the squad. After the big three, Bootle J.C., Police and Cadwa, University are in the middle group who are all bunched together, much of a muchness, they are currently at the bottom of the group but only because they have not played all their matches as yet, they could easily top this group and given the chance to field their best four, every match could possibly challenge Cadwa, as it is, they seem to be enjoying themselves and are happy to settle for a respectable top half of the table position.

Cadwa 'D' are a very comfortable third but Bootle and the Police are not likely to relax their grip. Looking at Cadwa they are strong enough but have lacked a little consistency probably because they have not fielded their strongest team each week. Rob Brackley and Tony Morris have both played No.1 but neither have played regularly. Dave and Jack Power are the heart of the team usually at two and three. Mark Bailie, Dave Stokes, Gareth Jones and Viv Seigle have all played with the team changing almost from match to match. They clearly demonstrated their potential by drawing with both the Police and Bootle J.C. but will find that the leaders are strong enough to dominate the other ten teams to such a degree that even two more good results by Cadwa would not be good enough to catch up.

The meeting between Police and Bootle J.C. was interesting struggle decided by the doubles both of which went in favour of Bootle to give them a six four

victory. Surprisingly only two sets went to three, Ray Chapple of Bootle beating John Moore to complete a double, his other victim being John Christian. The doubles between Len Dyson and John Christian of the Police and Dave Thompson and Ray Chapple of Bootle was also won by Bootle but was a real cliffhanger, the scores being 27-25, 19-21 and 21-23.

The Police paid Electric Supply a visit last week, apart from clobbering us they were taking an inventory of the conditions, I did not realise how bad our clubroom was, I believe they will be sending in the details for the next issue of the digest.

The two Jewish clubs are resting happier now, they were being challenged earlier on for the bottom spots which are theirs by right, Warwick Bolam 'A' as newcomers split them up for a while but realising their seniors Jewish 'E'.

Warwick Bolam team of C.Ledson, R.Peat, D.Waters and E.Maudsley are enjoying their first season in the League and were a little unlucky to go down to Rodney Youth, the other new team, 6-4 both these young teams will no doubt be getting in the practice that so many of our established sides consider a luxury, who knows next season they may well be challenging for promotion. I cannot say I have been inundated with copy from you all but the offer remains open, if you would like to add anything to these notes just let me know.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LES FRENCH

The world's authorities are trying to rearrange the long standing rules of our game to favour the attacking players once again.

Many years ago in 'Barna' days we had the best table-tennis to watch, provided one player was attacking at a given time. Two 'pushers' were a different matter and that aspect of our game was just as boring when sponge was introduced in the 50's. I'm sure you'll have noticed that combination bat 'pushing' sessions don't last as long.

The introduction of sandwich bats and the new faster, high friction rubbers, gave total domination to the attacking player. Speed of reaction and sheer physical power became all important giving a great advantage to the younger players. World champions became younger as experience and anticipation counted for little when the ball went past you before you could blink. The day of the defender was virtually over at the highest level. With 'attacking' domination, rallies became shorter so much that in a recent world championships the average shots per rally was just over three (serve-return-bang) was typical. In my opinion this has resulted in a lack of spectator interest, culminating in a lack of money coming into the sport. Long rallies are an essentially exciting part of our game. All players know that the intensity of the efforts redoubles as a point lengthens. Spectators are on the edge of their seats when a good rally develops. I can recall vividly two 'matches' which were magnificent to

watch. The first was a Barna v Carrington exhibition at the Stadium back in the 50's, and the other was those two Chinese gentlemen on the box a couple of years ago. Pure pleasure. Why did we enjoy them? The skills were considerable and the rallies long.

In the last couple of years the defender has had a chance again due to his ability to create doubt in the mind of the attacker, who can no longer just blast and loop away at everything, regardless. The best players, now they have had experience of various rubber combinations, have to pay detailed attention to the flight of the ball and the spin on it. Is this bad? Is it wrong for defenders to be back in with a chance? Are the rallies getting longer again? The MOANERS and DOUBTERS COMPLAIN THAT THEY MISJUDGE THE SPIN AND SO THE RALLY ENDS THERE AND THEN. It will if they don't make a proper attempt to observe the flight and the ball itself. Good players, who can control the ball even with different spins on it, still win but they need to make a much greater effort mentally. They have to be more careful. RALLIES ARE LONGER. Players whose control skills are limited and find themselves losing to combination bats, either due to a lack of strokes or a lack of sufficient mental effort are the ones who complain. Why should the laws of the game be changed to give them an easy time? I think it is morally wrong to change the laws to favour any particular type of player. The new bat rule does just this. Its introduction is removing the last chance the defensive player has of achieving any real success, and is taking away from the game a willingness of young players to learn to defend.

From my own personal experience using such a bat I can say how much pleasure I've had in giving hard matches to people who could beat me easily before. I've always had a good ability to judge spin and control the ball well, but I've always lacked reflex speed. Now that I can keep opponents guessing I can use those skills to prolong rallies. I've had dozens of exciting matches against players who pay proper attention to their shots and some easy wins against others who don't.

My own club mates learn to observe the ball more closely when they practice with me. They have to work harder, physically and mentally, for their points. These factors make them into better players.

On a financial note, the rule is going to make virtually everybody buy at least one side of rubber. Add the cost over the country and it is enormous. It's great for the equipment firms, though, trouble is, they're mostly foreign.

I contend that this rule should never be brought into League play, the breeding ground of future players, effectively undermining defensive players in favour of attackers. There would also seem to be moves to ban plain wood surfaces. I fail to see any reason for this. It will seriously affect some of our own players. Ted Mandaluff, Billy Clayton, John Hodges and Ian Wensley come to mind immediately. They must be disgusted.

<u>DIVISION 1</u>	P	W	L	D	Pts.	<u>DIVISION 3B</u>	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Wav. Labour	17	15	-	2	144	Cadwa 'A'	16	14	-	2	131
Vernon Sang.	16	14	-	2	132	Elec. Supply 'A'	16	11	1	4	125
Rafters	16	12	2	2	111	Bath St. 'B'	17	11	3	3	108
Bootle	15	12	2	1	105	Eng. Electric 'C'	15	11	1	3	104
L'pool YMCA	16	10	5	1	94	Vernon Sang. 'C'	16	11	4	1	104
Eng. Electric	17	8	7	2	87	L'pool YMCA 'B'	16	10	2	4	102
Wav. Labour 'A'	17	8	8	1	77	Bootle 'B'	15	6	7	2	69
Maghull	17	7	8	2	76	Trinity 'B'	16	7	9	-	66
Eng. Electric 'A'	16	5	9	2	67	Maghull 'C'	16	4	9	3	66
Wav. Labour 'B'	17	3	11	3	56	Bath St. 'D'	16	5	10	1	64
Vernon Sang. 'A'	15	2	12	1	53	Aigburth	16	4	11	1	56
Maghull 'A'	16	1	13	2	47	L'pool Jewish 'C'	16	1	14	1	35
Eng. Electric 'B'	17	2	12	3	47	Colonsay 'B'	14	-	13	1	32
Plessey	16	3	11	2	45	Bath St. 'E'	13	1	12	-	28
<u>DIVISION 2</u>	P	W	L	D	Pts.	<u>DIVISION 4A</u>	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Elec. Supply	15	14	-	1	128	Fords	16	14	1	1	128
Bath St.	17	14	1	2	122	Police 'A'	15	12	3	-	106
Cadwa	16	11	4	2	111	Cadwa 'B'	15	11	2	2	104
L'pool Jewish	15	12	2	1	106	Vagabonds 'A'	15	10	5	-	95
L'pool YMCA 'A'	17	12	4	1	101	University	13	9	1	3	94
Trinity	16	7	7	2	82	Eng. Electric 'F'	15	9	3	3	89
Vernon Sang. 'B'	15	7	8	-	73	Warwick Bolam	16	8	7	1	86
Colonsay	14	6	5	3	67	Maghull 'E'	14	5	8	1	69
Police	15	4	10	1	66	Courtaulds	15	6	9	-	66
Brownmoor Pk.	16	3	9	4	66	Vagabonds 'B'	14	2	10	2	49
Bath St. 'A'	15	4	11	-	56	Rafters 'B'	16	1	14	1	41
L'pool Jewish 'A'	15	4	11	-	49	Maghull 'F'	13	2	11	-	27
Linacre	15	2	12	1	40	Brownmoor Pk. 'B'	15	-	15	-	6
Wav. Labour 'C'	17	-	17	-	23						
<u>DIVISION 3A</u>	P	W	L	D	Pts.	Trinity 'C' Record Expunged					
Bootle 'A'	16	16	-	-	131	<u>DIVISION 4B</u>	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Eng. Electric 'D'	16	13	2	1	115	Cadwa 'C'	15	14	1	-	121
Vagabonds	16	11	3	2	105	Waterloo	15	13	1	1	109
Elec. Supply 'B'	14	9	5	-	81	Wav. Lab. 'D'	14	10	2	2	99
Argot	16	9	6	1	81	Eng. Electric 'E'	15	10	4	1	91
Bootle J.C.	15	6	6	3	77	Vernon Sang. 'D'	12	7	3	2	80
Bath St. 'C'	16	7	9	-	75	Maghull 'D'	14	7	6	1	78
Maghull 'B'	15	6	8	1	74	Brownmoor Pk. 'A'	16	5	10	1	60
Kirkby	16	5	8	3	74	Colonsay 'C'	14	4	8	2	56
Colonsay 'A'	16	6	8	2	73	Courtaulds 'A'	12	4	8	-	54
Trinity 'A'	15	3	8	4	64	L'pool Jewish 'D'	15	4	10	1	49
Plessey 'A'	15	2	11	2	50	Aigburth 'A'	15	3	11	1	48
Rafters 'A'	15	3	11	1	43	Eng. Electric 'G'	15	3	12	-	43
L'pool Jewish 'B'	15	2	13	-	37	Kirkby 'A'	14	3	11	-	42

DIVISION 5	P	W	L	D	Pts.
Police 'B'	16	14	1	1	129
Bootle J.C. 'A'	13	12	-	1	105
Cadwa 'D'	15	10	3	2	103
Elec. Supply 'C'	15	7	4	4	81
Argot 'A'	14	9	5	-	78
Wav. Labour 'E'	15	5	8	2	77
University 'A'	12	7	5	-	67
Maghull 'G'	12	6	5	1	64
Rodney Youth	14	3	8	3	52
L'pool Jewish 'F'	15	2	10	3	49
Kirkby 'B'	13	2	7	4	47
Warwick Bolam 'A'	15	3	11	1	47
L'pool Jewish 'E'	15	-	13	2	21

TABLE EDGES

The Annual Presentation Dance will take place at the N.U.R. Club, Deane Road, off Prescott Road (Kensington end) on Friday, April 13th. Presentations, cabaret, Disco spots - bar 11.30 p.m. Refreshment bar. Tickets limited at £1.50

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SOME CAUTIONARY TALES FROM THE FIXTURE SECRETARY

We all know there is one week after the season to play outstanding matches - and not more than one week.

In this Magazine some teams have 17 matches played, some 12. Last season all the matches were not played and as now not all Secretaries worried too much about match Regulation 10. As a result one team lost promotion.

Cup Regulation 7 is also a humbug to keep in touch with. One Club won a Cup by default.

My ambition is to see all matches played and played on time. Is yours? Can you achieve it? Are you secure in case of dispute? The Committee prefer not be involved in disputes but if they are they must follow your Rules - you passed them!

MORE TABLE EDGES

The Liverpool Closed Championships will take place at Kirkby Sports Centre on Sunday April 1st - many of you will be able to buy me a drink as it is your birthday!

Owing to Sponsorship not arriving in time the Merseyside Open will NOT take place.

If you really want to get rid of that odd bottle of wine over from Christmas or the box of chocs or any other unwanted presents - send them along we will put them in our Draw at the end of the dance on FRIDAY APRIL 13th.

Printed by:- C.T.L. Agency, 52 The Albany, Old Hall Street, Liverpool L3 9EG

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