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**TABLE
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DIGEST**

Official Magazine

OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Table Tennis

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Digest

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COMMENT

ON Page 19 we print a letter of criticism on the quality of the *Digest*. Strange as it may seem we welcome that criticism, partly because it has constructive ideas and partly because the one thing we should hate more than anything else is indifference.

We agree with much the writer says, and although he takes us to task in saying that the Editorial Board need "livening up," we would point out that the Board are limited in what they can do to liven up the *Digest*.

In the matter of pictures and illustrations we are well aware of the deficiency and it has long been our desire to end it, but we always meet the same obstacle—finance. For us to publish a couple of pictures each month would cost, for the printing blocks alone, between £20 and £25 in the season. In each the past two years there has been a loss on the *Digest* of just over £20 and although the Management Committee have considered that the League has been repaid for that expense, we must recognise the fact that the League could not sustain a loss of something approaching £50 each season.

We have considered various schemes for providing an income for improving the appearance of our magazine, particularly its picturisation, and it is our hope that we may eventually be able to adopt one.

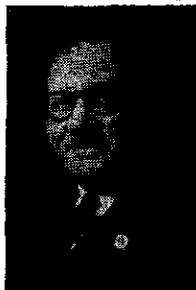
Regarding articles, we are at all times ready to receive them from anyone, but they must, of course, deal with some aspect of the game since the *Digest* is essentially a table tennis magazine. The "outside" readership we appeal for are such as former players who we feel must still have an interest in our activities. There are many such and their subscription would be a welcome addition to our finance.

There is one factor we would draw attention to. Our correspondence columns could and should be one of the best features of the *Digest*, yet it would appear that members of the League prefer to keep their points of controversy to their own club-room rather than give them the wider audience obtainable through our columns. That is a point we much regret.

From the Secretary's Desk

MANAGEMENT WANT YOUR VIEW ON FINALS AT PHIL

By W. STAMP.



THE 16th Merseyside Open Tournament is now a matter for the record books and the final scores and highlights of the play will be found elsewhere. I am concerned from another angle which concerns the finances of the League, as it was obvious to those present at the Philharmonic Hall that we should lose money.

We are possibly the only League in the country who, at the close of the preliminary rounds, transfer the finals to a hall some four or five miles away, so that they can be presented to the public under ideal conditions. We were doing this years before the war when the venue was Picton Hall, but it would appear that the time has come when the Management Committee will have to consider whether to play the finals at Mather Avenue, or whichever hall the earlier rounds are staged.

The argument may be put forward that there were not enough top-ranking stars competing or that an announcement was not made about Bergman's appearance until thirty-six hours before the finals.

The answer is that there were twelve Internationals headed by Aubrey Simons and Kathie Best, and that we published the news about Bergman immediately he arrived in this country from Yugo Slavia and gave us confirmation.

Less than Half

We have done well at the Phil in the past due to the support of the general public, but it was very evident on November 22 that our own members do not appear to be over-enthusiastic about their own tournament as the total number paying for admission was less than half our registered player strength.

I have heard it stated on more than one occasion that both players and public prefer to come along and watch an international match rather than the

final events of a championship. If that is so, there is every justification for the Committee to decide against going to the Philharmonic Hall in future.

There is a considerable financial outlay in staging an outside final and while we are not even within hailing distance of the Bankruptcy Court, no treasurer views with equanimity a continued depletion of the bank balance.

The Management Committee will be continuing their discussion on this matter early in January and views of clubs will be welcome.

International Match

We are staging the England v. Ireland international match at the Philharmonic Hall on Friday, January 23, and as this is always an interesting and keen tussle, we can look forward to a good evening's entertainment.

England will be led by Johnny Leach, the only English-born player to be twice world champion, and he will be ably supported by Aubrey Simons and Brian Kennedy, now recovered from his throat operation which prevented him competing in the Merseyside.

The fourth place is likely to go to A. Rhodes, of Middlesex, who has never appeared in Liverpool before, but of whom there are good reports.

Diane Rowe will be in the side and there is a possibility of her twin sister Rosalind coming up, but failing her we shall have another opportunity of seeing Kathie Best of Yorkshire.

The Booking plan will be ready on January 2, and your secretary will be sent a poster and also a card for your ticket requirements, so that if it is not convenient for you to go to Jack Sharps, Rushworths or the Philharmonic Hall for seats, he can make application for you.

I hope that every club will find it possible to make up a party.

Reflections on the Merseyside

THERE were so many features about this year's Merseyside Open that it is possible here to touch upon only a few of those points which have not already been given publicity. For that reason the finals at the Philharmonic can be passed over with the appendage of the scores for record purposes.

Of the features enumerated here some are bright and in keeping with the tournament, but others are not so bright and in this latter category must come the game on the Friday night between the two Rafter players, Ted Rumjajn and J. Crooke.

Many of those who watched it came away firmly convinced that the time limit rule should have been applied to the first game and that if it had been there would have been a first-class sensation. Apparently it wasn't imposed until the third game and the result was that a goodly crowd saw a pushing match that was more reminiscent of the dining room ping pong of the Edwardian days than of our modern table tennis. And it did neither of the two players concerned any good.

Debating Point

What a difference there was in what was practically the last match at Mather Avenue, when there was almost another sensation but of a different calibre. There will always be an argument as to whether Richard Bergman was just playing well enough to beat Ron Alcock of Manchester, as some of those who saw the game contend.

It always is a difficult point to decide, and especially with a player like Bergman, but there is

no doubt that to all outward appearances Alcock came within an ace of the finest victory of his career by playing brilliant table tennis.

And now back to another poor feature to record the feeling that has been created by five of our local players scratching after winning through to Saturday morning. A player has, of course always the right to scratch at any time, but there is surely a moral obligation on all those who enter a tournament to play through until defeated, if it is at all possible.

It seems so purposeless for anyone to enter a tournament, eliminate players who would be only too happy to put in an appearance on the final morning and then to fail to turn up. Better surely by far not to enter.

And now a tribute to all those who kept the tournament running smoothly in the best Merseyside tradition. They did a fine job, even if they had the aid of Mr. Tom Blunn's recording board which proved a great help in keeping "tabs" on players and tables.

And for those who like to keep records here are the details of the finals:—

Men's Singles.—R. Bergman beat A. W. C. Simons 10—21, 21—17, 22—20, 21—17.

Women's Singles.—Miss B. Gray (holder) beat Mrs. Cumberbatch 21—12, 21—17.

Junior Singles.—G. Pullar beat C. Booth 18—21, 21—19, 22—20.

Men's Doubles.—R. Bergman and A. Simons beat R. Hinchcliffe and G. Wadsworth 23—21, 21—14.

Women's Doubles.—Mrs. A. Pettifer and Miss C. Best beat Miss B. Gray and Mrs. Rowe 21—7, 16—21, 21—15.

Mixed Doubles.—A. Simons and Miss B. Gray beat R. Conroy and Miss S. Threlfall 21—13, 21—14.

To Forecast is Dangerous

NEVER before has their been such a levelling in the playing standard of the division. Individual results are not consistent and any one of the ten top players is liable to beat another, according to who is on form on a particular night. Consequently to forecast the result of most games is an uncertainty.

Balfour have now pulled ahead to lead the division although they were defeated by Oakhill. Yet African Oil Mills, who are lying second, are unbeaten but have recorded three draws—to Oakhill, Rafter's and 15th Crosby—while Balfour A occupy the third position.

The detailed results of the African Oil and 15th Crosby drawn game have not reached me as I write these notes, but it should be interesting reading to see if Bill Pierce's speedy and sometimes erratic game has overcome the tactical wiles of "Tiger" Bamford, and whether Bernard Hand can arrest Pierce's successful league progress.

Editor's Note: Pierce continued his success for he beat both Hand and Bamford to win two of the Oil Mills' five sets.

The "Tiger" is playing well this season and with the help of Hand, coming back to form, Crosby, who are at present lying fourth in the table, will be challenging the leaders.

Study His Feet.

Bohemians and Balfour B occupy the bottom positions, with Rafter's A just above them. The last named are now playing J. Crooke, who should help to improve their position. He has played for Southport and is a most agile defensive player with boundless energy. Young players would gain much in just watching his footwork. He has won the nickname of "Bring 'em back alive Crooke."

Individual results do not seem to vary in home and away games, which shows that playing conditions vary little throughout the division. The majority of the tables I would call fast, but those of African Oil and Livex are decidedly slow. The Acacia table appears to be higher at the ends than in the middle.

Post-War players have an all-round game and can adapt themselves easier

to changes than I suppose did the pre-war player who was either attacker or defender across a 64 inch net.

Playing conditions are generally good. The playing area at Livex is comparable to Wembley and would be ideal for representative games. My last visit there was for a pre-war Merseyside which included the Three Musketeers—Barna, Bellak and Azabados, plus 24 tables.

There is great enthusiasm among our players. Half a dozen of them play in two of three leagues—the Liverpool, Wirral, Southport and Business Houses—and occasionally have two matches in one evening. In these cases transport is laid on for table to table journeys.

Congratulations on good turn-outs by Anfield, Oakhill, and others who display their shirt and badges uncovered by pullovers of a different hue.

Most successful players to date are Pierce, E. J. Rumjahn, L. Davies, N. R. Jones, Bamford, L. Ross, B. Townsend and Frank Varty.

Try this for practice over the holidays:

Attackers: (1) Hit the ball much earlier; (2) slow topspin drive.

Defenders: (1) Short defence near the table; (2) long defence.

for Table Tennis

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FIVE YEARS' UNBEATEN RECORD

IN my opinion a table tennis match can pack more thrills than any other sport, especially if you're in a division with a chance of winning and every set counts.

Maybe the spectators don't agree when two players get pushing it out near the end of the third game, but to watch the faces of the two teams would give the impression that the finish of the Korean War depended on it.

In this division seven teams have a chance of going into the premier sphere, four are fighting to avoid relegation, and Liverpool Police, I am sure, wish they were already as so far they haven't collected a single point.

Little Chance

So far as I can see none of the first seven teams will have a dog's chance in the First Division next season unless they get new blood, as the average standard in this division is poor compared with past seasons and with the exception of a few No. 1 and No. 2 players the majority can neither attack nor defend with the necessary consistency.

Where too, are the youngsters, for most of our players have had their day. In addition we have not enough natural hitters—by that I mean someone who can pick them off the table with accuracy and speed.

Now for the match I saw. Wednesday, December 3, Cheshire Lines home to Victoria Park—result Cheshire Lines 7—3, and so far as I was concerned

Dick (defence) Burge, Cheshire Lines' No. 2, was the man of the match.

Ian Morris beat G. Digman 21—15, 21—19 and George Williams beat G. Owens 19—21, 21—17, 23—21, a close game. Then at two-down, Burge gave Sid Barrett an exhibition of defence, getting shots back from anywhere and losing weight every minute because he never stopped dashing to and from the table to win in three games.

Owen Hughes hit his way through Bill Watts 21—19, 19—21, 21—12 and Stan Jones played his usual awkward all top-spin game to beat Jim Houghton 21—15, 26—24 to give Cheshire Lines a 3—2 lead.

The surprise came, however, when Owens hit through Morris 21—19, 22—20 and although Williams looked as if he could stop the rot when facing Burge he found himself meeting a sound defence and went down 21—19, 12—21, 18—21.

Of the remaining three games the Park could only win the last when Houghton beat Hughes in two straight, so that Cheshire Lines secretary J. Grayson could tell me that they have not lost at home in league or cup match since 1947.

Another match I saw was Balfour C. and Oakhill A at Balfour. Balfour won 6—4 mainly because flick merchant Bill McKechnie beat both R. Hudson and Hamill. Joe Ellison, however, was the deciding factor for he went on last and won against the odds by beating R. Platt who serves down the backhand and wallbbs the return.

DRINK

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LEAGUE TABLES

First Division

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Balfour | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 72 | 28 | 18 |
| African Oil ... | 10 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 58 | 42 | 15 |
| Balfour "A" .. | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 57 | 43 | 13 |
| 15th Crosby .. | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 51 | 49 | 12 |
| Anfield | 10 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 50 | 50 | 11 |
| Livex | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 50 | 50 | 10 |
| Rafters | 9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 46 | 44 | 9 |
| *Oakhill | 9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 45 | 45 | 9 |
| Acacia | 10 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 48 | 52 | 9 |
| Rafters "A" .. | 10 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 46 | 54 | 6 |
| Balfour "B" .. | 10 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 36 | 64 | 3 |
| Bohemians ... | 10 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 31 | 69 | 3 |

Second Division

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Anfield "A" .. | 10 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 57 | 43 | 15 |
| Liverpool Y.M. | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 68 | 32 | 14 |
| Victoria Park | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 63 | 37 | 14 |
| Lucem | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 60 | 40 | 14 |
| Cheshire Lines | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 54 | 46 | 12 |
| Bootle Y.M.C.A. | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 52 | 48 | 12 |
| Wavertree C.C. | 10 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 51 | 49 | 11 |
| Oakhill "A" .. | 10 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 47 | 53 | 8 |
| I.C.I. | 10 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 44 | 56 | 8 |
| Waterloo Dock | 10 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 42 | 58 | 7 |
| Balfour "C" .. | 10 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 40 | 60 | 5 |
| L.P.A.S. "A" .. | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 22 | 78 | 0 |

Third Division

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Litherland ... | 9 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 67 | 23 | 16 |
| Linnets | 10 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 70 | 30 | 16 |
| V'toria Park A | 10 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 59 | 41 | 15 |
| Cadwa | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 65 | 35 | 14 |
| *Rafters "B" .. | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 57 | 33 | 12 |
| Tech. Students | 10 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 50 | 50 | 12 |
| Osterley | 10 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 49 | 51 | 9 |
| Eng. Electric | 10 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 42 | 58 | 9 |
| Bohemians "A" | 10 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 43 | 57 | 7 |
| Oakhill "B" .. | 10 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 30 | 70 | 5 |
| *Linacre | 9 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 23 | 67 | 1 |
| Anfield "B" ... | 9 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 25 | 65 | 0 |

Fourth Division

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| L'pool Y.M. A | 10 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 72 | 28 | 18 |
| W'tree C.C. "A" | 10 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 64 | 36 | 17 |
| African Oil A | 10 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 59 | 41 | 15 |
| Bohemians 'B' | 10 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 55 | 45 | 12 |
| Bath Street .. | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 51 | 39 | 11 |
| Livex "A" ... | 10 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 47 | 53 | 10 |
| St. Michaels .. | 10 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 48 | 52 | 9 |
| Bootle Y.M. A | 9 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 47 | 43 | 7 |
| Aighurth | 10 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 35 | 65 | 5 |
| *Domestic Miss | 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 34 | 56 | 5 |
| Harold House .. | 10 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 37 | 63 | 4 |
| R.A.F.A. (Liv.) | 9 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 31 | 59 | 3 |

WOMENS'—Division I

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Bibbys | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 76 | 24 | 19 |
| Balfour | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 81 | 19 | 18 |
| Lofters | 10 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 73 | 27 | 17 |
| Oakhill | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 61 | 39 | 13 |
| Bohemians ... | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 57 | 43 | 12 |
| Rafters | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 55 | 45 | 12 |
| Linnets | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 52 | 48 | 10 |
| Anfield | 10 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 35 | 65 | 5 |
| Cheshire Lines | 10 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 35 | 65 | 5 |
| Leyfield..... | 10 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 27 | 73 | 5 |
| Littlewoods ... | 10 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 34 | 66 | 4 |
| Aighurth | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 14 | 86 | 0 |

WOMENS'—Division II

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Linnets "A" .. | 10 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 66 | 34 | 17 |
| Waterloo Park | 10 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 61 | 39 | 17 |
| Brenka | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 59 | 41 | 14 |
| Wavertree C.C. | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 61 | 39 | 13 |
| Osterley | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 60 | 40 | 13 |
| Lofters "A" .. | 10 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 52 | 48 | 11 |
| Bohemians "A" | 10 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 50 | 50 | 10 |
| Littlewoods A | 10 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 44 | 56 | 8 |
| Ogdens | 10 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 49 | 51 | 7 |
| Beauclair ... | 10 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 45 | 55 | 7 |
| Catholic Metro | 10 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 22 | 78 | 2 |
| Lucem | 10 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 31 | 69 | 1 |

NORTH REGIONAL I.

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Waterloo Park | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 84 | 16 | 20 |
| Brenka | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 72 | 28 | 18 |
| Lofters | 10 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 67 | 33 | 15 |
| English Elec. A | 9 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 52 | 38 | 12 |
| Littlewoods ... | 10 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 49 | 51 | 12 |
| Litherland "A" | 10 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 50 | 50 | 11 |
| Everton Y.M. | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 54 | 46 | 10 |
| W'loo Dock A | 10 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 40 | 60 | 7 |
| R.A.F M'ments | 10 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 37 | 63 | 6 |
| W'breck Moor | 10 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 33 | 67 | 4 |
| *Tech. Stud. A | 9 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 33 | 57 | 2 |
| 15th Crosby A | 10 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 19 | 81 | 1 |

NORTH REGIONAL II.

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw Cott. Com | 10 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 73 | 27 | 18 |
| Lofters "A" .. | 10 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 65 | 35 | 16 |
| Maghull b/c .. | 10 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 59 | 41 | 15 |
| W'loo Park A .. | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 60 | 30 | 12 |
| Bootle Y.M. B | 9 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 55 | 35 | 12 |
| Eng. Elec. "B" | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 52 | 48 | 10 |
| St. Dominics .. | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 47 | 53 | 10 |
| Litherland "B" | 9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 48 | 42 | 9 |
| Anfield "D" .. | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 18 | 32 | 2 |
| W'loo Park B .. | 9 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 27 | 63 | 2 |
| Tech Stud. "B" | 10 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 27 | 73 | 2 |
| Bootle Police .. | 9 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 19 | 71 | 2 |

SOUTH REGIONAL

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | F. | A. | P. |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| V'toria Park B | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 79 | 21 | 19 |
| Linnets "A" | 10 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 82 | 18 | 18 |
| Beauclair ... | 10 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 76 | 24 | 17 |
| Aigburth Meths | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 65 | 35 | 13 |
| W'tree c.c. B | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 58 | 42 | 13 |
| Cheshire Lines | 10 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 56 | 44 | 11 |
| Linnets "C" | 10 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 44 | 56 | 10 |
| Lucem "B" ... | 10 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 39 | 61 | 6 |
| *Cadwa "B" | 9 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 28 | 62 | 4 |
| S Peters (W'ton) | 10 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 26 | 74 | 3 |
| C'hire Lines "B" | 9 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 19 | 71 | 3 |
| Vauxhall Sports | 10 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 18 | 82 | 1 |

EAST REGIONAL

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|---|----|---|----|----|----|
| Cadwa "A" | 10 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 73 | 27 | 17 |
| V'toria Park C | 10 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 72 | 28 | 17 |
| Holly Mount | 10 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 70 | 30 | 16 |
| Old Xaverians | 10 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 69 | 31 | 14 |
| Balfour "D" | 10 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 63 | 37 | 13 |
| Vagabonds ... | 10 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 60 | 40 | 13 |
| Leyfield..... | 10 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 48 | 52 | 9 |
| W'tree Labour | 10 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 42 | 58 | 7 |
| Osterley "A" | 10 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 39 | 61 | 7 |
| L.P.A.S. "A" | 10 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 37 | 63 | 4 |
| Beauclair "A" | 10 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 19 | 81 | 3 |
| Comet | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 8 | 92 | 0 |

CENTRAL REGIONAL

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|---|----|---|----|----|----|
| *Lucem "A" | 9 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 76 | 14 | 18 |
| Panto | 9 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 78 | 12 | 16 |
| L'pool Y.M. B | 10 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 62 | 38 | 15 |
| Vagabonds "A" | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 55 | 45 | 13 |
| Linnets "B" | 10 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 62 | 38 | 12 |
| Lussac | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 52 | 48 | 10 |
| Catholic Metro | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 48 | 52 | 10 |
| Oakhill "C" | 9 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 51 | 39 | 9 |
| Anfield "C" | 9 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 44 | 46 | 8 |
| Leyfield..... | 10 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 20 | 80 | 4 |
| Old X'rians A | 10 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 20 | 80 | 1 |
| I.C.I. "A" ... | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 12 | 88 | 0 |

* Incomplete Tables are due to the fact that teams marked with an asterik did not send in score cards for week commencing 8th Dec. 1952 promptly enough for result to be included. (G.W.)

NOTE THESE

ANFIELD have moved to new headquarters at 28 Beech Road, Walton Village. Their match room is five feet longer and two feet wider than their previous one. Go there by the 60 or 81 bus to Walton Hall Ave. or by the 19 or 44 tram to Beech Road.

Harold House are running a tournament next month for members of the Jewish community on Merseyside. There will be six singles events, boys and girls under 15, under 18 and over 18, and they will be played at the club between January 5—11. Entry forms from Mr. D. Cohen, 10 Middlesfield Road, Liverpool 18; closing date, December 31.

HANDICAP CUP TOURNEYS

The entry of 220 for the handicap competitions—163 men and 57 women—represents an increase in number of competitors but also, in view of the decrease of the size of the League, a considerable increase in the proportionate entry. Roughly 1—4 have entered compared with 1—6 last year.

This is an encouraging feature but to ensure the success of the tournament, I would like competitors to make a careful note of a few important points.

First, it is vitally important that players turn up at the time required, in particular this applies to those requested to be present by 6-45 or 7 p.m. To ensure a successful evening it is essential that the first matches be started promptly.

The average handicap is roughly 14—15, which means that the average game will be shorter than usual but as the number of sets to be decided varies from 12—14 according to the venue, it is obvious that no time must be wasted.

The secretaries or those responsible at the various clubs have promised to be prepared for the early start so if players will co-operate it should be possible to complete the programme by 10-30 p.m.

It has been decided that no one shall appear on their own table which means that in some cases a player may have some travelling to do. We have tried to distribute competitors as fairly as possible but it is inevitable that a few have been unlucky.

Lucem have given us two nights for the men's singles and to avoid confusion competitors playing there will find their slip marked Lucem (1) or (2).

Remember that clear directions are given in the League handbook as to how to get to the various clubs who are acting as hosts, so in case of doubt refer to your handbook. Will those requested to go to Anfield, note that Anfield will be playing at new H.Q. by 30th December. Full instructions have been sent to all those concerned.

One last word, the success of the tournament depends on prompt attendance. The person responsible at the centre has power to scratch, but please avoid this unpleasant possibility by arriving at the time stated.

This was not Arcadia

By J. H. C. HUGHES

ACROSS the Wirral icecap to the igloo of the Acacians for the match against Rafters A. On knocking at the door a voice shouted "Push," though it might have been "Mush."

The inside of the igloo makes an interesting study. At one end is a large white box with a notice informing all that it is the property of Fabbri's Ices. I do not think the journey of Mr. Fabbri's box was really necessary; in fact, one of the natives told me it was warmer inside the box.

In one corner of the room is a small electric fire, but as one of the two bars was out of action this did not cause the thermometer any extra work.

It Blew Not.

Then there is a queer contraption called a "hot air blower." All I can say is that I have met human types that were more effective at disseminating the product, though none were present on this occasion.

These Acacians are, however, either the world's greatest optimists or keen students of the power of suggestion, for hanging on the wall was, of all things, a fire extinguisher.

The match began with the thermometer registering 40 degrees. By the time the halfway stage was reached it had risen to 40.5 degrees. Now do not think this great upsurge was caused by either the fire or the blower; it was the result of everybody handling the thing to see if it was still working.

This steady progress was maintained, for by the end of the match the staggering figure of 41 was reached.

A word of warning to those who wear glasses—the cup of hot blubber they kindly give you at half-time causes glasses to steam, so take a little demister.

The result of the match was a win for Acacia 6-4, their winners being R. Jones (2), Andree Jones (2), Rowan and Egerton. For Rafters, Linforth (2), Crooke and Peter Rumjahn.

The conditions were all against the players and it would be unfair to comment on any game, but they all strove valiantly in an effort to restore circulation.

For Log Book.

There were, however, a number of interesting happenings. First, there was the appearance of Mr. and Mrs. Clint Casselman in the same team. I am not sure but I think this is the first time husband and wife have played in the same team in the first division. If so, Rafters can enter it in their log book.

Then I was surprised to find the home team breaking the latter part of Rule 19. Four of the players were in maroon shirts, which, I take it, is their club colours, while the fifth played in a blue shirt with a Y.M. badge. Oh, Mr. Blunn!

Last but by no means least, was the play of Rafters' new comer, J. Crooke. He had shown at Mather Avenue that he not only has a fine defence but plenty of patience, a virtue in rather short supply to-day. He now showed that he can hit a ball mighty hard on the backhand when he so desires.

It is, however, his attitude to the game that appeals to me even more than his play. He plays hard for every point, but never allows the losing of one to spoil his enjoyment. His ready smile and sincere congratulations when his opponent produces a winner, were for me the warmest things of the night. A good player and a grand sportsman.

In conclusion let me say I enjoyed the trip for the company was grand, the play interesting and the temperature adjectival.

The Wirral League are determined not to be behind us in any way. They too are publishing a monthly magazine, the *Wirral Horn*, and although on a smaller scale than the *Digest* it nevertheless fills the same important role very adequately.

Our League will be becoming well known in local hospitals. Once again a lot of our business has had to be conducted in a ward at Smithdown Road Hospital when Des Loughrey had to re-enter for another operation. Fortunately he has got over it and came out on Saturday.

WAVERTREE LET LEAD SLIP AWAY

WELL played Linnet A and Waterloo Park, joint leaders of Division 2 this month. Linnets have a slightly better sets average and suffered their only defeat at the hands of their close rivals. Brenka were responsible for Waterloo's only defeat.

Both teams are in their first season with the League—indeed, most of their players are new to competitive play—and are making a bold bid for promotion next season.

Wavertree have suffered a slight reverse but are not downhearted. A pat on the back for Gerry Gill and Reg. Fowler for their encouragement and spot of coaching. Most of the team are stroke-conscious and as they gain confidence should lose their rather timid attitude at the table.

This seems to be a failing with a great number of players who seem to find it difficult to put a bit of "bite" into their play.

I don't think Wavertree had quite got over their previous week's exciting match (they narrowly lost to Linnet A 7—3, seven of the sets going to three games) when they lost at home to Brenka.

Apologies

A black mark against an apologetic Brenka for their late arrival. It was 8-15 before the match began, and when I left at 10-50 p.m. there was still another set to be played.

It is good to see Pat Hughes back with them and eager for practice, as at the moment she is playing below her best. Dot Davies has ably taken over from Mrs. E. Cantwell as their No. 1, but would do well to concentrate on her footwork. Her weakness here often takes away from any advantage gained by her height.

With a 3—2 interval lead any luck Wavertree had in the first half went over to their opponents in the second. Jean Maguire beat Pat Hughes by steadily getting the ball back and letting Pat hit herself out. Impetuous Joyce Richardson mixed her game well to beat a steady Frances Murray 19 in the third but Frances had her revenge by beating Joyce Jones 16 in the third game after an exciting tussle.

Joan Hughes after beating Joan Hellon 21—11, 21—18, could well be forgiven for thinking fate was against her in the second half for at 21—20 in the third game, with her opponent, Edna Finnis, well away from the table she sent over what should have been a winner only to see it waft back and catch the edge. No one was more surprised than the Brenka player who went on to win 24—22, having also got her money's worth by beating Joyce Jones after strategic play on both sides 21—16 in the third game.

Still experimenting, the latest news from Linnet is the promotion of Myra Murphy from the second team. It is the first really competitive season for both Myra and Eunice Murphy (no relation, I believe) and they certainly mean to get places. Eunice got to the last eight in the preliminary rounds at the Open before going out to Bluey Casselman, and Myra only lost 18—21 in the third game to Lil Rimmer.

Grand Game

Linnet had a grand match against Cheshire Lines when they won 7—3. Leading 3—2 at the interval their only defeat in the second half was when Joyce Tippetts lost to D. Hughes 16—21, 24—22, 18—21.

Without a doubt the most exciting set was between N. Markson who managed to overcome May Green's half-volley tactics by her blitz attack to both wings to win 18—21, 21—11 and 22—20 from being 17—20 down. Audrey Brown lost to M. Green but beat A. Keightley 21—19 in the third to avenge Elsie Palmer's defeat by the same player 21—16, 18—21, 16—21. Elsie won her other set against R. Garner, who was also beaten by Myra Murphy, but E. Hewitt lost to both Myra and Joyce Tippetts.

To add more Bibby's flavour to their team, Lofters have signed on Doreen Hogg.

It is impossible for me to cover anything like all the matches, I would therefore welcome and appreciate any items of interest from secretaries or captains. Telephones (bus.) Central 5401; (home) Childwall 1267.

Park Would Not Swallow Pill

ONLY two more matches remain to be played and the halfway stage will have been reached.

With nine matches played Waterloo Park remain unshaken. Lofters went to the Park hoping to administer a distasteful No. 9 and to perform one of last season's giant-killing acts. Waterloo Park, however, took four of the five sets played after the interval to win comfortably.

Brenka, Lofters, English Electric and Littlewoods will fight on earnestly with the knowledge that there is always the possibility of fate intervening on their behalf.

Y.M.C.A.'s Promise

A team that has benefitted by their short experience is Everton Y.M.C.A. and recent performances suggest that they are now capable of upsetting more than one of the first five leading teams.

Litherland A would have been up with the challengers had they not been severely beaten by the Y.M.C.A. but I repeat once more that Litherland will be a strong combination next season. They are young and talented and the experience they are gaining in this their first season will give them the perfect combination of ability and confidence.

It is obvious that Waterloo Dock are badly on the decline. Since the side is practically the same as last season, if not actually stronger on paper, it would seem that their standard of play individually has deteriorated or that interest has waned. An inspiring leader with a resolute aim for the New Year, is required.

R.A.F. Movements and Technical Students A are triers every week and deserve the respect in which they are held. Warbreck Moor are a disappointment. To my thinking they are individuals rather than a team. When players start probing the possibilities of joining another club a red light begins to glow.

In contrast we give 15th Crosby A a pat on the back and to each player we say "Well done—son!" They have obtained only one point from a possible *18 to date. Undaunted they stand together, week by week without fail, to meet their elderly and more experi-

enced opponents. They strive to do their best as all good Scouts do.

Taking stock of the region's first division, I feel hopeful that the North can again win the Micklesfield Medals. The outstanding performances of Bill Kinrade, Kevin Fennerty, Harry Moores J. Redmond and J. Bennett are encouraging.

The progress of Brenka and English Electric in the Readman Cup has attracted unusual interest in the competition. Proud are we of last season's North Region champions, Litherland, who, undefeated, lead Division 3. Nor are we unmindful of Bath Street, runners-up, who are giving a good account of themselves in Division 4.

We are glad to welcome Anfield D to the second division of our region which has a completed establishment. Already they have made up a number of match arrears and would have made further progress if they had received better co-operation from two clubs who are due to play them on their own tables.

Exciting Position

The position in Division 2 is quite exciting. Raw Cotton are being relentlessly pressed by Lofters A, with Maghull B.C. treading on the latter's heels. St. Dominic's have fallen back somewhat, possibly as a result of their recent engagements being against teams in the top half of the table.

Bootle Y.M.C.A. B have earned praise from more than one club regarding the high standard of play by the younger players. Particular tribute must be given to Boy Rigerson on his style and calm assurance.

Bootle Police, like their colleagues, Liverpool Police, in the premier Second Division, are handicapped by duty rosters and consequently seldom table the same team two weeks running. Nevertheless their interest in the game and our league is genuine and they have made many friends.

It was good to hear from Sergeant Jones, their secretary, that the Chief Constable had pleasure in permitting the Liverpool B and Ellesmere Port B match to be played at the Police headquarters. The Chief Constable has been impressed by the good type of players and friends of visiting teams.

FINE CUP WIN BY LINNET "A"

WITH one-third of the season over there are only two teams with any real hope of championship honours—Victoria Park B and Linnet A. I cannot see another team strong enough to overcome these two and to me it is a cause for regret that it is now a two horse race. Both are as yet undefeated and both have a hearty respect for each other after their recent drawn battle on the Park's table.

The Park turned out four of last season's Fifth Division players, Harry Arden, Len Hunter, G. Cope and A. Perks, with A. Cowin as No. 5, while Frank Thomas, G. Mansfield, Rich Palmer, Ken Dutch and Bob McCormick were out for Linnets. A draw was a fair result on the night's play, but Linnet hope to win the return. I fancy Park have similar ideas.

I must award the month's "bouquet" to Linnet A for turning out without their No. 1, a reserve at No. 5 and beating the then leaders of the Fourth Division, African Oil Mills A, in the Readman Cup. In the next round they had to meet their own senior team, lost 10—0, recovered next evening to beat Aigburth Methodists 9—1 and then drew as already described.

Chance to Learn

I think I must do a little plain speaking—I do wish that our regional players had supported the Merseyside better. I know if you had entered few would have survived the first round or two, but the experience would have been of enormous advantage. One can learn a lot from the established stars, local and national about ball control, a virtue sadly lacking in regional play.

Therefore, enter tournaments, watch inter-city games and then copy what you have seen. By that means and by some sheer hard work you can, and will, improve your game. I would say that it is time we adopted some system of that kind.

Wavertree Community, as usual, are represented in the South, this season by their B team. It is not a formidable side but it was pleasing to see our friend, A. Trevor, in battling form again. Throughout the team I had the feeling that every man was fighting, but, as is so common in the regions, attacks are a bit erratic. With a bit

more steadiness I feel that the Wavertree team can win more matches than they are doing at present.

I am at a disadvantage when mentioning Linnet C as I have played in the team several times this season, but I would like to mention the improvement since last season when they finished near the foot of South 2. Constant practice through the summer raised the standard greatly and the team as a whole feel that they will soon be a force that counts. I hope so.

Certain of our South players deserve individual mention. Among them are Harry Arden (Victoria Park), for an all-round improvement in his game since last season; Frank Thomas (Linnet), who was, only last Christmas, a reserve for a weak Linnet C and who has recently left the South to play in the club's first team; Keith Horne (Beauclair) and Bob McCormick (Linnet), for lifting themselves from the 'reserves' to regular places in higher teams.

I must acclaim the Methodists' 5—4 win over local rivals St. Michael's, in the Stamp Cup, thus eliminating a Fourth Division team before bowing to the First Division Oakhill trio. Well done, Methodists.

Whitty's

for

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THEY'RE HARD TO WEIGH UP

SINCE my last notes the league position has remained the same but the leaders are more pronounced. Hollymount still head the table but with only a single point over Cadwa A and Victoria Park C.

This slender lead is due mainly to twice having saved their unbeaten record by drawing with Leyfield and Balfour D. Their success in these two matches can be attributed to their No. 1, J. W. Ball, who each time won both his events, the remaining three games being fairly spread over the rest of the team.

To weigh up the team is hard as Captain Jackson quite rightly takes second place, only to Ball. The remaining three, Finnigan, Stalker and Miles, all are fighters and Miles, ex-M.O.S. of just after the war, can be a hard nut to crack with his strange style and deliberations requiring dead silence.

Battled Hard

Of Cadwa, I cannot give any news or opinions, except to say that after a defeat in the first match by Victoria Park they have battled hard and collected all of the remaining points except one which they surrendered in a drawn game with Vagabonds.

Comet, our wooden spoonists, must be given a very cheery pat on the back for fielding full teams, and having a ready smile during their series of nine defeats. To them also must be given the medal for both hospitality and perseverance. On the three occasions I have visited them they were not down-hearted and always ready to talk or play table tennis, both for pleasure and practice.

In the middle there are Balfour D, Vagabonds, Leyfield and Osterley A, all of whom can surprise any of the leaders as Vagabonds have shown by drawing with Victoria Park and Cadwa A and Leyfield with Hollymount.

Last week's match between Victoria Park C and Balfour D finally fizzled out with a win by Victoria Park by 8 games to 2. This score, however, does not give any real indication of the match, as seven of the events went to three sets and were so very close that a score of 6-4 or 5-5 might quite easily have resulted.

From each of the two teams I would pick Sanders of Victoria Park (in spite heavy cold) and Rogers of Balfour, as the two most forceful and enterprising players in the match.

After that I must say the balance of both teams played with more dogged endeavour and determination than shear ability and forcefulness. Perhaps this was due to the occasion, but more probably the equality of each other's opponents was the real cause.

To-date I have not received any word of suggestions about our Regional Tournament. Come secretaries—help me, to help you!

Dot Davies (Brenka and English Electric) is being married on December 27 to Charles J. Wilson, another table tennis fan who plays in the Southport League. He is a farmer at Scarisbrick so is not likely to see his wife playing much in Liverpool after their marriage.

Joan Dinwoodie (Bibby's) has become engaged to Russell Brown who is Gladys Brown's brother. It looks as if the whole of Bibby's team will soon be related to one another as Gladys has been engaged for some time to Jim Rimmer.

Jack Hughes writes : I suggest we call the Merseyside Open the Ascot of Table Tennis. I am prompted to this after seeing one of our Joint Editors and Fred Bamford talking together in the foyer at the Philharmonic Hall, one attired in an attractive green suit of plus fours and the other wearing a natty line in duffle coats. Let our slogan be : If you want to know what the well dressed man is wearing this year come to the Merseyside.

Cup Feather in Panto's Hat

CONGRATULATIONS to Panto on their fine 7-3 victory over Rafters B, in the second round of the Readman Cup. This indeed, was a feather in their cap, I bet Panto were themselves a little surprised at the score.

To add to that victory they met and soundly beat by 9-1 Aigburth Meths. in the third round. May those two victories encourage them to greater efforts in future rounds.

At this point I would like to ask secretaries to let me know the venues of their cup matches so that I might have an opportunity of visiting some of them.

Leyfield A will have had a chance of picking up another couple of points when they played I.C.I. A last week, but Old Xaverians A will probably have to wait until the New Year for the chance of gaining their first points. I cannot see the I.C.I. collecting any points unless they can strengthen their team, but I hope they prove me wrong.

Oakhill Whispers.

Talking of strengthening teams—I hear whispers of new signings at Oakhill. These should certainly strengthen the Deane Road C team, so again I venture to predict a move up the table as I did for the Y.M.C.A. boys last month.

And what a move that has proved to be! They have not dropped a point since their first two matches of the season and have slowly crept up the table into third position. They meet Lucern on January 6th and the question is: Can they topple Lucern from their pedestal or will this be the first drawn match of the season? The following week the Y.M.C.A. meet Panto, so

that the first two weeks of the New Year should go a long way to deciding the region's champions.

February will be a busy month for I intend to hold the regional tournament during that month if a suitable venue can be found. Unfortunately we have no club in the region with a room large enough to hold four tables. Any suggestions of a suitable hall would be welcome.

Also during February and in early March there will be regional team trials. I propose selecting 20 players and holding three trials. I have had offers from two clubs of the use of their clubrooms for two of the trials but still require a third. Any other offers, please.

In the last issue I stated we had only three players with 100 per cent records. My apologies to Miss Howley (Catholic Metro). Her record is still 100 per cent, having won eight out of eight. H. P. Harkness (Panto) also still maintains his successful run, but the other two mentioned last month have since tumbled, J. Green (Lussac) losing to A. Upton (Oakhill C), and Upton himself falling before D. R. Barrow (Catholic Metro).

The Merseyside Open have taken up one week of this month and myself falling a victim to the 'flu, I have not been able to attend any matches. I tried to see one but it was a wasted journey for on arrival I learned that the match had been postponed. Will you notify me of cancelled and rearranged matches, please, and help me to avoid wasted journeys. A telephone call will do.

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Disappointing Cup Defeat

ONCE again Liverpool have lost interest in the Wilmott Cup. Two changes were necessary in the team to play Stockport, Peter Rumjahn and Reg Hetherington coming in for Ted Rumjahn (domestic reasons) and Bill Pierce (examinations), but even so the strength of the team did not appear to be impaired.

The match kept the spectators enthralled to the end. Stockport got away to a flying start by winning the first three sets, both Rumjahns being on the wrong side of a two points margin in the third game.

Liverpool fought back and took the next three to level the scores. Then Peter, after comfortably beating Schofield in two games, rather surprisingly lost by the same margin, but Reg restored equality after a grim struggle by winning 23-21 in the third game.

It was left to Ronnie and Schofield to decide matters, but the Stockport player was not to be denied and ended our cup aspirations by winning 21-13, 23-21. Details :-

R. Rumjahn lost to Schofield 13-21, 21-23; lost to Johnson 21-18, 12-21, beat Thomas 21-17, 21-15. P. Rumjahn beat Schofield 21-15, 21-17; lost to Johnson 15-21, 19-21; lost to Thomas 21-13, 18-21, 20-22. R. Hetherington lost to Schofield 8-21, 21-17, 16-21; beat Johnson 18-21, 21-17, 21-15; beat Thomas 12-21, 21-9, 23-21.

B Team Undefeated

With the Merseyside Open and national cup competitions breaking into November, the Lancashire League teams have played only one match each.

The A team tackled Stockport at Liverpool Y.M.C.A. and gained a comfortable, if hard fought victory of 7-3. At the halfway stage it could have been anyone's game as Liverpool only led 3-2, but by winning four of the last five sets they recorded their first win of the season.

Ted Rumjahn played steadily to win his three sets; Ronnie won twice and Norman Jones once, which, together with a doubles win, gave Liverpool their seven sets. Stockport's danger man was Schofield, who gained two of his team's sets and was only beaten in three games in his struggle with Ted Rumjahn.

The B team continued their unbeaten run by disposing of Runcorn by 8-2. A last minute change brought in Reg Hetherington. After the first match of the evening when Harris had beaten Runcorn's No. 1 22-20 in the third, the result was never in doubt. Set winners were Hetherington 3, Harris 3 and Gaulton 1.

The women's team received a setback to their championship hopes when they lost 7-3 at Bury. The foundation of Bury's success was laid by Miss S. Threlfall who, celebrating her selection for the county, won three sets.

Eileen Mansell gave her usual solid performance to win two sets and Bluey Casselman gained the other. Gladys Brown, appearing for the first time this season, played fairly well but unfortunately failed in the fundamental fact of not reaching 21 first.

Out of Rose Bowl

ANOTHER set of hopes went into cold storage at Lucem when the women's team was defeated 6-3 by Manchester in the Rose Bowl. Hopes were high when Liverpool took a 2-1 lead but the Mancunians then took a grip on the match to win the next five sets and put the result beyond doubt.

The best game of the evening was between Eileen Mansell and Dell Pettifer, the latter taking it at 19 in the third. Bluey Casselman had a mixed evening for while being unable to find an answer to her opponent's strong attack in the singles, she shared in two doubles victories. Andree Jones was well below form and gave a curiously inept display against Dell Pettifer.

Details :-

A. Jones lost to J. Braddock 21-19, 19-21, 15-21; lost to A. Pettifer 10-21, 10-21. Eileen Mansell beat D. Wilkinson 21-18, 21-18; lost to A. Pettifer 21-14, 19-21, 19-21. K. Casselman lost to J. Braddock 12-21, 21-18, 5-21; lost to D. Wilkinson 17-21, 18-21.

Mansell and Casselman beat Pettifer and Wilkinson 21-13, 21-18; Jones and Mansell lost to Wood and Braddock 21-17, 12-21, 12-21; Jones and Casselman beat Wilkinson and Braddock 16-21, 21-18, 21-19.