



Table Tennis

DIGEST

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

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EDITORIAL

Has the season really finished? It seems to have gone quicker than ever, I suppose that's because I'm doddering a bit.

There is no doubt about it, most of us have had some terrific evenings of Table Tennis. Most of them have just been normal games. But when it gets to 5-4 with the last game on – it doesn't matter if it is Wavertree Labour v Liverpool Y.M. or Harold House C v Merseybus, the tension and atmosphere is still the same and, despite the little hiccups, we have, 99 1/2% of the time the games are finished in good sporting spirit with chat and a drink. A former Committee Member insisted, many times, that you don't have to have a Bar for a Table Tennis match. I agree. I must say, however, that if you do it certainly helps socially, particularly when you get outside the League games when friends, wives, etc, come to cheer and, of course at City games and Finals, refreshments are laid on, so the social side is more prevalent. At English Electric, we were fortunate in regularly entertaining the best players in the Country, the County and the City and although the standard was so much higher, the crunch at 20 all in the third or 5-4 was exactly as exciting as it would be in the Harold House and Merseybus game, but in these games the social side is always to the fore with bags of name dropping and interesting stories.

I could quote so many super Table Tennis functions – the 50th Anniversary dinner, Police presentation dances – later Police cum Business House socials, only the other week with over 250 attending, the English Electric English Club semi-finals – Dave Cohens parties, our own English Electric Finals nights – and many others – all marvellous marvellous Table Tennis nights.

So why is the game cracking? Just briefly because the subject is so large, and only a quick purely personal comment, we have so few Table Tennis Clubs. We do have numerous Sports Centres where young and old can play the game of their choice. Most of the over forty players started at the local Church or Boys Clubs because there was nowhere else to go and no square box.

Just a passing thought, I wonder what the total service in office is of Arthur Upton, John McKim and Eddie Cameron. I might work it out if the last correspondent is late!

DIVISION 1

KEN ARMSON

Readers of the Table Tennis article in the L.E. on 27th April could be forgiven for assuming that an unmentionable team had won the 1st Division title by pure luck. Such an impression would have been incorrect for the rightful champions, Wav. Lab., won this title fair and square. Malcolm may have his faults, don't you all, but I feel certain he would be first to give full credit to Wav. Lab. on their championship win. They too had their problems and had to replace Steve Green at a critical stage of the title race.

I managed to prove, yet again, that I have no future as a forecaster, having stated in previous issues that firstly they would not present any real challenge, and in a later issue would not have the 'bottle' to take the pressure on the run-in. How wrong I was. They showed just how they could rise to the occasion by maintaining the pressure they had applied all season and following up their 9-1 thrashing of Elec. Supp. by giving them a target in their final match which they could not hope to achieve. Certainly it has been the most keenly contested championship for many years with three strong candidates and one outside chance in Cadwa. This serves only to enhance even more the nature of Wav. Lab's. title victory. Congratulations to Wav's four, Dave Roberts, Bernie Wentworth, Gary Watson and Steve Green. Gary found himself thrown into the title battle at a late stage and responded to the pressure in a manner I did not think he was capable of. His is a fighter, but it is the pressure of knowing you have to win which has to be overcome and not everyone is capable of doing this.

Second of the three candidates, and the most fancied, Elec. Suppl finished as Runners-up. They were my tip and this was obviously the mark of Cain for them. I know they will be disappointed at not completing the expected Double and will look back at sets lost which could just as easily gone their way and possibly wish they had not had to meet Cadwa in their final match. This was to be their 'Waterloo' and they must have known before the match started that with the form shown throughout the season by Phil and Kevin any chance of beating them 10-0 was as remote as the chance of rain in the Gobi Desert. As soon as they lost a set they became the Runners-up. Congratulations to them on their great Readman Cup win and being very worth Runners-up. They had to pull out all the stops in the Final and draw heavily on their greater experience to overcome the thrusting challenge of Cadwa in a match which could so easily have slipped away from them if they had lost their nerve. Star of the match for me was Peter Flint. He never lost his composure and showed his tremendous ability by raising his game when the pressure was on. He proved once again that there is no substitute for experience. A great match which ranked with any previous Redman Cup Final and was a great credit to all the players.

Finishing in 3rd place, Liv. Y.M. have had a good season which they can look back on with some satisfaction. In a season when the competition was strong and they could be considered less fancied to win than Elec. Supp. or Wav. Lab. it was necessary to win well if they were to remain in the hunt. This they did and in doing so increased their points total of last season and climbed into 3rd place at the expense of Cadwa. No-one could take them lightly as they showed in their final match against Wav. Lab. losing by the narrowest of margins 6-4. This was a match Wav. Lab. had to win if they were to succeed in their championship bid and six sets went to three with two others being won 21/23 and 22/24. Not a night for faint hearts with Keith once again giving his team a 3 set start with his almost customary triple. A mere fourteen sets separating them from the eventual champions. Having Keith in your team is a tremendous morale booster and this has given

Peter Lee a new lease of life. Never an easy player to beat and one who has responded to being in the the same team as Keith as his results continue to prove.

Cadwa, in spite of the successful debut of Phil and Kevin as regular 1st teamers, never really managed to shrug off the mantle of outsiders and actually slipped down a place. But their final place was unimportant. What was important was that they looked at home in this division and gave clear notice of their future intentions. They got to the Readman Final on merit and gave a brilliant account of themselves. They took many scalps and tilted quite a few crowns in overcoming more experienced players with an ease with gave their opponents much cause for concern. Only worry I can see for their club is holding onto them.

In a comfortable 5th place were Bath St. A good season for them in that last season they could only manage 7th place. Once again the backbone of their team was Ken Jackson. Never one to be overawed by reputations, Ken, in his time has rattled as many cages as Phil and Kevin, possibly more. He can always be relied on for at least one set and like Keith is a great encouragement to his team-mates. It is never easy to pick out a player's most notable win, but one of Ken's best this season must be his win against Peter Flint, 21/9 in the 3rd. He could well claim to have played his part in the title battle with his two sets in this match. They got into 5th place with a nice blend of experience and team spirit.

Lab. 'A' remained somewhat of an enigma. In second place last season, a different line-up this time, but one capable of doing battle with the best. They finished 6th with a total of 87 sets which does not really reflect their combined ability. It does often happen that in these circumstances the lower of two club teams see themselves as a foil rather than one expected to perform at an equal level. Don't suppose they will agree with this, but the records do bear this out with last season being the exception rather than the rule.

Just as great an enigma have been Bootle J.C. They arrived with a bang in 90/91 and gave a good account of themselves in their first season with a clear promise of even better to come. Yet despite a high regular team turnout and obvious ability, the promise remains unfulfilled. On his day Andy Clark is capable of beating the best and Chris and Nick are also capable of producing good results. So where have they gone wrong? They beat the lower teams comfortably as they showed against Colonsay, Eng. Elec. and Y.M. 'A' with 7/3; 8/2 and 6/4 wins. Yet against Liv. Y.M. and Wav. Lab. they nosedive to 10/0's. Five sets went to three against Wav. Lab. but they still managed to lose 10/0. The capability is there, but not, it seems, the will and ability to make full use of it.

Unable to overcome the loss of star players Colonsay struggled for much of the season but did manage to just keep out of the relegation struggle. This being mainly due to the results of Chris Ford and the signing of Natasha Williams. This signing not bringing much pleasure to Cadwa who lost her services. Chris won 34 of their 80 sets with Natasha chipping in with 13 from seven matches. This set them well on the path and the form of Colin Rourke brought them into the clear. Sudden loss of players has a knock-on effect with the team concerned often finding it a struggle to re-assert themselves and Colonsay appear to have found themselves in this position. Their main problem has to be what next season will hold for them as technically they are now next to bottom.

G.P.T. and Eng. Elec. go down with GPT having only learned late on that two teams would go down. This being due to the practice of only relegating one and sometimes none

when vacancies exist. G.P.T. mistakenly assumed that as there were only eleven teams instead of twelve only one would be relegated.

Our loss will become a 2nd div. gain in that they will gain at least one very sporting team who in an era of win, win, win still enjoy their game first and win second. Because of this approach they are true ambassadors for our sport. I will certainly miss them and I feel certain others will agree with me. This will make a pleasant change as players generally disagree with my views. Such is democracy.

Electric struggled from the very first match and gave the impression of being resigned to their fate. Once you accept anything as being inevitable then inevitable it will surely be. GPT on the other hand kept trying to the end, but even the late introduction of Paul Hutchings was only a vain bid to avoid relegation for the gap was too great to overcome.

They too have a great sporting character in Bob Edwards. If I had to select the most sporting player in Div. 1 Bob would be on my short list. A great character and team player who gives everything and respects his opponents ability. Question now is will they go down. GPT 'B' won the 2nd div. and in our topsy turvy way the 3rd team will become the 1st next season. So will the 1st have gone down and the 3rd come up, or will the 1st have stayed up and the 3rd stayed down? It sometimes appears that I hold what others consider strange views and and this issue is no exception. I am of the opinion, as any Wav. Lab. players will confirm, that in these situations the players responsible for relegation should go down with their team and play to get it's promotion back. Similarly, if a team wins promotion then those same players should be the ones to go up with it and enjoy the opportunity to play in a higher division which their efforts have earned them. How many, I wonder, agree with me.

In conclusion, I have not mentioned good wins and results as there is so much to cover in these final notes. There have been a number of good wins and results since our last issue and to those involved I extend my congratulations. I would like to see us go back to four of five issues per season to give more space to such matters, but in saying this I am aware of the heavy financial implications.

I have been writing the 1st div. notes since Jim Green died, over 20 years, and I really do think it is time for a change. No-one volunteered for the task this season presumably on the basis that it is better to kick the devil you know etc. Everyone seemingly enjoying kicking me. I know you really like me and my notes and this makes the task bearable. Anyway, give it some thought and if interested get in touch with our Editor, Jack Lambert, or myself. Possibly most of you have forgotten, or didn't know, that in edition to writing these notes I also did a stint for several years as Editor. That was during a period when we had five issues a season and I was also my own distributor. I had to write some 600 wrappers and stamp them as everyone got a personal mailing. You can see from that that I have done my share and deserve a rest. Give it some thought as the alternative is to have to continue to put up with my criticisms and views. The choice is yours. My thanks to the two players, or was it one, who praised me.

DIVISION 2

STAN CLARKE

Well there goes another season, it must be a sign of impending senility but each season seems to go faster than the last.

Congratulations to Cadwa "A" runaway winners of the division by a clear 31 points but

not before dropping their unbeaten record in a 6/4 defeat by Bath St. "A", admittedly Cadwa were without Ian Miller and Billy Hargreaves but Bath St. conceded two sets on the night due to an injury to Bob Hawkins.

G.P.T. "B" finished as runners up despite losing 5 matches during the season, finishing just 2 points ahead of third place Bootle J.C. "A" who as I suggested in an earlier set of notes paid the price of dropping unexpected sets by losing out on one of the promotion places. The lads of G.P.T. "B" must be crowing over finishing two places above their "A" team by a clear 12 points, it will be interesting to see who forms the team in the first division next season. At the other end of the division Colonsay "A" and Waterloo take the drop into the 3rd next season, unusually Colonsay "A" won more matches than the two teams above them and only one less than their "B" team who finished 4th from bottom. Perhaps the most surprising team of the season were Harold House who for so long looked relegation prospects but managed to climb to 7th place by the end of the contest.

Just to round off their successful league season Cadwa "A" did the double with a 6/3 defeat of English Electric "A" in the final of the Rumjahn Cup which was played some six weeks after the end of the season.

I am pleased to report that once again I have no records of clubs conceding walkovers, well done.

The one thing about having several strong teams in a division is that it produces a large number of face saving performances by individual players, the latest batch of cards show six matches which ended 9/1 the following players providing their teams with a point; Bob Hudson (Harold House) beat Mike Power (Cadwa) 16/21, 21/11, 21/16, Pete Frazer (Waterloo) beat Ian Miller (Cadwa) 21/16, 9/21, 23/21, Steve Gittins (Colonsay) beat John Kenwright (Harold House) 15/21, 21/16, 21/16, Eddie Clien (Harold House) beat Mark Whittaker (G.P.T. "B") 19/21, 21/19, 21/16, Pete Frazer did the business once again by beating Alan Cameron (G.P.T. "B") 21/13, 21/16 and Eddie Clein & Bob Hudson beat Richy Cragg & John McLoughlin 21/16, 23/21 and finally pride of place must go to Fred Bainbridge (Bath St.) who proved a thorn in the side of both G.P.T. teams in January he beat Mark Whittaker and Mike Feerick of the "B" team then in March he beat Frank McCann and Peter Wass of the "A" team.

Finally something to think about for next season if there is anybody out there who fancies writing the notes next season I'm sure the editor will be delighted to hear from you. Me? I expect to be playing in a more suitable division for my ability, yes you got it right, the 5th.

DIVISION 3

NOTES NOT RECEIVED

DIVISION 4

TONY CONNOR

And so ends (yet) another season, and an exciting one at that. Yes, Supply did hang on to secure their second consecutive title, but only by two points from a rampant Maghull "A". We may well ponder on whether Supply can make a hat trick with a 3rd Division title next year (they'll be thereabouts, I guess), but it'll be a lot more fun (and more cruel!) to pause a moment on some crucial stages that might easily have gone the other way, perhaps securing the championship for Maghull. Enter Trevor Hughes (Supply) and George Frost (Maghull) for a memorable encounter. First game 23/21 to Trevor, next game 17 to

George, and the 3rd slugged out 25/23 in Trevor's favour. If George had won and had Brian Gregory (reserve) taken proper advantage of having Peter Carney on the ropes (19-20-19) then, of course, things might have been different. Yes, a pretty absurd train of thought, I confess. After all, if bottom of table Harold House had won all their games, they'd have been champions! Actually no. as they were denuded of 30 points due to playing ineligible players, finishing on just 16 and relegated alongside Bootle Y.M.C.A.

So Supply and Maghull are promoted as clearly the best two teams in the division, and should fancy their chances in a 3rd division that is not now so strong as it was. Supply's big four of Trevor, Alan Biggs, Arthur Harrison and Peter were complemented with ex Labour player, John Ashley, who also caught the winning habit. His only loss, on cards available, was to Maghull "B"s improving Phil Christie 13-14-17, who enjoyed a very good second half of the season. Indeed, Maghull "B" as a whole were hyper-charged after Christmas, easily pulling away from relegation problems, to finish a highly creditable 5th. With their strongest team of Bill Salter, Brian Gregory, Phil and Jimmy Gill, I would rate them as dark horses for a promotion push, next season, especially as Brian Gregory will probably not lose so many closely contested games next time round, eg 19-14-19 against Bath Street's Rob Peat, and -10, 17, -19 against Labour's John Reynolds. Bill Salters' best win at number 1 was probably his 10 in the 3rd against Supply's Alan Biggs, whilst Jimmy Gill beat the erratic, but sometimes brilliant Tommy Wong (Bootle YM) 14 and 19. And that after Tommy had (brilliantly!) blasted Brian Gregory 20 and 10.

Above Maghull "B", Bath Street and Wavertree Labour slugged it out for 3rd and 4th positions. A somewhat private battle just shaded by Bath Street, and both teams will have realistic promotion hopes for next year. Peter Mercer (Bath St.) was another to experience an upturn in fortune and form in the second half, borne out by fine wins against Wilf Gibson (Maghull "A" 10 -15, 7) and Phil Christie (Maghull "B" 17, 17). Rob Peat, John Langton and Dave Stoddern continued to hit the ball harder and more often than anyone else (except for Tommy Wong and perhaps Fraser Farquarson), so Pete spent most of the season dodging the missiles. But by Christmas, the shell shock had passed and Peter made his own mark alongside his more aggressive team mates.

Labour too had a fine season, helped along by a settled and consistent format of John Reynolds, Sandie Sanderson, Mike Ashton and Tony Connor. Whilst we were in with a promotion shout until fairly near the end, I guess in our heart of hearts we knew the top two were that bit too strong. Still, Mike had an outstanding season and whilst John didn't maintain his virtually unbeaten first half, this 70+% average at number one, marked him as one of the best players in the division. Sandie's not bad either and at 2 averaged around 60% and stayed awake in 50 per cent.

I'm not sure that everyone stayed awake in Rob Peat's March encounter against GPT's Tom Downing, but I'm sure the audience did. Perhaps Tom did give it a few ZZZ's in going down 21/6 in the first, but if so, it was Rob's turn to snooze as he slipped to 5-16 down in the second. So all set for the decider? Not a bit of it, as Rob woke up in time to steal the second by 22-20, and win 2 straight.

Not that GPT's season was usually so exciting, as mid-table respectability always beckoned for them. But they did achieve late-on 9-1 victories against last season's promoted pair Waterloo and Cadwa, though their finest win was the end of season 6-4 against, in form, full strength, Maghull "B". Tom Downey recorded a double over Bill Slater and Brian Gregory whilst Bobby Bell and Stan Harvey shaded Phil Christie and Jimmy Gill respectively. Although Tom Banton (GPT) lost in three to both Phil and

Jimmy, he did record a fine two straight double the following week over Waterloo's Austin Hayden and Eugene Berger.

Eugene too impressed in shading Harold House "A" pair, John Hodges and Dave Cohen, both in three. A very good result this, as was Austin Hayden's 21/19 in the 3rd against improving Steve Perry of Cadwa. But the major plus of Waterloo's strange season was Fraser Farquarson's return to form after Christmas. I suspect his new bat enforced by the rule change, is instrumental in Fraser's upturn of form. Well would you fancy your chances with the old worn out Mark v Super Noah! I guess this new one will take Fraser to retirement though. Yes, only 2 victories for Waterloo, but plenty of close games kept them 30 points (but only one place) off a relegation place. They have a solid look especially with Bill Spencer and John Forest, but I believe that next season, strength in depth will extend to the bottom of the division leaving Waterloo and Cadwa with a possible relegation fight on their hands.

Eric Young also had a better second half for Harold House "B", but there was nothing he or his team-mates could do to save a disastrous season, after promotion last time out. Jerry O'Keefe did come out of retirement and (surprisingly) easily beat Bill Spencer and Ted Cramsie did record a double over Fraser and Bill in the same 6-4 victory, but this was one of very few bright spots for points penalised Harold House.

The "A" team fared much better (6th) and very nearly pulled it off (4-6) against Supply, with Paul Morgan defeating both Trevor Hughes and Alan Biggs. Mike Pool also shaded Trevor (17 in the 3rd) and Paul and Dave Cohen combined to take second doubles. Did you know that Harold House "A" have their own version of '10', directed and produced by Dudley Mooregan and starring Bo Cohen? Yes, the 10th different player to grace this fine team this season was ... G. Abrams on 28th January. Surely a record.

Cadwa tended to fade as the season progressed, but they achieved their aim of consolidation after promotion. The high spots for Russell Thornton and Jack Power were fine 2 straight victories for both over Maghull "A"'s Wilf Gibson. Jack Highton had his moments none better than victories over Arthur Harrison and Rob Peat. Steve Perry weighed in especially convincing in victory against Yours Truly, but Peter Roberts, at 1 is Cadwa's player of the season. He combined effectively with Jack in the doubles, and defeated, amongst others, Fraser and Rob Peat.

Chris McGuire continued to give everyone a hard game for Bootle Y.M. as perhaps their most successful player. And Jim Geddes strived to steady the ship (e.g. 18 + 12 against Stan Harvey), but Bootle at no time looked strong enough to avoid relegation. From second to bottom to second to top, I'll finish with some notable Maghull "A" moments. Harry McGarrity's double over Rob Peat and John Langton liked as I did Steve Woods routing of Waterloo's Fraser and John Forrest. George Frost took care of Sandie Sanderson's (Labour) challenge whilst Wilf Gibson most notably shaded Mike Ashton. Very last word for Labour's John Reynolds, never better than his 10 + 19, 17 +10 demolition of Cadwa's Peter Roberts and Jack Highton.

See you next season.

DIVISION 5

NOTES NOT RECEIVED

DIVISION 5

KEN ARMSON

At the conclusion of past seasons many have been vociferous in their condemnation of University for having failed to fulfil their fixtures with this failing having frequently led to their expulsion. I would imagine that most of us will be secretly wishing the same fate had befallen them this season as they swept all before them. It was not the case and they completed their season in full and soundly thrashed all and sundry in their relentless and faultless drive to a League and Cup Double. So strong in depth were they that during the season they officially reversed their playing order to enable their 3 and 4 to have a turn at playing 1 and 2. Congratulations to Keith Warburton, Duncan Preston, Robert Watt and Andrew Johnson on a brilliant season and for being very friendly and sporting opponents. They will not all be back with us next season to play in the rarefied atmosphere of Div. 4., but to those not returning, our best wishes for the future.

Bath 'D' were very worthy runners-up and must be feeling slightly put out that in any other season they would probably have been winners and possibly on a Double. I say probably for if that had been the case they would have had a much harder fight on their hands in finishing 1st than they had in finishing 2nd. Unlike Varsity their strength was based on age allied to experience plus luck. The luck being in the shape of Dave Batty who they signed on late last season after a prolonged absence. Alex, Reg and Clive chipped in with the age and experience, but they had to work hard for their successes and will find the going much harder in the 4th. Alex has recently undergone an extensive knee op. and is now recovering after a successful operation and a long spell in hospital with his recovery being bolstered by watching all the episodes of Coronation St. recorded for him during his sojourn in hospital by Mabel Neary. Proves there is a life after table tennis, it is called Coronation St. Hopefully, Alex will be back in action next season and moving even better. Anyone having beaten him this season can lay claim to having beaten a World ranked player, can't be bad. Congratulations to the team and best of luck in the 4th.

Wav. Lab. 'E' just sneaked into 3rd place at the expense of Aigburth and just might get promoted if vacancies exist. I think I am alone in hoping that we don't, my team-mates not sharing my views. I much prefer modest success and the enjoyment of playing in this division to the doubtful benefits of being thrashed every week and the prospect of dismal results. My team-mates, particularly Rez Mirdamadi, think I am bonkers, but my knowledge of our League is slightly better than theirs. We were hampered in our efforts for fame and glory by the enforced absence of Mabel Neary due to illness. Mabel has been plagued by knee problems allied to a mystery health problem which has affected her balance. The combination of these two unrelated problems have resulted in her having to reduce her playing commitment and at present she is virtually hors de combat. Hopefully she will see an improvement in time for next season and I know her many friends will be wishing for this. We were struggling for players and were fortunate in signing on Francis Lay to make up our four regulars. Francis was returning after a long illness and in spite of the physical problems this has left him with he performed well and the improvement in his game as the season progressed was clearly evident. We also had another physical crock in Rez Mirdamadi whose grit and courage in continuing to play competitively is clearly evident in every game. He is waiting for all kinds of transplants and due to his problems runs out of energy very quickly. This involves his having to stop playing to enable his body to build up energy again. I know he is very appreciative of his opponents acceptance of this disruption when it occurs. On Rez's behalf, and my own as team captain, I would like to thank all concerned for their patience and co-operation during the season. I know it is very disruptive and can upset a players game when these frequent interruptions are

forced on Rez. Hopefully his long awaited transplant will soon take place and his patience will be rewarded by a successful operation and a return to something approaching the normality many of us take for granted.

Close on W.L.'s heels came Aigburth and I feel certain that if University had not been with us they may well have pipped Wav. Lab. for 2nd place. Apart from Varsity they were the only other team to beat Bath St. 'D'. Yet another team whose strength lies in age allied to experience. Great opponents who enjoy their game and for whom a match is enjoyment first, win second. A theme which is strong in this division and sometimes absent in others. As one wit said to me "the way you play you need to enjoy it." One of my friends, I think. I always enjoy playing against Aigburth, particularly when my opponents are Bill Holmes or Eric Wood. Great opponents to play against and always friendly and sporting. You don't know what frustration really is until you try squeezing a point out of Bill. The consolation for Aigburth came in the shape of a second successive Stamp Cup Final appearance and once again they had to settle for a Runner-up medal. They will be looking next season to make it third time lucky.

Bootle Y.M. and Maghull 'C' were also in there pushing with Bootle Y.M. being hampered by not having Bert Rivers available on a regular basis. They too have their characters and in particular Eddie Preston who gives of his all and is as vociferous as ever in his efforts. He is well backed by Mike Hughes of the crafty spin returns. Two difficult players to beat as their record show. Mike has introduced his son to our game and although Colin's wins were infrequent he shows a lot of promise. Maghull also had experience with old hand Keith Whittaker captaining a mixed band of youth and age who all gave a good account of themselves. Their final position does not really do them justice. No doubt they will be looking back at some close results which could have gone their way, such as that against Aigburth when they lost 7-3 due mainly to being one short, Andy McCourt not turning up and Tony Sales losing 21/23 in the 3rd to Charlie Gallantry. Have you had a good look at Charlie's bat? As he could not find a suitable black rubber he covered his old rubber with black paint. Inspiration is not only the preserve of the great. Slightly illegal, of course, but very original.

New arrivals, Merseybus, brought with them the return to our League of Brian Harrison and he and his colleagues acquitted themselves well and will be feeling moderately satisfied with their final placing. I say, moderately, as they know it could have been better. Their playing venue is somewhat unique, vast in terms of length and in spite of many radiators the presence of a number of doors make it somewhat draughty. Poor Rex lost more energy trudging down the room to field the ball than he lost playing. Another great team who enjoy their game and our very friendly and sporting opponents. I am certain they enjoyed their first season with us and will be back for more of the same next season.

Bath St. 'E' finished in the lower half in spite of the efforts of John (the pipe) Letch who played a real captain's game and the crafty play of Brian Holden whose casual laid back game hides a variety of spin returns. Whilst you are busy telling yourself what a nice friendly opponent is facing you, he has leapt into the lead with his spin returns scooped up from somewhere near the floor and spinning viciously up from your side of the table. Any win recorded against Brian will have been hard earned. Even when you have lost to him he succeeds in making you feel it was you who should have won. Jack is also a character with a pipe which is even older and more well know than he is. A very worthy opponent, but in all honesty I have to say that he has let me down badly by failing to produce the goods in

respect of his notes. These two are backed up by Ron Georgeson and George Crowley to make a real mixed bunch of characters. Ron is the quiet one who would make a good card player for his face tells you nothing. Anyone playing him for a large pot could find themselves bluffed out of it. George looks innocuous and appears to lack any style, but once his forehand gets going all his opponents can look forward to is picking up the ball from the back of the room.

Down there with them were the Police who saw an improvement in their results when they too decided to get in on the age and experience act by bringing Arthur Garnett into their team at Week 7. He finished with a great record and was unbeaten in 10 of his 16 match appearances. This must have been a great encouragement to Brian, Ollie and Phil who seemed to be finding it a struggle to hold their own, but what they lacked in ability they more than made up for in enthusiasm and I expect to see much improved results from them next season for the signs of such an improvement were clearly to be seen in their later results.

Waterloo 'B' finished next to bottom and I don't think they expected to do much better. They may even be feeling really pleased to have succeeded in avoiding bottom place. Captained by Mal Clark, who was making a welcome return, they were all virtually beginners and their evident enthusiasm never waned. The few personal wins they recorded were a well earned return for their efforts. Unfortunately they lost very precious points due to a breach of Rule when they played Austin Hayden who was ineligible due to having played too many matches for higher teams.

Harold House 'C' finished bottom but they can look back with some satisfaction on a fully completed match programme and compare this with last season when they failed to complete their fixtures and paid the penalty of expulsion. It is easier to play every week when you feel confident of achieving a few wins and notching up the points than it is to give the same dedication when you know the outcome is going to be a series of crushing 10.0 defeats, the only reward for your effort being that you turned up. No competitive sport can function without sufficient participants and the big fish cannot survive without the minnows who are the real backbone of any sport. I have nothing except praise and respect for them and feel certain the experience gained this season will stand them in good stead next season. They almost lost what few points they had won when the League Management Committee deducted points from them for the same offence committed by Waterloo. These should have been deducted from a higher team, but fortunately the error was spotted and speedily rectified.

We now come to L.I.H.E., another club with a past history of expulsion and who last season successfully completed the season due to the effort and guidance of their secretary. With a new hand at the helm this season they fell rapidly away and suffered the ultimate disgrace of yet another expulsion. This was particularly unfortunate as they had a nucleus of good players capable of winning as they demonstrated against Aigburth, losing 6-4; Merseybus, losing 6-4; and getting a draw with Bootle Y.M. 'B'. Possibly this expulsion and the consequent deduction of sets won and lost against them may have had an effect on the final placings due to the number they won and some teams may well have breathed a sigh of relief. But the real losers are those teams who did not get the opportunity to play them and lost the opportunity to play in a greater number of matches. One of the staff did phone me and it transpired that the root of their problem lay in the use of a Final Year student as secretary. Abdul Akanni did his utmost to keep up with fixtures, but the pressure of his studies and the mounting level of postponements eventually brought about their downfall. Ironically they reached the semi-final stages of the cup and could easily

have been one of our finalists. If we want these teams in our League, which quite honestly, we do, then the League must ensure that they get in much closer communication with the College to make certain that the student taking on the position of secretary has the time and the will to not only carry out the duties correctly, but to also ensure that all fixtures are fulfilled. This means getting to grips early with the inevitable fixture backlog arising from their later term start at the beginning and halfway stages of our season. We need them, and I think they need us. But both sides have a duty to all teams to make certain proper communication exists between our League and the College.

On the thorny question of which teams should be in this division, I make no apologies for raising again the contentious issue of monitoring new teams. It is frustrating for teams of fair and equal ability to find thrown amongst them a team whose strength and ability clearly requires their being placed in a higher division. It is soul destroying to be used as a mere stepping stone to greater things by a team who themselves do not wish to be playing in this division and sometimes see it as an annoying requirement to attaining their rightful higher place.

In conclusion, I am only a last minute stand-in for John Letch and I would apologise for any inadequacies in these final notes. Anyone interested in doing this job next season now that John Letch has gone AWOL should contact our worthy Editor.

THE LIVERPOOL CLOSED TOURNAMENT – 1993 BRIAN LEESON

This season's major event in the Liverpool League's calendar took place at Kirkby Sports Centre on Sunday, February 7th, an earlier date in the season than usual, to comply with the suggestion of members at last year's A.G.M. It was argued that a date in mid-season would attract more entries, especially if Divisional Championships were included.

However, it must be reported that entries for the new four Divisional Championships were fewer than anticipated. In Division 2, there were 16 contestants (5 from Colonsay, 3 from Bootle J.C., 3 from English Electric, plus 5 from other clubs), Division 3 produced only 9 entries, one of whom didn't arrive to play, Division 4 had 10 entries (4 from Wavertree Labour), while Division 5 also had 10 entries, four Clubs providing the contestants (Aigburth, Maghull, University and Wavertree Labour). If these Divisional events are to be continued next season – (and I hope they will) – hopefully more players will be persuaded to enter.

Entries for the Women's Singles were also extremely disappointing. Only six ladies entered and two of these didn't arrive to take part on the day. It must now be seriously considered dropping the Women's Singles altogether and perhaps introducing an Open Singles Event, as we have done this season for the Doubles. It really is a farcical situation when a player can come through the qualifying group without playing and thereby reach the Final by default.

The Junior Singles Event must now also come under discussion as to its future. Only eight entries were received, two players failing to appear, these being two seeded players in fact.

The other main events, Men's Singles, Open Doubles and the Veterans Singles were well supported and it remains to be seen whether these three will form the basis of future Tournaments, leaving out the events which obviously attract so few entries.

The winners of the various events at this year's Tournament are listed separately elsewhere.

In thanking all those who helped in the running of this year's Tournament, I would mention in particular Ken Armson and Don Davies who between them produced an excellent Finals Programme booklet. Don had prepared all the interesting information and statistics of the finalists while Ken had taken on the task of putting the programme together, photo-copying the pages and stapling them together. So, instead of a single sheet Finals Programme, we were presented with a booklet which contained useful, informative details of the players. It was a help this year, of course, to have more than a week between the Sunday events at Kirkby and our Finals evening on Tuesday, 16th February to prepare this new-style programme.

We were pleased to have Mr. Bill Fawley and Mr. Leo Crone and their wives with us on Finals evening at the Police Club. The Bill Fawley Construction Company Limited has supported our Championships financially now for several years and we are all grateful for their continuing support and interest in our sport.

Mens Singles – P. Flint beat C. Ford 17, -13, 12

Open Doubles – P. Flint and K. Connor beat K. Williams and K. Dolder 20, -17, 19

Veterans Singles – D. S. Roberts beat A. Timewell 18, 17

TABLE EDGES

At the time of writing, Alex Gould has had his Veteran ambitions curtailed as he is recovering from an operation in Fazakerley Hospital. Here's wishing for a quick recovery Al and let's see you back on the circuit soon.

Veterans is the only area of Table Tennis which is flourishing at the moment. Think about it!

Top three senior men are Xin Hua Chem – 2 Carl Prean – 3 Des Douglas in a couple of years he will be a Veteran!

Names we may know on the list Andrew Eden (13) Paul Hutchings (61) Stuart Richards (94) Keith Williams (158) Neil Gravener (161).

Lisa Lomas is Ladies number 1: Brenda Buoey 193 and Paula French 197 are our best, but how about Muriel Cox at 206.

Dave Roberts 73 and Alan Timewell 76 are our best Vets. Tony Clayton 4 and Wally Allanson 42 will be remember by many, couple of nice low numbers in the Juniors Phil Musgrove 12 Kevin Dolder 26.

Keith Williams beat Peter Lee in the B. H. League singles final.

The programme produced by Don Davies and Ken Armson for Finals Night, was quite tremendous. Having said that the name Bill Fawley and his Construction Company cannot be mentioned often enough for he and his family's terrific support of our Tournament.

Billy Clayton as chirpy as when we first met at Litherland Boys Club a 'few' years ago won the co-operate games over 60's doubles title with Les Gee.

Congratulations to University on a 100% Cup and League Season.

It should be put on record that Ken Nelson and the Waterloo Park Club have been most kind and co-operative with the English Electric survivors. Admitted the beer has flowed freely – It all helps for a pleasant evening.

£50,000 has been allocated to Table Tennis in the Merseyside area to encourage youngsters to play with the accent on improved facilities.

I can confirm that Birmingham is the venue for the 1994 European Championships with the World's top players competing.

Met Peter Lee again (but he doesn't buy me a coffee) he asks me if I know of a couple of girls under 12 and 14 who play Table Tennis – not World beaters, just players. If you do, let him know.

Do you receive your copy of the digest regularly? If not why not? Three magazines are issued each season more than enough for all members.

How do you fancy 11 up instead of 21, another idea being thrown around by the hierarchy!?

Despite a fully explanatory letter from Ken Armson, notes for Div. 3 and 5 have not arrived. We are now talking about six working days before the A.G.M. which gives you an idea of the terrific co-operation we receive from Alan Smethurst and the boys at S & A Print. As you can see Div. 1 and 2 correspondents wish to resign (both are fully committed in other table tennis activities) and 3 and 5 have not arrived. So to put it mildly we are in a bad way – are you prepared to give a couple of hours **THREE** times a year?

V.I.P. VISITS THE FEW

Donald Parker, the non playing England Captain had, in his capacity as Director of Coaching, been coaching 40 young potential champions at the Grantham Table Tennis complex, he also had a 7.30 date with Members of the Liverpool League to put the locals in the picture on – Focus on Table Tennis – as sponsored by the Sports Council. We are probably talking about the most influential person in England on the playing side of the game. To keep his appointment he came direct from his training session without having time to go to his hotel to change.

He was greeted by Arthur Upton, John McKim and Stan Clarke (who is also very much involved) two members of the Police Club, three members of Linacre and one each from Aigburth, Colonsay, English Electric and Wavertree Labour.

The basis of his talk was, of course, the lack of recruits to Table Tennis. With the European Championships coming up next year we must be prepared for an influx into the game. This apparently happened after the World Championships, but we weren't ready and could not cope.

The Sports Council have selected Table Tennis as their – Focus on Sport. This initially means that for the next three years, five North West Regions, including Merseyside, will receive £50,000 per year to promote the game. This will be under the jurisdiction and allocated by political administrators, so he basically suggested for instance that it would be better for a Tennis Club say, to extend their premises rather than provide balls or the like, as they could then say – look, that's what we have done with the money. Money will be available to be applied for – so apply for whatever reason they can only say no. More cash will be made available later from Pools Firms, etc.

John Prean took over as Chairman of the E.T.T.A. with very dodgy finances. He vacated the Chair leaving them with £400,000 in the bank. Don attended an International Table Tennis game in Belgium with a 6,000 crowd, in an adjoining room, Steve Davis was watch by 23 – pressurise T.V. as much as you can. If coaching or Playing Centres are built as self contained entities the upkeep is more of a problem than the buildings. Another reason why improvements or extensions are favourite. Any queries to Stan Clarke.

It was a very interested couple of hours: he told a few topical anecdotes, if Tony Harris and Arthur Garnett had laid on a dinner, we could have had a Sportman's dinner!

CUP FINALS

STAMP

AIGBURTH 0 – UNIVERSITY 6

This was the Aigburth Veterans second successive final. Charlie Gallantry (who could play for University) lost to Kevin Warburton of Blackpool 16-21, 9-21. Bill Leeming lost to Robert Watt of Brighton 15-21, 14-21. Eric Wood lost to Andrew Johnson of Coventry 10-12, 14-21. In the best game of the night Charlie lost to Duncan Preston of Burnley 15-21, 17-21. Duncan and Kevin clinched the Cup beating Charlie and Bill 13 and 14. I believe Aigburth are putting in a formal complaint against Duncan and Robert's multi-coloured shorts, Andrew's U. J. shorts and Kevin's which trailed his ankles – very sexy! Played at Cadwa, Keith Williams Official and presented trophies Mike and Jack Power, Club Officials.

FORREST

ELECTRIC SUPPLY 'B' 6 – BATH STREET 'C' 3

Alan Biggs beat Rob Peat 15-21, 21-18, 21-13. Trevor Hughes (he gets around this boy) beats John Langton 21-11, 15-21, 21-15. John Ashley loses to Dave Stoddard 15 and 19. Arthur Harrison and John lose to John and Peter Mercer 21-16, 19-21, 8-21 pretty close (3-2). Trevor and Alan beat Rob and Dave 21-14, 15-21, 21-14. This was possibly the crunch game. Arthur loses to John 18 and 15 (4-3) Trevor beats Rob 22-20, 21-13 and Alan beats Dave to clinch the game.

Played at Bootle J.C. with Stan Clarke, Match Official and Dave Graham, Club Official – Stan presenting trophies.

HYDE

MAGHULL 4 – BOOTLE J.C. 'A' 6

Rob Craddock lost to Ken Strahan 15-21, 21-11, 18-21. Chris Roberts beat Mike Moran 21-15, 14-21, 21-18. Julie Prince beat Alan Walton 21-19, 13-21, 21-18. Rod Bulmer lost to Roger Neal 19 and 15. Chris beat Alan in 41 mins (it seemed longer) 16-21, 21-18, 21-16. Julie beat Roger 24-22, 17-21, 21-19 – superb both players on top form. So it's 4-2 to Maghull just one game for a draw!?! But Rod lost to Ken 20 and 15. Roland lost to Mike 9 and 14. Chris and Rod lost to Ken and Mike 10 and 16 to complete the excellent come back. Julie and Ro lost to Alan and Roger 16 and 15.

Played at Wavertree Labour with Ken Armson Official in charge and Ken and Faith Club Officials. Arthur Upton presented the trophies.

RUMJAHN

ENGLISH ELECTRIC 3 – CADWA 'A' 6

Richie Cragg lost to Ian Miller 10 and 14: Frank Brady lost to Ken Hartley 18 and 19 (bonus for Cadwa) Rikki Brown beat Bill Hargreaves 11 and 18 (bonus for Electric) : Mike Power beat Peter Holmes 21-16, 15-21, 21-16 (3-1 to Cadwa): Richie and Peter lost to Mike and Ken 18-21, 21-19, 12-21. Rikki and Frank lost to Ian and Ken 16-21, 22-20, 20-22 the crunch game and a good one. Rikki called on again but was amazingly up to the task beating Ken 18-21, 21-19, 22-20 (5-3 to the Champs) Richie lost to Mike 9 and 12. A sad end to an exciting match and a great double for the Cadwa lads.

Played at Liverpool Y.M. with Paula French Match Official and Club Official Keith Williams. Arthur Upton introduced the Rumjahn Clan – Ted many times English International – Janet, City and County Player and daughter, Helen, Ted presented the trophies.

READMAN CUP

CADWA 3 – ELECTRIC SUPPLY 6

Phil Musgrove and Kevin Dolder beat Peter Flint and Terry Turner 21-19, 19-21, 21-18 – wot a start! Jonathan Allen lost to Peter 21-13, 20-22, 14-21 (bit of sweating in the second). Phil lost to Rob Beavan 14 and 13. Kevin beat Rob 23-21, 15-21, 21-17: Jonathon lost to Terry 21-19, 19-21, 21-23 – nail biting stuff. Phil lost to Peter 18 and 18: Kevin beats Terry 15 and 18 (3-4): Jonathon loses to Rob 14 and 15 – Kevin and Peter with heat really on – Peter wins 21-12, 18-21, 21-19 – my goodness my guinness, but you can't get one at the Y.M. and we all needed a few after that tense and exhilarating match.

Played at Liverpool Y.M.C.A. – Match Official Stan Clarke, Club Official Keith Williams assisted by Paula French. Trophies presented by Arthur Upton.

FRANK MURPHY TROPHY

WAVERTREE LABOUR 5 – GPT 3

A game to savour with Dave Roberts, the Liverpool Champion, living up to his title and winning his three games. Trevor Owens on a new lease of life beating Mike Tierney, Frank McCann also beating Mike and Roy Smith. Bob Edwards was the third of the GPT team to reach the final.

With so much excellent Table Tennis about it is perhaps unfair to select the Roberts McCann final crunch game as a real cracker. Despite being off scratch (why can't a reserve have a handicap?) Frank certainly hit a peak performance.

A special mention for Umpire Alan Timewell – have you ever tried to start a game – minus 4 plus 3 instead of love all, Alan nearly did the lot.

Played at Bootle J.C. with Alex Gould in charge and Dave Graham, Club Official with Arthur Upton presenting the trophies.

100 CLUB REPORT

Listed below you will find our winners for December, January, February and March. We will be doing the Draw for April and May at the League A.G.M. with the Draw for June, July and August taking place at the League Handbook Meeting.

An apology to several of our winners for the January, February, March Draw for the delay in receipt of their winnings. This was due to building work which required my packing everything away until its completion.

As last year, I would appreciate members sending their £12 membership for next season to me either by way of a post dated cheque now, or by cheque by 31st August. Your co-operation in this will avoid my having to send you renewal letters which can be expensive, and also enable me to more quickly access how many vacancies require to be filled. Hopefully, with your support, we will again attain full membership of 100.

DECEMBER	P. Lee	P. Luxon	J. O'Sullivan
JANUARY	T. Cramsie	N. Miller	Fords T.T.C.
FEBRUARY	Harold House T.T.C.	M. Moran	Wav. Lab. T.T.C.
MARCH	D. Rumjahn	K. Armson	D. Bunclark

DIVISION 1	P	W	L	D	PTS
WAVERTREE LABOUR	20	16	2	2	156
ELECTRIC SUPPLY	20	18	2	0	152
LIVERPOOL Y.M.C.A.	20	15	3	2	143
CADWA	20	15	2	3	137
BATH STREET	20	9	10	1	100
WAVERTREE LAB. 'A'	20	6	11	3	87
BOOTLE J.C.	20	9	9	2	84
COLONSAY	20	5	12	3	80
L'POOL Y.M.C.A. 'A'	20	4	14	2	66

G.P.T.	20	1	17	2	51
ENGLISH ELECTRIC	20	1	17	2	44

DIVISION 2	P	W	L	D	PTS
CADWA 'A'	22	20	1	1	173
G.P.T. 'B'	22	17	5	0	142

BOOTLE J.C. 'A'	22	15	4	3	140
G.P.T. 'A'	22	12	6	4	130
ENGLISH ELEC. 'A'	22	10	11	1	111
FORDS	22	7	10	5	108
HAROLD HOUSE	22	9	11	2	104
POLICE	22	10	7	5	98
COLONSAY 'B'	22	6	14	2	88
BATH STREET 'A'	22	4	16	2	80

WATERLOO	22	3	17	2	74
COLONSAY 'A'	22	5	16	1	72

DIVISION 3	P	W	L	D	PTS
BOOTLE J.C. 'B'	20	17	1	2	152
MAGHULL	20	14	3	3	135

BATH STREET 'B'	20	15	3	2	133
ELECTRIC SUPPLY 'A'	20	12	4	4	119
BOOTLE Y.M.C.A.	20	10	6	4	117
CADWA 'B'	20	8	9	3	94
WAVERTREE LAB. 'C'	20	6	14	0	79
WAVERTREE LAB. 'B'	20	5	12	3	76
G.P.T. 'C'	20	4	13	3	73

POLICE 'A'	20	3	16	1	66
LINACRE	20	2	15	3	56

DIVISION 4	P	W	L	D	PTS
ELECTRIC SUPPLY 'B'	20	19	0	1	153
MAGHULL 'A'	20	18	1	1	151

BATH STREET 'C'	20	16	4	0	136
WAVERTREE LAB 'D'	20	13	6	1	133
MAGHULL 'B'	20	11	9	0	100
HAROLD HOUSE 'A'	20	7	10	3	95
G.P.T. 'D'	20	7	11	2	88
CADWA 'C'	20	5	13	2	78
WATERLOO 'A'	20	2	13	5	75

BOOTLE Y.M.C.A. 'A'	20	2	17	1	45
HAROLD HOUSE 'B'	20	2	18	0	16

DIVISION 5	P	W	L	D	PTS
UNIVERSITY	20	20	0	0	179
BATH STREET 'D'	20	16	3	1	155

WAVERTREE LAB. 'E'	20	15	4	1	129
AIGBURTH	20	11	6	3	121
MAGHULL 'C'	20	8	7	5	105
BOOTLE Y.M.C.A. 'B'	20	7	6	7	100
BATH STREET 'E'	20	7	9	4	97
MERSEYBUS	20	8	12	0	93
POLICE 'B'	20	2	15	3	65
HAROLD HOUSE 'C'	20	2	18	0	28
WATERLOO 'B'	20	2	18	0	18

Note:- Harold House 'B' 30 points deducted for playing ineligible players.

Waterloo 'B' 10 points deducted for playing an ineligible player.

L.I.H.E. record expunged having given three walkovers.