



Table Tennis DIGEST

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

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EDITORIAL

Another season (halfway through). Another Digest late. The first one always seems to be the hard one and loses its point. Perhaps we should cancel the first one and just issue league tables in a Newsletter to include any important announcements or dates. How big is the nucleus that considers the Digest essential? It is part of our scene and has won admiration countrywide but is it worth the money we have been paying for it? The costs this season will decrease as we have a new format and set up.

When the issue is brought up at any meeting, any time over the years, there has been an outcry and the basic answer has been, even if it means an increase in subs, let's keep it. But, the guys who say this are the backbone blokes who basically run the game and the clubs. What about the other 80 or 90 per cent? Do you think the biggest burden on our finances is worth three magazines? Think about it and if I dare say it, Let's know.

Who would have thought a couple of years ago that John McKim, after 96 years service, and Eddie Cameron, after 95 3/4 years service, wouldn't be directing operations. What great servants to our cause. Oh dear, we will be in chaos and darkness when they go - not so. Paula French and Tony Harris have taken over and to say the least they are doing more than a competent job in a completely new world to both of them. I think we should say thank you and carry on the good work.

It's the third game in the cup final. The 3rd Division player is 28-25 down to a top class 1st Division player. The atmosphere is electric. It's over - is it? Crash! Bang! Wallop! (not quite. They were devastating backhands). 3rd Division had won 31-29. What a way for Trev to finish his colourful and exciting table tennis life. Weeks later, the table tennis world, led by President and Chairman, Arthur Upton, paid their respects to one of our games great characters, Trevor Hughes, who died suddenly when on holiday with his wife and children. They have our deepest and sincere sympathy.

"Oh referee!", will never be the same again.

Jack Lambert

DIVISION ONE

by Ken Armson

New season, same write. Big disappointment being my hoped for replacement opted out of taking over this Division. Biggest shock was the surprise move by Keith Williams to Cadwa, this being quickly followed by that of Mike Mahoney to G.P.T to complete the break up of the Y.M. 1st team. Neil Gravener has made a re-appearance for Cadwa and Colonsay have strengthened their already formidable 1st team. A warm welcome back to G.P.T. and a warm welcome to G.P.T. 'A', not that they probably look upon their unexpected promotion as being a good thing. Welcome also to Police, whose return after a long absence brings back Paul Gittins and Justine Thomas. Will they survive? Well, that is another story. Certainly the relegation issues will be more keenly contested than the Championship, which already shows signs of being a one team race, as Colonsay, aided by the return of J. Bartolo, continue were they left off last season. Only complacency can prevent them being Champions, the sort of complacency which almost saw them dumped out of the Readman Cup by Cadwa 'A', as they scrambled to an undignified draw to get a replay, after putting out a weakened team, which they obviously considered was strong enough to dispose of Cadwa 'A'. How mistaken they were, and how bruised their ego. Is it, I wonder, an indication of their disregard for the lower teams, or was it unavoidable? They will say it was unavoidable. I would say that had Wav Lab or Cadwa been their opponents on that night the unavoidable would suddenly have been avoidable. For Cadwa 'A', John Henshaw recorded a good win against Chris Ford.

A worthy mention for Pat McLoughlin, Lpool Y.M. playing for Varsity in the 5th two seasons back, he moved to Bootle J.C. last season who couldn't or wouldn't recognise his potential and hardly used him. Presumably disappointed by his lack of involvement, he moved to Y.M. He has quickly made his mark after a quiet start against Bath St. when he lost his 3. He then took two off Y.M. 1st team and followed this with a treble against Wav Lab. Against Police he beat Paul and Steve but surprisingly lost to Justine in 2 straight.

He returned to Wav Lab for the cup and won two, beating Dave and Rob. Don't know how he fared against Lab 'A' but it would seem to be his favourite venue, much to the disappointment of Wav players. I expect to see him take quite a few more scalps and a move to Y.M. 1st must surely merit consideration.

On the Championship front, the changes to our league format have meant the top teams meeting each other earlier than has previously been the case. Colonsay have taken full advantage of this opportunity to dispose of would be contenders Cadwa and Wav Lab, early in the season, and let everyone know that the title race is already a dead issue. The only issue left being that of runners-up, and who remembers runners-up?

Six teams, GPT, GPT 'A', Police, Lpool YM 'A', Cadwa 'A', and Bootle JC could be involved in the relegation battle, with three of those being outsiders, dependant on how they and others perform. Obviously Police and GPT 'A' will be seen as prime contenders. Early results have been interesting with Bootle JC taking 4 sets from Cadwa including a 2 straight win for Andy Clark against Kevin Dolder. They got another 4-6 against Lpool YM with Andy getting 2. They recorded a fine 6-4 win away to Bath St for whom only Ken Jackson was successful, winning his 3. These early results indicate they have woken more quickly than usual from their summer siesta and may have already ensured their survival.

GPT never expected to be promoted and have not achieved the kind of results which could indicate an outside chance of survival and Police have not fared much better. GPT 'A' took only 9 points from their first six matches which could give them a possible 30 odd at finish. Police managed to double that and could, with luck, achieve a possible 60. Waterloo were relegated with 62, ten adrift of next placed Manweb who were allowed to step down. No doubt the outsiders were relieved to see GPT 'A' come up as this will possibly have ensured one of them a reprieve. Police will no doubt point to their 6-4 win against Cadwa 'A' and 4 taken from Lab 'A' thanks to a treble from Paul, who beat Trevor Manning, Alan Timewell and Roy Smith, all in 2 straight. Cadwa 'A' will look

towards their 9-1 thrashing of YM 'A' and a very creditable draw with GPT.

Speaking of Lab 'A' and Trevor Manning, I must welcome back Trevor who was last in this Division with the now defunct Rafter's. Always a redoubtable opponent who gives away points sparingly, his re-appearance has strengthened an already strong Lab second team who will no doubt be seeking to improve on their well earned 5th position last season. They got a draw against YM 1st and Bill Stanley playing as reserve almost got himself into the record books when he lost narrowly to Dave Tagg. A word about YM 1st who, following the loss of Keith and Mike, are clearly struggling to regain their composure. A drop into the lower half looks like being on the cards at the halfway stage but I expect them to recover some ground and claw their way to a more respectable position.

Plenty to perm from and we can expect more shocks as the struggle to stay up intensifies and middle teams seek to improve their position at the expense of those above and below them. I feel certain that GPT, strengthened by the inclusion of Mike Mahoney will be hell bent on staying up, knowing their chances have been improved by the unexpected promotion of their 'A' team. Police are not strong enough to compete on equal terms and lack the quality of reserves available to their stronger rivals. So, to sum up. Colonsay for the double. Wav Lab as runners-up, with GPT 'A' and Police for relegation. Now it is up to you, the players, to prove me wrong. Final plea, will someone please, please, take over from me.

DIVISION TWO **Sylvia Graham**

It's nearly Christmas and I must wish you all a Merry Christmas - saves on postage !!! but before I start my notes a serious matter has come to my attention. A member of our Division has been found guilty of soliciting not once, but on many occasions and for many years!!!! Before the National Dailys get wind of it I will reveal all. Yes, Mr Birch, you cannot deny it....you are a solicitor and now this issue profile.

Ted is a globetrotter of impeccable character. An avid sports follower, he has seen little white balls hit in South Africa and then flown to Las Vegas

for a boxing match, though he has never been known to throw in the towel. It must be said that Ted's teams always play with great spirit (in more ways than one) and often start a match at six o'clock to practice certain recommended arm strengthening exercises. Sunday matches are scheduled for the afternoon to leave morning/lunchtime free for religious activities. Ted's lucky number is 126 (please ask him why) and his favourite animal is a donkey to which he has been compared - could someone please enlighten me? For many years he has played in the Liverpool league where he battles for every point. He has won Divisional medals, cup medals and three in the Lancashire and Cheshire League whilst representing the Liverpool veterans' team. Undoubtedly, his most valued trophy must be the winners medal he received at the first Veterans' Cup Final when the team played their hearts out in final acknowledgement of their friend Frank Murphy, to whom the cup was dedicated.

Ted leads me into the rest of the notes because Ted with Alan Chase, Mick Allen and Mike Corocoran appear destined, even at this early stage, to be the champions and who could deny them when they are averaging 8 points each match. The fight for second place is not so cut and dry. My feelings are that Bath St 'A', Waterloo 'A' and Harold House are the main contenders, but only if they can field their full sides every match. There's Colonsay 'A' who started the season very shakily but with signing Tony O'Connor and the return of Brenda Bouey, you have the side which beat my tip for the top 7 games to 3. I think their revival is a bit late for promotion this season, but prove me wrong by all means. Maghull are again taking points, left, right and centre (get the pun? three aside??) and Matty Wilson is making his mark with wins against all the top teams. Bootle JC 'A' are not the force of two seasons ago and as one card comments "if Julian Q doesn't play away matches they wont bounce back to division 1". What more can I say!! Most other teams are winning some and losing some which makes predictions very difficult. Comments on cards have increased to 7 which amazed me until I found that 3 were on Bootle JC 'A's cards. JC 'A' beat Waterloo 'B' 9-1. Dave Graham played superbly, according to the

card, and was easily 'man of the match'. Against Maghull the score was an 8-2 win but George Frost was unlucky to lose all three after playing very well. It was an enjoyable match where the score could easily have been reversed. Bootle YMCA and Waterloo 'B' always have a good match and this time it was YM's turn to win. Apparently the 'hard hitters' were a little unlucky because as the room got hot the ball started to float a little and not as many hits went on. John Higham thought the net was too high when he lost to Andy Armstrong but he could always have used the match card to check! YMCA's new secret weapon is to slip the caretaker a few bob to turn up the heating. They could end up losing a few pounds but gaining few points!! The final comment on a card is from Maghull and it's one I wholeheartedly support. The fact that match cards and score book are laid out differently is very confusing, so can the Management Committee rectify this when reordering new sets of stationery??

Now the roles of honour. Good wins : Martin Hunter (Colonsay) beat Ian McElwee (Bath St 'A') -15, 19, 17. Steve Woods (Maghull) beat the whole Waterloo 'A' team in one match, which is no mean feat. Ricky Brown went down -18, 13, 12, Fred Pheyse by 19, -20, 14 and Alan Reid 20, 17. Danny Every (Bootle YMCA) beat Ted Gilmour (GPT'B') -15, 17, 12. Colin Owens (Bath St 'A') beat Alan Cameron (GPT 'B') 14,13. Matt Wilson (Maghull) beat Mark Whittaker (GPT 'B') -8, 20, 21. Pete Frazer (Waterloo 'B') beat Mike Corcoran (Waterloo) 19, 17 and Danny Every (Bootle YM) 16, 13. John Kenwright (Harold House) beat Julian Quirk (Bootle JC 'A') 24, 13. Fred Pheyse (Waterloo 'A') beat Eddie Clein (Harold House) 6, 19.

Close matches this time : Matt Wilson (Maghull) beat Frank James (Harold House) 9, -18, 19. Mick Allen (Waterloo) beat Pete Frazer (Waterloo 'B') 27, -20, 20. Roly Wright (Bootle YM) beat that same Pete Frazer 22, -26, 18... don't worry Pete, your turn will come!!! Mike Moran and Sylvia Graham (Bootle JC 'B') beat Ian McElwee and Tony Kendal (Bath St 'A') -26, 19, 19.

Facesavers : Not many but....Peter Holmes (Waterloo 'B') beat Stuart Fay (Bootle JC 'A')

21, 15. Harry Johnson (Fords) beat Mick Allen (Waterloo) 19, -10, 20. Eddie Crowley (GPT 'B') beat Colin Owens (bath St 'A') -21, 12, 17. Roly Wright (YM) beat Bill Proffitt (Fords) 17, 19.

P.S. Guess what? The very first game of the first set of the night in the match between Harold House and Waterloo 'A' went to expedite. The players were Ricky Brown and Eddie Clein.

P.P.S. Thanks to everyone who commented on the cards....comments will get printed! Remember to nominate your friend (or enemy) for the next profile.

DIVISION THREE

Mike Power

I start by apologising for the shortness of this year's notes brought about due to a cost saving scheme for the Digest. As it happens I only have about five scorecards per team to report on anyway. The top of the table shows at least five teams vying for promotion. The early leaders are my own team Cadwa 'B' and Wav Lab 'B'. Steve Jones (Wav Lab 'B') is clearly one of the top players having lost only one to clubmate Roy Adams 20, 17. Roy himself has only lost one to Bob Hudson 20, 12. Steve is ably supported by Richy Jones, Joan Connor and the evergreen Mabel Neary. My instincts tell me they will be a 2nd Division team next season, but who will join them, either Cadwa 'B', Police 'A' or one of the Bath St teams. If Police could bring out their strongest team each week they would be my tip, but can they. Gareth Jones and Len Dyson lead the team, Len having lost just one to Billy Hargreaves -18, 15, 17, and it's no disgrace losing to Billy, who still has his 100%.

At the time of writing both Bath St teams are level on 60 points, 10 games played, but still have to play each other, a crunch game. There's not much between the teams, both having very capable number 1's, John Watson and Rob Peat, but I feel they may not have the strength in depth required for promotion, although with players like John Langton, Peter Ross and Billy Clayton around I may be made to eat my words. Labour 'C' are just behind the leading pack and I guess they will stay there even though they achieved a creditable draw against Labour 'B' with Roy Adams and Mike Ashton chipping in with two each, and a

remarkable game between John Gratton and Richey Jones, John claiming victory, -21, 7, 5, amazing! Labour 'C's closest rivals are Manweb who trounced them 8-2 when they met Roy Adams winning his two against John Moore and Arthur Harrison. Manweb started the season well with wins against Bath St 'C' 6-4 and Manweb 'A' 7-3 but then met Labour 'B' and lost 9-1, a shock to the system. Steve Jones didn't play, but look who Labour brought in, the very impressive Bobby Owens. What a shame he doesn't play more often. Manweb then lost 7-3 to a full strength Police with Gareth Jones having an 'off' night losing two. They beat Maghull 7-3, before losing 9-1 to Cadwa 'B' with Alan Biggs beating Rob Davies in two straight. Maghull 'A' drew their first two games against Police 'A' and Lpool YM (Ming Liu starting the season in this Division before being promoted to his rightful position in Div 1) They then came unstuck to Cadwa 'B' 9-1 with George Frost claiming their sole victory against George Higham 16, 20. The closest game was between Don Davies and Wilf Gibson, Don winning 18, -11, 23. Maghull are good enough to stay in this Division and should finish mid table. If they do get into any trouble they have the facility to bring in Chris Roberts at No 4 (not a bad No 4 eh!)

Relegation looks as if it's between the remaining four teams, the favourites being the two promoted teams from last season, Cadwa 'C' and Harold House 'A'. To be honest I cannot understand why H.House have had such poor results, not a win in sight, their best result being a 4-6 defeat by relegation strugglers Cadwa 'C'. Ian Burrows had an excellent win against Rob Peat 16, -9, 16 in a 9-1 defeat to Bath St 'C'. With fellow players Bob Hudson and Paul Morgan they are good enough to survive but they better hurry up. Newcomers Cadwa 'C' are finding the going tough with only the one sole win. Steve Graham has had a few close games. He lost to Francis Lay 18, -20, -21, beat Billy Clayton -17, 14, 21 and Alan Biggs, 22, -19, 10, both fine wins. The stalwart of the team is my old man, still as enthusiastic as ever. Still as lovely as ever but maybe out of his depth at this level. Then again he played as reserve for the 'B' team against Labour 'C' and won his two in a 5-5 draw. Thanks dad! Lpool YMCA with

Ming Liu would have no relegation problems but without him they could be in trouble. A very cheerful team with characters like Jimmy Clewett and Francis Lay, no one would like to see them go down. Well, unless they can get George Smith to play, which he has done once, I think it will be a pretty close run thing.

Another team with five straight defeats is Manweb 'A'. Alan Biggs has 50% at No 1 but unfortunately the team has suffered by not having a settled side, eight players being used in five games (a record equalled or surpassed by 5 other teams!!) Manweb 'A' have a better average per game than their three closest rivals and if this continues, they should escape relegation. But who knows? It's a funny old game.

Finally, I would like to say a fond farewell to one of the games best loved characters, Trevor Hughes. A dear friend since we were teenagers and a man who has given me more memories than anyone I can think of. We will all miss his humour and his backhand but most of all we will simply miss Trevor. The game won't be the same without him.

DIVISION FOUR

Arthur Garnett

It came as somewhat of a surprise when I was approached to write the notes for Division 4, knowing that Tony Connor had done an excellent job for a considerable time. I only hope that I can come somewhere near to his high standard.

So off we go into another season. I'm sure we all start each season full of good intentions and with the highest aspirations. My particular good intentions were to remain unbeaten for as long as possible, and, after having lost a match, become hard to beat, and finally, to enjoy playing table tennis. Ah well. I lost my second match and have hardly won a set since. I have enjoyed every game so my third good intention is still intact although it's still only the first week in November.

As you all know by now we have lost the University team. It must be extremely difficult to run a team at the University with most of the players staying for only three years. The University team which departed in the summer of 1994 was a very good one, which had been Division 5 and 4 champions in successive seasons.

No doubt a team will emerge there again. The Police have lost their lower team from Division 5, which means the 'B' team in Division 4 is now the bottom team. This happened because they have lost their home night at the club in Fairfield. George Wright turned up with the team one Wednesday night to find a band playing on the stage. The result is that Police 'B' are struggling to find a venue for their home fixtures and have played a couple of 'home' fixtures on their opponents table. I hope this situation will resolve itself after the Christmas break and I would like to thank opposing team captains for their co-operation.

Although it is still very early in the season, two teams appear to be 'the ones to watch'. I feel that it will be a long, close struggle right up to the seasons end before the champions are known. Waterloo 'C' have the edge over Maghull 'B' at the moment, but, as stated it is still very early. Favourites for the 'wooden spoon' at present are Maghull 'C' and Police 'B'. Although the Police are yet to field their strongest team they have picked up the odd win. I feel that the rest will be fighting it out for the third spot with most of the teams being very evenly matched. This, of course, make for good competition.

From my information to date I can only see two 100% records - Julie Prince (Waterloo 'C') and Wilf Gibson (Maghull 'B').

Close Calls :- Tom Banton (GPT 'C') 24-22 v S Gill (Maghull 'C') in third. Frank Lacey (Linacre) 22-20 v Alec Gould (Bath St 'D') in third. Paul Faulkner (Wav Lab 'E') 23-21 v Dave Batty (Bath St 'D') in third. Jack Davidson (Linacre) 20-22, 21-9, 22-24 v Tom Purcell (Police). N Appleby (Linacre) 20-22 v Kathy Haydon (Bootle YM) in third. Bobby Bell (GPT 'C') 20-22 v Eddie Preston (Bootle YM) in third.

Talking Point : With the Division now down to twelve teams (including University) we now have free weeks in which to re-arrange any outstanding matches. I wonder how many other teams, like the Police, suffer at the start of the season because players are still away on holiday. With the ever increasing number of families going abroad for their annual feast of sun, sea and sand, September

has become more and more a holiday month. How do you feel about the season starting in October and carrying through until the end of April? The only adverse comment I have heard about this suggestion is that Easter falls in April. Good one. Christmas falls in December but we still play in December and January. A one week break, a couple of matches before the end of the season could be good for the game, especially for those in contention. I'd be interested in what you think. Tell me when you see me, or better still, write to the Digest. I'm sure the Editor would be pleased to hear from you.

That's it for now

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

DIVISION FIVE

James Power

As I write this report Waterloo stand at the top of the Division having played 4 and won 4. Wav Lab 'F' are second having found some fine individual and doubles performances in their early matches, and at third is Bath St 'E' (another one of those hard to find clubs). Aigburth are in fourth spot. At the other end of the table Harold House 'C' prop up the table, behind LIHE and Maghull 'D', all three having lost their first four matches. LIHE look to have found a real asset with their new signing, Frank Kaiser, who I am sure will improve their points total. With 31 points between the top and bottom teams and still another three quarters of the season to go, there could be many surprises. Of course all these teams have played different amounts of matches, so it will be a while yet before the middle of the Division sorts itself out, and any one of the top 4 teams could take the lead.

Wav Lab 'F' had a promising start to the season, but haven't quite fulfilled their potential in their last couple of matches, to maintain a strong challenge on the leaders, Waterloo 'D'. Steve Perry and James Power having played some fine doubles with 6 out of 6, with other regular Rez Mirdamadi at number 1, and Paul Reed-Clayton and Roy Silsby making excellent debuts for Labour. James Power is enjoying (when he wins) a good start to his first year in the Division. Waterloo 'D' are in fine form and it looks like they may capture the Division 5 crown again. Unfortunately Police 'C' retired from the League after only a short period,

nullifying fine 9-1 victories for Wav Lab 'F' and Harold House 'B'(who I am sure are both as sick as parrots to see Police go after these results!).Police 'C' did manage to 'beat' Waterloo 'D' 10-0 when their team didn't appear for their first match, so Waterloo will be relieved.

In the middle of the table from position 5 to 8 respectively are Colonsay 'B', Harold House 'B', Aigburth 'A' and Bootle YM 'B'. H.House 'B' have won 3 out of 3 and only two slim 6-4 results have kept them in the middle of the table. Colonsay 'B'(with some fine performances from Lee Farley) on the other hand have won only 2 matches and lost 3, but still find themselves above Harold House.

By the time you read these notes I am sure the picture will be a lot clearer and the margin between the top and bottom will be larger. Obviously I am hoping that Wav Lab 'F' are up there fighting for promotion, but at the moment all the talk is about Waterloo, but who knows?

FRANK MURPHY HANDICAP CUP COMPETITION

Once again the Handicap Committee spent four hours on handicapping and did their best to ensure that every team had an equal chance of success. Not the easiest of tasks even if your name happened to be Solomon. We don't claim to have got it right yet and don't expect much in the way of expressions indicating that maybe we did get some right. We did discuss alternative methods such as team handicaps but the variation in the composition of groups was too complex for this to be successful without a great deal of preparation. We have, however, agreed to look further into the possibility of this to see if a fairer method may be possible. To this end and also to review the effect of current handicaps, the Committee will be meeting again in January to study 1st round results and also team handicap systems in operation elsewhere.

If any member or teams have any views which they would like to, express, or ideas for improving handicapping, be it by individual or team, I would like to hear from them. I will ensure that all such correspondence is placed before the Committee.

As my team were ignominiously bundled out in the 1st round I could say that we got our handicaps wrong, but in fairness to our opponents they played well (lucky shower), and fully deserved their 5-2 victory, and we have no complaints.

K.A. Armson

Chairman, Handicap Committee

LEAGUE '100' CLUB

Not so good news at present in that we are down on membership renewals and I have not been able to contact a number of our regular members. Could I ask any such member wishing to renew their membership to let me have their cheque. We are also seeking new members and anyone interested should contact me. The annual cost is only £12.00 and we have 12 draws for 3 prizes each draw and a consolation draw in August for those not having won a prize during the preceding 12 months.

Your League is committed to assisting with junior coaching sessions and the setting up of a Woolwich Junior League, in conjunction with the City Leisure Dept. The '100' Club funds will assist with this. It is important for our sport and our League that we actively involve ourselves in introducing youngsters to our sport and provide the coaching necessary, if they are to attain a good standard and take part in competitive play.

Winners for May, June, July & August were:

May : A. Upton, R.Davies, K. Armson,

June: W.Stanley, A.Garnett, S. Clarke

July : P. Taylor(Bath St), M. Ellis

August : Fords, P. Lee, S. Graham

Consolation winners : R. Mirdamadi, A. Woods,

K. Ainsworth, R. Bulmer, J. McCaig

Ken Armson '100' Club Organiser

A MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

TO ALL CLUBS & PLAYERS

SECRETARY'S COLUMN

I am grateful to the Editor for giving me the opportunity to include a few lines in the Digest wearing my 'secretary's hat', and I intend to use it to keep you fully informed on the work of your Committee and the activities of the League.



Your Committee have been involved in a number of schemes lately, involving grant aid applications to the National Lottery, with the aim of obtaining a dedicated Table Tennis Centre, in Liverpool for use by all enthusiasts. It is too early to give you any firm news, but we are actively pursuing the matter. You may have received a questionnaire, designed to measure the support for such a centre. If you haven't already done so, please return it to me via your Secretary a.s.a.p.

I'm sure you will agree that the future of the sport lies with children. A Junior Coaching Scheme, in partnership with Liverpool City Council, is presently being run by Stan Clarke and Ken Armson, with the aim of encouraging youngsters to the sport. Stan and Ken are doing an excellent job and are hopeful of forming our own Woolwich Junior League in the new year. If you know of any interested or aspiring juniors, please contact Stan or Ken for further details.

FINANCES

Your Committee are also examining league finances and expenditure, with a view to keeping registration fees down. For example, this issue of the Digest has been produced at half the cost of previous issues.

We have now received a refund of about £600 from the ETTA for Vat paid on affiliation fees. This money is yours and the Committee will be looking at way of returning it to you.

Following complaints made at the Handbook meeting, the Committee have decided that the Treasurer will be notifying clubs on a monthly basis of any fines incurred.

THE 'CLOSED'

The Liverpool Closed Tournament will take place at the Everton Park Sports Centre on Sunday 18th February, 1996, the finals at the Police Club on Tuesday 27th February. Please make every effort

to support the event. Entry forms have been circulated to all Secretaries, but if you haven't got one, contact the tournament referee, Brian Leeson.

SOCIAL

There has been a lack of social activities in the league in recent years so this year there will be a joint Business Houses / Police / LD TTL end of season social evening, which I am confident you will support. Put the date in your diaries now :- Friday 26th April at the Police Club. (further details to follow)

I have discovered in a very short time that it is virtually impossible to please everyone, but I can assure you that I and my fellow Committee members will do our utmost to serve you and the interests of the league as best we can.

If I can play a part in returning the league to anywhere near the 'glory days' of the 1930's and 50's I will be more than happy.

P.S. Remember this is your magazine. I'm sure the Editor would welcome any comments on the above.

Regards, Tony Harris

Volunteers Wanted !!

Are you interested in taking a coaching course? How about an umpiring certificate? Or would you like to be a referee?

The League is desperately short of coaches and umpires who are willing to give their time to promote our sport.

Brian Leeson and Ken Armson could also do with a hand on the refereeing front.

If either of the above appeals to you, and you would like to put something back into table tennis, please contact Stan Clarke, Ken Armson or Brian Leeson.

Calling all Veterans!!

An additional event has been included in the 'Closed' Tournament this year to cater for all you fit 'over 55's'.

Support the 'Closed' !!

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

When I took on the job of Secretary I did not realise the wealth of history connected with the LDITL, going back to 1926, when the League was formed under the guiding light of Mr L.E. Forrest, the League's first Secretary. From those humble beginnings, with just 6 founder clubs, in the space of 5 short years, Liverpool had become the centre of table tennis in the North of England, and was second only to London nationally.

In those early days, the old parchment covered bats were being replaced by vellum and pimpled rubber, resulting in a quicker and more exciting game. Matches were usually long drawn out affairs, as it was difficult to hit outright winners, on account of the high net, 6 3/4 inches, but this resulted in a better spectacle. Use of the 'finger spin serve' was a deadly weapon in any aspiring champions repertoire and was practised for hours until perfect.

Many Inter City, and exhibition matches, involving visiting Internationals were played in Liverpool, the main venues being :- YMCA, Foley Street, Deaf Institute, Princess Avenue, Harold House, Chatham Street and Picton Hall, William Brown Street. With no television or radio the youth of the day flocked to these matches and crowds of over 600 were common.

The game was at this time dominated by the Hungarians. The 'three musketeers' as they were known, Barna, Bellac and Szabados played marvellous exhibition games throughout the world bringing the 'modern' game to the eyes of the public. Szabados was reported to 'hit the ball so hard its flight could scarcely be followed by the eye', while countryman, Barna relied on his 'super backhand flip and deceiving drop shot'.

The English Open Championship was held for the first time in Liverpool in 1931, and took place on the 4th floor of the 'new' Lewis's Store in Renshaw Street. A crowd of 5,000 watched Szabados beat his countryman Barna in an exciting final.

The top Liverpool club at the time were Hatton, winning the first four league championships. Top individual players and England internationals included Don Foulis, the Hyde brothers, Cecil, Eric and Ken, and ladies, Miss J. Bartholomew,

A Pollitt and N. Norrish.

In 1934 there was a record 310 entries for the 9th Annual Closed Championships played at Harold House. An interesting article in the Liverpool Daily Post at the time reported, "D. Foulis is defending his title and will play E. Rumjahn, 14 year old City 'B' player, in round 2". I wonder if Ted remembers that one?

The game in Liverpool continued to go from strength to strength, when as suddenly as he arrived on the scene L.E. Forrest left Liverpool for London. His departure is recorded in the minutes of 15th July, 1936, where "the President, C.E. Bartholomew expressed a hearty vote of thanks to the finest worker and sportsman in the League".

L.E. Forrest was awarded a Life Membership of the League in 1937, but what happened to him in later years I do not know. (Perhaps you do?)

The new Secretary / Treasurer of the League was Bill Stamp, but more about his era, next time. (Editor permitting)

There must be members still playing who have interesting memories of those early years. I hope this article will encourage you to put pen to paper and send those memories into the Editor.

If any member has any early handbooks or other memorabilia they would like to donate or lend to the League then please contact me. I am hopeful of compiling a display of historical memorabilia for all members to enjoy, possibly at the Closed Finals night.

(With thanks to Peter Rumjahn)

Tony Harris

North West Region League Champions Tournament

The above tournament will take place on 30th December, 1995,

at the Hyndburn Table Tennis Centre.

Each League in the North West has been invited to enter all their current Closed Singles Tournament Champions.

The finals will be held at the Nynex Arena on Sat 13th January, during the latter stages of the Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

Further details from Tournament Referee, our very own Ken Armson, Tel 486 3073

MATCH SECRETARY'S REPORT

Following a request by Ken Armson at a recent meeting for a report on the League's fortunes in the various competitions, here we go.

The Men's team didn't play their first match until five weeks after the start of the season, due to other Leagues being unable to obtain premises! This has gone on for a number of years and something will have to be done before inter-city play ceases to exist in its present format. Our first match, at home to Stockport, who were playing their third match, produced a splendid 8-2 success.

The Bolton fixture, due on 22nd September, was played on November 3rd, six weeks late. The lads put on a fine show winning 9-1. Kevin felt ill during his first set and although I agreed to him conceding his last two sets, he managed to complete both of them. The Warrington match, on 4th December, saw us trailing 3-0, but in an amazing fightback, we led 4-3. The home side levelled the match before Keith and then Kevin, with victory over Mal McEvoy, clinched the two points.

We opened the defence of the Norman Cook Memorial Trophy against Bury, our opponents in the 1994 final, winning 6-1 on the night. The match was over after the first three sets as they arrived without their top England junior, Lindsey Thornton and Graham Clark, ranked 39 in England. The next match will be a repeat of last season's semi-final against Wirral. This time the match will start at scratch and should be a great tussle, with Bernie Wentworth, Andy Taylor, Rob Bevan and Clare News out to avenge that 5-4 reversal. The men met Lytham in round 1 of the Wilmott Cup and when Stuart and Kevin were unavailable, Chris Ford and Ian Eaton joined forces with Keith Williams to win 5-0.

Leading 4-1 and 5-4 against Wirral, Liverpool Ladies should have taken both points, but Clare News, who enjoyed a great match, weighed in with 4 wins, helping the visitors to an equal share of the spoils. Southport were our opponents in the JM Rose Bowl, Paula, Justine and Clare (Wirral haven't entered) winning 5-0. We travel to Grimsby in round 2, our first match there in more than 30 years.

The Veterans' 'A' team have started with three straight victories in Division 3. Alan Chase, Ted Birch and Mick Allen have always been very competitive and have given themselves a good springboard to gain promotion for the third year in a row. Dave Roberts, Alan Timewell and Michael Tierney won their first match at home to

Macclesfield 7-3 and when Michael goes on his annual winter holiday, his 'stand in' will be Trevor Manning. Not one supporter has been present this season and the teams could do with your support, especially for the Wirral game quarter final in the Norman Cook Trophy. (details are printed in the Echo, but you can also phone me for the date / venue, which has not been arranged yet)

Don Davies

Why not subscribe to Table Tennis News?

Just £15.00 for 8 issues, it provides all the up to date scores, fixtures and gossip, across the Region & Country.

The ETTA Diary costs only £3.50, Good value on both counts!

Tel 01424 722 525

TOP LIVERPOOL PLAYERS ?

Dear All,

A leading player, last season, gave me his all time list of top Liverpool players and for what it's worth here's mine.

1. Tony Clayton (the most genuine and nicest player I've ever met),
2. Keith Williams,
3. John McNee,
4. Gordon Birch,
5. Wally Allanson,
6. Roy Smith (the most successful player in Liverpool League history),

Others who deserve a mention are :

Tony O'Connor, Trevor Manning, John Marshall, Ted Mandaluff, Paul Hutchings, and Stuart Richards (who is in the Tony Clayton mould). What do you think? I'm sure there are people who disagree. Why not write in with your top players.

Don Davies

Wanted

Table Tennis enthusiasts of all standards of play to take part in the Liverpool Closed Tournament.

When: **Sunday 18th February, 1996**

Where: **The Everton Park Sports Centre.**

Finals at the Police Club, Tuesday 27th February

SUPPORT THE CLOSED!

TABLE EDGES, NETS & ECHOES OF THE PAST

Well, Keith Williams has gone to Cadwa!

Ken Armson, having retired, finds himself up to his eyes in it.

Natasha Williams is now in her second year at Sheltonham, where she hopes to gain a sports degree. Unfortunately, due to the distance, she has not been able to turn out this season for her club or league. She did offer to travel from the West Country for the opening match but fortunately this was not necessary. How many players would do that for their club? Good luck! It was nice having you in our League. Come back any time.

As one Welsh number 1 departs, the previous incumbent, Justine Thomas has returned to the Ladies team. After a season with Manweb she has now signed for the Police. Between them, they annexed the Closed Ladies Title on no fewer than 4 occasions.

What more can one say about Brenda Buocoy? Four times Liverpool Closed Singles Champion, including a hat-trick of successes in 1972, 73, and 74. This season she celebrates 26 years since making her debut for the League, when she appeared in the Bromfield Trophy with Sara Manning and Barbara Kirkham.

Three great players from the past have re-appeared in the League this season, the first being the 1967 and 1968 Liverpool Singles Champion, Gordon Birch. Formerly with Cadwa and Bohemians, he has signed for Harold House, whose former English Electric team-mates, Eric Youd and Eddie Clein. His first match, incidentally, pitted him against former Electric man, Fred Pheysey, who hadn't read the script and denied him his hat-trick.

Gordon, who owns Beyond the Brigs, in Old Swan, won the now defunct Montgomery Open in Wales and was the last player to boast a 100% singles record in a 1st Division season! John McNee and John Rankin both came close to equalling the feat before suffering late season defeats when the record was on the cards.

Former Closed Champion, Trevor Manning, was next to pop up, playing for Wav Labour 'A' against the Labour first team. Trevor, a league and cup winner with Rafter's and a Barbados international, beat Keith Williams in the 1983 final. He joins forces with former team mate, Alan Timewell, the pair reaching the final of the Readman Cup for five years in succession while at Rafter's.

Also making an unexpected return, after twelve years away, is Tony O'Connor. He turned out for Colonsay 'A' against Bootle JC 'A' beating Dave Graham, Derrick Sullivan, losing only to Stuart Fay. Tony, arguably the best junior ever to come through the league, reached number 1 in the England rankings.

The 1996 Olympic Games European Qualifying Tournament, takes place in Manchester's Ninex Arena, from January 10th to 14th. The arena is capable of seating 19,000. Tickets are priced from £1.00 on the Wednesday, up to 5.00 on the Sunday.

If you wish to act as a volunteer helper for the above tournament please contact either Tony Harris or Ken Armson. Volunteers for the Qualifying tournament will automatically be given first option on the World Championships in 1997.

DIVISION 1	P	W	L	D	PTS
COLONSAY	10	9	1	0	81
CADWA	10	8	1	1	77
WAV LAB	9	8	1	0	71
G.P.T.	10	4	4	2	47
WAV LAB 'A'	9	4	3	2	45
BATH STREET	8	3	4	1	39
BOOTLE J.C.	8	4	4	0	38
LPOOL Y.M.C.A.	8	3	3	2	35
LPOOL Y.M.C.A. 'A'	9	1	7	1	29
CADWA 'A'	8	2	5	1	27
POLICE	8	2	6	0	27
G.P.T. 'A'	9	0	9	0	14

DIVISION 4	P	W	L	D	PTS
WATERLOO 'C'	7	7	0	0	55
MAGHULL 'B'	7	7	0	0	54
WAV LAB 'D'	8	2	3	3	44
BOOTLE YMCA 'A'	7	4	2	1	40
WAV LAB 'E'	7	5	2	0	40
LINACRE	8	3	4	1	38
G.P.T. 'C'	8	2	5	1	35
BATH ST. 'D'	7	3	4	0	33
POLICE 'B'	8	2	5	1	33
MANWEB 'B'	7	2	4	1	29
MAGHULL 'C'	8	0	8	0	9

DIVISION 2	P	W	L	D	PTS
WATERLOO	9	7	1	1	66
BATH ST. 'A'	10	8	2	0	60
WATERLOO 'A'	9	6	2	1	58
FORDS	10	6	4	0	53
HAROLD HOUSE	7	5	2	0	42
BOOTLE J.C. 'A'	9	2	6	1	42
BOOTLE J.C. 'B'	9	4	5	0	38
MAGHULL	8	2	3	3	37
G.P.T. 'B'	10	3	5	2	37
COLONSAY 'A'	8	4	4	0	35
WATERLOO 'B'	9	1	8	0	32
BOOTLE Y.M.C.A.	8	1	5	2	27

DIVISION 5	P	W	L	D	PTS
WATERLOO 'D'	9	9	0	0	77
HAROLD HOUSE 'B'	10	9	1	0	73
BATH ST. 'E'	10	4	4	2	54
AIGBURTH	9	4	2	3	53
WAV LAB 'F'	8	4	2	2	46
COLONSAY 'B'	10	3	6	1	40
MAGHULL 'D'	8	3	5	0	36
AIGBURTH 'A'	7	3	4	0	26
BOOTLE Y.M.C.A 'B'	8	2	6	0	26
L.I.H.E.	8	0	7	1	20
HAROLD HOUSE 'C'	7	1	5	1	18
POLICE 'C'					Record Expunged

DIVISION 3	P	W	L	D	PTS
WAV LAB 'B'	10	7	0	3	73
CADWA 'B'	9	7	1	1	63
POLICE 'A'	10	5	1	4	62
BATH ST. 'B'	10	5	3	2	60
BATH ST. 'C'	9	5	2	2	54
WAV LAB 'C'	10	4	2	4	53
MANWEB	9	5	3	1	46
MAGHULL 'A'	10	2	6	2	37
MANWEB 'A'	9	2	7	0	35
CADWA 'C'	10	2	8	0	33
LPOOL Y.M.C.A. 'B'	10	2	7	1	31
HAROLD HOUSE 'A'	8	1	7	0	23

Club Secretaries

I have not received score cards or the new date for the following matches:

- Div 1 Wk 7 YMCA v Bath St, Cadwa 'A' v Bootle J.C.
- Wk 9 Police v Bath St, W Lab v YMCA
- Bootle JC v Wav Lab 'A'
- Div 2 Wk 4 H.House v Waterloo, Bootle JC 'A' v Bootle YM
- Div 3 Wk10 Manweb v H House 'A'
- Div 4 Wk2 Bath St 'D' v Wav Lab 'E'
- Wk6 Bootle YM 'A' v Mweb 'B'
- Wk9 WLab 'E' v Mweb B, Waterloo C v Mhull D
- Wk10 Bootle YM 'A' v Bath St 'D'
- Maghull 'B' v Wav Lab 'D'
- Div 5 Wk1 LIHE v H.House 'C',
- Wk 2 Bootle YM 'B' v Aigburth 'A'
- Wk 9 Aigburth 'A' v H.House 'C'
- Wk 10 W Lab 'F' v Maghull 'D'

You are reminded of Match Regulation 10(postponement/ Rearrangement of matches). Contact me if you have any difficulties.

Paula French (Fixture Secretary)