

Table Tennis **DIGEST**

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

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EDITORIAL

Just as I was patting myself on the back for having off-loaded the 1st Division notes I received word that Jack had resigned as Editor. Being the fool that I am, I offered to take up the reigns. My offer was taken up and so here I am, back again, in my third term as Editor. Many of you will be dismayed, hopefully some may be pleased. Who cares!

We have struggled financially with our magazine the last few years due to the high cost of printing and this has restricted the Editor's freedom. Hopefully, such problems are behind us in that we have adopted hi-tech methods which will reduce our costs. On that basis we have started to broaden its content, however, as Editors before me have repeatedly stated, it is your magazine and the forum to air your views, suggestions, gripes etc. If there is anything connected with our League or sport that you want to get off your chest then do so by airing the facts in your magazine.

Included in this issue is an interesting article based on the many memories of Peter Rumjahn. Have you memories of our League or your Club which may be of interest? If so, knock them together or alternatively just let me have your comments and I will produce an article based on them.

Finally, I would just place on record my appreciation of Jack's work as Editor and for keeping our magazine going through difficult times. I would also use Editor's licence and take this opportunity to thank those of you who have sent me cards or letters or congratulated me personally on my New Years Honour award of the M.B.E. It may interest you to know that when submitting the nomination, my Employer, Railtrack, also included my table tennis involvement.

Ken Armson

MATCH SECRETARY'S **ROUND UP** by Don Davies



Liverpool teams have enjoyed a tremendous first half of the season, suffering just two defeats in twenty matches to date. The Men's team of Keith Williams, Stuart Richards and Kevin Dolder, lead division one with a 100% record and with three homes and two away matches to play, our first title is certainly not beyond them.

The Veteran's 'A' team also boasts a 100% record but the home match against Preston will almost certainly turn out to be the title decider. Ted Birch, Alan Chase and Mick Allen are looking to gain promotion for the third successive season.

The Ladies team of Brenda Buoey, Paula French and Justine Thomas, lie in unfamiliar territory, occupying 4th place after three matches. Blackpool and Preston requested postponements, both being unable to raise a team while two other matches were postponed due to County fixtures. We now find ourselves with a glut of matches to re-arrange and it raises the question, should Lancashire and Cheshire League matches be scheduled for County Championship dates?

Hopes that the Veteran's trio of Dave Roberts, Alan Timewell and Michael Tierney, will claim the division one title, were dashed when beaten 10-0 by reigning champions Stockport, having earlier gone down 6-4 at Burnley.

As holders of the Norman Cooke Memorial Trophy, one would hope that we can qualify for our sixth final when we take on Chester in Shotton on Deeside! The home side will enjoy five points advantage in every game and lining up for them will be three times Liverpool Ladies Single champion, Sue Manning / Alexander, thirteen years after last playing for Liverpool. One may ask, why is a match under Lancashire and Cheshire rules being staged in North Wales?

At the time of writing, we are still in the three knock out competitions, although facing two away ties. The Men play Wirral for the second year in succession while the Ladies cross the Pennines where they take on Leeds. The Veterans have a difficult match at Bradford and are without regular number two Alan Timewell who is injured.

T. T. QUIZ

1. How many times has the World Championships been staged in England?
2. Who won the Men's Singles title when the World Championships were staged in Birmingham in 1977?
3. What was the height of the net prior to the present height of 6 inches?
4. Who is the current Olympic Men's Singles champion?
5. In which North Korean City did Seiji Ono beat Guo Yuehua, when his opponent retired due to injury?
6. What is the name of the trophy presented to the World Championships Men's Singles winner?
7. He won fifteen individual gold medals in World Championships and died in Lima, Peru in 1972. Who is he?
8. This man won the Liverpool Closed Men's Singles title three years in succession in the late 1950's, but who is he?
9. Prior to Andrew Eden who won the Closed in 1989, who was the last international player to claim the Closed Men's title?
10. Prior to Natasha Williams, who is the last female international to lift the Closed Women's Singles title?

Answers to Don Davies

LIVERPOOL CLOSED FINALS NIGHT

when : Tuesday 27th February

**where: The Police Club,
Prescot Road, Fairfield**

commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Free Admission

**Come along and see a great night's
table tennis!!**

SECRETARY'S COLUMN

You may be surprised to know that table tennis is booming in this country at the moment!

You may be even more surprised to know that Woolwich Junior Leagues are springing up all over the country and that last year 2,000 youngsters took up the game for the first time, proving that given the opportunity children will play table tennis.

Table tennis has now been chosen as one of seven sports to be introduced into our schools as part of the National Junior Sports Programme. This Government backed initiative, due to be launched in April, 1996, aims to introduce children as young as 5 years to a number of sports and is an opportunity not to be missed. If we can provide the framework for these children to continue with table tennis outside of school we won't lose them. The seeds are being sown and I believe it is only a matter of time before junior table tennis in Liverpool really takes off. As I mentioned last time, Stan Clarke is running junior coaching sessions at Picton Sports Centre, and Ken Armon is in the throes of forming our own Woolwich Junior League.

The upshot is that we need more people to become involved!!

If you feel that you can spare a couple of hours a week to help to develop the game or you want more information about the coaching, then please give Stan or Ken a ring (nos in handbook)

LIVERPOOL CITY TEAMS

I recently had the pleasure of attending my first Inter City match (as a spectator of course) and I thoroughly enjoyed watching Liverpool beat Wirral in an exciting Wilmot Cup quarter final.

I was made to feel more than welcome and was impressed with the high standard of play and sportsmanship shown by both sides. Unfortunately, I was the only spectator at the match, a fact that must be disheartening to the players and Match Secretary, Don Davies.

I will certainly be going back for more. If you would like to see the cream of local talent on display and possibly pick up a few tips why not go along and support your City



teams. Dates and venues are usually published in the echo but can also be obtained from Don Davies.

Although the A.G.M. is a long way off can I remind all members that any proposed rule changes and resolutions for inclusion in the preliminary agenda must be sent to me in writing, no later than Saturday 24th February, 1996. Enjoy the rest of the season.

Tony Harris

AN APPRECIATION

It will be observed from the appearance of a different name on the front page that there has been a change of Editor, this having been occasioned by the resignation of Jack Lambert who had fulfilled these onerous duties since assuming the role in 1972.

From the time of the first issue of the Digest in October, 1950, there have been a number of distinguished occupants of the Editorial Chair and from the time of his appointment, Jack has deservedly earned the right to be a part of this illustrious group. Indeed, it will be self evident, without the need for a mathematician, to realise that slightly more than 50% of the total period of the Magazine's existence has been in his capable hands. He has shown a dedicated commitment to his task and over the years, his personal attendance at Cup Finals, Liverpool Closed, and other table tennis events has enabled him to include reports based on first hand knowledge.

Opportunities have, of course, been taken on the League's behalf at various times during his longevity of service to our sport, to recognise Jack's valued contribution, and he has been the recipient of the Stamp Award of Merit, the E.T.T.A. Merit Award, and following a number of years as Vice President of the League, he was last year accorded the highest accolade the League could bestow, that of Life Member.

Although we may have exhausted the honours which the League can confer, I believe that it would be the wish of the League's members that the Digest should be used on this occasion as a forum to place on record, warmest appreciation of Jack's meritorious service. It gives me the greatest possible pleasure to do so. Thank you Jack for the many hours you have put in in your capacity of Editor. The memory of your service will remain with us.

Arthur Upton

President/Chairman

DIVISION ONE

by Paul Gittins

After many years of 1st div. notes Ken Armson has put his pen to rest. I expect some of you could give Ken a few ideas where to put his pen, but I know the majority of readers, myself included, will miss his direct, honest and at time controversial approach. An approach which certainly held your interest regardless of your loyalties and I only hope that my articles can follow Ken's high standard,

The div. has started to take shape and even though we're just halfway through the fixtures the teams fighting for the title and to avoid relegation have already been established. GPT 'A' were always destined to return to div. 2 so it's no surprise that they are holding up the div. However, they haven't disgraced themselves, Ian Wensley's 2 st. win over Bill Hargreaves and Frank McCann's in the third against Ken Hartley showing they can cause problems. Peter Wass's miraculous win against B.J.C.'s Andy Clarke which, although occurring early in the season, is still worthy of mention. If Peter's backhand was as active and consistent as his famous backside then I'm sure he would take a few more scalps, one of which would have been Stuart Richards who, although winning comfortably in the 3rd, was involved in two deuces which could have gone either way.

There are three other teams fighting to retain 1st div. status, Cadwa 'A', Police and Y.M. 'A'. Bootle J.C. are currently placed third from bottom but this is an unrealistic position and once they've played their outstanding matches they'll move up. Steve, Justine and myself have found the going tough, particularly the first half, when one is adjusting to the quicker pace and higher standard of the 1st div. I would say there is at least a 5 point difference between a good 2nd div. side and that of an average 1st div. team, the gap widens when you play the top three. So Steve and I were pleased to take a point off Colonsay when we won our doubles beating Chris and James "please no more neighbours jokes" Bartolo. An important point for Police and perhaps just as important for Colonsay, but for different reasons. Cadwa 'A' presently second from bottom are also well aware of how 2 or 3 points gained each week can add up and with Ken Hartley in the team they are always guaranteed to pick up vital points as they demonstrated against Y.M. Ken's 2 st. wins against Peter Taylor and Dave Tagg, backed by Ahmed Thabet's and John Henshaw's wins against Dave giving them 4 crucial points. Peter

Lee, as one would expect, comfortably won his 3, a task he repeated against Bath St. beating Ken Jackson, Mike Keane and Fred Bainbridge in straight sets. Kenny got back to his winning ways by beating Peter and Dave.

I'm surprised that Y.M. are in a vulnerable position as on paper you would expect Pat McLoughlin, Tony Whelan and Ming Liu to be comfortably placed and able to enjoy their table tennis without any worries. However, a 7-3 defeat by Lab 'A' with Alan Timewell and Roy Smith winning all their singles indicates that at times Pat and Tony do not play to their full potential. Ming Liu, however, seems to be improving with each game. Bath St. can vouch for this when Ming was named 'man of the match' (on the scorecard, probably in Ming's handwriting) having defeated Ken, Mike and Fred, Pat winning the other set against Fred.

The middle of the table consists of Y.M., Lab 'A' and Bath St. and this too, is a highly competitive section with few points separating teams. The experienced squad of Alan Timewell, Roy Smith, Gary Watson and Mike Tierney make Lab 'A' a formidable team who will make the majority of teams work hard for their points. This was the case when they met a G.P.T. team strengthened by the arrival of Mike Mahoney whose wins against Gary, Alan and Roy and Bobs against Ken and Roy saw the game end all square. G.P.T. are lying in 4th place, Mike's arrival allowing Bob and Paul to compete without the threat of relegation hanging over them, this being reflected in their current position. It is also reflected in their individual performances such as Bob's tremendous wins against Dave Roberts. A further example was their 6-4 win against Y.M. 'A' Bob, Mike and Paul winning two each, demonstrating that the team may not consist of superstars but has equal strength throughout. More importantly, it is good to see a newly promoted team with the ability to have at least two consecutive seasons in the 1st.

At the start of the season you could have backed any one of three teams for the title, but it would have been a wise man to predict, at this stage that only 4/5 points would be separating the top 3. It would appear that all three have adopted a 'squad' policy and I would guess that this is due to players having other commitments rather than a strategic choice. Bernie Wentworth, Rob Bevan, Dave Roberts and Andy Taylor for Wav Lab, Kevin Dolder, Keith William's, Ian Eaton and Ken Connor (plus a star appearance by Ahmed Thabet) for Cadwa, with Paul Hutchings, Stuart Richards, Chris

Ford, James Bartolo and Jean Jordaney.

The three teams have gone through the 1st half picking up the usual 10-0's, 9-1's and the occasional 8-2 wins. The points dropped guaranteed the opposing winning player a mention in the Digest, such is the price of being a top player. The clash between Wav. Lab and Cadwa produced what must have been a night of brilliant table tennis. Eight sets went to 3 and I lost count of the deuce games. Wav. Lab. eventually came out 6-4 winners. Bernie beat Kevin and Ian but lost to Keith. Rob beat Kevin and Keith but lost to Ian. Dave beat Keith and Ian but lost to Kevin, Keith and Kevin taking the doubles from Bernie and Dave, current 'Closed' champions. I hear that a Wav. Lab. v Cadwa Cup Final has been lost due to Wav. Lab playing an ineligible player in their semi-final.

Keith only winning one singles in a match is a rarity on its own, but he obviously was in no mood for losing when Cadwa met Colonsay for he disposed of Paul, Stuart and Chris in straight sets. You'd be forgiven for thinking that Keith caught them on an off night, not so, for Paul went on to beat Kevin and Ken with Stuart and Chris beating Ian, Cadwa winning 6-4.

To summarise, the Div. appears to be well balanced and I'm sure that the fight for the title and to avoid relegation will go right to the wire.

It is rumoured that the new-look Digest may include a computerised scanned photo of Divisional writers above their notes. Perhaps that is the real reason Ken Armson has called it a day!!!

DIVISION TWO by Sylvia Graham

Sadly, there were no nominations for my profile this issue but I did have a request from a certain little lady. Being a forgetful teenager cum veteran she forgot to mention who she was writing about but she did give quite a few clues. Sandy said that her mistress was really a terrific player with a great hit (not that she ever hit her!!) and that she used to work for the place that makes people well when they're sick. In the 70's she was a prominent junior player renowned for 'wicked' serves which she cultivated as a twelve year old and which she still possesses years later as a prospective vet. (not a word that Sandy really feels at ease with!!) Still one of Liverpool's top lady players, she represents the Liverpool League, the County and was an integral member of a British League team which gained promotion and was awarded 'ream of the weekend'. On the table she is a fair but tenacious player while off the table she is a great mistress

(?) and lively companion, says Sandy. No prizes, but can you guess who she is? Last clue is ask Waterloo because she won her three against them.

Now, with only a few weeks of the season left I don't think there is any doubt about the champions and I hereby congratulate Waterloo. I must say that their departure to the 1st is always a loss to the 2nd. Bath St. 'A' look to be favourites for 2nd place and with two teams in the first it would help to restore some of Bath Streets former glory. Waterloo 'A' must still be in with a chance so there match with Bath St. on March 9th might be worth attending - and there's always the chance of a good pint (just ask for Alan!!)

Colonsay continue to astound me with the selection of players they manage to turn out, ranging from the unknown Frenchman, Jean Jordaney to the well known Tony O'Connor. They have the honour of inflicting Waterloo's only defeat to date when Brenda Buocoy won her three singles and took the doubles with Paula French in a good 7-3 win. Harold House continue to have a good season but with few matches to catch up on it is difficult to judge exactly how well they are doing. I predict a very busy time for them in March.

Most of the other teams are fighting for mid table positions and I doubt whether there will be more than 15 points between the fifth and tenth positions. Bootle YM and GPT 'B' would seem to be the favourites for relegation. The 2nd is a tough division and if they do find themselves relegated I am sure they will find the 3rd division much easier after their experiences here. It's tough at the top!

I am pleased to announce that the message is getting through! The comments boxes HAVE been used. Fords home match v Waterloo 'A' states that as it was Alan's turn to drive they couldn't buy him a drink (brotherly love!) and that in their match against Waterloo 'B', Andy Armstrong played so well that none of them could give him a game. Well played Andy! Danny Every, Bootle YM, also put pen to card and says that their match with Maghull was a classic. At 5-1 down John Higham, playing Steve Woods lost the first but eventually won the set 18 ion the third. Then came the fightback 5-4 down and doubles still to play and what an exciting game it was. Steve Woods and Matty Wilson against the old timers (Danny's words, not mine) John Higham and Tom Killip. Lots of long, fast rallies, plenty of action resulting in a YM win -14, 13, 22 making the match a well earned

DIVISION THREE by Mike Power

draw. Disappointing for Maghull but what a comeback. Danny also comments that he didn't think he'd have much to say about their match with Waterloo because Waterloo were just too good. However the last set of John Higham against Mike Corcoran was such a brilliantly entertaining game it deserves a mention. Mike, hard hitting and looping. John defending off the table, then coming in to kill. Long rallies, great exhibition stuff but most of all an open and sporting game. Membership forms for the JH Fan club can be obtained from Bootle YM! he last comments are on the Bath St. v Waterloo card. Three asterisks mark the card which I assume mark the three crunch games.. From the card it seems that Tony Kendall played his games and left with his side losing 2 sets to 1. Bath St. won the doubles -16, 18, 20 to level the match. Waterloo went ahead when Mick Allen beat Colin Owens -15, 15, 20 and then Ian McElwee levelled the match at every turn to gain the draw although his win over Mick 13, -21, 19 could easily have been reversed. Not much more to say except every card tells a story.... so let's see what ours have come up with :-

Good Wins: Brenda Bouey (Colonsay 'A') bt Ted Birch (Waterloo) 16, 19. Eddie Clein (Harold House) bt Ian McElwee (Bath St 'A') 21, 11. Mike Moran (Bootle JC 'B' bt Steve Woods (Maghull) 18, 18. Eddie Crowley (GPT 'B' bt Andy Armstrong (Waterloo 'B') 18, -17, 13. Stuart Fay (Bootle JC 'A') bt Tony O'Connor (Colonsay 'A') 19, 19. Harry Johnson (Fords) bt Ricky Brown (Waterloo 'A') -18, 18, 10. Steve Woods and Matty Wilson (Maghull) bt Ian McElwee and Tony Kendall (Bath St 'A') 14, 21.

Close matches : Pete Holmes (Waterloo 'B') bt Graham Reid (Fords) -23, 11, 21. Tony Kendall (Bath St 'A') bt Danny Every (Bootle YM) 22, 19 and Alf Perry (Fords) 19, 20. Roger Neal (Bootle JC 'B') beat Fred Pheysey (Waterloo 'A') -19, 19, 19. Ray Hibbs (Waterloo 'A') bt Fred Pheysey 26, 20. Mark Barnes and Eddie Clein (Harold Hose) bt Andy Armstrong and Pete Holmes (Waterloo 'B') -22, 13, 19.

Facesavers : not many this time....only four and all were against either Waterloo or Waterloo 'A'. John Higham (Bootle YM) bt Alan Reid (Waterloo 'A') 13, 13. Bill Harris (Colonsay 'a') bt Alan Reid (Waterloo 'A') 14, 15. Mike Moran (Bootle JC 'B') bt Mick Allen (Waterloo) 16, 14. John Higham bt Mike Corcoran (Waterloo) 13, 13.

Well, the Championship looks like it's down to a three horse race between current leaders, Lab 'B', Cadwa 'B' and Police 'A'. Both Bath St. teams appear to be slipping away and would require a good run of results to get back in the frame. Labour 'B' are flying, even though they keep fielding reserves. They played no less than 3 reserves in a 10-0 drubbing over lowly Lpool Y.M. and then played with 3 completely different reserves in a 7-3 victory over Harold House. Strength in depth is always important and Labour have it in abundance but when they met Cadwa 'B' their normal full strength side turned up and ran out winners 7-3, with Steve Jones claiming his usual double against myself and Rob Davies 24/22, 21/19 and 21/15, 26/24 respectively. (Billy Hargreaves didn't play). Steve has still lost just the one to game to Roy Adams and must be regarded as a good scalp to be gained if anyone can get near to him. Another scalp would be Bobby Owens, also having lost just the one game to Gareth Jones. Bobby had a close call against Billy Hargreaves winning 21/19, 16/21, 21/19, this being Billy's only defeat. Gareth is keeping Police in the hunt with 8 wins in a row including victories over Rob Peat, Roy Adams and a close call over Steve Graham, 17/21, 23/21, 20/22.

At the other end of the table it's still Lpool Y.M. propping up the rest but they now seem to have the full time service of George Smith. This may be too late, but, hold on, Newsflash coming in, Geof Huntingdon has just turned out for them against Cadwa 'C'. For those who don't know Geof, it's no surprise as he usually plays in the 1st Division. If he plays every week with George, it may be enough and the nearby teams, namely, Cadwa 'C', Maghull 'A', Harold House and maybe Manweb 'A' better be on the lookout.

Manweb 'A', now playing with new signing Trevor Barraclough at number 2, look to be moving clear of the relegation zone. Alan Biggs can prove to be an awkward adversary to the best of them and Trevor must be one of the best number 2's in the Div. John Ashley and Alan Radcliffe give valuable support and are becoming more consistent.

Cadwa 'C' and Maghull 'A' are scrapping with each other to stay up and at the moment Maghull have the edge. When they met, Maghull clinched victory 6-4 but the game could have gone the other way. Bill Salter beat Jack Power 19/21, 21/15, 24/

22 (sorry Dad), Ray Parkinson (nice to see a new face) beat Wilf Gibson 21/17, 25/27, 18/21 and Wilf Gibson lost again to Jack 22/24, 21/17, 18/21 (you owe me £1.00 Dad). George Frost had a good night winning his 2 against Steve Graham and Jack Highton and teamed up with Wilf to win his doubles. Harry McGannity also won 2.

Manweb are about 25 points behind the promotion race and after 10 games have lost only 3 matches. A 7-3 victory over Lpool Y.M. threw up an unusual anomaly, unfortunately for George Smith. He unluckily lost both singles to John Moore and Rob Conley by identical scores, 21/19, 19/21, 23/21. Sorry George, but at least you got a mention.

Harold House have won just 2 games against fellow strugglers, Maghull 'A' 6-4 and demolished Lpool Y.M. 9-1, with Paul Morgan defeating Francis Lay 9/21, 21/16, 28/30. They drew with Manweb 'A' with Paul narrowly losing this time to Alan Biggs 19-,17,19.

Both Bath St. teams are capable of dishing out a drubbing. The 'B' team beat Cadwa 'C' 10-0 with only one game going to 3 sets, but then got on the wrong end of a 6-4 defeat by Manweb 'A'. This inconsistency is why they will be in the 3rd Div. next season. OUCH!! I must say, however, that John Watson is having a fine season. Of the 5 cards I have in my possession he has lost only twice to Ian Burrows and Steve Jones. The 'C' team has a similar record and should finish in about fifth position. They have lost only twice in twelve games and are in the semi final of the Cup. When they came to Cadwa to play my own team they ran out 6-4 winners, our only home defeat and Rob Peat wouldn't forgive me if I didn't report his win over myself I was up 10-3 in the 3rd, the game was over when, all of a sudden Rob woke up. Crash, Bang Wallop!! I lost 21/16. Don't ask me what happened, I couldn't see the ball.

Some news just in. The Maghull players think we should have dope tests. They are not sure if they themselves would pass, but I'm sure they would!!!

Finally, a thank you to Len Dyson for your comments about my last set of notes, I think you're great too!

DIVISION FOUR by Arthur Garnett

In my youth I played a variety of sports : football, cricket, basketball and competitive swimming to name but a few. How fortunate, therefore, that I found table tennis. A great game at which I found I could compete at, for me, a reasonable level. How many other sporting activities are there,

where, at 50 years of age, I can still compete with my opponents, of various ages and levels of fitness, and still enjoy each game as much, if not better, than 30 years ago. I ask the question, but I know the answer. NONE. The vast majority of players in our Division are friendly, sporting and as my record shows, a little better than me. The small minority do not fit into this because they are a lot better than me, however, it would appear that we will probably be losing these players to Division 3 come the final games in March.

Which brings me nicely to the current state of affairs in our Division. As seemed likely at an early stage in the season, two teams have run away at the top : - Waterloo 'C' and Maghull 'B'. I did indicate in the last Digest that I believed this contest would go to the wire and I still think this is the case, both teams dropping points in unexpected quarters. Wav. Lab. 'D' 4 Waterloo 'C' 6. John Reynolds, Mike Ashton and Bill Stanley picking up singles against Ro Craddock, Bill Spencer (2), with John and Tony Connor picking up a fine doubles win against Julie Prince and Ro, 21/14 in the 3rd.

GPT 'C' 3 Waterloo 'C' 7. Gammons and Bell winning singles points and then pairing up to take a doubles point from Richie Cragg and Ian Lunt.

Linacre 3 Waterloo 'C' 7. A fine double from Harry Reeve in straight sets against Julie Prince and Ro Craddock, with Julie and Ro again losing in the doubles to Harry and Jack Davidson. This match could easily have been a draw, or worse for Waterloo, three of the other matches they had won were only by two points in the 3rd set.

Of course, these results are all away from home. Is it that they don't travel too well. They can't afford to relax as Maghull 'B' are right on their tails. Talking of whom. Maghull 'B' 6 Wav. Lab. 'D' 4. John Reynolds, Mike Ashton and Bill Stanley again doing the damage with a point each, with Mike and John winning a doubles. Maghull 'B' 6 Bath St. 'D' 4. A good night for the Bath St. players, each one, Val Franco, Reg Edwards, Dave Batty and George Crowley winning a singles point. Maghull 'B' are currently lying in second place, close behind Waterloo 'C' at the top. I can't see them giving up the fight until the very end. But, sorry, I expect Waterloo to win the Division.

The two teams from Wav. Lab. have only two points separating them after 11 games, the 'E' team in 3rd with 59 points and 'D' in 4th on 57. In fact, only 12 points separate the 3rd and 9th placed

teams, with Manweb a further 4 points adrift on 43 with a couple of games in hand. I find Manweb's position surprising. I regarded them as a strong team who should have been challenging Maghull in 2nd place. I still think they'll finish in a respectable mid table position.

Maghull 'C' are adrift at the bottom and seem a certainty for Division 5 next season. The big question is, if two are relegated, who will be the other team? Looking at the average points per game, it would point to GPT 'C' with an average of exactly 4 per game from 12 played, but 'its a funny old game Saint' and anything can happen in the next couple of months. The two teams from Wav. Lab. Linacre, Police, Bath Street, G.P.T., Bootle Y.M. and Manweb all look quite evenly matched, but I think Bootle Y.M. will probably come out on top of the 'also rans' and take 3rd place. We shall see.

Who is the player that no-one seems to like to play against and why? EDDIE PRESTON plays at number one for Bootle Y.M.C.A. He always gives one hundred and ten per cent, fights every point to the bitter end, hates to lose but more often wins. His enthusiasm and commitment would be a bonus to any team and I can't praise his efforts highly enough. Eddie, that's a pint next time!!

TALKING POINT What time did your last match finish? Was it well after 11.00 p.m? I started in the Liverpool League in the mid sixties. The majority of the players in the League at that time did not have their own transport apart from the odd bike and made their way to venues by public transport. The starting times for matches then was 7.30 p.m. and I would hazard a guess it has been 7.30 p.m. for a very long time.

Times though have changed. The working hours in the 1990's allow people to finish work earlier than ever. Nearly everyone has their own transport. I don't know of anybody who travels to venues by public transport but still we have a starting time of 7.30 p.m. I think it's time for a change. Let's have matches starting at 7.00 p.m. Think of the advantage in doing this : An extra 30 minutes at the end of each match where necessary, but in most cases, a match finishing 30 minutes earlier. Tell me what you think next time you see me, or better still, write to the Digest with your opinion. P.S. Many thanks to Waterloo for the convivial atmosphere at the end of our match in the week

before Christmas. The wine and the butties were a perfect finale to our 10-0 'stuffing'.

DIVISION FIVE

by James Power

Happy New Year! After recovering from the Christmas break some teams came out fighting whereas others obviously thought it was still Christmas!

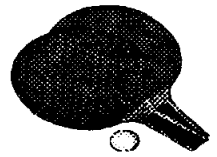
Having reached the halfway mark in the season it looks to be a two horse race with Waterloo 'D' out in front by a neck. Harold House 'B' are a fine second having steadily climbed the table by increasing the margin of their victories to earn better points. Bath St. 'E' remain stuck in 3rd place some 20 or so points behind. 20 points is a large margin when you consider that the points difference between 3rd and last place is 35 points. It may be too late to stop the two top teams but there is a lot of pride at stake lower down the order. Aigburth are only a point behind Bath St. 'E' at the time of writing. Every other team is separated by about 5 points from their neighbours with the exception of Aigburth 'A' and Y.M. 'B' both on 26 points, with Y.M. having played 1 more game.

L.I.H.E. stand just above Harold House 'C' who still remain in 10th and 11th place. L.I.H.E. have been unlucky not to record their first win of the season yet, so far they have only managed 1 draw. Only Waterloo 'D' have the distinction of being the only team yet to record a loss. Harold House could spoil the party being a slim 4 points behind, although they have played 1 more game. Waterloo have performed consistently and well. Although points have been taken from them with fine individual performances : Steve Perry beating Waterloo 'D' No 1 Ken Nelson in the third. John Hodges did exactly the same thing for Harold House and also beat Ian Lunt to record a fine singles double over Waterloo. Unfortunately for Harold House 'B', all this did was to limit the damage of their loss to 7-3 away from home, while also erasing their unbeaten record, this being their first defeat.

Looking at the middle of the table anything could still happen. Wav. Lab. 'F' lie in 5th, with Colonsay 'B', Maghull, Aigburth 'A' and Y.M. 'B' occupying 6th to 9th place. Wav Lab 'F' have recorded too many draws in recent matches to

TABLE EDGES, NETS & ECHOES OF THE PAST

Congratulations to the boys at Linacre who celebrate their Golden Anniversary this year. It was in 1946, when, after playing together for some seasons in the LBA League, and after forming and governing Linacre Boys Club, that five enthusiasts joined together and formed the Linacre Club. Two of those founder members, Jack Davidson and Frank Lacey are still going strong and must hold some kind of record. In April 1965 an article in the Digest reported that Frank had recorded his 500th win in the League, from 782 games played. What's the score now Frank ?



Congratulations to Tom Purcell and Mabel Neary who have successfully completed Parts I and II of their County Umpires Test.

After doing so well to reach every final except the Juniors, Liverpool players failed to win any of the titles in the North West Champions Finals at the Ninex Arena. To be fair to the players they were really messed about by the ETTA and ended up playing in very poor light while the equipment was being put away. The Men's Singles event was won by Paul Hutchings (representing Wigan), while Claire Newns (representing Cheshire) was Ladies champion.

Liverpool entertain Wigan, led by Paul Hutchings, in the Lancashire & Cheshire League on Friday 23rd February, while the Veteran's 'A' team entertain division 3 leaders Preston 'A' in what amounts to a title decider. Watch the Echo for more details or contact Don Davies or Alan Chase.

What about the upset in the Readman semi-final ! YMCA qualified for the final after one set when Pat McLouglin beat the ineligible Andy Taylor. I bet Ken was fuming at such a silly mistake.

A busy time lies in store for League Officials, ensuring a couple attend at every cup final. If you can help out at umpiring at any of the matches, please contact Mike Power. It doesn't seem right for players appearing on the big night to have to umpire.

Fred Bainbridge will down many a pint telling his story of how he beat Keith Williams in the recent CADWA / Bath St. encounter. Call in at the Childwall Abbey when the Crosby team are on that side of town and check it out, if you dare. Joking apart, you wont see a poor players don't beat the six times champion. Well done Fred!!

Roy Smith was also up to his old tricks in the Readman Cup semi-final against CADWA. Trailing Kevin Dolder 8-0 in the decider, the Labour Veteran took 12 points in a row and dropped just 4 more to claim yet another famous scalp.

Local players fare well in the latest ETTA Ranking List with Paul Hutchings rising from 110 to 105 and Bernie Wentworth jumping 16 places to 106 in the Men's list. Stuart Richards moves up three to 124 with Keith Williams, albeit on limited play, at 149 and team-mate Kevin Dolder four places lower.

The Ladies list has Brenda Buocoy and Paula French at 95 and 103 respectively and their Colonsay club mate Claire Newns rises to 31, the highest non veteran player in Cheshire. Natasha Williams (CADWA) is listed at 8a, for tournament organisers, to avoid the possibility of her meeting a highly ranked player in the early rounds of a tournament and causing an upset.

In the Veteran's list Dave Roberts is at 48, with Sylvia Graham at 34 in the Ladies section and Mabel Neary at 46. Former English Electric and Liverpool ace Tony Clayton is at 6, Muriel Cox, a Liverpool player and N.P.C. being listed at 65.

Editor's Comment : News from the lower divisions would be appreciated. Please drop me a line or give me a call with any snippets of information you may have!

THE BILL STAMP YEARS

While Les. Forrest will be remembered historically as the founder of the League, Bill Stamp will be remembered as the builder, for his enthusiasm and tremendous organising ability, particularly after the war, built the league once again into a major force.

When Bill took over as Secretary in 1937, Liverpool boasted a dozen internationals. Amazingly, 10 of these were members of the same club, Clubmoor, the men's 1st team consisting of: Cecil, Eric and Ken Hyde, and Peter and Ted Rumjahn - all England internationals, and Fred Bamford, a Welsh international.

The Clubmoor Ladies team was equally impressive consisting of England internationals: Joyce Bartholomew, Rita Doolan, Edie Malley and Nora Norrish.

The war put a halt to the advancing standards of table tennis in Liverpool, but to the credit of Bill Stamp and Chairman, Mr Brandreth, the League activities continued under the Emergency War rules.

During the war, Ron Rumjahn was emerging as a good player. He twice won the Men's title at the depleted Liverpool Closed tournament and after the war, sustained his promise, retaining the title for five years in succession and gaining international honours.

The ending of the war brought increased optimism and guided by Bill Stamp, the league began to grow again. Several clubs, including top club, Clubmoor had been bombed out of existence, and returning players were looking for new clubs to join.

The top clubs and individuals at the time included Bootle YMCA, with Gordon Brownley and promising junior Ralph Gunnion. Great Crosby, with Bill Pierce, Bernard Hand, Chris Cougan and Joe Watts. Balfour, with Les Davies, Reg Hetherington, Norman Jones and Les Mullholland. Rafters, with the three Rumjahn brothers along with Jack McCaig and Eric Card.

There is no doubt that after the war, Liverpool was no longer the force it had been. Ken Hyde did not take up the bat again and although Don Foulis and the Rumjahn brothers remained, there

were too few top class players emerging.

Pimpled bats and orthodox play were still the vogue but as the net had now been dropped to six inches, more attacking players were produced. The new service rule was causing problems as the finger spin service was now illegal, the ball having to rest on the palm of the hand.

In 1947, the Committee secured an option on premises in Smithfield Street, capable of holding 10 tables, for a league headquarters. The cost would have meant every member paying 2/- a month statutory membership and at the AGM of that year, the headquarters plan was defeated, with 40 votes for, 37 against. (3/4 majority was needed)

Many people consider that this is a major factor why Liverpool has not produced the class of player it did before the war. With no centre of excellence where the best and up and coming players could practice, the standard of play was never going to progress beyond a certain level. Apart from Ron Rumjahn, the only other Liverpool internationals since the war were Ralph Gunnion and Bill Pierce (Junior international).

From his little office in the Refuge and Incineration yard in Smithdown Road, assisted by his wife, Nan, Bill Stamp used to organise coach trips full of Liverpool players and supporters, to the various northern tournaments and Welsh Open Championships. Peter Rumjahn recalls one such coach trip to the North Wales Open, where he won the Men's Doubles title and received six bottles of pickles as his prize, which were duly distributed and consumed by the coach party.

Bill was also the force behind the successful running of the Merseyside Open tournaments and he used to invite the world's top players to take part. These tournaments were also great social occasions with visiting players being accommodated for a couple of nights at the homes of Liverpool players. The Rumjahn household appeared to be the place to be as, apart from having a TT table they boasted a piano, and after the finals the gatherings would go on till the small hours.

Bill carried out his duty with tremendous enthusiasm until his untimely death in 1956, when John McKim took over as Secretary, not realising, I'm sure that he would remain in post for 37 years!

With thanks to Peter Rumjahn

Tony Harris

YOUR LETTERS

Dear Editor,

The article on top Liverpool players was very interesting and mentioned most of those I would have nominated but for me there were two outstanding omissions. The first being Ron Rumjahn, surely one of the best players produced by Liverpool and a credit to the game. Along with Peter and Ted, they ensured the Rumjahn name would be enshrined in Liverpool league annals.

The other was Arthur Taylor, a brilliant talent from Litherland Boys Club. When Arthur was at his best, few could live with him and he is well worthy of inclusion in any Liverpool Top Ten. That's my pennyworth. I hope other players will write in with their selections.

Yours

Frank Lacey (Linacre)

Editors Comment : I am mortified. For years I have tried without success to invoke a response by being as controversial as possible. Now, a straight forward article from Don has had the desired result. Thanks for airing your views Frank. Any more takers?

CONGRATULATIONS !

Dear Editor,

It is possibly now generally known that Ken Armson was awarded the M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours in recognition of a lifetime of devoted service to the Railways and in particular his role as a respected Trade Union Official.

Nevertheless, I am sure that the League membership would wish to be associated with the many expressions of congratulations which Ken has deservedly received, and on their behalf I am pleased to avail myself of the use of the Digest to do so. Well done, Ken!

Arthur Upton
President / Chairman

Dear Editor,

About our magazine. I know it is a burden on our finances but to myself and many others it is well worth it. Where else would we get news from each Division and other snippets of T.T. info. Keep up



the good work and long may it reign.

On a personal note, the lads from Linacre were sorry to hear of the death of Sandy Sanderson. Our memories of Sandy go back to our early days in the League when Jack Lambert, Lack Longstaffe, Eric Smitton and Sandy made us battle for every point.

Frank Lacey

STOP PRESS!!!

As from Monday 19th February, the Junior coaching sessions at the Picton Sports Centre will be held on a **Monday, between 4 - 6 p.m.**

Your help for just 2 hours a week would be appreciated.

Why not bring along a couple of kids, sons, daughters, nephews, nieces etc.

You never know, you might just enjoy yourself!!

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.

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

Div 5 notes (continued from page 7)

make any real progress. With only three players due to illness they earned yet another draw against Colonsay 'B', who are improving all the time.

With time running short, any hopes of catching the top two must surely be fading. Waterloo 'D' are still the Newcastle United of Division 5, maybe the rest of us will settle for Man Utd or Liverpool. At least our Bolton Wanderers can try again next season! Best wishes and good luck for the rest of the season.

P.S. Congratulations to Ken Armson M.B.E.

DIVISION 1	P	W	L	D	PTS
COLONSAY	14	13	1	0	115
CADWA	15	13	1	1	115
WAV. LABOUR	13	11	2	0	97
G.P.T.	15	8	5	2	84
BATH ST.	16	8	7	1	80
LPOOL. Y.M.C.A.	13	6	5	2	61
WAV. LABOUR 'A'	14	5	7	2	61
BOOTLE J.C.	12	7	5	0	57
LPOOL. Y.M.C.A.'A'	14	2	10	2	54
POLICE	14	3	10	1	50
CADWA 'A'	13	2	10	1	39
G.P.T. 'A'	13	0	13	0	17

DIVISION 4	P	W	L	D	PTS
WATERLOO 'C'	12	12	0	0	98
MAGHULL 'B'	13	10	2	1	89
BOOTLE Y.M.C.A. 'A'	12	8	3	1	68
LINACRE	13	5	5	3	67
BATH ST. 'D'	12	5	6	1	62
WAV. LABOUR 'E'	12	6	5	1	60
POLICE 'B'	14	5	8	1	60
WAV. LABOUR 'D'	12	2	6	4	57
G.P.T.'C'	13	2	8	3	52
MANWEB 'B'	11	4	5	2	49
MAGHULL 'C'	13	0	12	1	18

DIVISION 2	P	W	L	D	PTS
WATERLOO	13	9	1	3	95
BATH ST. 'A'	14	12	2	1	94
WATERLOO 'A'	13	8	2	3	84
BOOTLE J.C. 'A'	16	7	8	1	76
MAGHULL	15	4	7	4	72
FORDS	15	6	6	3	71
HAROLD HOUSE	10	7	2	1	62
WATERLOO 'B'	15	3	10	2	62
COLONSAY 'A'	14	7	7	0	59
BOOTLE J.C. 'A'	12	3	8	1	55
G.P.T. 'B'	15	4	9	2	49
BOOTLE Y.M.C.A.	14	2	9	3	48

DIVISION 5	P	W	L	D	PTS
WATERLOO 'D'	12	12	0	0	103
AIGBURTH	14	9	2	3	96
HAROLD HOUSE 'B'	13	12	1	0	95
WAV. LABOUR 'F'	14	6	5	3	78
BATH ST. 'E'	14	6	6	2	75
MAGHULL 'D'	13	5	8	0	60
AIGBURTH 'A'	13	5	7	1	53
COLONSAY 'B'	14	3	9	2	49
BOOTLE YMCA 'B'	14	3	10	1	45
L.I.H.E.	9	0	8	1	20
POLICE 'C'					

Record Expunged

DIVISION 3	P	W	L	D	PTS
WAV. LABOUR 'B'	15	12	0	3	107
CADWA 'B'	15	10	3	2	95
BATH ST. 'B'	16	9	5	2	92
POLICE 'A'	14	7	2	5	82
MANWEB	16	7	5	4	81
BATH ST. 'C'	13	7	3	3	78
WAV. LABOUR 'C'	15	6	5	4	78
MANWEB 'A'	16	5	9	2	71
MAGHULL 'A'	15	3	9	3	59
HAROLD HOUSE 'A'	15	3	11	1	54
CADWA 'C'	15	2	12	1	54
LPOOL. Y.M.C.A. 'B'	12	2	9	1	34



SOCIAL &

PRESENTATION EVENING

L.B.H.T.T.L. M.P.T.T.S. L.&D.T.T.L.

at: **Fairfield Police Club**
on: **Friday 26th April, 1996**
commencing at 8.00 p.m.

Comedian **MICKEY FINN**

Top Trio **S C R E A M**

and **Toms Blue Ice Disco**

FOOD AVAILABLE BAR TILL 1 A.M.

Tickets Just **£5.00** from
Arthur Knowlson, Ken Arneon
or your Club Secretary



Presentations commence 8.30 p.m. prompt

