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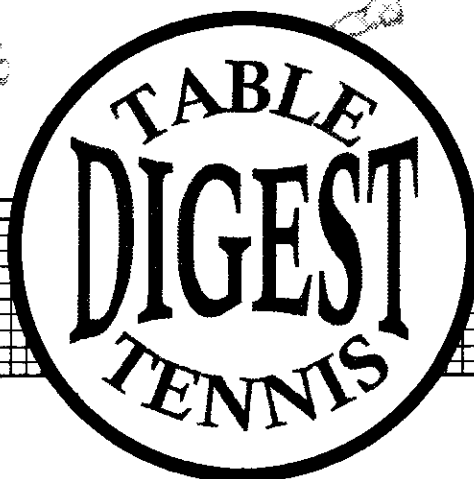
No. 1

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LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT
TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE



Season 2002 - 2003



Web Site. WWW.Liverpooltt.Freeserve.co.uk

EDITORIAL

Another season well under way, we have been through quite an eventful summer, with table tennis getting a major boost from taking part in a very successful Commonwealth games at Manchester, with England having won Gold for the Men's Team, the Men's Doubles and the Women's Singles wheelchair events, in fact, well done to all who took part.

The European Youth Championships were played in Moscow, with an improved performance from the England team over last years. The World Schools Teams events took place in Slovakia, best English Boys team finishing 6th, and the best English Girls team 4th. There has been an increase in the number of counties affiliated to the English Schools T.T.A. to 42, so schools everywhere are treating table tennis as a very important sport. Liverpool Schools are trying to move forward in this aspect, but as mentioned so many times, are held back by lack of volunteers to coach in the schools, so we are looking for more players who are willing to give up a small amount of their free time to help. As the sessions are usually straight after school, i.e. 15-30 to 17-00, more suited to the many retired players, (but not just) who are looking for a little extra to do. More information on this can be had from Ken Armson MBE on 0151 486 3073.

We had the Liverpool Butterfly Grand Prix held at the Wavertree Tennis Centre, with a record entry of 280. England No.9 Bradley Billington beating Ryan Jenkins of Wales 4-1 in the Final of the Men's Singles. Local players, Kevin Dolder, losing to Ryan Jenkins in the semi of the men's singles, (but did win the Men's Band 1 singles), Keith Williams overcoming Chris Ford in the final of the Veterans singles, and Bootle JC's Cherith Graham winning the Ladies Band 2 singles final. The Grand Prix was organized from the L&DTTL end by Ken Armson MBE and Arthur Garnett, (and I'm sure, many others). The first Major competition to use the new Service Rule.

We also had the World Veterans Championships in Lucerne, Switzerland, where English players won 4 event Gold Medals. Les Darcy (Yorkshire) won the "over 80's" singles, Derek Schofield (Cheshire) lost in the final of the "over 70's", Pam Butcher (Kent) lost in the final of the "over 70's" women's singles. "AGE", "OLD", "World Champion at 80" in an active sport, the world is changing and people are active much longer.

EDITOR

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Some of our top local players have moved about, joining new clubs, which should open up the top of the table to more competition, and give them a chance to play each other more competitively.

The new Service Rule is now in operation, for anyone who hasn't seen this, or been told about it, there is an article by Ken Armson MBE printed on page 20, Item 2.6.3. made me think hard, "The Ball, after passing over OR around, the net assembly, touches directly the receivers court". The equivalent of a David Beckham bender, I suppose this is in case technology and skills change, or is it happening already !!

Don Davies has started the Season again with his reports in the Liverpool Echo, and now also on the L&DTTL Web site, so keep an eye on them. Mention of the web site, John Langton is still keeping it up to date, and Paula is getting the up to date League Tables to John for uploading, so, all in all we are trying to keep you as up to-date as possible, but this is so dependant on the match cards being sent to Paula ASAP to start the ball rolling, so keep watching and reading.

Our local top stars are playing in the National British League in the Premier League, under the name of The Seasideers, they were promoted last season, now the travelling is country wide for intensive weekend battles, they are currently 2nd. To London Progress, which could be said to be near professional in make up, so it's quite an achievement, well worth watching at this level if the chance comes.

I'm rushing now to finish this for the printing, someone said to me once "do people actually read all the Digest or just look for their names in the Div. Reports ???" hopefully they take the time to read it all I thought.

My thanks to all the Div. writers for their effort, I know that time is at a premium, and all the other contributors for their contributions.

City of Liverpool 4 Star Junior Championships at the Greenbank Sports Academy



Bradley Evans (Bucks.)
Winner Junior Boy's singles

All presentations performed
by
Mr. Arthur Upton

**President of the Liverpool
& District Table Tennis League**
31st. Nov-1st. Dec. 2002

Band of Brothers

BRADLEY EVANS swept through the field in the Cadet Boy's singles in the City of Liverpool Junior Open at the weekend.

The England No.14 from Bucks. had to dispose of brother Myles in the last eight before overcoming another brother, Gavin, in the semi-final, he then crushed Durham player David Meads in the final.

Another sibling clash occurred in the under-13 boys' singles when Gavin Evans overcame Myles in round two and then beat Scotland's Craig Howieson in the final.

Wirkenhead's Haley Parker turned in a fine performance on Saturday, beating Scotland's Jenny Galloway in the Band 1 Girl's singles final in addition to capturing the Cadet Girl's singles title.

For the second day in succession Gavin Evans lost to brother Bradley, this time in the semi-finals of the Junior Boy's singles, after earlier overcoming his other sibling Myles in the last 16. Bradley went on to win the title after ousting Cheshire's Tom Page in the final.

Gavin, who is tipped to play for England at senior level, was successful in the Junior Band 1 singles, beating Durham's Simon Donnelly.

Report from Don Davies

It's amazing the friendliness at these Junior tournaments, even though the players and families / coaches may be from far flung corners of the country, involving a lot of traveling, there's a general comaraderie throughout, everyone seems to know everyone else. Due to the National rankings being based on points gained at tournaments and important matches, to move up the rankings you have to travel, having said that, I'm sure they all enjoy it, only trouble is, 'school the next day'

Editor.



Gavin Evans (Bucks)
Winner U-13's Boy's singles



Haley Parker (Cheshire)
Winner Cadet Girl's singles



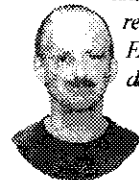
Tom Page (Cheshire)

Match Secretary's Report from Don Davies

With the men and junior teams' playing their respective matches over two weekends, there aren't as many matches as usual to report on.



In the opening Premier Division group matches at the Hilton Centre in Harwich, Kevin Dolder, Paul Hutchings and John Rankin emerged with a 100% record via victories over Halton, Bury, Mid Cheshire and Blackpool. In what was a very successful and well organised (by Tony Meredith) event, it remains to be seen whether the Ladies' and Veterans' will opt to stage their respective matches in this manner. The ETTA calendar is bursting with events but dates need to be found since many, including myself, believe this is the way forward, for representative play,



When the second and final stage is played in January, the men must beat Oldham, Manchester and Bolton if the title is to be claimed for the eighth year in succession. The A team re-entered the league after a number of years and completed the three division 2 matches in second place behind hosts Lancaster and Morecambe.



Unfortunately, what amounts to the title decider in the Ladies Premier Division ended in defeat to the 1999/2000 champions Wirral. At 11-30 on the morning of the match, I received a call from Brenda Buoeuy advising that she couldn't play due to a recurrence of a long standing back injury. With Sue Burgess unwell and Julie Prince unavailable at such short notice, I called on Wavertree Labour's Stephanie Howard. There cannot be many instances of a mother and two daughters participating in the same city team particularly at this level of play. Clara Howard beat Terri-Ann Nolan and Gemma Lloyd and while sister Alice beat Clare News, that was all we could muster.

In the National League' Championships, the men had to travel for the second time in three years to Nottingham where they played a four teams round robin, the top two qualifying for round two. With Kevin working and Keith Williams in a tournament, John Rankin and Paul Hutchings were joined by Paul O'Donnell - who won a

set in two of the wins - in matches against Potteries, Leicester and hosts Nottingham. Victories in all three outings ensured qualification for round two in April.



The Ladies' team was drawn against 13 times winners' Wolverhampton, hosts Wirral and Birmingham. Two days before the matches, Brenda was again forced to drop out and when we asked Cherith Graham, who plays for Southport as & junior, if she would play, she instantly agreed. She made a tremendous debut, beating Terri-Ann Nolan and Gemma Lloyd - the pair also falling to Alice Howard. With the match score at 4-4 in the last set of the day, Clara Howard and Gemma went toe to toe and at 9-9, it couldn't have been closer. Twelve more points were needed though to determine which team would finish on top of the group and it was the Wirral player who edged home, 16-14. Both leagues' however progress into the penultimate round in April, when if successful, would qualify for the Knowsley finals' next May.



The Liverpool Ladies team which started the 2002-03 season off with a match against Manchester Ladies, Liverpool winning 7-3 at Liverpool YMCA.

From L. to R. Brenda Buoeuy, Clara Howard and Alice Howard. The City and County games are well worth watching if ever you have a free night.

New European League- Men

Emphatic 3-0 win for England Men against Israel at Liverpool

England men had an emphatic 3-0 victory in their European League First Division match with Israel at the Greenbank Sports Academy, Liverpool, but it was much closer



England Team.

Alan Cooke, Coach
Andrew Rushton, Lancs.
Terry Young, Berks.
Gareth Herbert, Berks.

Match Officials

Karen Tonge, Referee
Stan Clark, umpire
Steve Perry, umpire

Israel Team

Gay Alensky
Ron Davidovich
Yaniv Sharon

Match Report
by ETTA

Gareth Herbert (Slough, Berkshire), 21, the in-form England No 2, started very slowly against the 19 year old Israel national champion Gay Alensky, and was soon 2 games down. He then struggled to take the 3rd and 4th games, before playing strongly to comfortably win the fifth, triumphing 2-11, 7-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-5.

Then Terry Young (Maidenhead, Berkshire), a late call-up following his superb win over the top seed Chen Weixing (Austria) at the Ocean International Sussex Open Butterfly Grand Prix at Horsham on Sunday, avenged his narrow loss to Yaniv Sharon when England last faced Israel two years ago, getting the closest of verdicts 11-7, 3-11, 7-11,

11-9, 12-10 over the Israeli No 1 this time. In fact Young led 10-7 in the deciding game, but only clinched it on his 4th match point.

Making his home European League match debut, a highly motivated Andrew Rushton (Lancashire) produced a workmanlike demolition of the Israeli substitute, Ron Davidovich, the 19 year old Mancunian winning 11-3, 11-1, 11-6 to give England the match.

A very pleased England coach, Alan Cooke, commented, "In the early stages it seemed that we could have been 2-0 down, but all three lads responded to the challenge, leading to this excellent score-line finish".

England V Israel at the Greenbank Academy, Liverpool 12/11/02

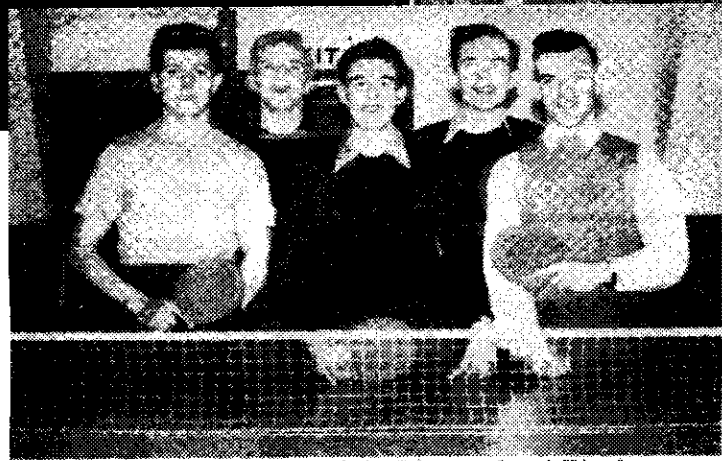
It was the first time I've seen a live game at this level (other than the Commonwealth Games recently), and two things struck me most of all, one was the lack of support, which I am sure must have been a bit of a disappointment to the Liverpool City Council Sports People who organised this match directly with The ETTA. The City Council supports our league with various funding, mainly directed to the younger element of the game, but nevertheless, the future of the game, so more support from the general playing fraternity would have been appreciated. There did seem to have been a general lack of publicity, but I am sure most Clubs must have been aware that the match was being played, as our league had publicised it well.

The second was disappointment in that only 3 sets were played, 2 of five games and one of 3 games, 11up, with very few rallies, as the match was the best of Five, So England winning 3-0. was 2 points in the bag, match over in about an hours actual play, and me (and others) £5 lighter. The notion was that going 11up would be more exciting for the watchers, my suggestion would be that they play at least 5 sets each match, with a point to play for each set, so that every set is important. As players, we all know that "exciting games" can't be turned on and off like a tap, it depends on the opposing styles and quality of the players, and to win the points is the main objective of the players, but making sure that the supporters, (especially if paying) don't go away feeling a bit "miffed" is within the control of the rule makers.

EDITORS thoughts only, but I'm sure not alone in thinking along these lines



Here's two photo's for the old brigade to think about, they have come from the archives of an earlier era at Bootle YMCA. The Div. 2 champions photo was in a 1956-57 YM. Program lent by Don Davies, the other shown to me by the current YM. Staff, Doug Ward, who was the regular YM photographer is still a member of the Bootle YM. So I'm hoping he has a few more of these oldies to browse through.



John Higham thinks the other photo is a City match, he can name most of the players, so put your heads together and see if we can put names and clubs to all the faces.

I hope the final printout will be clear enough as they are old photo's !!

Undefeated Champions of the Liverpool and District
Circa 1956-57 Table Tennis League (Div. 2.) [Photo. by Doug. Ward]

If you want to see lots of old Photo's from the heyday of the Liverpool Table Tennis scene, and the national scene as well, Tony Harris's book "SEVENTY FIVE NOT OUT" is a must buy, (a present off the family for those who already have everything), Tony (Police TT. Club) can be contacted on 01744 730644 or tony@harris316.fsnet.co.uk

VIDEO REVIEW

SELF-STYLED hustler, champion of the hard bat game and a lifelong gadfly to the US authorities Marty Reisman is the subject of a British-made video due out this month (November).

Reisman, now 72, is still a competitive player at national level in the US hardbat rankings. But it is his colourful career up to now which is the focus of 'The Marty Reisman Story,' an hour-long video produced by Liverpool company Northern River Productions.

The video recounts Reisman's phenomenal success as a young table tennis star, his post-war visits to England including his epic win over Viktor Barna in the British Open at Wembley - and the money matches that went on behind the scenes along with Reisman's penchant for smuggling and blackmail!

Later our hero graduated from smuggling nylons into Britain to carrying gold ingots for Far East cartels in a specially-made vest while touring as a celebrated American table tennis star.

Reisman shows no sign of slowing down. "I've had a fantastic life so far -and I still can't wait to see what my next challenge will be," he says. "Through table tennis I have been round the world several times, met the Pope, princes and potentates, I've never had what you might call a proper job, and I've loved every minute. I'm still active as a player and coach and I can't wait to see how good I am when I'm 80!"

As a world championship contender Reisman's potential was dealt a savage blow by the appearance of the sponge bat in the 1950s. Refusing to abandon his wooden paddle he took a conscious decision to let the sponge-dominated game make its own way - while he continued to champion the hardbat game in his own unique style.

The Marty Reisman Story,' narrated by BBC Radio 5 Live commentator Charlie Lambert, is available from Northern River Productions, 30 Gladstone Road, Liverpool L19 1RR, price £19.95 inclusive of vat, p& p. More details at www.northernriver.co.uk or phone 0151 427 5050.

Preparing these notes must be getting to me. The other night I actually dreamt that I died and went to heaven. At the Pearly Gates I'm met by St. Peter who tells me that he is prepared to let me in on the condition that I do two years penance in payment for all the years of 'nasty digest comments.' He then tells me that I have to do the penance with this woman. At this point the most hideously deformed, smelly, gossiping woman appears. I reluctantly accept. St. Peter then leads me into a vast room filled with white-robed couples, chatting and laughing. Sweet music fills the air and angels and cherubs flutter about. Suddenly I see Eddie Clein arm in arm with a beautiful model. "What's going on?" I say to St. Peter. "How come I get two years with this hag whilst he gets to cavort with a beautiful model?" "Steady on," says St. Peter, "let me explain. That's not Eddie doing his penance, it's the model doing hers."

A warm welcome to one and all for the new season, which already promises to churn out a few surprises. The closed season has produced some interesting transfers. Paul Hutchings is now playing closer to home by signing for Maghuil whilst Keith Williams, and I'm led to believe Wayne Percival, have been given the honour of signing on for Waterloo. Neither of these players are playing on a regular basis but nevertheless when they do play, will uncharacteristically impact more on the relegation battles than that of the Championship.



It is Keith's transfer, which I believe will play a more significant role in determining who wins the league. Cadwa's loss, it would appear, is now Liverpool YM's gain as it is YM who to date have taken up the gauntlet and have started the season at a furious pace. Their first game was, ironically, against Waterloo who were without their summer signings. YM were 8-2 winners with Peter Lee remaining unbeaten whilst Waterloo's two points came from a good win by Alan Chase over Omid Khaiyat and a doubles win for Alan / Ted Birch against Peter / Dele Olyumbo.

YM's 8-2 win over Cadwa 'A' continued their good form and it was only Ken Hartley who could impact on the scoreline by beating Omid and Dele. Bath St.'s Kenny Jackson, not surprisingly, went one better by winning all three and was further supported by a good win for Fred Bainbridge over Omid. The final result being 6-4 to YM. Bath St 'A' unfortunately could not reiterate their first teams performance and only managed one point from their encounter, with Ian McElwee beating Dele.

Harold House, like YM, have also yet to lose and are only 7 points off the top. Their opening game against newly promoted Manweb produced a 8-2 win with Manweb's Dave Harse beating Ray Jackson and then teaming up with Ray Parkinson for a good doubles win. Harold House must have been pinching themselves when the Cadwa first team turned up with a reserve and also playing one short (probably waiting for Keith). Not even Peter Taylor could impact on the 9-1 defeat, Wavertree were their next opponents and they proved to be made of stronger stuff, mainly because there were three of them. Roy Smith I'm told, now wait for it, is playing with NEW rubber. Don't quote me on it, in fact it's probably the most libel thing I've ever written but if it's true it contributed to Roy winning all his three in two straight against the H.H. boys.

Eddie Clein had a good straight win over Alice Howard but the match of the night was Steve Whalley's win over Phil Luxon which produced 98 points in the first two games - 26/28 - 21/23 - 21/11. Apparently Phil played part of the match unaware that his 'fly zip' was down. When he discovered this I'm told that he coolly turned to Alice and said, "Don't worry you're perfectly safe. The cage may be open but the beast is asleep". I thought that the more accurate analogy for Phil would be "a dead bird never falls out of it's nest."

Bath Street's 1st team take up the third spot and as always rely upon Kenny Jackson to lead the way. Kenny's hat tricks against Cadwa 'A' and the Cadwa 1st team produced different results. An 8-2

win over Cadwa 'A' was only marred by Ken Hartley's defeat over Fred whilst Kenny's efforts against the 1st team couldn't prevent a 6 - 4 defeat. This match saw Mike Mahoney having a terrific game and win against Ian McElwee, just pinching it 19 in the 3rd. Eddie Crowley did however go on to avenge Ian by beating Mike two straight. Kenny's winning ways were put to an abrupt end when he faced Manweb's prodigal son Les Molyneux who went on to win all his three. Brenda Buoeay conversly had a miserable night losing all three but was close against Dave Harse 20 in the 3rd. A good 7 - 3 win for Manweb.

Division two Champions L'Pool YM 'A' are having their best start in this division for many a good year. The team of Ahmed Thabet, Tony Whelan and Paul O'Donnell is certainly good enough to justify it's position and if anything is now living up to the potential that the team always possessed but which unfortunately was seldomly displayed during the season.

Paul O'Donnell took no prisoners against Bath St. 'A' winning all three two straight, giving his team a 6-4 win. Paul's luck ran out against Maghull's Fred Pheysey and the YM team were unfortunate that Maghull had Paul Hutchings available on this occasion who helped secure a 7 - 3 win. Ahmed and Tony recovered for their next game by both beating Cadwa's Peter Taylor but again Kevin Dolder made the difference forcing YM to settle for the draw. The points were once again shared when YM played Wavertree with 7 of the matches going to three. Ahmed had a good win over Dave Roberts who in turn beat Tony and Paul O'Donnell in three. Roy Smith

lost comfortably to Tony Whelan who then lost in 3 against Phil Luxon. Phil then went on to have a cracker against Paul losing 20/22 in the 3rd.

The Police team are plodding along nicely. We share a common problem with the likes of Maghull and Waterloo in that our star player, John Rankin, also has other table tennis commitments which prevent him playing on a regular basis. John has recently returned home from Germany having represented the British Police in the Police European Championships. Apart from the ping pong John told me that the hosts spoil them rotten taking them out on day trips which also included an evening in the 'Red Light' area. This got me thinking. Do you know that every single brothel that I've ever been in, not one of them has sold a decent bowl of soup.

John did however turn out against Maghull which included Paul Hutchings in the line up. Neither players on either team troubled John or Paul and I think that all remaining players were looking forward to their clash. Paul however was not really firing on all cylinders and this coupled with the fact that John was absolutely buzzing made for a one sided event with John taking both games in comfort, the match ending 7-3 in our favour. Harold House featured next and although we were disappointed with a 6 - 4 defeat, we had to take our hats off to Eddie Clein (even though he keeps his on) who walked away unscathed on the night. Ken Connor and Steve Gittins had an epic match with Steve eventually taking it 26/24 in the 3rd.

Terri - Ann Nolan and Gemma Lloyd are again proving their weight in gold when called upon. Terri - Ann had a great win over Bath St's Fred Bainbridge, whilst Gemma equaled this achievement with a splendid win against Cadwa'A's Ken Hartley. Both matches ending 4-6, 6-4 respectively. Our match against Waterloo also gave Jon Dyson the opportunity to make some headlines by first beating Mick Allen and then going on to beat Alan Chase 23/21 in the 3rd. Steve had a good night by winning all three whilst I had to be satisfied with a win over Mick.

Wavertree Labour are also amongst the middle runners and in my view should be pushing the likes of the YM for the Championship. To me Wav Lab's squad of Dave Roberts, Roy Smith, Alice Howard and Phil Luxon is ideal to challenge for this seasons wide open title. A 6 - 4 defeat to Maghull hasn't helped the cause. Again Paul Hutchins being influential by taking all 3 but on this occasion ably assisted by Steve Woods who had good wins against Alice and Phil. Even more damaging was the 8-2 defeat at the hands of a Keith William's Waterloo where poor Dave had a nightmare evening losing out to Keith, Alan Chase and Ted Birch. The team did however get back to winning ways with a 7-3 win over Cadwa'A'. Dave soon recovered from his earlier nightmare by winning all his three on this occasion. Ken Hartley did salvage some points with two good wins over Alice and Roy, and then combined later with Mike Power to beat the same pair in the doubles.

The Bath St 'A' team of Ian McElwee, Clare Newns and Eddie Crowley have only won one to date but apart from the 9-1 thrashing by YM, all the other results have been close. A 4 - 6 defeat in the derby saw Ken taking all three whilst Fred Bainbridge had a good win over Ian McElwee. Fred did however lose out to Clare and Eddie, this last one going to 19 in the 3rd. Bath St 'A' then managed to go one better against Maghull earning a draw, although I'm sure Ian will be bitterly disappointed losing out to Steve Woods, Matt Wilson and Alan Jones. Clare on the other hand secured all three of her points whilst Eddie proved too strong for Steve and Alan.

Just to digress for a minute in relation to my wife Jeanette, who has for some strange reason, taken an unhealthy interest in my notes. Having read previous digests and probably prompted by previous obituaries, she actually asked me the other day, when I do eventually pop my clogs and I'm lying in my coffin with people looking down paying their last respects, what would I like them to say? "Look he's moving" would be a pretty good start. She then tried to make amends by

reminding me of the proven statistic that married men live longer than single men. Rubbish - it just feels longer.

Anyway, back to reality and a welcome return to the division to Maghull who will be pleased with the summer signing of Paul Hutchings. You wouldn't blame Maghull for thinking that Paul's presence will help them avoid relegation. Help them yes but not guaranteed when you think that Waterloo have Keith and possibly Wayne Percival to call upon. A lot will depend upon as to how often these top players can turn out and, more importantly, against what teams.

Probably a good example of this is Waterloo's 7-3 win against Manweb. Keith not surprisingly won his three but was taken to three by both Ray Parkinson and Andy Lloyd. Dave Harse had a great game against Alan Chase winning 13 in the 3rd whilst Andy picked up his only point of the evening against Ted. It's a shame that Alan's score card comments are only read by a select few because they're so funny. He's written, "Young Williams, when this lad grows up he might make a decent player." I think that the

only reason they asked Keith to play was so that the 'mean' age of the team went down to 50.

Manweb's relegation fight took a turn for the better when they beat Cadwa 'A' 7 - 3. Ken Hartley won all his three but was taken close by Ray Parkinson 21/23 in the 3rd. The fact that Cadwa played one short would have put a smile on the Manweb faces.

Looking at the league table it's strange to see the two Cadwa teams holding up the division. The 1st team I'm sure will pick the points up as they did against Maghull, winning 9 - 1 with Fred Pheysey being the sole winner against Peter Taylor. It's the 'A' team which will find the going tough. Mike Power can vouch for this when he was unlucky losing 17 in the 3rd to Wav Lab's Alice Howard.

Well, it's time for me to depart and wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Happy New year, and don't forget lads, if you find yourself suffering from a festive hangover, don't do as I did recently when I mistook the wives 'P.M.T.' pills for paracetamol. The big clue is that the 'P.M.T.' pills have the bite marks on the lid.

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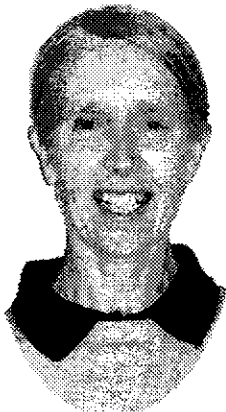
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As I sat down to write these notes nostalgia took over...perhaps it's the time of year!!...or the 'ghost of Christmas past' but I started to think about family and friends and then about the players who have suddenly left the division and I had to smile when I thought of all the characters that can never be replaced. I'm sure you'll all remember John 'Ginger' Watson (Bath Street), Mabel Neary (Wavertree Labour) and her 'googlies', Mike Moran (Bootle JC), Trevor Hughes (CADWA) and his torrent of jokes and Alan Reid (Waterloo) whose catch phrase 'meat 'n two veg' caught many a person on the bend. All I'm trying to say is that at this time of year, when the world goes mad and everyone starts rushing around, stop for a moment and give yourselves a little time to remember ... and I'm sure you'll come up smiling!!!

Anyway, I think the division has well and truly settled itself into two parts. It seems that the two teams that were relegated last season from the first division have every intention of returning and I certainly expect them to do so. At the moment there is only one point between Fords and Marconi and that's down to the match between the two when Fords won 6:4. The match was a humdinger and as expected all sets were closely fought. Tim Wearden took his three on the night but as they were all 18, 19 or deuce he could also so easily have lost all three (and that was with home advantage!). I eagerly await the return in the New Year. I still tip both for promotion but I wouldn't like to predict the order past the post. Both have



depth and the 3-a-side system suits as they are strong throughout and opposition cannot hide.

However strong you are there are still players in other teams that are up for it. Les Molyneux (Manweb 'A') has only lost one that I can see, and Graeme Black(Waterloo 'A') is a force to be reckoned with. Mickael Belloc, Steve Kee and Billy Cheung all of Liverpool YMCA 'B' are all in with a shout and then there's the Bath St. crowd of Dave Evans, Rob Peat, Mark Patterson etc. etc. who will never lie down until the last point's played. When you think about it we have a brilliant division with an extraordinary amount of talent and I hate to think about who should be relegated. At the moment the division is propped up by the two Bootle JC teams but I can't see both being relegated although the club must face the possibility that either one of them could go. I don't think anyone can sit back because no team is 'safe' at this time of the season. The two young players at Bootle JC are certainly making

their marks and will be a force to be reckoned with next season, although some say that they are already.

Comments on cards are usually sparse and far between but for some reason I've been inundated this time... obviously the message is getting through or perhaps there budding journalists out there with creativity just bursting to get out. Jon Dyson writes that the 6:4 loss to Bootle JC 'A' was a disappointing start to the season for Police 'A' and that he suffered first match nerves whilst his dad showed a stronger countenance with two good wins. The first was a convincing win over Cherith Graham and the second was gained by 'frustrating' Bill Harris. Cherith bounced back by taking her other two sets; a career first against Gemma Lloyd and a two game to love victory over Jon Dyson when in both games she was down but came back to win 18, 16.

Then, according to Liverpool YMCA 'B', Fords secret is to only sign players with 3-letter first names to confuse everyone. In this case it was Tom, Tim and Bob. The 'flower pot men' are used to their matches finishing early, apparently....is this a ploy to psyche out the opposition. Steve said that he had forgotten the 'big secret' he learned last season (that must account for the triple loss????) but he feels that a year out sees Billy 'blocker' Cheung returning refreshed and raring to go.....although he suspects that Billy has been having secret practice sessions in his chippy with the stir fry ladles.

Fords 'A' say they were pleased to come back from three nil down against Bootle JC to earn a draw and Gemma Lloyd from Police 'A' wants to thank the Bath St 'C' team of Dave Evans, Rob Peat and Dave Stodder for an enjoyable nightnot sure whether this should be censored as we are a family magazine!!!

Brian Crolley is quite vociferous this season. In Bootle JC's match against Bath St. 'B' he states that Roger Neal and Ian Grant had a tremendous tussle with Ian winning -12,6 and 13 but even so man of the match went to John Langton who won his three. In JC's match against Bath St. 'C' Dave Evans was declared man of the match with three wins (seems nothing unusual in that!), with Brian and Rob Peat the best game won by Rob 17, -20 and 19 and Cherith's the best win against Rob 18, 18. Always a man to encourage new talent he names 14 year old Tom Bray, one of Dave Graham's youngsters, as a star in the making after beating Bob Edwards -17, 16, 16 to gain the only set in the teams' 9:1 defeat by Marconi. He states that the Marconi team will surely get promotion at the end of the season.

In Police 'A's draw with Fords 'A' Robbie Goldson was so close to winning his three, and was only denied by Terri-Ann Nolan clinching this nail biting contest 26:24 in the third. Richie Cragg says that the Waterloo v Liverpool YMCA match was really good and played in a great spirit throughout (er!!! thought yours was bitter Richie???) says thank you everyone for a good night. October also saw Dave Tagg's return after injury, a sound return (no pun intended!) and one that tested his stamina as it was against Police 'B' where the 'B' stands for backspin. YMCA thought them a team of real grindersbut good blokes nonetheless although there's not much chance of catching the last order in the pub after the match (Waterloo beware!!!).

Before I continue with the Roles of Honour I would like to wish everyone a really Good Christmas and I hope we'll meet in the New Year. Keep the comments coming as they are really appreciated and if you think you deserve a mention then put it on the card.

Facesavers: Tom Bray (Bootle J.C.) beat Bob Edwards (Marconi) -17, 16, 16.

Gemma Lloyd (Police 'A') beat Bob Edwards (Marconi) -20, 10, 13. Tony Harris (Police 'B') beat Pete Holmes (Waterloo 'A') -17, 17, 18. Paula French (Police 'B') beat Bob Hughes (Fords) 26, 21. Graham Black (Waterloo 'A') beat Bob Edwards (Marconi) 13, 21.

Close Wins: Bob Hughes (Fords) beat Len Dyson (Police 'B') 17, -22, 21. Gemma Lloyd (Police 'A') beat Bill Harris (Bootle JC 'A') 21,20. Richie Cragg (Waterloo 'A') beat Steve Kee (Liverpool YMCA 'B') -21,21,20. Derek Sullivan (Bootle JC 'A') beat Julie Prince (Waterloo 'A') -19,21,19. Robbie Goldson (Fords 'A') beat Pete Holmes (Waterloo 'A') 22,25.

Good Wins: Ian Grant (Bath St 'B') beat Tim Wearden (Fords) 17, -19, 15. John Langton (Bath St 'B') beat Dave Evans (Bath St. 'C') -12, 13, 22. Steve Kee (Liverpool YMCA 'B') beat Nigel Stopher (Waterloo 'A') 17, 13. Rob Peat (Bath St. 'C') beat Les Molyneux (Manweb 'A') 17, 19. Cherith Graham (Bootle JC 'A') beat Graeme Black (Waterloo 'A') -11, 12, 20.



Happy Christmas, but we could do with some advertisers !!

As Nelson said to Lady Hamilton: "Welcome to my little column."

I was cornered by Roly to present this season's 3rd division reports as the team what I played in last season did get promoted from the 4th. He also thought my prose and manner with symballatic wit was due another audience. I felt the hand of Peter Ross up Roly's back, so you should see a happy PR due to the reduced stress levels of not having to meet deadlines for this august organ.

The team of which I am a member, **CADWA 'D'**, was not so much promoted as "lifted" into the 3rd to make up the numbers. But now they're here that's not the intention and we wish to tarry a while and breathe the rarefied atmosphere. Also, taking in deep gulps of oxygen will be our club mates lead by Bob Peverall, who surfaced from the 4th Division as Champions. Making a welcome and not unsurprising return to the 3rd from where they disappeared by a squeak margin the season before. Bereft of CADWA teams last year and now you get 3 as Rob Davies's team of left handers (- was Steve Graham's team but he lost out in a game of paper, stone, scissors) have popped in to cool off after experiencing the heat of the 2nd.

Another club with a big presence here this year is **Wavertree Labour**. They also have three but could have had four as what was Wav Lab 'A' dropped from the 2nd and what was Wav Lab 'D' got promoted in runners-up spot from the 4th. So expect to see three teams with a mixture of those members of last year's four teams - as easy as ABC.



You will note that I refer to the other two CADWA teams by reference to their team captains not by their suffix letter. As it is the case with all clubs that have teams going up and down the promotion escalator, the letters may change but the teams can be the same. This would also appear to be true of **Manweb**. So, only as the season unfolds do we get to see the make up of each team.

There seems to be a few back-of-card scribes in this division so rather than discouraging them I'll put them up front and allow you to sample the atmosphere from someone who was actually there (makes my life easier too) ...

"CADWA 'B' began the season chasing the game as Bath St 'D' held a 4-3 lead. Ian Burrows then beat Peter Ross in three to tie the score, then Rob Peverall battled a 3 setter over Eddie Williams. Finally the doubles of Ian and Peter Roberts destroyed Les Gee and Billy Clayton to secure a 6-4 win. "The battling 'B' team beat the Bath St" was the chant on the terraces."

I detect the whiff of Peverall in that laudation.

"Not the start we wanted but this Marconi Team (- Trevor Owens, Ian Wensley, Frank & John McCann on the night) should be in the promotion area at the end of season and with Trevor helping out for a few games!! And regular No 1 Peter Wass normally playing should soon rattle up a lot of points. John (Higham) beat Trevor last night in a B.House game, but didn't get a look in tonight. 3 games went to 3 sets, each game could just as easy gone the other way. Still things can only get better, we hope." Roly's right, you can't beat a regular No. 1, although equally important is a consistent No. 2. Richie Winckle deserves mention as he came closest to getting a point for the home team, losing from deuce in a 3rd game against John McCann.

Sadly we don't have Roly's opinion on the week 2 match, away at Wav Lab 'A', which WL'A won 7:3. But we do for the week 3 game of **Bootle YM** versus **CADWA 'C'**, 6:4 to YM:

"A complete reversal of the cup match 5 days ago, same 8 players, just a different table. 6 games going to deuce, 4 to CADWA 2 to Bootle. The difference again is winning the doubles. Best game of the night, Danny (Every) & Rob (Davies), some great hitting. Rob winning first game, 27-25, Danny having led 19-16. Danny taking 2nd game 21-16. Leading changing in the third, with Danny in driving seat at 20-15 but Rob digging in to win 22-20." Roly describes the week 5 home game v **Wav Lab 'B'** thus:

"A good match going our way, but only 4 going to 3 games. Important game at 7 when Dave played Richie, 6-0 up to then. I expected Richie to win but Dave (Foulis) got stuck in, moving about fast and deserved to win. Next game Danny v John G. Fast and furious, first time I've seen John Gratton loose his cool, John well ahead in the last game when Danny got a few nets & edges (5) and pulled right back at 18 all. But then Danny ran out of luck!! John letting Danny lose the points. - 6-2. Then John H (Higham) winning his 2 in style. 8-2"

Finally the CADWA 'B' scribe dips his quill nib to scribble for the CADWA 'B' v. Wav Lab 'A', 4-6, game:

"The Cadwa 'B' team continue to stutter with Peter Roberts gaining his 1st win of the season over Richie Jones. Alan Davies and Rob Peverall proving a strong doubles pairing but both inconsistent in their singles. Ian Burrows is also slow adjusting to life back in the 3rd Div. The best is yet to come!"

Mick Tierney must already be there, as again he won his two singles to be the foundation for the Wav Lab 'A' smash and grab.

In the opening week there were some good results and good individual performances with a few surprises.

Mark Miles, appearing for Wav Lab 'C', gave CADWA 'D's' George Lennon a tough welcome to the 3rd winning over 3. On a long night, 7 games went to a decider Dave Williams losing narrowly 20/22 in 3rd v Trevor Dolder being the closest. Final score 5-5 due to Mike Ashton bagging a brace. (Beating me

28/26 was a bit much!)

Waterloo 'B' got a good result in their season's curtain raiser against **Manweb 'B'**, 6-4. Getting off to a flyer by being unbeaten in their singles were Julie Prince and Ted Cramsie for the home team and Peter Carney for the visitors.

George Frost will long remember his victory over Rob Davies, as will Kevin Lewis over George Higham, but as the team lost 4/4 3 setters, the **Maghull 'A'** 2 **CADWA 'C'** 8 score line leaves more for the visitors to crow about.

Plenty of love retained in the **Wav Lab** love-in of 'B' versus 'A', a 5-5 draw. Mick Tierney defeated both Peter Howden and John Gratton. Similar storyline, 5:5, for **WL 'C'** without Mike at **Manweb 'B'**. Mark Myles was the only unblemished character, but Sharon Norman pushed him over three, and then broke through Dave Williams' defences.

Marconi 'A' followed up the YM whitewash with a 9-1 home victory over **Waterloo 'B'**. Julie beat Frank for the point, and Ken Nelson nearly pipped John McCann. Another whitewash ensued at **Wavetree 'C'**. Dave Williams gave Frank McCann a fright taking the first 25/23 in their encounter, before Frank took charge in the next two games. The best result for the opposition came the following week when the 'C' took home 4 points back to **CADWA**. They had to fight for it as their points came in the 4 games that went to a decider. Alan Davies won both singles, showing nerve from deuce twice against Ian Wensley, 20/22, 21/17, 20/22 and then 21/19 in the last game v Frank McCann. Ian Burrows had the same story against John. Alan &

Bob Peverall showed why they were so feared in the 4th Division winning 1st doubles over the McCanns. On this night I think we saw what will be the main **Marconi** team, Ian, Frank, Peter Wass and John, aided by guest appearances of Trevor Owens at No 1 spot as and John Moores at No. 4. It seems as if anything less than 100% effort and 90% averages will be the charge from the Tesla boys. (Anyone remember OMITD?)

The other club with the electric connection, **Manweb**, had there 'B' team put in their best result of the early season, a 7-3 win over **CADWA 'B'**. Paul Jennings had a good night at No.2 beating both Alan & Ian. Sharon Norman bagged a brace too, scalping Peter Roberts & Steve Graham. Alan Evans succumbed to Alan Davies in two straight, and Alan Cameroon went all the way with Ian & Steve but to no avail. Playing host to the 'D' team a week later Rob Barker proved a worthy replacement winning his two as did George Lennon for the visitors, in a close 6-4 **Manweb** win.

Peter Carney stepped in the following week at Bath Street 'D', but found Les Gee and Billy Clayton full of guile. Les was bettered by Sharon, who in turn lost out narrowly to Adrian Bramham 21/19 in the 3rd. Eddie Williams was solid at No 2 for Bath Street as was Billy C at No. 4. Altogether 6-4 for BS'D'.

This **Bath St 'D'** team also includes Peter Ross, who was on hand to assist in their first home match of the season, winning 8-2 over **Maghull 'A'**. Adrian, Peter & Billy stood resolute on this occasion. Brian Gregory was the

only single success for the visitors taking Eddie to the wire over 3. A week later and Steve Critchley for **CADWA 'D'** did the same. This was the only real victory for **CADWA 'D'** as **BS'D** conceded two in their 7-3 result. At **Wav Lab 'B'**, a similar score could have been racked up but for some tremendous doubles play from the home team and one man in particular. John Gratton beat both Adrian & Peter in the singles, then teamed up with Peter Howden to beat them in first doubles, 23/25, 22/20, 21/18. Les & Billy contributed 4 singles wins to their 6.4 win. This defeat for **Wav Lab 'B'** broke a chain of draws, three in a row, versus **Wav Lab 'A'**, **Cadwa 'C'** and **Maghull 'A'**. Howden, Gratton, Foulis and Banks tend to be the team members. Peter & John filled the top of the card in **WL'B**'s favour against a strong **Maghull 'A'** (Downing, Frost, Bulmer & Lewis). George Higham nearly had John (19/21 in 3rd) and Steve Graham did undo Peter in a see-saw set over 3.

Wav Lab 'A' are more likely to win than draw. 6:4 at **Waterloo 'B'**, 7:3 over **Bootle YM** and best yet 8:2 over their own 'C' team. The difference in these score lines is not so much the opposition as the make up of the **Wav Lab 'A'** team. Tierney, Black, Stanley and Jones are the top dogs. It must have been a classic encounter when Mick played **BYMs** John Higham. In the second John was close to defeat after losing the first but pulled things round to win 2:1. In turn Ian Black surprised John with 2 straight, 21/17 in each. Bill Stanley beat Richie, but found Roly on top form. Bill then lost to Julie Prince & Ted Cramsie at

Waterloo, on a night when they were each undefeated. In the top of card match, Julie lost the first game to Ian, then crucially won the second from deuce 23/21. Richie Jones put Ian Lunt & Ken Nelson to the sword (or should that be blade?). He did the same the following week to team mates Mike Ashton & Andy Bird. Only Andy Bird for the 'C' team won a singles (against Bill Lowe in 3), the other point coming from the "old tactic" of playing 1&2 as second doubles. Tony Connor must have thought he had a chance against Mick after taking the first game, but the normal order was restored as Mick stormed through the next two.

Maghull 'A' have begun badly, averaging 2.2 points per game. At least in their 3:7 home defeat by **Bootle YM** they found a bright spot, as one player contributed to all their points, winning his singles and assisting in the doubles. That man being Kevin Lewis. Playing at 4, he overpowered Danny Every and overcame a Ritchie Winckle revival. All the more impressive when you consider he is ranked 26. Tom Downing & Harry McGanity both went the distance with Roly, who was just too strong when the chips were down. The wheel of fortune favoured Tom in taking the first game off John Higham, who then settled into his rhythm to win out comfortably. **Waterloo 'B'** showed no mercy in taking all points, and the "old tactic" didn't work for **Maghull** in the 2nd doubles, Tom & George Frost losing 21/19 in the 3rd game with Ian Lunt & Ted Cramsie. **Waterloo 'B'** were on a high after beating **CADWA 'C'** 6:4 in a closely fought encounter. **Waterloo** had more bottle in the

deciders, Julie 2:1 v Rob Davies, Ted 2:1 v George Higham. Steve Graham was back the following week at **Wav Lab 'C'**, but probably felt the worse for it, losing narrowly to Tony Connor and Mike Ashton. A draw was achieved thanks to a spirited resolve in the lower orders.

Spirited resolve can work wonders, as D played B at CADWA. 7:3 to the "home" side. George Lennon, Trevor Dolder & John O'Sullivan winning all their singles, whilst Steve Critchley played the game of the night v Rob Peverall despite losing to 19 in the 3rd. Trev found old boy Jack Highton troublesome, only a hair split them, 19/21, 23/21, 22/20. Both teams opted for the 2&3, 1&4 format for the doubles. Steve & Trevor, lost 21/23, 21/18, 23/25 to Peter & Ian, as George & John lost 22/24, 19/21 to Rob and Jack.

Thanks to Roly & Rob for their missives. If anyone else wants to do more then record the score I'm only too glad to include your match reports. In the unlikely event of me being swamped I will edit drastically!

I wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all readers.

Doug

Well, it doesn't seem that long since the end of last season, and yet we are already 6 games into our new one.

First impressions of division 4 are that it is going to be a lot tighter at the top than last season, with no one team showing the domination that CADWA 'C' did last season. After the first 6 games played by most of the teams there is only 3 points separating the top 3 teams, and only 15 points between first and seventh in the division.

Wavertree Labour 'D' are the early season front runners and have shown some impressive form so far with 5 victories and just 1 defeat. They opened the season with a 9-1 victory away to Bath Street 'F', nine of the matches settled in two straight, Bath Street's only win coming courtesy of Chris Blackburn who beat Mario Grove 17 and 15. Mario and Dave Goulden were both playing as reserves for Wavertree as their other 2 regulars, Stephanie Howard and Eric Spencer were unavailable to join Stan Clarke and Ken Armon on the night. A week later Wavertree hosted Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'C' who included their new signing Torsten Bondal. Torsten registered his first win in the division, beating Stan in three, before becoming a victim of Ken's inimitable style, losing 15 and 10.

Currently in second place just 2 points behind Wavertree are Manweb 'C'. They have a strong team this season with Peter Carney, John Ashley, Arthur Harrison and Alan Biggs. They defeated a weakened Aigburth side early in the season 9-1, Carl Anderson registering a point for Aigburth with a tremendous win over Peter, 16 and 15. Strangely they struggled against Aigburth 'A', fighting to a 6-4 win, Peter and John both winning their two singles.



In third place at the moment, a further point behind are Wavertree Labour 'E'. Being the bottom team at a large club, they will be hoping that they can continue to put out a regular side. They started their season at Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'C' the week before Torsten arrived. The home side were hardly weakened by his absence though, being able to turn out George Smith at number one. A close match finished in a 6-4 win for Wavertree, a deciding factor being victory in both doubles. After 6 games Wavertree remain unbeaten in the league, most victories being close and they have also drawn 2 games. If they can keep their regular four of Anthony Mitchell, Gordon Langshaw, Ken Roberts and Steve Perry they should finish in a respectable position in this division.

Bath Street 'E' have had a mixed start to the season, winning three, drawing one and losing two. They had a good win over Manweb by 6-4, Alan Willis remaining unbeaten on the night, including victories over John Ashley and Alan Biggs. In their first match

against their club colleagues in the 'F' team, they recorded a maximum, defeating them 10-0, the closest game on the night coming between Dave Cunningham and Ian Ambrose, Dave just edging Ian out 21/17 in the third. The only reason they may struggle this season could be in consistency of team availability, they have only been able to turn out their strongest team twice so far.

Marconi 'B' gained promotion at the end of last season and certainly look strong enough to at least consolidate their place in div.4. Their regular team looks like being Andrew Owens, Bobby Bell, Tony Mullally and Ian Woods. Where they could have an advantage over some teams may be in the strength of available reserves. They were able to bring in Ted Gilmour when they hosted Wavertree Labour 'D', although he too struggled against Ken, going down 17 and 16. Andrew Owens was able to take advantage of playing down a position defeating Stephanie and Stan. These two wins were decisive in gaining a 6-4 victory for Marconi over the leaders, also helped by a good win in three for Ian over Dave Goulden.

Maghull 'B' have only played five games so far, winning 2 and losing 3. Their defeats have all been by the margin of 6-4 so they are certainly consistent. They have already used a different player three times so far this season so it is difficult to determine exactly what their regular side is. The three players to turn out regularly so far have been Phil Christie, Brian Gregory and Wilf Gibson. They have also used John Gillibrand, Steve McGanity and Bill Salter. Phil had 2 good wins over Wavertree Labour 'D', beating both Stan and Ken, with Brian also defeating Stan. Their best result so far has been a 7-3 win at

Bath Street 'F' with Phil and Brian both winning two on the night.

Liverpool Y.M.C.A. 'C' have welcomed Torsten into their fold this season and look at their strongest when they also have Johnny Tsang available to play at number 4. They have also started off in a fairly roller-coaster fashion so far this season, winning twice, drawing once and losing three times. They had a good 6-4 win at Maghull with Torsten defeating Phil and Brian and Alvin Tso beating Brian and Wilf. They have faced both Bath Street teams, emerging unbeaten with a 7-3 win over the 'F' team and a draw with the 'E' team. A lot of close games seems to be the tone for them so far they look like the team for late nights with a lot of three setters.

Bootle Y.M.C.A. 'A' started the season strongly but have suffered in the last couple of matches due to the absence of Bert Rivers and Arthur Garnett. Their absence was probably most

strongly felt against Wavertree Labour 'E' when they suffered a 9-1 defeat, Mike Hughes saving the whitewash with a thrilling 21/19 win in the third against Anthony. With their strongest team out, Bootle should have no problems climbing up the table and challenging the current top teams.

Aigburth haven't had the greatest of starts but their outstanding player so far must be Carl Anderson. Promoted to number one he has registered some excellent victories, including wins over Peter Carney, Stan Clarke, Arthur Garnett and Gordon Langshaw. Their 6-4 win over Bootle was a good team performance with reserve Derek Traynor beating both Mike and Peter.

The bottom slot in the division looks likely even at this early stage to be fought out between Bath Street 'F' and Aigburth 'A'. Only 2 points separate them, Bath Street appear to be slightly stronger but only if they are able

to field a full strength side. They are another team who have struggled to get a regular 4 out this season and have lost 5 of their 6 games, including 2 heavy defeats, 10-0 to their 'E' team, and 9-1 to Wavertree Labour 'D'. Aigburth 'A' have yet to win or draw a game, but had narrow 6-4 defeats against Bath Street 'E' and Manweb. These two have yet to play each other this season, and availability of players when they do could make a big difference as to who ends up propping up the table.

Finally I know this has been mentioned by every digest notes writer since Ken Armson was a boy, but it would be a great help if captains could put some comments on the reverse of the match cards. Only 2 comments so far (thanks Stan), any information you give can only help to expand on the actual events and any incidents in the matches.

Good luck to everyone for the rest of the season.

Bill keeps pace with worlds best

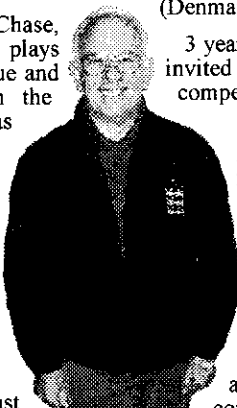
Crosby table tennis stalwart, Bill Clayton has just returned from his 5th. World Veteran's Championships in Lucerne

Bill went with Ted Birch and Allan Chase, who both play for Waterloo. Bill who plays for Bath Street in the Liverpool League and played for Otis Elevators when in the Liverpool Business Houses League, was unlucky not to get through the group stages of the over 70's competition, losing his deciding game 13-15 to a Belgian, and going down to another player who went on to the semi-finals.

But Bill reached the last 32 of the losers Plate. Allan and Ted reached the last 64 of the over-50's and over-60's respectively.

Crosby Stalwart Billy Clayton, has just returned from his fifth World Veteran's Championships, held recently in Lucerne, Switzerland.

Bill, a former area manager for Mersey, Dee and North Wales area of the National Federation of Retail Newsagents, has been playing table tennis for more than 50 years.



Just turned 70, he lives in Laurel Grove, Waterloo, and in the past has been to Vet's Championships in Melbourne, Vancouver, Manchester and Dublin, and European Vet's Championships in Prague, Gothenburg, and Arhus (Denmark).

3 years ago, he won the Hull over-65's and gets invited to play in the Cumbria over-60's competition.

He was ever present with Bath Street last season, Bath Street have been in operation for over 51 years, but Bill has not always played for them, turning out originally for Litherland Boys Club and then Wavertree Labour.

The former Otis Elevators Lift Company apprentice has been in a Business Houses League championship team in every division of the Lancashire and Cheshire League, (an inter-league competition), bar the first division, in which he has also played.

EDITOR

This was reproduced from an article in the Crosby Herald printed around the time of the Commonwealth Games in Manchester

I was looking forward to the new season with a little more interest than normal. The amended service rule came into being from Sept 1st and I was wondering if any of the clubs in div 5 had obtained a copy for display in their club room notice boards. There are two main points to bear in mind to the amendment. One is that the free hand must now be stationary prior to throwing the ball up for service, whereas before only the ball had to be stationary and there was nothing to stop the server from moving his free hand with the ball stationary in it. The other more important change is that no part of the servers body must be between the server and the receiver. This is to stop players from shielding the ball to hide from their opponent the type and direction of spin applied.

At competition level I have observed many players have made a conscious effort to get their free hand out of the way as soon as the ball has been struck. But as normal in the L'pool League observance of the service rule does not come into the equation. I have been asking club secretaries and team captains have they heard of the amended service rule? All shook their heads, but one secretary did say "I've heard about this "but that's about as far as I got. There well may be a copy in some club rooms but Div 5 with only having its usual low quota of teams, you soon exhaust secretaries.

That said ! on to the league statistics.....Nine teams only to start the season; last year we did start with 11 only to lose a Har Hse team near the end. However Aigburth did place an extra team in, only to have to withdraw it prior to the season getting under way. One solution I feel might help is an extra competition solely confined to Div 5 teams. What about it Committee? This



way they might get some value for the entrance fee.

Maghull "C" got off to a good start with a 6-4 away win at Har Hse "B". Denise Chorley beating both Stephen Simpson and Gary Abram followed by a pair for Jeanette Hutchings over Stephen and Richard Beilan. These two will be the mainstay of the team this season.

Their other team the "D" suffered a 6-4 reverse at the hands of Police "C" where Alan French won his two beating Alan Smethurst and Jeff Banks. Two for Dave Oakes and one from Neil Thomas in 3 against Jeff Banks. But Andy McCourt steadied the ship, beating both Sreve and Neil and winning his doubles with Keith Whittaker.

Bath St "G", my team disposed of the ladies 10-0 in the opening match, but this I fear is all the good news. Dave Batty has had to have a further operation and will be out for 8-10 weeks, and yours truly has only managed the opening game since then, again with a health problem.

This is going to put Doug Marriot and Richard Woodley up to the dizzy heights of 1& 2 for the time being, with reserves from juniors and where ever for

the time being. The wheels began to fall off in earnest with a 3-7 home deficit to Maghull "D", only Dave Batty winning his 2 over "Banksie" and Alan Smethurst. But as usual Andy steadied the team again beating Richard and near octogenarian Eugene, just in 3. "Banksie" was also on the receiving end in a 2-0 deficit to a very determined Richard Woodley, head down and I'm not going to lose this one -no way!.....A double for Keith Whittaker also in this match.

Maghull "C" must have been confident as they approached Greenbank only to come away losing 7-3. Greenbank have the added services of one Mark Palmer. Is this the player I have umpired at disability tournaments? If so Greenbank have acquired a top rate player to augment Tony Edge, Ian Littlewood, and John Sherratt. Both Denise & Jeanette falling to Mark, but some consolation for John Gillibrand & Mark Ambrose in the doubles over Mark Palmer & Mark Morgan. If Greenbank can field this team consistently, then they can be challenging for the title. Much the same story when they entertained Police, seeing them off 7-3. They did not have Mark on this occasion, but consistent wins from Tony Edge & John Sherratt plus both doubles. Could we have some statistics on the card please Tony?

Good to see Steve Riley Police's upbeat captain getting on the scoresheet the right way with a win over Gerry Kinsella in this match. Only the weak number 4 spot can hinder Greenbank.

Talking to Harry Reeve of Linacre they had only played one match, and they could only manage a draw with Maghull "C". A double each for Harry and Jack Davidson, but newcomer (to me) K. Lewis notched up two wins in fine

style for Maghull, beating Ken Ainsworth & another new player to me Peter Barton, both in two. Is this Linacre's youth policy ? Against Police they went down 6-4 Jack losing in 3 to the tenacious Dave Oakes, and Harry only just maintained his 100% record against the equally hard working, hard to beat Bob Rawlinson. Another Police new name to me is Alan Woods but he wasted no time in winning his two against Ken Ainsworth & Alec Davidson. I can't see Linacre winning the title this season, but good to talk to Frank Lacy and report he is as sharp as ever after his recent illness, and also doing his share of umpiring.

Bath St ladies are at the wrong end of the table with no wins to report yet, but they are very upbeat about it and things should improve now that reserve Albert Parker has been moved to a more realistic position as number 2 in the team to allow Myra Lovelady more scope at

number 3. They managed to get some points on the card when they played "Har Hse A" this was courtesy of the non appearance of Eddie Clein (76% in the first Div last season) . In the same match Barbara Alcock had a good game against Paul Morgan, just going down in 3.

My own team Bath St "G" won't be in any position to make a challenge, as reported Dave Batty is sidelined with me , and if we finish above the bottom spot I will be happy. One of our juniors Mark Rawlinson who has been turning out for us registered his first win at Har Hse when he beat Dan Grodnall in a 9-1 deficit. Last years team which finished in third place could not be kept together, George Crowley and Alan Willis have moved up to support the "F" now in Div 4.

There is, for the first season I can recall for a long time where there is no clear cut title prospect. All the teams are in a bunch. But maybe after Xmas the picture will become clearer.

Some of you will know that our tenure in our present location is under threat as the Sefton Property Group are anxious to purchase the remaining years of the lease. The parent club , and ourselves have voted to see the lease out, and that is the position at the moment. A gate has been erected across the entrance to our yard parking area, and if you wish to park your car outside the club then see the team captain who has access to a key to lift the barrier. If you don't want this hassle, then park in the social clubs car park as most of us do. We expect work to commence shortly to demolish the out buildings, some of which are unsafe-hence the barrier to deter further dumping.

It only remains to wish everyone in Div 5 a very Happy Christmas & New Year.

Regards

Ron Georgeson

Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy Second Round

	Bath Street-5	v	M /side Police	
561	Manweb-2	v	Bootle YM -2	542
	Bath Street-2	v	Bath Street-3	
	Waterloo-2	v	Manweb-1	
549	Linacre	v	Bootle YM -1	541
	Bootle JC -2	v	Fords	
	L'pool YM -1	v	Aigburth-1	
	Cadwa-2	v	Cadwa-4	

I've only got two match results to show, my own club, and only one match to write about to fill the space, but with a few words about the handicapping to start with, the last round was completed with only one result looking a bit too easy, Bootle YM-1 v Bath St. 1, 101 points in it, but i don't think you can blame the handicaps, ok, starting with a handicap of 130 does seem a bit daunting, but top players are capable of pulling a lot of that back when playing to form, in this match it didn't work out, but the luck of the draw comes in as well, you may draw a team with a similar handicap, but isn't that what this cup is all about. Credit to Ken Jackson, Fred Bainbridge, and Les Gee for going into that match Knowing the hill they faced, (they also lost to us last year with a similar handicap). We played Linacre next with the boot on the other foot, we had to pull 50 back, it was hard going till the 7th. Game Richie gaining 30 from Ken, 8 behind, then Danny gained 12 off Jack, last game and we are 4 in front, but Harry was too steady for me and won by 12, so victory for Linacre, and for the handicapping, but it could have gone the other way !!

EDITOR

Cups *Divisional and The Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy. 2nd. Round.*

Division One - Readman Cup

5	L'pool YMCA	V	L'pool YMCA "A"	4
5	Maghull	V	Waterloo	4
2	Bath Street "A"	V	CADWA	5
5	Bath Street	V	Police	1

Two matches going to the wire, L'Pool YM just pipping their 'A' team 5-4, and Maghull doing the same to Waterloo, which leaves the top team and 3 teams currently in 8th, 9th, and 10th spots in the league to go into the semi's, could cup 'fatigue' be having an effect on the league positions !

Division Two - Rumjahn Cup

4	Police "B"	V	Police "A"	5
5	Waterloo "A"	V	Manweb "A"	2
5	Marconi	V	Bath Street "C"	1
1	Bath Street "B"	V	L'pool YMCA "B"	5

Police 'A' 5- Police 'B' 4, that was the only close one in the 2nd. And with the Fords 1st. team out (going out 5-0 to Waterloo 'A'), leaves the current 2nd, 3rd, 6th. and 8th teams to battle out in the semi's. Waterloo 'A' and Ym 'B' having played in both rounds, must be getting the winning feeling, if Waterloo get the home draw, look hard to beat.

Division Three - Hyde Cup

5	CADWA "C"	V	CADWA "B"	3
5	Marconi "A"	V	CADWA "D"	0
2	Maghull "A"	V	Wavertree Lab.	5
5	Wavertree Lab. "A"	V	Manweb "B"	1

No close games in this Div., and it looks as if there could be a double coming, the current 3 top league teams in contention, with the 7th, who's going to get Wav. Lab. 'B' In the next draw, having said that, cup matches don't always go by the book

Division Four - Forrest Cup

5	Maghull "B"	V	Bath Street "F"	2
0	Bath Street "E"	V	Marconi "B"	5
5	L'pool YMCA "C"	V	Wavertree Lab.	3
4	Bootle YMCA "A"	V	Manweb "C"	5

Only one close game here, Bootle YM 'A' 4, Manweb 'C' 5, I bet YM. felt a bit unlucky after that one, Manweb currently in second spot with a game in hand. Current top team Wav. Lab. 'D' going out to 6th. Placed L'Pool YM. 'C'

Division Five - Stamp Cup

5	Harold House "A"	V	Bath Street "H"	2
5	Linaere	V	Maghull "C"	1
1	Maghull "D"	V	Police "C"	5
5	Bath Street "G"	V	Harold House "B"	3

There was only one team having already played a round in the 5th Div. Linaere who knocked out Greenbank in the 1st. Round, and, it seems, didn't have much trouble with Maghull 'C', mind you, Linaere, with around 200 years (give or take a few) of cup competitions between them should have that little edge. Police 'C' (middle of the table) polished off top placed Maghull 'D', and I see Alan Woods is back with the Police, should help a bit.

Letters to the Editor

Tel: 0151 228 7436

26 June 2002

The Editor
Table Tennis Digest

Dear Roly

I read with great interest the May Digest celebrating 75 years of Table Tennis in Liverpool. Jack Davidson, Linacre, passed it on to me as he knows I still have table tennis in my blood even though I hung up my bat many years ago (the bat is still in its case at the back of the wardrobe somewhere!)

The name Norah Norrish has prompted me to write to you. Norah made a bit of a comeback in the sixties and Joined our Ladies' team at Crawfords -myself, my sister Barbara Horsley and Muriel Cox. Her husband was very proud of her past achievements and encouraged her to play again. She was full of enthusiasm, turning out in our team's colours. Alas, after such a long interval of not playing, she was experiencing difficulty coping with the new sponge bats, also she was now having to wear bifocals and found them troublesome.

She did, however, stay with us for two seasons and I would like to think that she enjoyed and satisfied a yearning to play again.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Barton

PS

Peter and I recently celebrated our 40 years of married bliss (!) and had a long weekend at Warner's in Bodelwyddan Castle - and who should we meet there but Ken and Betty Black. Wonderful! (CADWA circa 1953).

EDITOR

Referring to Tony Harris's History Of Table Tennis, Norah Norrish was probably at her best in the 1930's, so making a comeback in the 60's, after so much change in the bats, was a big hurdle, much easier to take changes in your stride while still playing. This draws my attention to the Ladies of Bath St. 'H' team, Barbara Alcock, Lil Randles, Myra Lovelady, Beryl Matchet and Mary Delamere, all, may I say it, true vets, who came back to the game only a few seasons ago, and I'm sure, enjoying themselves, but who had had a taste of the change in technology before, but nevertheless, still a challenge.

New Service Rule effective 1 September 2002, as approved at the ITTF's AGM on 5 April 2002 in Zagreb, Croatia:

2.6 A GOOD SERVICE

2.6.1 Service shall start with the ball resting freely on the open palm of the server's stationary free hand.

2.6.2 The server shall then project the ball near vertically upwards, without imparting spin, so that it rises at least 16cm after leaving the palm of the free hand and then falls without touching anything before being struck.

2.6.3 As the ball is falling the server shall strike it so that it touches first his court and then, after passing over or around the net assembly, touches directly the receiver's court; in doubles, the ball shall touch successively the right half court of server and receiver.

2.6.4 From the start of service until it is struck, the ball shall be above the level of the playing surface and behind the server's end line, and it shall not be hidden from the receiver by any part of the body or clothing of the server or his doubles partner.

2.6.5 It is the responsibility of the player to serve so that the umpire or the assistant umpire can see that he complies with the requirements for a good service.

2.6.5.1 If there is no Assistant Umpire, and the umpire is doubtful of the legality of a service he may, on the first occasion in a match, warn the server without awarding a point.

2.6.5.2 If subsequently in the match a service by that player or his doubles partner is of dubious legality, for the same reason or for any other reason, the receiver shall score a point.

2.6.5.3 Whenever there is a clear failure to comply with the requirements for a good service, no warning shall be given and the receiver shall score a point. **2.6.6.** Exceptionally, the umpire may relax the requirements for a good service where he is satisfied that compliance is prevented by

Local Under 18's making a mark in the Bigger World of Table Tennis

Cherith Graham Age 17

*Currently number 18 Junior Girl on ETTA ranking list (16 if you take out 2 foreign players).
Currently Number 1 Junior Girl in Lancashire and has represented Lancashire Junior
teams for past five years*

*Represents Lancashire Senior 1st Team for last two years and Senior 2nd Team the
season before*

*Plays for Bootle JC in 2nd Division Liverpool - wins include Graeme Black, Rob
Peat, Paul Price, Mickael Belloc and Trevor Owen*

*Plays for Seasiders in the Premier Division of Junior British League with Clara
Howard*

*Plays for Darlington in Division 2 of the Ladies British League and currently top.
Played for Wirral in same division the previous year and team gained promotion
when finished first.*

Plays for Seasiders in Division 3 North of Open British League

*Played for Liverpool in Rose Bowl in November (with Alice and Clara Howard) and
beat Wolverhampton (the holders) knocking them out of the competition that they had
won for 16 consecutive years.*

Lost in final of Liverpool Ladies Singles 2 years ago

*Won U21 in Newcastle Grand Prix 3 years ago, Won Band 3 Ladies in King's Lynn Grand Prix same year
and in August this year won the Band 2 Ladies at Liverpool Grand Prix.*

*Won Merseyside Schools U16's last three years and this year represented English Schools in the
International at Cardiff. Playing for the 'B' team they came second and lost only to the England 'A' team.*



Tom Bray – 14 years

*Won Lancashire Junior Trials and hence number 2 Junior Boy in Lancashire (Adam
Bleakely No.1)*

Currently number 24 Cadet on ETTA ranking List.

*Won U13 Boys event in Merseyside Schools and reached quarterfinals of National
Schools and was only denied a place in the semi-finals by a 12:10 loss in the fifth to
a top ten cadet*

*Was integral member of Birkdale High School's U13 team that won Merseyside
Schools and North West Region and lost in zoned final to the eventual r/u in
National team event.*

*Plays for Bootle JC in 2nd Division Liverpool - wins include Bob
Edwards, Grahame Reid, Ian Grant, Frank James*

*Played in the successful Formby TTC team that won the Northern Division of the
National Junior League*

Plays for Formby in the British Junior League

Plays for Seasiders in Third Division of the Open British League (with Cherith).

*Was awarded his Lancashire County badge last season for representing Junior
team and plays in Junior first team this season.*



The above information supplied by Sylvia and Dave Graham, Cherith and Tom having passed through their coaching set up at Formby, my thanks to them.

Hopefully I can gather some information on Paul O'Donnell and Clara Howard for our next Digest

This season we have our usual crop of clubs who abuse the ranking system by ranking players in a lower team when it is the intention for them to play regularly for a higher team but are able to play lower until they have played more than five matches in the higher group. No doubt they see this as utilising their players to the best advantage but there is another name for it and we all know what that is.

The service law is probably the most abused table tennis law and with the law having been revised this season some were hoping that players who do not throw the ball up or who throw it back would study the revised service law and comply fully with its requirements. Alas for such hopes as the serve out the hand brigade are still with us and I have heard already of one who got very upset when asked to comply with the most basic of requirements, that of throwing the ball up at least six inches. Why do we turn a blind eye to this simple requirement and in many cases make excuses for these players when they are blatantly in breach of the service law and who invariably get upset if requested to serve correctly. Has the time not come for every player to comply fully with the service law and insist on others doing likewise? Should the ball in service touch the net and bounce on the receivers side all players rightly expect a 'net' call and do not complain when it is called so why do we turn a blind eye when players do not throw the ball up or throw it back and more importantly why do they complain if asked to serve correctly when they know they are in the wrong. The same criteria applies to swearing etc again we ignore this and by doing so indirectly treat as acceptable what clearly is not and whilst some may not be offended there are many who are but are reluctant to say so.

The most talked about event so far this season has been the change of clubs for Keith Williams from Cadwa to Waterloo, no one knows why he changed clubs but many would like to know and Keith clearly has no intention of enlightening anyone so we will all either have to keep guessing or just forget about it but at least it made a good talking point.

There is now a strong possibility that Marconi and Bath Street may lose their premises in the near future and have to find an alternative venue as did

Wavertree Labour and Bootle JC and others before them and clearly the time has come for us to look seriously at the need for our league to have a reasonably sized venue of its own. Other leagues have worked hard to achieve this aim and are now reaping the benefit of an up turn in membership and an increase in clubs but for too long we have ignored the signs by turning a blind eye because it would mean most of you having to put something back in to your chosen sport

Where did we go wrong, with the support of the City Leisure Services an international match was played in Liverpool the first for 50 years, cup fixtures arranged for the night of the match were postponed, the match was announced at our Handbook meeting and publicised in our local paper and on local radio and yet the attendance was abysmal. League members were almost outnumbered by members of other leagues and we were left to pick up the pieces. We receive strong support from the Leisure Services and will find it much harder in the future because league members could not be bothered giving their support to this match.

The opening shots have been fired in the first contested election for some years for the position of Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Treasurer of the ETTA the current incumbents, Alan Ransome, Tony Chatwin and Barry Granger being challenged by Alex Murdoch, Mike Johns and Martyn Clarke and we can expect plenty of fireworks as both parties try to outdo each other in order to win the support of Leagues who hold the majority of the voting power. Both parties already claiming they have the required support but have still to turn this into votes. But we all know that whatever the outcome of the ballot nothing will change and we will not see any reduction in our fees.

When the Frank Murphy Cup regulations were amended last season one important change was the requirement for players to be available to play at 19.30hrs and not have until 20.00hrs before they could be called on to play. There is a strong case for us to extend this to all cup matches for the advantage of first call for the visiting team is worthless if members of the home team are not available when the match commences as their first call advantage is restricted to those players present and as we play only

play only to a result, every call, and in particular the first call, is important.

With the support of the City Leisure Services we now have a central coaching venue that is intended to become our Centre of Excellence but we have fewer junior players than any other League in the country and this is something we should be ashamed of for there are plenty of would be players out there in schools and clubs and their requests for assistance go unheeded as do requests to members to make themselves available. **Several schools and youth clubs are currently seeking coaching support so is**

it not time those of you who have retired or taken early retirement contact Ken Armson who will allocate you a suitable school or club. All that is required of you is a couple of hours of your time once or twice a week and with your help we can build up a network of centres feeding into a central venue and you just might be the person who stumbles across a future international. The 12 year old star, Darius Knight, started playing only because his mother wanted to keep him off the streets and there will be others like him, possibly here in Liverpool, with a natural flair for table tennis, but they are not going to come to us we are going to have to go and find them and this will only happen with your support.

Coaching

To add to Kens notes above on coaching, Gatacre Comp is the main stay of the coaching scene, But Dave Oaks is going strong at Childwall Comp. I'm at Fazakerley High, I believe Dave Graham may be starting a school in the Anfield area, Bath St. are still coaching, even though their premisses is an ongoing problem, I'm not sure about Maghull at present due to the refurbishment going at their club, but I'm sure coaching will be progressed ASAP, and Dave and Sylvia Graham at Formby.

Coaching at the schools is usually during the day after school has finished (ie. 3-30) but where the coaching is part of general sports set up in the main hall, there are times when the hall is required for other activities and it may be that our coaching is put off for a couple of weeks, and as in my school, with badminton and trampolining in the same hall, competing to keep their interest in the early stages can get a bit frustrating.

Having said that, two weeks ago my squad of interested youngsters jumped from 4 to 8, with 2 who said they hadn't played before showing good signs and interest,

the one and a half hours flew over, (typical youngsters, all want to play each other for the 'champ.), so I set up a little league, did the paperwork for the next week, but the next week was called off, school required the hall, the following week, only 4 of the previous 8 came to the session, so, there is the problem, we are competing against so many other things they can do, but we need to be there to encourage them to come back.

Fazakerley teacher Mr.Dennis Roberts managed to put a table tennis team together for a recent Penathlon (I think that's what it's called) competition between various schools, which surprised me, the boy's said they "got battered", but were looking forward to the next one,

so there is the encouragement.

So any more interested Players, give Ken a ring on 0151 486 3073



My squad of potential at Fazakerley High