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LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT
TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE



Arthur E. Upton 1919 - 2003

Season 2002 - 2003



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

EDITORIAL

It is with sadness I have to announce the passing of our League President, Mr Arthur Upton, at 83 years of age, the Obituary and comments from players who knew him more closely, stress the dedication he gave to the game of table tennis. Our sympathy goes out to his wife and family.

First to remind all players that the Liverpool Closed date has been fixed for Saturday 29th March 2003, to be played at the Wavertree Tennis Centre, commencing at 9-0am. There are 10 different events, with most of the events preliminary rounds being organized on a group basis, (at the discretion of the Referee), so everyone starts off with a few games under their belt in the Divisional events, the unfortunate thing is that not everyone can win a medal, but there is always the opportunity to see some top class table tennis in between games during the day. Five finals will be completed on the Saturday.

The Mens, Womens, Junior singles, and the Open Doubles finals will be played on Finals night at the Police Club on the following Tuesday, 1st. of April.

All Club Secretaries have been sent entry forms for this event, forms are also on the L&DTTL web site for downloading.

It's your competition; why not support it, entry forms should be in by Wednesday 19th. March.

If you can't make the Tournament itself, come along to watch the finals night at the Police Club, there'll be some good matches.

I was just starting to collect bits and bobs together for the next Digest, and as always, looking for anything of interest to add, decided to download a bit of software from the ETTA site, fatal, my PC crashed, and I was unable to use it for a week, waiting to get it fixed. So having been loaned an old bound volume of TT News, issues for the 3 years 1951 to 1953, I had another read through, the era of, Barna, Leach, the Rowe Twins and many more, the starting years

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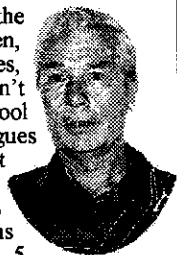
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of the "soft" bats, fascinating reading, but not a lot on the Liverpool League. I also had the loan of old copies of our own Digest, going back to 1986, Jack Lambert was the Editor, no computers then, printing was by whoever was the cheapest, in 1990,

even talk of calling a halt to the Digest in the format used then, because of a drain on resources, (financial), thankfully this didn't happen, as I'm sure the Liverpool Digest is the envy of many leagues around the country for the wit and writing of the Div. reporters over the years, even as close as 17 years ago we had 6 divisions with 73 teams, (now it's 5 divisions with 56 teams). That Digest of 1986 had the same questions to ask as today, "where have all the players gone?" they are out there somewhere, but what if they decided to come back, could clubs as they are now accommodate them, space and nights are at a premium now, and more closures imminent. Coaching! pleas for more assistance from the players to give a little of their time, you don't have to be a coach, just stand at the other end of the table to the learners and get the ball back and keep the practice going, that plea is just the same today. The talk of players dropping one club to move to another for whatever reason, put a question mark over "club loyalty", especially, when in some cases, a whole team moved on. And as regards to 'player apathy', this isn't a new problem, it was aired in the 50's, the majority just want to turn up and play their game, enjoy a good night, go home and look forward to the next game, when it comes to helping with a bit of the organising, a bit of time to assist, or even seeing someone else in action, that's a different story, and yet it isn't so difficult. I could go on and on but you are probably thinking "come back Ken Armson", before I forget, one for Kenny Jackson, "did you ever send that Wavertree Labour badge back to Ken?"



We have many top class players in our League, a lot of them playing for the City Rep. Teams, some playing in the British League, all which requires a lot of dedication, time and cost, with not a lot coming back other than satisfaction, I'm sure they would be more satisfied to see more of the average players at these matches as spectators. Since taking up this "job" as Digest Editor, I've seen a lot of these games, and I always come away with the feeling "so that's how it's done", that's what I'll do next time I play, it never works out as I hope, as there's no substitute for practice

Last Season The Wirral League celebrated 50 years as a League, after breaking away from the Liverpool & District league, celebrating with a Hot Pot Supper evening, and a get together of past and present players, how come they have such a thriving youth coaching policy?

When Arthur Upton became the Chairman of our League in 1958 I was only 4 years of age. Between the years of 1991 and 1998 he doubled up as both President and Chairman. He then stood down as Chairman in order to allow younger blood to have a go. As the President of the League there was no requirement for Arthur to attend Management Committee meetings but due to his unquestionable enthusiasm he continued to attend and continued to be a major force behind the running and development of the League. Even though Arthur was in his 80s, he still attended local tournaments and many a time you could see him helping out on the control table. In this column I cannot do justice to Arthur's memory. He was nothing less than an ICON.

When I was dragged onto the committee, sorry, asked to join, I was immediately installed as the Cup Competition secretary and for a number of years I travelled to many of the finals with Arthur. For those of you who didn't know him that well, he had a funny side, he was always looking to crack a joke. I found Arthur to be one the most amiable people I had ever met and there is no-one that I respect more. I make no bones about it, he will be greatly missed, not only for his humour and kindness but also for his knowledge and leadership. The League owes a debt of gratitude to him and I would welcome suggestions for how you would like this to be done.

Arthur's wife, Lil, is also someone I greatly admire. She has also contributed to League in no small way over the years and my deepest sympathy and those of the entire League go out to her. I hope the memories of Arthur's life and his achievements help to console her at this sad time.

Mike Power

Oldham and Tameside Table Tennis Leagues arranged a presentation night, held on Thursday 6th. March 03 at the Hollingwood and South Chadderton Conservative Club, Oldham, where both Alan Ransome OBE and Alex Murdoch were in attendance. The evening was split into two parts to give each candidate the opportunity to present their manifesto, followed by a question and answer session to hear the views of members. As our Digest was printed after this event took place, this article is only to show the interest the election is creating around the country.

The following Election Timetable is from the ETTA web site

23rd. January	Nomination Forms sent to members
15th. February	last date for receipt of Nom. Forms
6th. March	send out ballot papers to members
22nd. March	last day of receipt of ballot papers
6th. April (to be confirmed)	counting of Votes
8th. April	send out results

With respect to the elections for the 3 principle ETTA positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer. Your Management Committee discussed in depth the manifestos of both teams and representatives of the M.C. attended the meeting held in Oldham (mentioned above). This meeting confirmed our original view that we should cast our votes in favour of the present incumbents mainly due to uncertainty as to the ability of Alex Murdoch to fill such a high profile position and give the necessary time to the post, the qualifications of running mates Mike Johns and Martin Clark not being questioned.

Mike Power

The veteran 1st team visited Nottingham in the Alec Brook Memorial Trophy where they beat Leicester 5-3, Matlock 5-2 and the hosts 5-3 to reach the semi-final stage. That, however, is part of the story, for only Paul Hutchings and John Rankin travelled, since Keith Williams was working, Ken Jackson was ill and a reserve was difficult to find at short notice. Our boys won every set played. Well done to them. Hopefully a full team will be available to travel to Leamington Spa on 12th April where they lake on Sidcot, Hallam and the Spa team. The winners will qualify for the four teams finals in Knowsley over the weekend 24/25th May.

The men's 1st. team has also qualified for the penultimate stage in the Wilmott Cup and must visit Huddersfield on Saturday 5th. April hoping to make it to the finals for the second time.

The ladies finished in second place in the four team JM Rose Bowl behind Winal at Arrowe Park but not without a dramatic sequence of events, and now travel to Birmingham for the penultimate stage - the group winners qualifying for the finals in Knowsley.

The men's 1st team led the table after the first group of matches in the Lancashire and Cheshire League's premier division round robin at the Hilton Centre, Horwich, Victories over Halton 6-0, Mid Cheshire 4-2, Blackpool 6-0 and Bury 6-0 left them in the driving seat for the second and final group of matches at the same venue on Saturday 15th. February. I was present for both sessions and the lads scored victories over Oldham 5-1, Manchester 4-2 and Bolton 5-1 ensured the title for the eighth year in succession.

The most remarkable aspect of this triumph was the inclusion of Lawrence Kenwright for the second group of matches. The 37 year old last played for Liverpool more than ten years ago but since joining Liverpool YMCA this season, has returned to the form that saw him gain league and cup honours with the Liverpool men's team. When Kevin Dolder (working) Keith Williams (broken finger) Ken Jackson (unwell) and Peter Lee (spending a Valentine's weekend in Barcelona) were unable to play, former Closed men's singles finalist agreed to help out. What a return. Although his game was a shade rusty in certain areas, he kicked off with two against Oldham before weighing in with one a piece against Manchester and Bolton, Fantastic

The men's A team finished in second place behind Lancaster & Morecambe in the division two round robin and will complete the group matches at Halton on 8th. March.

A junior team was entered into the Lancashire &

Cheshire League for the first time in a number of years and we were placed in the premier division and it was intended that Paul O'Donnell, Clara Howard and Lee Proffitt would represent the League. However, a few days prior to the round robin matches in Lytham, Paul and Clara dropped out through injury and I was unable to replace them. If a team can be raised for the second phase of matches, we would still be eligible to enter the competition and possibly avoid relegation.

Veterans 1st.

Team	Home	Won	10-0 w/o
Macclesfield	Home	won	10-0 w/o
Preston	Away	won	6-4
Liverpool 'A'	Away	won	10-0
Manchester	Away	won	7-3
Tameside	Away	won	6-4
Halton	Home	won	10-0

Veteran 'A'

Team	Home	Won	Score
Tameside	Away	lost	4-6
Halton	Home	lost	4-6
Preston	Away	lost	1-9
Liverpool	Home	lost	0-10
Macclesfield	Away	lost	2-8

Ladies

Team	Home	Won	Score
Manchester	Home	won	7-3
Wirral	Away	lost	3-7
Macclesfield	Home	won	10-0
Halton	Home	won	8-2
Oldham	Home	won	9-1

National Rankings of Players who play in the L&DTT League to 100

Senior Men rank

John Hilton	30
Kevin Dolder	35
Paul Hutchings	43
Keith Williams	55
John Rankin	83
Chris Ford	101

Senior Women rank

Clare Newsns	23
Brenda Buoeoy	38
Alice Howard	40
Gemma Lloyd	55
Cherith Graham	70
Sue Burgess	80
Sylvia Graham	101

Junior Girls

Cherith Graham	15
Clara Howard	21

Junior Boys

Paul O'Donnell	76
Tom Bray	91

Cadet Boys

Tom Bray	23
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Veteran Men

John Hilton	1
Paul Hutchings	3
Keith Williams	9
John Rankin	15
Chris Ford	23
Wayne Percival	62
Ken Jackson	88

Veteran Women

Brenda Buoeoy	5
Sue Burgess	23
Sylvia Graham	36
Steph. Howard	77

ENGLISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2003

PONDS FORGE INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE SHEFFIELD



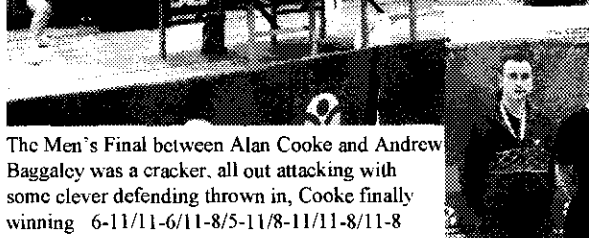
The Championships were held 28th. Feb. to 2nd March at Sheffield, which is a fantastic arena, none of our local players managed to get to finals day, but did manage the last 32. The large crowd was entertained with some fantastic table tennis, especially the Mens Final between Alan Cooke and Andrew Baggaley. John Rankin losing in the semi's of the Vetcrans singles.



The Men's doubles final between Alex Perry & Terry Young v Bryn Drinkhall & Andrew Rushton Perry & Young winning 3-2



The Women's final between Andrea Holt and Helen Lower was an attacker v defender, with the defender coming off best, but the score doesn't do justice to the match, Andrea winning 4-0



The Men's Final between Alan Cooke and Andrew Baggaley was a cracker, all out attacking with some clever defending thrown in, Cooke finally winning 6-11/11-6/11-8/5-11/8-11/11-8/11-8

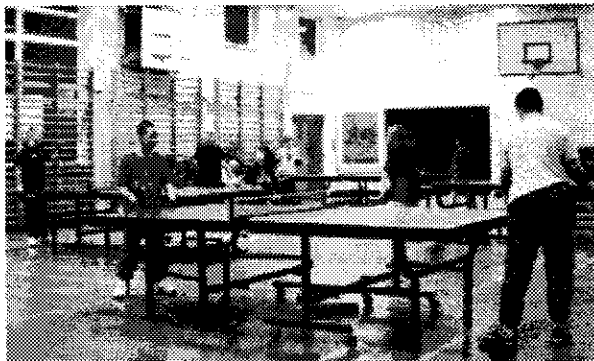


The presentation of the Men's singles Trophy was made by the Minister of Sport to Alan Cooke, looking on L to R. Bradley Billington (Semi F.) Andrew Baggaley, (runner up), Minister of Sport. Alan Cooke, Alan Ransome, OBE, Terry Young (Semi F.)

On the left, part of the large crowd which were treated to an excellent day of Table Tennis, and who I'm sure went away very happy!!

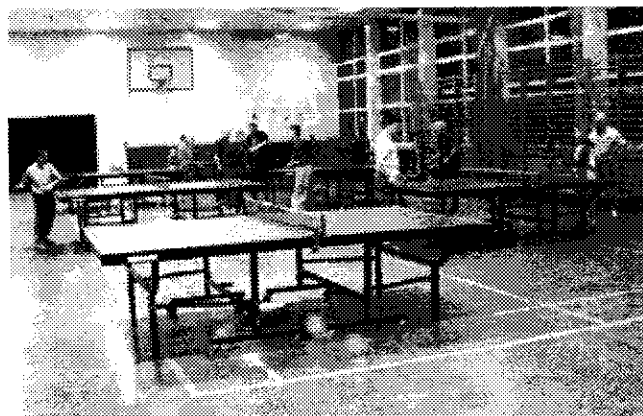
Coaching at Gateacre Community Comprehensive School

I visited the Gateacre coaching set up the other Monday, to see how Ken and his helpers were doing, it was the first day back after the school holiday, there were about 10 youngsters, I believe normally about 20 will turn up, 10 tables are available. Coaching staff was made up



of Ken Armson & Stan Clarke (Wav. Lab.) Graham Rollinson (Aigburth), George Smith (L/Pool YM),

Arthur Garnet (Bootle YM) and me. As soon as I offered my services, Ken said "go and give Scott a knock-up", I was soon on the receiving end of a



mixture of forehands and backhands, which I couldn't control, I had to go and get my match bat as I was looking the novice. The keenness to learn is obvious, with Stan moving about all the tables. Two hours soon went over, with the last 15 minutes spent playing lighthearted games. So the need for more helpers to is always there, even just to return the ball differently, and maybe get a bit of coaching as well, can't be bad.

EDITOR



Members of the City of Liverpool Junior team, all coached at Gateacre.

L. to R.

Peter Jones, Scott Martin & Ian Laird.

Ian also plays for Aigburth TT club in the Liverpool League

Let me first apologize to all the teams who have had to put up with my late arrival at some matches. Unfortunately we're a one car family at the moment due to the fact that the wifes' car engine mysteriously blew up the other day. The mechanic and I were at a loss as to the cause of the mishap until Jeanette suggested that the fault may be due to the dip - stick being too short. When asked to explain this bizarre diagnosis she said, "well for weeks it hasn't been reaching the oil".



Liverpool YMCA and Cadwa are presently head to head fighting for the Championship. Their clash resulted in a 7 - 3 win for Cadwa with Kevin Dolder predictably winning all his games. The remaining games should've been up for grabs but Peter Lee, uncharacteristically, failed to make a mark, losing two straight to Peter Taylor and 19 in the third to Mike Mahoney. Mike continued with his winning ways against Dele Olyumbo but was stopped by Omad Khaiyat who went on to beat Peter Taylor to make the scoreline somewhat respectable for YM.

YM did however get back on track dropping only two points against Manweb courtesy of Ray Parkinson beating Paul O'Donnell, and Andy Lloyd beating Dele. A 10 nil annihilation was then saved by Maghull's Matt Wilson having a tremendous win over Dele. The YM derby match proved an eventful night and a close call with the 1st team pinching a 6 - 4 win. Tony Whelan went home

with the match ball having disposed of Peter, Dele and Omad. YM'A's Miguel Bellec was unfortunate to go home empty handed having lost close in the 3rd to Peter and Dele. Ahmed Thabet, not only had to suffer a two straight drumming by Peter Lee, but then had salt rubbed in the wound when Peter endorsed the match card predicting that Ahmed would only beat him when the cows come home. Unfortunately predictions have a habit of coming back to haunt you and I should know, remember the 'ladder' Pete?

Harold House's hopes of emulating last seasons' performance by finishing within the top three may be somewhat beyond them due to fluctuating results. They started well with a fine 8 - 2 victory over Mayhill which saw Matt Wilson yet again saving face by beating Ken Connor and Eddie Clein, however, Harold House's next two matches saw them going down 7 - 3 to Bath St 'A' and

then plummeting to a disastrous whitewash against Waterloo. In the Bath St match Ian McElwee's consistent play paid off against Alex and Ray, whilst Eddie Crowley was equally impressive against Ken and Ray.

Alex and Ray soon made amends by beating Cadwa 'A's Billy Hargreaves and Alan Davies for a 6 - 4 win but neither player posed a threat to Ken Hartley who went home unscathed. Ken Connor was unlucky to lose in the 3rd to YM 'A's Ahmed Thabet and Miguel Bellec but reaped vengeance on Tony Whelan which resulted in both teams sharing the spoils.

The Wavertree team of Dave Roberts, Alison Howard and Roy Smith continue to churn out solid performances. A 6 - 4 win over Bath St. saw Kenny Jackson get his obligatory three whilst Fred Bainsbridge had a good win against Alison. John Langton made a guest appearance and did himself proud by taking Dave Roberts to three. Dave was not in a charity mood during their 8 - 2 win against Manweb who did however take some solace with the defeats of Alice by Ray Parkinson and Roy Smith to the hands of Les Molyneux. Dave had mixed fortunes against Bath St 'A' losing to Ian McElwee and Eddie Crowley albeit the Wav team came out 7 - 3 winners on the night.

The Wav team continued with their good fortune with a great 7 - 3 win against YM 1st team. Dave didn't drop a game all night and Roy had the usual

titanic game against Peter Lee, losing 18 in the 3rd. YM's remaining points came from Peter and Dele being successful against Alison.

I'm sure that every warm blooded male has noticed that Alison Howard has the location 'Abercombie' printed on the butt of her shorts. It's actually fascinating how the psychology of advertising effects ones train of thought because every time Alison bent over to pick the ball up, I instantly thought "God I'd love to go there" (obviously once I'd paid the congestion charge).

Bath St. 1st team seem to be leading the way in the middle of the table. I would think that they will probably be pushing for the top four by utilizing the inconsistent form of Harold House. Kenny Jackson who never has a bad season and rarely has a bad match led the way in their draw against YM'A'. In the same match Fred Bainbridge (or should I say 'Lord Fredrick' now that Fred has taken up residence in the exclusive Crosby Marina complex) had a good win over Paul O'Donnell but couldn't repeat the performance against Tony Whelan or Miguel Bellec. Harold House also struggled to make a mark against Bath St. with Alex Bryce saving red faces with wins over Ian McElwee and Lord Fred.

The Bath St. 'A' of Ian McElwee, Claire Newns and Eddie Crowley have developed into quite a formidable trio (Eddie that means three). A 8-2 win over Manweb with Andy Lloyd getting the only singles win against Eddie was soon followed by a 9 - 1 annihilation of my Police team. I'm still

having nightmares over that one. As bad as the result was I still ended the night with a chuckle as whilst driving out of the car park I allowed Eddie to drive in front of me. In recognition of my road manners Eddie instantly flicked his car interior light on and off and gave me the old 'thumbs up' out of the drivers window. Once a busman, always a busman.

Another team that has now established itself within the division is YM 'A's team of Ahmed Thabet, Paul O'Donnell and Miguel Bellec. The lads had a good 7-3 win against Waterloo with Ted birch being the sole winner for the tennis club. I must also take this opportunity to formally welcome Miguel Bellec to our league. I must admit that my opinion of the French was based on the theory that you knew when a Frenchman had been in your house because your bins were empty and the cat was pregnant. However, Miguel has raised my views as he comes across as a nice lad with a good sense of humour (I hope) and a decent ping pong player to cap it.

Talking about decent players brings me on to Waterloo's Keith Williams who has really come back to form. It must be something in the tap water up there. It was inevitable that Keith was going to make a big difference to Waterloo's season but he seems to have rekindled his enthusiasm and is ploughing through everyone. A 6 - 4 win over Maghull saw Keith beat Paul Hutchins comfortably in the third with Alan Chase adding to the tally against Steve Woods and Fred Pheysey. Keith still to date retains his 100% record, as does Cadwa's Kevin Dolder, having recently beaten

John Rankin two straight. I hope that both Keith and Kevin are available for when their respective teams play as the potential is there for a great match.

The Police team at the start of the season were faced with the annual problem of fielding a consistent team, however, John Rankin is now able to commit himself more to the team and consequently will feature in most of the remaining matches of the season. I must admit that we were starting to twitch a bit when the league tables came out but hopefully with John's presence coupled with me now hopefully pulling my weight, we should be okay. On the occasions when reserve players do come in they've certainly contributed to the scoreline as was the case when Tony Harris had a good win over Manwebs Ray Parkinson to assist in a 7 - 3 victory, and also when Terri-Ann had a tremendous win against Wavertree's Dave Roberts.

Incidentally, if you think that John Rankin pulls some funny faces whilst serving, I would've loved to have seen his face when his wife Debbie told him that she was expecting their third child. "You're what?" I believe was his reaction. John tells me that he has the responsibility of choosing a name which he says he will pick out of a hat. I'm taking bets at the moment but my money is on 'Seven and three eights'.

Although Maghull, according to my records, are still within the relegation zone, I honestly can't see them leaving the division. The introduction of

Paul Hutchings has obviously paid dividend, not only in match results but also by allowing other team members to perform without the threat of relegation hanging over their heads. Matt Wilson for instance has had some great wins which have been well documented in this article.

For me the teams destined to go are Cadwa 'A' and Manweb. Cadwa's Ken Hartley is as loyal as ever. He bats on regardless through thick or thin and still manages to maintain his high standards. The Cadwa team

and club should be applauded for not 'playing the system' when Chris Ford signed on. The temptation for most clubs would've been for Chris or another 1st team player to be ranked in the 'A' team. The 'A' team players thought that this would be unfair and decided to let fate take its course.

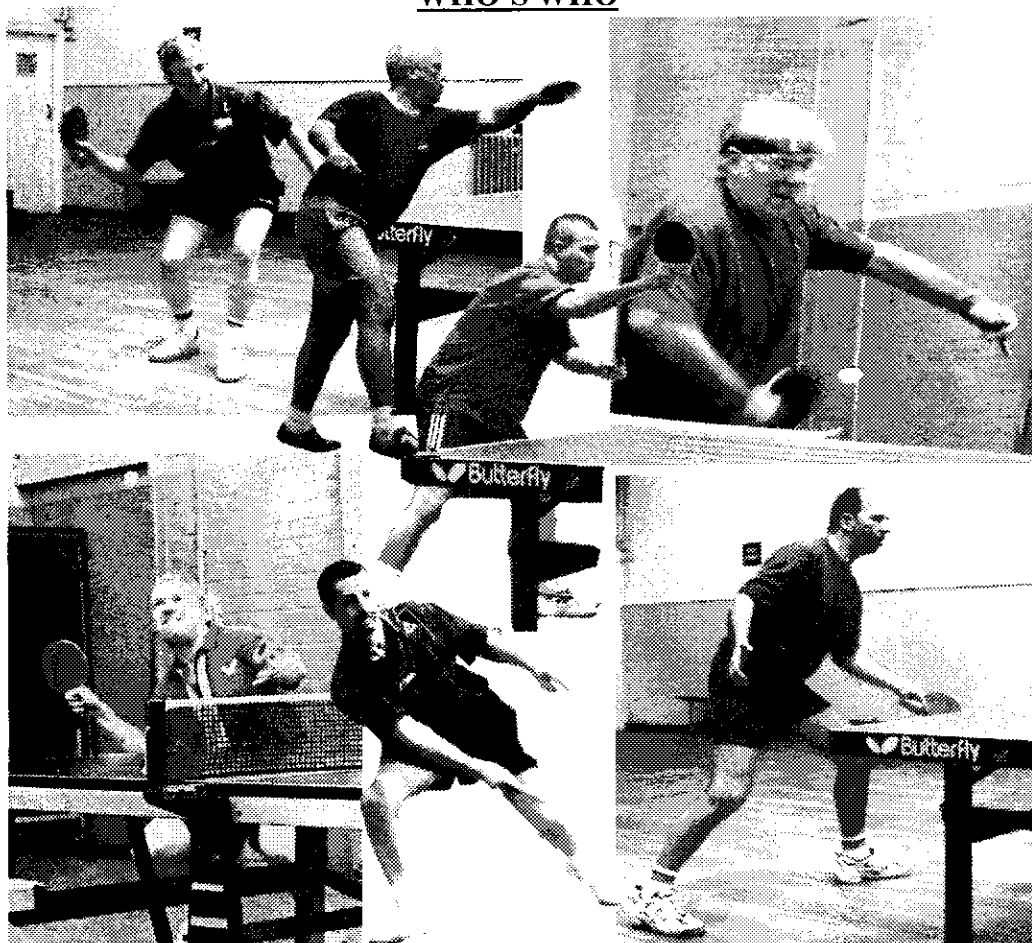
Likewise, the Manweb team plod on and notch up some good individual wins and know doubt Les Molyneux, Ray Parkinson and Andy Lloyd will

take each game as it comes and see every point as a bonus.

Anyway, I'm off now to try and figure out the best route through 'Ambercombe' but before I do,

can I just encourage everyone to support the forthcoming 'Closed' tournament. It's well organized and you get lots of ping pong as well as catching up with some old friends. What more could you ask for. See you there.

WHO'S WHO



Not many cards to run through 'cos I think they are all still being processed but I'll try and give an idea of what's been happening. Police did cause some confusion earlier in the season by not only changing the match nights of the 'A' and 'B' teams but also changing the fixtures too. For several weeks the cards had the teams crossed out and one week the card had the 'A' team playing twice with six different players...but I think everyone has sorted it out now.

Before I forget, Eddie Crowley from Bath St. asks to be remembered to all his friends(?) in the Division. He said that the First isn't all it's cracked up to be and several times he has considered coming back for the camaraderie, friendly banter and tight games. He said there was nothing to hold him in the first and it's only now he realises how his old chum Ian had helped sort out some of his many weaknesses to give him the game he has today. Come back Eddie all is forgiven!! I'm sorry I said you played like Andrea Baldi!!!!

Oh! And did you know that John Langton from Bath St., ex BT, has been having trouble with phones or was it umpires???? At a recent match, as his opponent served into the net, someone's mobile phone went off and the umpire played a let. Unlucky John but you win some and you lose some (aside....must remember to take mine to our next match!!!!)

Well, after those little titbits I suppose we should look at how we are progressing. I can't see there being any change in the promotion teams as Marconi and Fords are 20 points ahead of the third place team Manweb and that's an awful lot to make up in half a season. Marconi and Fords



believe are definitely going up and I think they will be having their own private battle for first and second place. Currently there are only three points between them and that isn't much after fourteen games so neither can afford to drop silly points. The rest of us can play our part by making it as difficult as possible for them for the rest of the season making them fight continually for every point and earning yourself recognition into the bargain, in the next digest, for convincing wins. At the same time you'll be doing your own team a favour as there are really no safe teams in the bottom seven teams. Manweb 'A' and Waterloo 'A' are just that little bit ahead of the seven but still haven't enough points to be complacent. The bottom seven teams are set for an exciting time as their positions are changing week by week whilst two teams have a match in hand. Once these are played we'll get a truer picture but the run up to the end of the season will depend on who plays who in the remaining fixtures. This will probably be the most exciting end to a season the divisions' ever had and I look forward to seeing future results. My amended predictions for the two most likely to be demoted

are Bath St 'C' and Police 'B' but that's not set in stone just taken from the bottom of the latest league table.

Things do change because at the beginning of the season Graeme Reid had doubts as to whether his team would remain in the division this season but after eight games he thought that 'so far so good' perhaps they would be there next year and after an 8:2 loss to their first team where three of those eight were losses 25:23, 21:19 and 21:19 in the third he feels more optimistic as he felt those heading for promotion should be beating them more convincingly and by greater margins. He also thinks that individually all the members of Fords 'A' are beatableso there's the challenge folks...everyone all out for points against Fords and prove Graeme rightor wrong!!!!

Brian Crolley says that in the Bootle JC match against Police 'A' Tom Bray was the star player winning all his three singles against Gemma Lloyd, Jon Dyson and Paula French to prevent the whitewash. Brian adds that the Police team are all stars. Brian can sweet talk anyone...can't he?? Steve Kee is definitely the Division's proverbial chatterbox and my best friend 'cos he's witty with it and I can rely on him to make some snappy comments on the cards. This time he comments that Fords 'A' contains all choppers!!! (somehow I don't think Steve likes them too much!!!!) and he would like to campaign for an earlier start to their matches or a one inch net whichever is easier. He said that the match between YMCA 'B' and Bootle JC was a very quick match apart from one three hour

game between John Henshaw and Brian Crolley. He states that it was a masterclass in dead bat versus dead bat tactics, which Brian edged (or was it 'netted'??) Brian had a good night overall and Steve felt in his match against Brian he was trapped in the middle of a Star Wars scene fighting against the one and only Darth Vader...something to do with the Brian's breathing I expect. He also says that young Tom 'Skywalker' Bray is quite a prospect...as is Princess Cherith.

There was one more card with comments on....but as it was Trevor Owens detailing the Marconi latest ranking list...forgive me if I don't print the details.....sorry! Trevor...even though it is the most exciting thing you've ever written on a card!!!

Remember if anyone has interesting details of something that has happened at a match or a funny titbit that may be of interest put it on the card and share it...remember 'Sharing is Caring' so show you care for everyone in the division.

Lastly let's have a look at the roles of honour for this period:

Facesavers: Not many this time so it shows how evenly matched most teams in the division are....Rob Peat(Bath St 'C') beat Tom Murray (Fords) 19,17. Ian Grant (Bath St 'B'); beat Trevor Owen (Marconi) 19,18. Tom Bray (Bootle J.C.) beat Tom Murray (fords) -14, 21, 17

Close Wins: Paula French (Police 'B') beat Frank James (Fords 'A') -15, 20, 20. Bill Harris (Bootle JC 'A') beat Dave

Graham (Bootle JC) -19, 18, 20. Terri Ann Nolan (Police 'A') beat Peter Joiner (Bath St 'B') 18, 20. Rob Peat (Bath St. 'C') beat Ritchie Cragg (Waterloo 'A') 22, -18, 20. John Henshaw (Liverpool YM 'B') beat Paul Evans (Manweb 'A') -22, 17, 19. Paula French (Police 'A') beat Brian Crolley (Bootle JC) 19, 20, she also beat Frank James (Fords 'A') -15, 20, 20.

Good Wins: Sue Burgess (Bath St 'C') beat Torstein Bondal (Liverpool YMCA 'B') -19, 18, 18. John Langton (Bath ST 'B') beat Nigel Stopher (Waterloo 'A') 15, 20 and then Mark Patterson beat him by exactly the same scores. Rob Gouldson (Fords 'A') beat Trevor Owens (Marconi)-8, 18, 22. Gareth Jones (Police 'B') beat Dave Evans (Bath St. 'C') -12, 18, 23)

CUP SEMI-FINALS ---- Results

Division 1 - Readman Cup

0	Bath Street	V	Maghull	5
5	CADWA	V	L'pool YMCA	3

Lights failed at Bath St.- Bath St. conceding match

Division 2 - Rumjahn Cup

5	Marconi	V	Waterloo "A"	3
1	Police "A"	V	L'pool YM 'B'	5

Division 3 - Hyde Cup

0	Wav.Lab. "B"	V	CADWA "C"	5
5	Marconi "A"	V	Wav.Lab.'A'	2

Division 4 - Forrest Cup

3	Maghull "B"	V	Marconi "B"	5
5	L'pool YMCA	V	Manweb "C"	3

Division 5 - Stamp Cup

5	Harold House'A'	V	Bath St. "G"	1
5	Linacre	V	Police "C"	0 w/o

Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy

Linacre	v	Bath St.3
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Linacre won by 30 points

MANWEB 1	v	Fords
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Fords won by 20 points

CUP FINALS

matches to be played

Division 1 - Readman Cup

CADWA	V	Maghull	30th.April 2003
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Division 2 - Rumjahn Cup

Marconi	V	L'pool YM'B'	28th.April 2003
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Division 3 - Hyde Cup

Marconi "A"	V	CADWA "C"	24th.April 2003
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Division 4 - Forrest Cup

L'pool YM "C"	V	Marconi "B"	23rd.April 2003
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Division 5 - Stamp Cup

Harold House'A'	V	Linacre	22nd.April 2003
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Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy

Linacre	v	Fords	29th.April 2003
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Venues for the above finals to be arranged

This report covers November & December 2002, a period when the CADWA teams in this division all suffered the effects of being without their number 1's. The 'B' team lost theirs to the 'A' team. The 'C' team never saw theirs. The 'D' team gave theirs up to replace the 'C' teams. Thus is the loss at the top of the tree felt down to the club's foot, as the machinations of a club system is oiled with iron filings.

At this time CADWA 'D' still had the services of George Lennon, who was able to take points off Marconi 'A's Ian Wensley and Frank McCann, in his last game for the 'D' team before being reranked up into the 'C' team. Steve Critchley was also playing well, turning in magnificent performances against Ian Wensley and Wav Lab 'A's Bill Stanley. Don Davies also showed promise beating Bill Lowe. But with the results in those games being 3-7 and 2-8, it was apparent that the team were in dire trouble, even given the fact they were against promotion contenders. Thus it was rather inevitable that when CADWA 'D' meet CADWA 'C', who able to play George at number 4, that there was a landslide.

Only Steve's determination to prove a point by winning points, netted a solitary point, 1-9. A similar tale when 'D' hosted another Wav Lab team, their 'B', and another 2-8 defeat. Steve C beating Peter Howden & genial John Gratton, for the 2. Don Davies took a game off Ken Arnson & Paul Banks, in turn Trevor Dolder had the closest of matches with Paul, 19/21, 21/19, 19/21. Worse was to come at Bootle YM, as Roly Wright, our Roving Reporter writes:



"Start the season with a 10-0 against battering - finish the year with a 10-0 win. I did think that the face saver was to be the 1st doubles, CADWA going into a 1st game lead, 21-18, but not to be, at least it went to 3 games (17 & 16 in 2nd & 3rd), the only match to go to three games. John Higham and Richie Winkle becoming a formidable doubles as the season goes on. No deuce games, only at 19."

Over this period, CADWA 'B's fortunes followed those of the 'D' team. Having essentially lost the services of number 1 Alan Davies to the 'A' team, pressure was put on the remaining players as they all stepped up a spot. Even with Alan's services, they too mirrored the 'D' team against their CADWA 'C' team. Alan, playing his last for the 'B' team, had a brace and the only 'B' team points from the 2-8 defeat. The 'C' team's George Higham tantalised Rob Peverall and Ian Burrows, dropping the opening game to each, but winning through comfortably in the end, the only man to go to a deciding

game. The following week, home to Maghull, the intermediate solution was revealed; Rob at 1, Peter Roberts at 2, Ian at 3, and a 'C' team reserve at 4 - this time Steve Graham. Maghulls No. 1 Kevin Lewis made short shrift of Rob & Peter. Ian struggled to get started against both his opponents. Ian lost the first set 18/21 to both George Frost and Harry McGanity. He then won the second in each. He defeated Harry in one 3rd but was humbled by George in the other. It wasn't Harry's night as he was also squeezed out in 3 against Steve G. Final score, 7 sets to 3, a good result to get things moving again for the CADWA 'B' boys. However away, at Wav Lab 'B', Rob Peverall scrubbed Peter Howden off his Christmas card list due to a 22/20 3rd game defeat. The pain was all the more acute as Rob had overturned a first game loss, by winning the second 21/6. Rob took some comfort by winning against John Gratton in two. Wav Lab 'B', showed no remorse in the 9-1 result. Rob Davies in at 4, survived a deuce in the first game v Dave Foulis, who took the second to force a decider. This too came down to deuce and this time Dave had the nerve to win 24/22. A fortnight later, and another tough lesson, as Waterloo 'B' carded an 8-2. Julie Prince was too strong for Rob P & Ian B. Rob Peverall narrowly lost to Ian Lunt who in turn lost out to the other Rob, Rob Davies. Rob D, was not so Happ 'E' against Harr 'E', as Mr Nelson showed how to close out a game 21/12 in the 3rd. Harry and Ted Cramsie also felt warm glows as they were undefeated in singles. But Harry and Julie couldn't prevent the Robs (P&D) salvaging another point.

As mentioned above, CADWA 'C's victories in the intra club matches, 9-1 & 8-2, have set them up to be the clubs main hopes for promotion. When the smoke settled Steve Graham was able to rejoice (quietly, not smugly) with top form wins over Steve Critchley, Trevor Dolder and Rob Peverall. George Higham must have felt the same but less so, as he also had victories over Rob P & Trev, and Ian Burrows, but all taking 3. George was always a slow starter. Bragging rights probably go to George Lennon, who has won the most games, whether that be at 4 or 1. Rob Davies has wins over John O'Sullivan & Peter Roberts to his credit. However, when put under pressure from Manweb and then Marconi cracks appeared. Manweb 'B' won on the CADWA boards 6-4. The doubles were easily the 'C' teams, but the singles were more hotly contested. The 2 singles victories were the Georges v Alan Cameron. Firstly Higham in 2 straight, but then Lennon had to work hard to win 21/18 in't 3rd. That was the only one of the five sets that went to a deciding game that CADWA C won. Paul Jennings perhaps had to work the hardest to beat Steve G & Mr George Higham, but each time building up an untouchable lead in the 3rd. Sharon Norman got revenge over George Lennon with another strong 3rd gamer. Alan Evans joined in the rout taking Steve in 2 and Rob D in 3. No let up for the CADWA boys in their next fixture, away at Marconi 'A'. What had been a solid doubles combo of Davies & Lennon, Graham & Higham, crumbled under the dog collar lampshades. Wensley & McCann put points on the top of the card for Marconi, as the George's put points on the bottom for CADWA. The match of Wass v Lennon seems to be the pick of

the night, as George won his 2nd singles, a very close affair, 18/21, 21/19, 21/18. The 3-7 result leaving CADWA 'C' to contemplate that championship won't be theirs this year.

On the other side of the stream, Wavertree Labour have fared only slightly better in their juggling of 3 teams. That Wav Lab 'A' victory over CADWA 'D' had Ian Black & Richie Jones in fine form. Mick Tierney replaced Ian, and Mark Myles replaced Bill, in the following weeks trip to Manweb 'B'. And it was they who yet won, as the team went down 6-4. A draw looked probable and a win looked possible as 5 games went to a decider. However Wav Lab 'A' only won one of them, losing three in the 3rd by just the minimum 2 points. Ian was back for the next game, home to another formidable team, Marconi 'A'. Frank McCann opened up for the visitors beating Bill Stanley. Mick replied by taking Ian Wensley in 2. The battle of the 4s went to John Moore. Ian then tied the match with a win over Peter Wass. The crucial 5th game could have gone either way, but Bill Stanley couldn't stop John Moore securing another victory that kept Marconi ahead. After the break, Mick Tierney came back from losing the 2nd to beat Frank McCann in't 3rd, now 3-3 all. Richy Jones was then called to the table to face an "out for revenge" Peter Wass, who quickly restored advantage to Marconi. Ian Black then faced a similar prospect in Ian Wensley. In the battle of the lans, Mr Wensley surged through to give Marconi an unbeatable 5-3 position. For the doubles both teams had opted for the 1&3, 2&4 formation. Thus Marconi, called on second doubles Frank & John versus Ian & Richy. Their only bad call of the night, as and the Wav Lab boys ignored

their failure to wrap it up in two, to take it in three. Mick & Bill then tried to emulate their team mates, but after losing the 1st they lost out 21/23 in the 2nd, and the draw escaped them. No changes were made as the same four that lost narrowly to the title contenders, then visited Bath Street 'D'. A sound move, as they returned the vote of confidence, winning through 8-2. Les Gee had to retire from his last match of the evening, after having beaten Bill Stanley in 3. Eddie Williams took the same number of games to beat Ian Black. All else, went Wav Lab 'A's way. Peter Ross and Billy Clayton couldn't turn the tide, especially against Richy.

Okay, so defeat against two strong teams, and a good win over a mid table team. So Wav Lab 'A' must also be thinking their name is not on the cup. At least not on the Champions cup, but they'll see time and opportunity to have their name inscribed on the Runners-up cup.

Wav Lab 'B' found Manweb 'B', a much stronger prospect than did their 'A' team. This time Manweb had Alan Evans in at number 1. Alan stung Peter Howden and John Gratton. Peter unsettled Paul Jennings, who in turn beat Paul Banks in 3. However, John lost a see-saw set versus Sharon Norman, who was in the course of winning her two. Paul enjoyed or endured, another 3 gamer with Alan Cameron, but finished the stronger. Both doubles to Manweb, to make up a convincing 2-8 win for the visitors.

As John Gratton records about this clash of titans

"Bad result for Wav Lab 'B' as prior to this game both teams had identical records: played 9, points 50. Sharon is an

excellent player with a deceptively steady counter attacking style. Paul Banks has improved out of all recognition since the start of the season. He won only 1 of his first 8 games and this loss to Paul Jennings was his first in his last 10 games. Eventful game -- 2 bulbs had been broken and first couple of games played in semi-darkness until Ken A. arrived with new bulbs."

On that occasion Mike Ashton was in for 'B' team regular Dave Foulis. Up against **Waterloo 'B'**, Dave was back and could beat Ken Nelson, but found Ted Cramsie too much of a handful. Indeed it was the Cramsie & Prince show (again!), as they were unbeaten for the visitors. Paul Banks responded in kind for the home team, inflicting defeat on Harry and Ken Nelson, to ensure the points got split evenly 5-5. Mike Ashton was in the **Wav Lab 'C'** team that lost 7-3 to the 'B' team. It took John Grattan 3 games to crack Tony Connor's attack, which had proved too much for Peter Howden. Peter put Mike Ashton in his place (1v2) as Mike had done to Dave Foulis (2v3). However the difference between victory and non-victory was both Paul Banks wins over Dave Williams and Andy Bird, and Peter & Johns doubles 22/20, 18/21, 22/20 confrontation with Tony & Mike.

The defeat by the 'B' team, was the **Wav Lab 'C'**'s 2nd in a row, on the back of a 6-4 away defeat at fellow strugglers **Maghull 'A'**. Captain Connor is only too aware of how vital these skirmishes at the bottom of the league are. He and his team have survived a good few seasons by picking up points when it mattered most. An out of form Tom Downing lost to both Tony and

Mike. Mike contributed another point to the cause by beating Harry McGanity. Together he and Tony teamed up to take first doubles. Tony's record was blemished by George Frost, as the iceman cold shouldered him 23/21 in't 3rd. Maghull's hardy No. 4, Kevin Lewis inflicted wounds on the pride of Williams and Bird. Kevin teaming with Tom to take 2nd doubles from the same twosome. {Hardly surprising therefore that Kevin has since been reranked up.}

Mark Miles and Gordon Langshaw joined Tony and Dave in the journey North to Bootle. But, they only managed to prize 2 points out of the hands of the **Bootle YMCA**. Six games went to three, and only Tony could rejoice in beating Danny Every, in a class 19/21, 21/19, 21/18 turn around. Roly sums up thus:

"Wav Lab 'C' main problem for being near the bottom is not having strongest team out regularly. Mark is a good addition but couldn't handle John. Tony did well beating Danny, and had the edge only losing 30-28 in the last one. And don't the doubles make the difference."

Wav Lab 'C' without Mike met **Waterloo 'B'** without Ted Cramsie. Tony again led by example with fine wins over Julie and Ian Lunt. Super Sub Stan Clarke (Stan's description not Tony's, but on this occasion Tony had to agree) not only won his two singles (including a coming back from the brink of defeat by Ken Nelson) to win a decisive doubles with Andy Bird. And, as Roly says, doubles do make the difference, if only Tony & Dave had stopped Julie & Harry nipping the first 21/23, 20/22, then they would have had their first win of the season, instead of yet another draw!

They didn't have long to put things straight. Playing at home two weeks on the trot obviously helped. A thunderous 7-3 victory over **Bath St 'D'**. Reason for Mr Connor to celebrate you'd think, after all his hard effort for the team. But in ironies of ironies, Tony wasn't involved! No it was Mike, Dave, Tony Mitchell and Andy who wore the laurels. Mike made a claim for the No. 1 spot by beating Eddie Williams & Peter Ross. Another Super Sub made an impeccable contribution; Tony Mitchell beating Ross & Alcock. All of this would have been as now't if both doubles hadn't been secured. The guile of Billy Clayton was the only diamond in the dark for Bath Street, and Dave Williams nearly had the surprise of the night when tied at 1 game each, 20-20 with namesake Eddie, but Eddie somehow won the next two. Some recompense to Eddie after losing to Mike 21/19 in the 3rd.

And I could complete my report now, having only commented on the fortunes of two clubs, CADWA and Wavertree Labour, and everyone else by reference to them. With 6 teams out of 12 in the division nearly everything that goes on will involve these two. There is the occasional prospect of none of the teams in these clubs meeting, in which case every game involves these characters. Does this influence make for a more exciting division? - I don't know. But it certainly provides more intrigue. And it fuels the furnaces of the conspiracy theorists. Something to think about as you read these results if you're not a player for either of these two clubs.

So, what of the other clubs inter rivalry. Well, the

Waterloo 'B' regulars beat a **Bath St 'D'** bolstered by Adrian Bramham at No.1, 6-4. Julie did for Adrian and Eddie, whilst Adrian won by the narrowest margins 23/25 in the 2nd against Ian. Ted got his money's worth. In both singles he came from a game down to level. He lost one decider to Eddie, but had the better of Billy Clayton. Billy never likes to go home empty handed and duly took a point off Harry, who added to Peter Ross's night of woe. The week previously the same Waterloo 'B' team had gone down by the same margin to **Bootle YMCA's** usual suspects. They each won one, lost one in the singles. Indeed, only John Higham was able to hold his own, including beating Ian after losing the 1st 21/23. The longest first game of the night however, and the season thus far, was Ted & Roly, 29/31 to Roly, who then wrapped up the set in the next game. Waterloo's failing and BYMs strong point was the doubles, all won in "straight sets".

Prior to this, **Bootle YM** had played host to **Bath Street 'D'**, but had been unable to beat them, 5-5. Bath St had Les Gee replacing Peter, and BYM had Peter Williams in at 4 as Danny was awol. Les didn't disappoint, taking his two. Roly & Peter found the opposition too hot, whilst John & Richie were cool under pressure, fending off all comers to keep 100% records, as the YM won 4/5 3rd game sets. As our correspondent up North puts it:

"A ding dong match. 1-1/2-2/3-3/4-4/5-5. A good result for the night. Adrian is a good find for Bath 'D'. I did think we were going to win 6-4 when we pinched the 1st(2nd) doubles match on, but then lost

the other doubles, again pinched by the winners. A close game between John & Adrian. The fireworks going off outside put Adrian off a bit, John's hearing aid was off, was that an advantage?"

So, two consecutive games away from home for Bath Street, and a haul of 9 points, is a very respectable return. However, facing **Marconi 'A'** on your return home is not a promising prospect. So it was that Marconi inflicted, a 10-0 on Bath Street. Eddie came closest to getting a point on the board, 19/21 in't 3rd v Ian Wensley. Perhaps, Bath Street are just trying to get accustomed to playing away? Whatever, at that time it was only their 2nd defeat.

It may be that Bath Street were just the unfortunate recipients of a backlash, as the week previously, **Marconi 'A'** had suffered their first defeat of the campaign, and it had been on home soil to boot. **Manweb 'B'** turned up with a strong team, led by Alan Evans. Ian, Peter and John (McCann) each took a point in singles, two coming from John Ashley. But for the first time in many a long year Frank came away from both his singles empty handed. Alan & Sharon were just too strong on this occasion. Alan had a fine encounter with Mr Wensley, alternating 21/18s 2-1 in Alan's favour. Sharon made it a rare double over the McCann clan, by beating John too in two. However, the McCann's years of understanding was the difference that won the 2nd doubles. Paul Jennings went to 3 in both his matches, but only took the set off Peter Wass. Alan & Sharon teamed up to win their doubles, capping a strong performance by the pair, in the 6-4 win over the

top team. Strangely, weeks later it was the same score line against (what was) the lowest team in the division. All of the visiting **Magull 'A'** boys won a singles. Kevin Lewis beat Paul in the battle of 1's. Against Sharon, he squared the series 1-1 with a 21/13 2nd game, but then lost the final by the same score. Sharon again won her two, as the team won both doubles. So, not a bad result for MCA 'A' against "the team that beat Marconi". But a week later facing said **Marconi 'A'**, any hopes of a reasonable result were dashed 1-9. MCA 'A' must have thought themselves in with a shout as Marconi had two reserves in place. But such is their strength in depth, that both reserves were unbowed, and the solitary home point was in Kevin's 1v1 victory over Frank. I wonder if Marconi 'A' are getting tempted to play a squad system? Resting the regulars and giving a run out to the youngsters as the whim takes them.

So, what has does all of the above signify? Well, we saw a small dent in the armour plating of the ever rolling onward Marconi 'A' tank, which didn't cause the tracks to come off, nor them to come off the track?! But not much has changed in team orders (sic) since the last time of writing. Team positions have only altered by the narrowest degree. Which can only mean that little will change in the final run in. At the end of this marathon, Marconi 'A' will be enjoying the mars bar whilst wearing the tin foil jacket as Wav Lab 'A' look over their shoulder to see CADWA 'C', Manweb 'B' & Bootle YMCA hot on their heels going up Pall Mall. Msytic Smeg out.

Since the first digest appeared this season, there have not been too many positional changes in what is still proving to be a very competitive division. One team making quite a charge up the division is Marconi B, moving up from fifth to lead as we pass the halfway stage of the season. They took on a strengthened Bath Street F side and defeated them 7-3 with both Tony Mullally and Ian Woods winning both of their singles matches, Tony beating Karen Gibson and Geoff Metcalfe, and Ian beating Geoff and Ian Ambrose. Liverpool YMCA C were next up for Marconi, and were also handed a heavy defeat, 8-2, this time Andrew Owens and John Rowan emerging unscathed including a victory for Andrew over Torsten Bondal. After 13 games, Marconi hold a 6 point lead over nearest challengers, Manweb C, a gap which almost seems quite large in this division this season.

Manweb have looked a little inconsistent recently, defeating Bath Street F and Wavertree Labour E, both by 8 games to 2, and losing 6-4 to Wavertree Labour D and Liverpool YMCA C, the latter result later being changed to an 8-2 victory for Manweb owing to YM playing out of ranking order with J Lau playing incorrectly at number 1. The match against Wavertree Labour E also proved eventful with Labour's Anthony Mitchell having to leave without having played a singles match due to being violently ill during the game, none of us thought the game you were watching was that bad Tony! The game against the Labour D team almost finished on the day after it started, the final match finishing at 11:40pm according to Stan. This game was fairly unusual in



that Labour played a mother and daughter combination, Stephanie and Clara Howard, both of them playing their part in victory with Clara defeating both Arthur Harrison and the evergreen Alan Biggs.

Bath Street E remain in third place despite two heavy defeats, to Maghull B and Marconi B, 9-1 on both occasions. In both games, Dave Cunningham saved the whitewash for Bath Street, defeating Steve McGarity 23/21 in the third against Maghull, and John Rowan 23/21 in the second against Marconi. The match with Wavertree Labour E rivalled the Marconi - Labour D game for time, 5 of the matches going to three and one game which didn't was not for the want of trying, Dave involved again, this time beating Anthony Mitchell 21/12, 30/28. I have heard of getting your moneys worth, but Dave seems to be getting more than his fair share!

Wavertree Labour D have slipped from the top of the pile down to fourth after losing to Bootle YMCA A and their E team, both by the same score line of 6-4. Stan Clarke and Ken Armson were both unbeaten

against Bootle, but while Ken remained unbeaten against the E team, Stan suffered an off night, going down to Anthony Mitchell and Gordon Langshaw. They were back on the winning trail when they faced Aigburth A, winning 9-1. Ken had a fright playing Lee Proffitt, scraping it 22/20 in the third. Lee then found Stan a different proposition, losing 7 and 11.

Bootle YMCA A have the same points total as Labour D, having played a game less than them. They hosted Liverpool YMCA C and defeated them 8-2, only J Lau saving face for the Liverpool side beating Mike Hughes and Peter Williams. After their 6-4 win over Wavertree Labour D their visit to Labour E proved more difficult, ending in a 9-1 defeat. Mike gained their only point on the night, beating Anthony in three. Another marathon game on the night was between Steve Perry and Jim Geddes, Steve eventually edging it 18/21, 26/24 21/15.

Wavertree Labour E are a further 8 points adrift of Bootle, but seem fairly comfortable in mid-table. Again Labour E have looked slightly inconsistent, achieving some good victories and suffering one or two heavy defeats. Ken Roberts has had a couple of good wins recently, beating Peter Williams of Bootle YMCA and Alan Biggs of Manweb, Ken seeming to like playing against "funny rubbers." Gordon Langshaw was undefeated against the Labour D team, beating Stan and Stephanie on the night. Anthony Mitchell, having recovered from his illness, also defeated Stan but found Ken too strong for him.

Liverpool YMCA C have the same points as Labour E.

They appear to have turned out quite a few different players this season, but on one occasion didn't turn up at all for the away fixture with Aigburth A, the note on the card from Eric Young claiming that this is the only way he can win games! Liverpool YMCA seem to be having some strange games this season, the non-appearance at Aigburth A, the playing out-of order against Manweb and in the game with Aigburth, Francis Lay conceded his match with Ray Jones after being called for his serve on four separate occasions, after the fourth call he refused to continue. They then registered a good win over Manweb, J Lau, now registered at number one, beating Peter Carney and John Ashley, and Francis beating Arthur Harrison and Alan Biggs.

Maghull B are just one point behind the two teams above them but have dropped 2 places since the last digest. They recorded fine 9-1 wins over Bath Street E and Aigburth A, Phil Christie and Brian Gregory not dropping a set in either match. They also slowed Marconi down, drawing the game after choosing good partnerships to win both doubles matches.

Aigburth look to have

gained enough points to keep them clear of their A team in the race to avoid relegation to the fifth. In a game with Maghull, two of the matches kept the "audience" captivated, Brian Gregory edging out Ray Jones 21/18, 14/21, 28/26 and Graham Rollinson redressing the balance, beating Bill Salter 21/15, 19/21, 21/15.

Aigburth brought Lee Proffitt in from their A team for this game but he was unable to overcome either Steve McGanity or Wilf Gibson. Carl Anderson handed out a rare defeat to Dave Cunningham during a 6-4 victory over Bath Street E, following this up by beating Peter Joiner in a draw with the Crosby club's F team.

It is still very close between Bath Street F and Aigburth A for that dreaded relegation slot, just two points separating them at present. Bath Street appear to have strengthened their team and now regularly seem to be able to turn out Peter Joiner, Karen Gibson, Ian Ambrose and Geoff Metcalfe, this could be the factor to keep them one step ahead of Aigburth A. Geoff wasn't available when the two sides met earlier in the season, and Peter

Joiner was named on the card but didn't play, handing Aigburth a 3-0 start, and Aigburth certainly took advantage, winning 8-2, with only Eric Young losing out, going down to Ian Ambrose and George Crowley. Peter was obviously missed, as he has had some good wins this season, beating Arthur Garnett and Mike Hughes in a 6-4 win over Bootle YMCA, and Andrew Owens 21/13 in the third.

Aigburth A have had 2 wins this season including the walkover against Liverpool YMCA and may just not be quite strong enough to survive. Derek Traynor continues to record some good wins, beating Steve McGanity of Maghull, and Ian Woods of Marconi to gain the only point on both occasions.

So, much as I hate to make predictions, I guess it comes with the territory so I am going to tip Marconi to edge out Manweb at the top, and unfortunately Aigburth A to leave us for division 5.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Liverpool Closed, please support your tournament.

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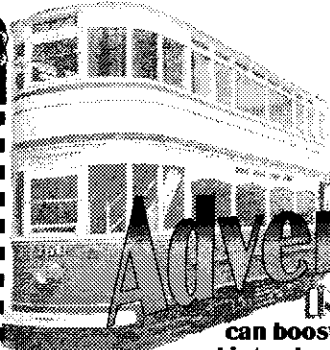
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It is difficult to give a balanced report on this Div due to the lateness and lack of up to date cards. It is of course partially due to only having nine teams at the outset. By the time you read this (most likely early March) the news will be old hat because I only have cards up to week 11 w/c 6th Jan, so the remainder of Jan and Feb are not included. Personal memory, I hope will come to my aid and the matches I have seen.



From the Fixture Secretary, who is first to receive the cards they go to the Publicity Dept for inclusion in the press, results etc. Statistics are next, and finally they come to the note writers. All this can take time and if they are late from team captains, this compounds the situation.

Latest league tables show that Linacre are right up there and have emerged as the favourites for the title. Harry Reeve leads the way, and to date I have yet to see any defeats. In the last match prior to Christmas they were gifted 10 points away to H H "B". Linacre turned up, had a knock for half an hour then went home with a Yuletide gift. They did lose to Police (whom they will play in the Cup semi-final) but that was back in the early part of the season. Well supported by Peter Barton K Lewis and the regulars of Ken Ainsworth, Jack Davidson & Norman Appleby. If they do get promotion to the 4th Div they just might avert going back down again with those players mentioned. Latest tables (17/2/03) show they have had two defeats from 8 played, but no cards to show who they lost to.

Harold House "A" are currently in second place having played the same number of

matches, and losing only one to date. Again no card to record who beat them. Both H H and Linacre have two games in hand on third placed team, Maghull "D", but only 4 points separate 1st and 5th placed teams. Should be interesting when they all meet in the second half of the season. H H 'A' can be formidable opponents when they can turn out their strongest four, and that could prove their downfall as they cannot afford to keep on giving three sets away. They do appear to have quality reserves in the person of Martin Roberts who steps in to replace Paul Morgan or Mike Poole. They only just scraped a 6-4 win away to Greenbank, but had no trouble disposing of their "B" side 8-2, only a weak reserve preventing a 10-0. Another 10-0 this time at home to Maghull "C" only three games going to three. A successful debut for J Hughes.

Maghull have two teams in this Div, but the "D" are just shading the "C" by 3 points. in 3rd spot. They went down 8-2 away to Greenbank (28-11-02) and a 9-1 defeat to Linacre (12-12-02), only Andy Mcourt saving the whitewash beating Norm Appleby in 3. A couple of weeks previously they fought out a draw with "H H" 'B' a win for

Allan Smethurst, Keith Whittaker Jeff Banks and Andy, plus one double. I personally have never liked playing at Maghull but only because of the conditions, the sloping table was one but there is now another factor. I was looking forward to playing at the newly refurbished room, only to see apart, from the carpet, things as they had always been. I know the Table Tennis section have little say in what is done to the area, but just replacing all the seven dud fluorescent tubes (three over the table, and four at the ends would make a dramatic improvement. What about it Harry?

A player for the future is Mark Ambrose, younger brother of Ian (who plays for Bath St) if he can keep his interest. A lot to learn but has good temperament

Police are lying in 4th spot and this season seem to be avoiding playing short. The reserves are there now and Steve Riley must be a happier captain because of this. Jay French is back to support brother Allan (although he did suffer at the hands of Chris Foley Bath St as did Allan) when they won 7-3 (11-12-02). Allan Woods also won his two in a draw with Bath St "G" (Dec)

An interesting Cup semi-final is in prospect when they meet the Div leaders, but if they can field their best four I fancy them to reach the Final. Dave Oakes and Bob Rawlinson are in the vanguard, but one interesting point is that on his return to playing Jay went in at number 4 in Nov, below Allan, by Dec a regrouping had him at number 3, above Allan. My team Bath St "G" held them to a draw in Dec, but a double for both Bob Rawlinson and Allan Woods in this match.

Maghull "C" occupy mid table spot but leading up to Christmas they went down 10-0 to H H "A", only Denise Chorley getting into a three setter. Police also proved too strong for them back in Nov but this time Denise was a winner against Allan French, also in three. John Gillibrands & Mark Ambrose teaming up to take the first doubles over Bob and Allan. I can't see this team rising any higher than mid table, nor do I see Narash Tagore in the line up anymore.

Harold House "B" who will have trouble in getting into the top half if they can turn out their regular team, Steve Simpson is the anchor man with able support from Captain Gary Abrams Richard Beilan and Daniel Grodner, who will benefit from some club coaching in time. They can also call on Richard Blackburn for support.

Bath St "G", my own team have now been strengthened by the return of Dave Batty and myself, and hopefully we can climb up the table by season end.

A 6-4 deficit to Maghull "D" saw Dave win his two against Alan Smethurst and Keith Whittaker. Ritchard Woodley also beat Keith in this match. The highlight of our season could be the Div cup semi-final this month against Harold House "A", but we will have our work cut out, for we have lost to them, twice so far in the league.

Bath "H", mainly the ladies team are having a tough time of it and languish at the foot of the table. But they are consistent and very upbeat about this and have been strengthened by a re ranking of Albert Parker to number 1 and this allows a more solid team throughout. Barbara Alcock is really playing well now and they won their first match of the season in Feb. Great support from Capt Lil Randles, Myra Lovelady, and when called upon to play Beryl Matchett and Mary Delamere.

Greenbank have only played 7 matches according to the league tables (17-2-03) so have some catching up to do. or are there

cards missing? They did win well at Maghull "D" 8-2 only Lynne Riding being the sole loser. Mark Palmer, now the No 1 with Tony Edge and John Sherratt No 3. This didn't stop them going down 6-4 to a strong H H 'A' side where Mark and John both lost to Martin Roberts and Mike Poole. Ian Littlewood beat Ritchie Blackburn, but John beat Dave Cohen. Greenbank are a consistent outfit and will continue to take games off all the teams in the Div, but their weakness is not being able to play their strongest team all the time.

That's about it for this time, as I said at the beginning the lack of up to date cards does not make this job any easier. The final "Digest" in May, I hope will give me all the information I need.

Don't forget to support the Liverpool Closed on the 29th March!

The Right Way to Serve ??

The page in the TT News with the new Service rule on, also carried an article by Colin Clemett on the reasoning behind this rule change, The following points are from this article, as the whole article is a bit too long to print in total.

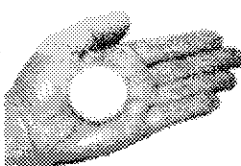
1. *"The essential requirement is that the server, and in doubles the server's partner, must do nothing which would prevent the receiver from seeing the ball from the start of the service until it is struck. If the receiver can see the trajectory of the ball, the side of the racket with which it is struck and the direction in which the racket is moving, he or she can judge the effect on the ball and the contest becomes more even"*

2. *"For the umpire the task is to judge whether the serving player or pair hides the ball from the receiver"*

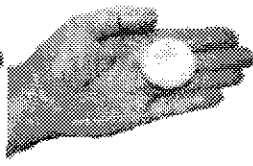
3. *"There are two other differences between*

the new law and the old one, both intended as simplifications. First, there is now no requirement for the servers hand to be flat at the start of the service. What the umpire has to ensure is that the hand is open, with the ball resting freely on it, rather than just conforming to a particular geometrical shape which is, in any case, not really possible."

4. *"But at least it tries to address what is a serious problem without placing inordinate demands on players to modify their game or on umpires to attempt the impossible."*



this is Right



but is this Wrong ??

NETS & EDGES ISSUE 2 – Season 2002/03

Sadly our President suffered a heart attack on 25 February whilst in hospital and passed away and our thoughts go out to his widow Lil. She has lost a husband and a lifelong companion and table tennis in Liverpool and further afield has lost a dedicated and experienced officer whose record of service to our sport; knowledge and ability will probably never be surpassed. All who knew him will sadly miss him and table tennis will be poorer for his passing.

So we think we have got problems with changes to our game, FINE, the association covering diving has now agreed changes permitting jumping in from a diving board, or 'bombing' as it is called, to be classed as an international event with points being awarded for the degree of splash and how well knees are kept tucked in. Makes a bigger ball and 11 up for our sport appear a minor problem. Perhaps we could make foul serving an international event and I know of several players in Liverpool who could qualify for a world championship!

Did you hear about the international umpire who following a defeat in a local league game threw his bat across the room smashing it in the process? Red card job!

At the time the first issue of this magazine was being distributed containing my comments re illegal services I attended a match and observed a player who amongst other things threw the ball back, did not throw it up more than 2 inches, shielded the ball and during the match few serves met the required service criteria.

A week or so later a player from my club was faulted and was not happy about this even though I had previously pointed out to him that when serving forehand he tended to throw the ball back. But there is a moral in this, one I quoted to our team during the match referred to above. You should not fault a player unless the service action of all your own team is legal as to do so invariably leads to fit for tat reprisals followed by disagreement and players being at odds with each other. First step in getting everyone on the right path is for each and every team to ensure all of their service actions meet the required criteria and

to fault their own players as readily as they would like to fault their opponents. What we have to get rid of is throwing the ball back, serving out of the hand, just pulling the hand away and shielding the ball. Before anyone claims their action is legal have a look at your own and that of your team mates and you may be surprised to note how many players do not actually throw the ball up but instead drop their hand away and in doing so rarely strike the ball as it is coming down as it has not been thrown up in the first instance.

Is my campaign taking off, well, in one league match this season a player noted for not throwing the ball up was faulted on a number of occasions and rather than try to comply with the service law conceded the match.

Our Fixture Secretary, Paula French, is hanging up her pen and will not be standing for re-election so this mouth watering job is up for grabs and should have you all reaching for your pens!

One for the record books, Linacre has incurred what I believe to be their first ever fine for late arrival of a scorecard and they are in turmoil. Paula can now be certain of immortality as this astonishing feat will be recorded in Linacre's Book of Records but possibly it will not be an easy entry to find.

How can a player who did not play a single point be shown on a scorecard as not playing because he was injured? If you do not physically go to the table and play a point then you have not taken part in that match and your team should be classed as being a player short. Is this a new way of avoiding a fine when playing short?

It is not surprising the ETTA cannot estimate the numbers playing TT If other leagues are similar to ours for we have a large number of players on club rankings who have not yet played and most of them are unlikely to do so this season. I wonder if one of their names will appear as injured and conceded to avoid a fine?

Bit of needle creeping in at Liverpool YM the scorecard for the match 1st v A stating 'Ahmed Thabet will never beat Peter Lee'.

Can a club's ranking for our 1st division be correct if a player playing up as a reserve from a lower team and division wins all his sets and the regular players manage only one each?

After some detailed scouring of the ETTA Calendar we have at last found a date for our 'Closed' tournament but have had to move to a Saturday. This being due to three of our top players playing every fortnight in the British Premier League with the remaining weekends involving non-availability of our venue or a clash with other events. It will be interesting to see if Saturday proves to be a more popular day than Sunday or vice versa. **The tournament date is 29 March and the entry form has been distributed and is also available on our website. The closing date for entries will be 19 March and Finals Night will be 1st April, venue Police club. You can also play your part by making yourself available on the Friday evening when we have to move equipment and set it up. Contact Arthur Garnett for details of times etc. if you are able to assist.**

Bill Salter (Maghull) has come up with a novel idea for not shaking hands with his opponent having refused to shake hands after LOSING to Stephanie Howard because he did not like the game she played or the rubber she played with. Interestingly she won because she could get his shots back but he could not get hers back and twice got to 21 first. Seemingly, in Bill's eyes, your opponent is not playing fair if he/she does not play the game you want them to play or use the rubbers you want them to use. He called it making his protest but everyone else present, including his own teammates, called it bad sportsmanship.

The issue as to whether in England we should play to 11 or 21 will be debated and voted on at the ETTA Annual meeting the National

council having tabled a proposition that the waiver allowing us to play to 21 be withdrawn and that 11 up best of 5 to commence from June this year. It has been agreed that this proposition will require only a majority vote and this could favour 11 up. It makes sense, whatever our views, that having made our protest we should now fall in line with the rest of the world or risk finding ourselves emulating the ostrich and saddled in addition with two different scoring systems.

Election fever for the 3 principle ETTA positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman & Treasurer is running high and it looks likely to be a close run contest and if total number of nominations are anything to go by we may see a change of leadership for the next three years. Certainly the challengers see it going their way and if they are successful the next three years could well be interesting as like politicians they will be seeking to implement their changes and at the same time build for themselves a re-election platform.

It is on the cards that for the second season in succession we will have a team, possibly two, in the National Team finals and these will again be played in Knowsley giving everyone the opportunity to go along and support our team/s and maybe watch history in the making if they lift a trophy or two.

Finals will be played during week-end of Sat.24th and Sun. 25th of May

Letter from CADWA T.T. Club

*Dear fellow TTer's.
As you know, you always get a warm, sometimes roasting welcome at CADWA Table Tennis section. However, can I bring to the attention to all smokers out there that there is a strict no smoking policy. This means no smoking anywhere on the premises; hall, toilets, kitchen, even the little porch entrance. This basically means you have to smoke outside, in the car park, or your own car. The reasons behind this are not only to do with safety in a wooden building, but also a condition of our Insurers.
Apologies to all smokers for the inconvenience, and thank you for your compliance.*

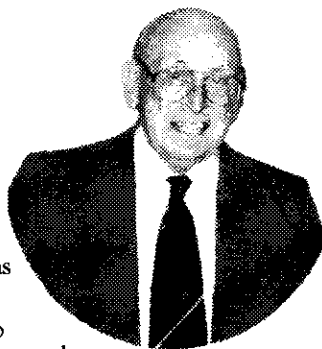
Doug Baker CADWA.TT.Secretary.

I believe we have two additional members to the Heart Surgery Club, both are players of Maghull TT Club, both have had Pacemakers fitted, Bill Salter and Fred Pheysey, Bill, I am told had his fitted earlier last year, and Fred sometime before Christmas just gone, Bill is back to his normal game now and seems to be in "full" control of his pacemaker, to the extent that in one game he was in, he was unexpectedly behind and started rubbing his chest, which concerned his team mates, but it seems he was only speeding up, and went on to win. Fred is also back playing again, apparently unphesed by his ordeal.
Two players awaiting Hip replacements, Les Higham, (Bootle YM) his third, and Don Gibson (Bath St.) his second, our best wishes to all.

OBITUARY

ARTHUR E. UPTON.

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Arthur E. Upton in the early hours of 26th February 2003. Arthur died in a local hospital as a result of a severe heart attack after a long period of poor health and leaves behind his devoted wife "Lil". His record of achievement in the area of Table Tennis administration is momentous and unlikely to ever be surpassed, a list of his main areas of contribution reads as follows:



Played in the Liverpool & District Table Tennis League 1945 to 1969 before suffering a massive heart attack, which brought to an end his playing career.

Chairman Liverpool & District Table Tennis League 1958 to 1998.

Member Lancashire Table Tennis Association Executive Committee 1962 to 1964.

Chairman Lancashire County Table Tennis Association 1964 to 2000

Chairman Lancashire & Cheshire Table Tennis Association 1964 to 2000

English Table Tennis Association Disciplinary Committee Chairman 1968 to 2000

National Councillor for Lancashire from 1968 to 2000.

Member of English Table Tennis Association Management Committee 1973 to 1978.

English Table Tennis Association Vice President from 1978 to 1981.

English Table Tennis Association Honorary Life Member 1981 to 2003.

President Liverpool League 1992 to 2003. Stamp Award of Merit (L&DTTL) 1969

Liverpool & District Table Tennis Association Honorary life member 1997 to 2003.

Awarded Life Membership Lancashire Table Tennis Association 2003.

As a result of his lifetime of service to the sport Arthur was universally accepted as the person to consult if there was a problem to solve or if advice was needed, his attention to detail was legendary, as many an unwary minutes secretary will testify.

I can do little better in summing up the man than to quote from a Scroll of Honour that was presented to Arthur in May 1998 when he retired as Chairman of Liverpool League, after a period of forty years in that office;

"To recognize his dedicated service for more than 50 years, first as a player and following as an administrator in local league, adding leadership of the County Association and later encompassing thirty years of unstinting commitment at the national level"

Over this period of time Arthur has endeared himself to all those with whom he has associated and he commands the utmost respect for his deep knowledge and understanding of the principles behind the English Table Tennis Association.

He is honoured for his support of the truth, his encouragement of effort, his tenacity in pursuit of the ideal, his tolerance and patience when dealing with sensitive issues and his diplomacy over all.

Arthur will long be remembered for his acerbic wit, he was well respected by all who came into contact with him and will be greatly missed. Our thoughts are with "Lil" his wife, who also played in the same team as Arthur, who can comfort herself in the knowledge that Arthur loved her deeply. I, along with his many friends will miss him greatly.

Stan Clarke, Chairman Lancashire County T.T.A.

**The following Obituary, unfortunately, came to my attention too late
for inclusion in the last Digest.**

**In MEMORY OF MR. GEORGE GAMBLE PRESIDENT OF THE LIVERPOOL
BUSINESS HOUSES TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE 1965 - 2002.**

Mr. George Gamble the long serving President of LBH Table Tennis League passed away on Sunday November 18th aged 87, following a long and debilitating period of ill health, during which time he survived two major Heart attacks.

George, a devoted family man with a firm belief in Christian principles, leaves a wife Millie, a Son Malcolm, a Daughter in law Jane and two Grand children, and the League extend to all the family sincere and heartfelt condolences at this time.

George was a man of many facets and a well balanced sense of Social awareness and recognised the importance of giving young people a sound foundation for future life, and it was to this end that he devoted many years to the Scouting movement in the Childwall area, becoming Scout master and area commissioner.

George was also a meticulous craftsman producing marquetry to a professional standard, as well as being a skilled wood carver and turner.

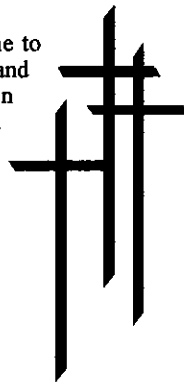
Much of George's working life was spent in, what is now the National Health Service, working in his field of Scientific Officer in the discipline of Haematology at Hospitals in Preston, Stoke on Trent and from 1950 to retirement at Broadgreen Hospital Liverpool.

In 1952 Peter Rumjahn and I met George, in a Table Tennis sense that is, via an internal Liverpool Hospitals League we had set up and later through The LBH Table Tennis League where George played for and organised a Broadgreen Hospital Team, independent of our United Liverpool Hospitals team later to become the NHS team of the present time.

George became an active administrator within the sport giving much time to LBH TT League affairs, becoming a Committee member, Life member and ultimately in recognition of his contribution to League Management, in particular Tournament and function organisation etc., he was appointed League President.

During his protracted illness George was sadly unable to pursue his hitherto pragmatic involvement in Management Committee matters, but nevertheless maintained, if at a distance, a lively interest in the League. It is however his earlier dynamic approach and Gentlemanly demeanour that will always be remembered with fondness. Thank you George and may God Bless you.

Arthur C. Knowlson.
(General Secretary, Liverpool Business Houses League)
2nd December 2002.



For the two Table Tennis Leagues in Liverpool to lose both their Presidents, who must have given well over 100 years of active organizing service between them, within 3 months of each other, is a sad loss indeed. I'm sure, I can endorse, on behalf of all players in our Leagues, the earlier comments of those who new them more closely, and convey our deepest sympathies to their families.

Any Clubs wishing to make donations in respect of Arthur Upton should make them to:
The Cardiothoracic Centre at Broadgreen Hospital, Liverpool, or:
c/o H. Leslie Humphreys, 69, Liverpool Road, Crosby, Liverpool L23 5SE

Editor

Latest Tables from Paula only possible if Paula gets the match cards promptly from team captains

DIVISION ONE	P	W	D	L	PTS
L'POOL YMCA	15	12	0	3	103
WAV. LAB.	14	9	3	2	84
CAD.WA.	12	9	2	1	84
BATH STREET	14	7	2	5	75
HAROLD HOUSE	13	7	2	4	69
L'POOL YMCA 'A'	14	3	7	4	68
BATH STREET 'A'	15	4	3	8	67
WATERLOO	14	5	2	7	67
MAGHULL	14	4	3	7	60
M/SIDE POLICE	12	5	1	6	56
CAD.WA. 'A'	15	1	0	14	49
MANWEB	14	4	1	9	48

DIVISION TWO	P	W	D	L	PTS
MARCONI	14	12	1	1	104
FORDS	14	13	1	0	101
MANWEB 'A'	15	6	3	6	81
WATERLOO 'A'	14	9	2	3	79
M/SIDE POLICE 'A'	14	8	1	5	71
BATH STREET 'B'	15	5	1	9	65
L'POOL YMCA 'B'	14	4	4	6	64
FORDS 'A'	15	3	5	7	64
BOOTLE J.C.	15	3	4	8	63
M/SIDE POLICE 'B'	15	3	3	9	60
BATH STREET 'C'	15	2	5	8	59
BOOTLE J.C. 'A'	14	3	2	9	59

DIVISION THREE	P	W	D	L	PTS
MARCONI 'A'	15	13	0	2	114
WAV. LAB. 'A'	14	10	1	3	89
CAD.WA. 'C'	14	7	3	4	84
BOOTLE YMCA.	14	9	1	4	80
MANWEB 'B'	13	10	1	2	79
WAV.LAB. 'B'	15	4	5	6	75
WATERLOO 'B'	15	6	2	7	73
BATH STREET 'D'	15	5	2	8	71
CAD.WA. 'B'	14	3	1	10	54
MAGHULL 'A'	15	3	1	11	50
WAV.LAB. 'C'	13	2	4	7	48
CAD.WA. 'D'	13	1	1	11	33

DIVISION FOUR	P	W	D	L	PTS
MANWEB 'C'	13	10	0	3	86
MARCONI 'B'	12	8	2	2	82
BATH STREET 'E'	14	7	2	5	74
WAV.LAB. 'D'	14	7	1	6	73
BOOTLE YMCA 'A'	13	8	1	4	73
WAV.LAB. 'E'	13	5	3	5	65
L'POOL YMCA 'C'	14	7	1	6	65
MAGHULL 'B'	12	5	1	6	64
AIGBURTH	13	2	3	8	50
BATH STREET 'F'	13	2	2	9	45
AIGBURTH 'A'	13	2	0	11	43

DIVISION FIVE	P	W	D	L	PTS
LINACRE	8	5	1	2	55
HAROLD HOUSE	8	7	0	1	54
MAGHULL 'D'	10	5	1	4	54
M/SIDE POLICE 'C'	9	6	1	2	51
MAGHULL 'C'	10	6	1	3	50
HAROLD HOUSE	10	3	1	6	45
BATH STREET 'G'	11	3	1	7	42
GREENBANK	7	4	0	3	37
BATH STREET 'H'	11	1	0	10	32

There only appears to be two teams running away with the points at the tops of their divisions, Liverpool YMCA in the 1st, and Marconi 'A' in the third.

But the relegation battles look as if they could involve a few teams at the bottom of each division, and at this stage of the season could easily change before the end.

Why are there still teams throwing points away due to playing in the wrong ranking order. so easy to write the relevent section of the club ranking order in the Green match books for quick reference!!