

Official Magazine
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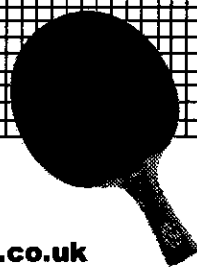
No. 3

End of Season

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT
TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE



Season 2002 -- 2003



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

EDITORIAL

Following suggestions I have had, from players, that to distribute a Digest after the season has well finished, means most players don't receive their Digest until the start of the next season, I'm not sure about this, but I'm giving it a try, and print the full Digest Vol. 57 No. 3 for the Handbook meeting, so it will include any items of news to crop up during the closed season, and everyone will get Digest and Handbook together. (can you wait that long!). If there are any players out there who have any suggestions on this, please let me know.

Last season it was suggested to me to ask in the Digest (which I did Vol. 56 No. 3) how many players would be prepared to pay an extra £1 per season to have their Digest posted direct to them, meaning a lot of extra work for me, but players getting them ASAP, I had thought that I was going to be busy, but guess what, not one reply, not even from the players who had suggested it, that made me wonder if players actually read the Digest.

I propose that the main issue of importance to have been decided recently is that the Power Base of The English Table Tennis Association (ETTA) has changed, after the existing team of Alan Ransoms OBE, unchallenged for the last 12 years, has now been ousted by Alex Murdoch and his team. by a 2 to 1 majority. Alex and his team haven't come to power on the backs of promises, but more on the issue of change, as in Politics, change is the only way of finding out who can do a better job! Either way, everyone involved in Table Tennis must wish Alex and his team, with the help of the permanent staff, best of luck for the success of his leadership of Table Tennis in the UK.

One of the decisions of the ETTA AGM was the situation of 11up or 21up, this was debated and decided on at the AGM. on June 28th 03, most of the opposition to 11up seems to come from the "older generation" (with respect),

At one of the most heavily attended AGM's for many years 21up games were consigned to the history books after a card vote resulted in 13483 votes in favour of retaining the 21up option and 23367 in favour of removing it - a surprisingly large majority. This means that affiliated ETTA leagues **must use** the new 11-up scoring system, (first adopted by the International Table Tennis Federation two years ago and followed throughout the world by the 195 member countries), for their main competitions from 1st September, although they could still employ 21-up for additional, fun or novelty competitions.

An earlier amendment to postpone the implementation date for one year was also heavily defeated on a card vote.

Over concern of a few possible dis-affiliations owing to unhappiness with the vote result, the new ETTA Chairperson, Alex Murdoch, is making himself available to meet particular dissonant leagues in order to try to avoid that outcome.

I think the euphoria of the large majority in favour of 11 up should be tempered by concern of the 13483 against, hopefully most, if not all, will accept this decision, and carry on playing the game we all enjoy, just a slight change of attitude is required.

I have printed a letter from Alex Murdoch, (from the ETTA web site) on page 24 expressing his concerns.

Publicity for Table Tennis, or lack of it, how many times do we hear that our sport doesn't get as much publicity as other sports, my thinking on this is that the press and TV will only give space to sports that believe in themselves and have a popular following, we all love playing our own matches, but when it comes to supporting others playing, the interest drops off a bit, Mike Johns, part of Alex Murdoch's new team, has his own promotions company, so more publicity ideas may be forthcoming, but publicists need numbers to brag about. Having said that, the World Championships played in Paris 21st to 25th. May were well covered each day on Eurosport, and a new Competition, The Continental Masters, was held at the Crucible, Sheffield, (of snooker fame) on 9th. August, with a full hours edited version the following day on BBC Grandstand, was well worth watching and recording.

Our League Fixture Secretary, for the 'last lot of years' Paula French, has decided to have a rest from the pressure, Paula has carried out this work with a due diligence, as could be seen by the number of points deductions to teams making "genuine mistakes" to match cards, and to the increasing number of league tables appearing during the season, our thanks go out to Paula for a job well done.

A new Fixture sec. Trevor Owens, (volunteered), and was voted in at the League AGM.

Trevor's many years doing the same job for the Liverpool Business Houses League, should make the changeover fairly painless.

You also have a new Cup Fixture Secretary, (volunteered)? yours truly, I'm not sure how painless that's going to be though!

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EDITOR

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It's all change at the top of the ETTA following the success of Alex Murdoch and his team who will replace Alan Ransome and his team following this years ETTA AGM. Your Management Committee discussed in depth the manifestos of both teams and representatives of the Management Committee attended a meeting in Oldham where both men where given the opportunity to present their case followed by a question and answer session. Following this, it was our decision to support Alan Ransome and his team. We acknowledge there was an undercurrent in Liverpool that supported Alex Murdoch and now that he and his team are in office we will obviously give them our full support and a letter confirming our support was in fact sent to him shortly after the result was known. I am sure it will take a while before we notice if anything changes as a result.

Regarding our own league, a major concern for me is the situation regarding walkovers and the effects this can have on the league. How would you like it if you played all season and had a very good chance of becoming divisional champions only to find that your nearest rivals are awarded two walkovers right at the end of the season and end up piping you at the post. I wouldn't be very happy if it happened to me. Unfortunately it has happened this season in the first division. It appears to me that end-of-season walkovers occur nearly every year, and it's always the first division. For some reason, normally at the end of the season, certain clubs can't raise a team. Maybe they're a mid-table table and feel they no longer have anything to play for, I don't know. Unfortunately when this happens there is always someone who will benefit by it and someone who will lose out. One team may escape relegation and another may be promoted or crowned champions, but this will only happen at someone else's ex-



pense. Something has to be done about it because it simply is not cricket. The main people who could help put an end to this practice are the club secretaries and I would implore you to ensure this situation is addressed. The only other way would be a rule change, which I am personally giving serious thought to.

Paula French has acted as Fixture Secretary since 1994 and has decided to hang up her boots. As well as Paula, John Langton is resigning as Cup Secretary in order to spend more time with the running of his own club, Bath Street. On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank them both for all their hard work during their time in their respective posts.

As in previous seasons we have successfully run three tournaments, an Open Tournament, a Junior Tournament and our own Closed Tournament. I would like to thank Ken Arnson in particular, for the amount of sterling work he does in this respect. I hope you all appreciate just how much he does.

Again our representative teams achieved tremendous success this season and although we are blessed with exceptionally talented players they would be of no use unless someone had the dedication to manage the situation. Our Chairman is also our Match Secretary, and has been since

1974. Don Davies, Like Ken Arnson, should be congratulated on his efforts.

Our web site, managed by John Langton, with input from Roly Wright, is taking off. If you haven't yet looked at it then I would suggest you do. Not only can you keep up to date with league tables but you can also have a laugh at everyone's snap shot. There are also useful and interesting links to other web sites. John has done a tremendous job and should be commended for his dedication.

The 4th division ended the season with only 11 teams therefore following the new rule that was proposed by CADWA and carried at last years AGM, only 1 team will be relegated from that division.

Roly Wright has now completed two years as editor of the Digest and I have to say what a brilliant job he has done. The layout is superb and I'm sure it is the envy of other Leagues.

Did you know this - China submitted a proposition for the International Table Tennis Federation AGM, in Paris on May 21st, for the return of the 21 up scoring system. Would you believe it? When I read it, I checked the date to see if it was April 1st. The proposition was later withdrawn!

Following the resignations of both Paula French and John Langton, next season we will have a new Fixture Secretary, namely Trevor Owens from Marconi, and hopefully a new Cup Secretary. It's quite possible that until the newly elected members get their respective feet under the table there may be a few hiccups. If there is, please bear with them and give them time to get used to their new posts.

Well I hope you all had a good season and continue to enjoy the next, even though we may yet end up, playing up to 11?

**Mike Power
Hon. Org. Sec.**

What went wrong, where were our competitors? OK, so we moved to a Saturday, possibly for the first time, but only because circumstances left us with no other option. Whatever the reasons, and it was not just because of it being on a Saturday, we had our lowest ever entry and unless we win back entries next season our Closed could become yet another victim of player apathy. Many other leagues, LBH being the most recent, having stopped running such events lack of support having made them unviable.

Our Closed is run at a central venue with quality equipment and we try to match ETTA standards and ensure our members are properly catered for. We have introduced a number of improvements to try and make our Closed more user friendly and are looking to introduce other improvements. Last season we introduced free tea and coffee and as this was clearly popular with competitors this facility was made available again this year. We also ran a Consolation event for the Men's singles but this was very poorly supported and was not continued. Last year on finals night we introduced refreshments for spectators and although finals night attendance was down we upgraded this year and provided a hotpot but attendance was down again. Last year we also invited finalists to attend the buffet we provide for our sponsors and allowed them to bring a guest but this was discontinued this year as some abused it. For some years medals have been provided for the Over 55 and divisional events and I was successful this season in obtaining the consent of the Management Committee to provide prizes similar to those given for finals night events. We now need to know if this change is acceptable or would you prefer us to revert to presenting medals. Selecting prizes is a difficult and onerous task and suggestions on suitable prizes will be warmly welcomed and if affordable suggestions are received they will be considered. **Closed tournaments in addition to being competitive should also be**



viewed as being social as they provide an opportunity to meet socially with players other than just briefly on a match night. They must be viable, hopefully profitable and well supported for the hard work and input of those behind the scenes can only be justified if members give their physical support to the event.

Having got that off my chest over to our 2003 event. Roly Wright distributed forms in good time to every club so none can lay claim to not having received any. The closing date arrived with only a handful of entries received but as usual they continued to drift in along with the inevitable phoned entries that are always unsupported by a follow up entry form, cheque and SAE. Although delayed phone entries can lead to errors and increase the workload, like Brian Leeson, I never refuse an entry and try to accommodate everyone for this is your tournament not mine, **but it would be nice for a change to have all the entries in by the closing date.** I actually received a phone call from a player about 2 weeks after our tournament to say he had not been able to send in his entry as his secretary had not responded to his request for a form but could he enter by phone.

The knock on problem created by late entries is that I cannot do the draw or prepare the paperwork until the last minute and that sort of pressure I can well do without. It also means not knowing until just prior to the event if it is going to be viable and having the additional task of purchasing suitable prizes at very short notice for if it all

goes wrong and the event runs at a loss then the buck has to stop with me.

Entries for the divisional singles were again extremely disappointing with 12 from D2, which I suppose could be seen as being a third of that division. The 3rd was abysmal only five entering, the 4th managed 12 and the 5th a mere 4 and a cynic would say that was a 33% increase on last year when we had to combine it with the 4th. The low entry for these events having a knock on effect on all other events only 14 entering the O55s, 22 for the Veteran event, 6 for the WS and a mere 28 for the MS with the doubles having 19 pair. The JS attracted only 3 entries one of which was ineligible and the event became a non-runner. This is something that should be of concern to all members as it means we have too few junior players coming through. The bottom line to the drop in entries is that fees have to increase just to enable us to standstill and were it not for the cash sponsorship we receive from Fawley Construction and from the City Leisure Services by way of a venue support then this event could not take place. **We really do want to provide the best possible for our members but unless you respond by entering then this event will fall victim to player apathy syndrome.**

We can muster 24 tables and associated equipment, shortly to become 28, but required only 12 tables and could easily have coped on eight. For me it was an easy paced day and no assistance was required on the Control table and we could have finished a lot earlier had I pushed matches on quicker but I saw no benefit in doing so.

The O55s produced some very competitive matches but no real surprises. Neither Ted Birch or Alan Chase were at full fitness and when they met in the s/f Alan emerged winner 13 in the 3rd. Dave Harse took the other s/f but in a much tighter match overcoming Peter Taylor 19 in the 3rd and it could just as easily have gone Peter's way. In the final Dave took the first game 7 lost the 2nd 18 and although

trailing in the 3rd pulled back to win game 18 to become our O55s champion.

The 2nd Div produced a real shock when No.1 seed, **Les Molyneux** was defeated in the semis by **Gemma Lloyd** 15 in the 3rd. The other semi between **Cherith Graham** and **Tim Wearden** produced a real battle and from where I was situated appeared to be a stormy one, Tim emerging the winner -18, 20, 16. He went on to take the final 2 straight Gemma not producing the form that had brought about the defeat of Les.

John Higham, who defeated another female finalist, **Annabelle Sorrentino**, in 2 straight 14 & 12, won the 3rd comfortably.

No shocks in the 4th division where **John Lau** and **Andrew Owens** moved easily into the final John emerging a comfortable 2 straight winner 11 & 14.

The 5th became something of a wash-out when one of the 4 players failed to turn up making it a group of 3 but I allowed the 4th player to play when he eventually arrived even though play had been concluded in order to give additional games to the other 3.

A minor shock came in the early rounds of the VS when **Stephanie Howard** beat **Rob Davies** 2 straight to win her a notable place in the QF's. Stephanie had won the first but was trailing heavily in the 2nd game when Rob's game fell away allowing Stephanie to get back in to take it 2 straight. There were no other shocks **Keith Williams** and **John Rankin** moving easily into the final the expected tussle between 3rd seed John & 2nd seed **Paul Hutchings** never materialised and although losing the 2nd game 10 John never really looked in danger of losing the set.

The doubles went exactly as the draw predicted, Kevin & Keith and Paul & John were never extended and had an easy passage to the final. The MS going the same way with no major surprises and none of the four semi finalists were ever in any danger of losing a game let alone being defeated. It fell to the WS to produce the most competitive TT and surprise semi finalist winner in **Cherith Gra-**

ham who having finished 2nd in her group had to face No 1 seed **Clare Newns** and soon made it clear she intended making a second appearance in the WS final and quickly snuffed out any threat from Clare to emerge a comfortable winner. **Paula French** faced No 2 seed **Gemma Lloyd** in the other semi with Gemma also enjoying an easy passage into the final.

John Rankin approached me on behalf of the finalists and asked if I would consider playing 11 up best of 5 on finals night and after seeking the views of members of the tournament committee and having weighed up the pros and cons I decided we had nothing to lose by playing 11 up in a one off situation as this would also give spectators the opportunity of seeing this scoring method first hand.

The first of the Men's semis, **Keith Williams** v **John Rankin**, finished 3 straight and although John took Keith to 10-all in the first Keith never looked in danger of losing. The 2nd semi **Kevin Dolder** v **Paul Hutchings** produced the first surprise of the night and what a surprise that was for an out of sorts No 1 seed Kevin did not get a look in Paul winning comfortable 8, 2 & 8 to join Keith in the final. It has to be said that although Paul had not previously beaten Kevin he had clearly come with the intention of winning and never let Kevin get a look in and was a worthy winner.

The WS final involved the only newcomer to a finals night, **Gemma Lloyd**, facing last year's losing finalist whom she had beaten in the group round but who had got to the final the hard way by knocking out the No 1 seed. Gemma made a good start taking the first comfortably only to see Cherith come back to take control of the 2nd game 8 and then take a nail biting 3rd game 13/11. From then on Cherith took command of this match taking the 4th game 8 and the set to become our new Ladies champion and following others in winning this title whilst still a junior.

Keith Williams v **John Rankin** in the VS final came next, Keith wanting to win this title back and John wanting just as much to win it for the first time and although this finished in a 3

straight win for John both finalists played superb table tennis with some great rallies. Keith gave it his best shot but John dominated every game to win 6, 8, 8 and become our new Veteran champion.

Over to the Doubles final when the four MS semi finalist paired up as doubles finalists **Keith & Kevin** v **Paul & John** our current champions Kevin and John now being in opposition to each other. Paul & John taking the first game 9, Kevin still struggling to find his form. The 2nd went to Keith and Kevin with the 3rd going the way of Paul & John and we had our first 5 game set when Keith & Kevin fought back to make it 2 games all. The 5th was a tremendous game fortunes swaying first one way then the other and went to deuce with Keith & Kevin edging their way to victory 11 in the 5th. This was an enjoyable battle of skills between two fairly evenly matched pair as the final scores indicated.

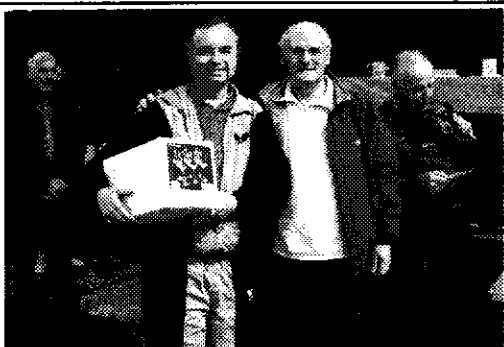
We were ahead of the clock and heading for an early finish when **Arthur Garnett** decided to lighten the evening by knocking off the table one of the raffle prizes, a bottle of sherry, it duly broke splattering glass and the contents over the floor. He rounded off his unintentional cabaret act by offering to replace the prize for whoever won it and then saved his money by winning it himself. The MS final was then delayed as the glass had to be swept up and floor dried and we found ourselves behind the clock.

The MS proved to be the highlight of the night with some superb table tennis from **Keith** and **Paul** and amazingly the first game was decided 33/31 Paul finally managing to get the required 2 point lead in a game that swung first one way then the other but throughout Paul looked the more likely winner as Keith struggled to take command. Paul continued taking the game to Keith, taking the next game 8, Keith fighting back to scrape home 12/10 in the 3rd. Paul was on the attack all the way in the 4th and although Keith played some brilliant table tennis and tremendous returns Paul always appeared to have the edge

and his determination to win the title won him the 4th 11/8 to become our 2003 Men's champion.

It was an exciting and very tight match, both players pulling out all the stops and Keith playing with the coolness and skill that have become his trademark but Paul was determined to win and make it his night and would let nothing stand in his way and he achieved his victory the hard way by beating the two top players in our league. Those who claim 11 up will involve shorter matches and less TT may like to reflect on the fact that the point's tally for this match was 65/60 and the set lasted as long as any 21 up 3 games set. Yes, 33/31 in an 11 up game can be considered unusual but the doubles final went to 5 games and a 51/42 points tally.

Hope everyone takes on board my comments and I look forward to receiving a massive entry for our Closed event next season Ken.A.



Dave Harsc (Manweb) beat Allan Chase(Waterloo) 21/17-16/21-21/18 to win the O/ 55's. tournament



Tim Wearden (Fords) winner of the 2nd. Division singles .Tim beat Gemma Lloyd (M.Police) in the final 21/17- 21/17, here with Stan Clarke and Ken Armson.



John Higham (Bootle YMCA) winner of the 3rd. Division singles, John beat Annabelle Sorentino (Wav. Labour) 21/15-21/17



Above. John Lau (L/Pool YM.) winner of the 4th. Div. Singles, John beat Andy Owens (Marconi) 21/11-21/14



Harry Reeves (Linacre) won the 5th Division Singles beating team mate Jack Davidson in the final of a round robin.

Finals Night at the Police Club



The Mens Doubles winners Kevin Dolder and Keith Williams After a tough match 9/11-11/7-7/11-11/5-13/11 against Paul Hutchings / John Rankin, with Mr. Leo Crone, Fawley Construction.



Mens singles winner, Paul Hutchings, who defeated Keith Williams after a nail biting first game 33/31 then 11/8-10/12-11/8. Playing 11 up doesn't always throw up the excitement that it is meant to do, but that first game had the tension from the start to finish. Paul, showing his obvious pleasure, after receiving the Trophy from Mr. Bill Fawley



above

The Guests and sponsors of our Liverpool Closed, L. to R. Mr Leo Crone, Mrs. Carol Crone Mrs. Vivian Fawley , Mr. Bill Fawley. Bill, in his younger days, was a player of City standard himself, and played in many tournaments including The Liverpool Open. His backing of our 'Closed' is very much appreciated.



Veterans Champion, John Rankin, who beat Keith Williams 11/6-11/8-11/8 in the final, a complete reversal of the mens singles SF earlier on, which Keith won 3-0. John with Stan Clarke

Ladies Singles winner, Junior, Cherith Graham, (Bootle J.C.) after winning 5/11-11/4 -13/11-11/8 over Gemma Lloyd. (M.Police) received the Trophy from Vivian Fawley

Without the background help and assistance, it should go without saying that the tournament would not be staged. I should like to convey most grateful thanks to all who may have helped in any way.

Don Davies

Divisional Cup Finals and Frank Murphy Handicap Trophy

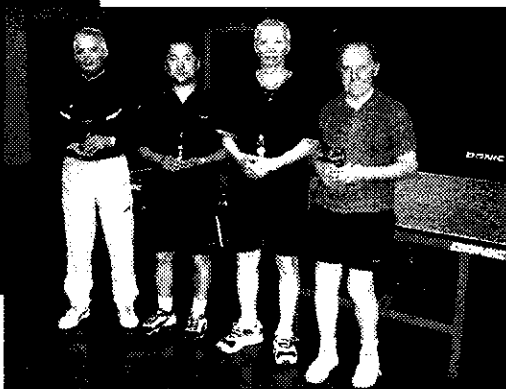
The Finals are shown in order of playing. All venues provided an excellent after match Buffet for players and spectators. Also the attendance and presentation of the Rumjahn Trophy by Peter and Janet Rumjahn, and the Frank Murphy Trophy by Marjorie Murphy, accompanied by family party

The Stamp Trophy, (5th. division).
Linacre 4 v Harold House 'A' 5.
The match was played in a "must win" but friendly atmosphere, right down to the last game.

Players taking part. L. to R.
Paul Morgan (HH), Jack Davidson (L),
Martin Roberts (HH), Harry Reeves (L)
David Cohen (HH), Ken Ainsworth (L),
Mike Poole (HH), Norman Appleby (L)



Forrest Cup runners up Liverpool YMCA. 'C'
(below), L. to R. Francis Lay, John Lau,
Alvin Tso, and Jimmy Clewett.



Forrest Cup (4th. Div.) winners by 5 games to 3,
Marconi 'B' (above). L. to R. Andrew Owens,
Bobby Bell, John Rowan and Ian Woods



The Hyde Cup (3rd.Div.) was won by Marconi 'A'
5-2 over CADWA 'C'. 3 of the Cadwa team
arrived late and were already 2-0 down, reserve
Don Davies being the only one having played,
fought well , only losing 2-1 to John McCann, but
it was Cadwa chasing the calls after that, only
George Lennon winning for Cadwa.

The teams L. to R.

Rob Davies (C), Ian Wensley (M), George Lennon
(C), Frank McCann (M), Peter Wass (M), Steve
Graham (C), John McCann (M) and Don Davies (C)

The Rumjahn Cup (Div.2) was won by Marconi, and completed a creditable season for the club, with all their three teams winning their respective cups and leagues. Pictured on the right the Marconi team of L.to R. Bob Edwards, Trevor Owens, & Paul Price, having received the Trophy from Peter and Janet Rumjahn. Also in the picture Cup Secretary and organiser John Langton (pictured right)



pictured on the left are the Marconi team with runners up Liverpool YMCA 'B' L.to R. Billy Cheung, John Lau, the Marconi team, and Steve Kee



Both Final teams of The Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy (right) from L.to R. Alf Perry (Fords), Harry Reeves (Linacre) Grahame Reid (F), Jack Davidson (L), Robby Goldson (F), & Ken Ainsworth (L) Fords won 506 points to 498, after a tight and very competively entertaining match.



It was a pleasure to have Marjorie Murphy and party with us to watch the nights games, and present the Trophy's on completion of a very sporting night of Table Tennis L.to R.

Dave Berry, Marjorie Murphy, Sue Berry, and daughter Suzanne Murphy



The Readman Cup (Div. 1) was retained by CADWA (who won last season), beating Maghull 5 games to 1. Cadwa had gone into this game as favourites, with Peter Taylor, (being elder statesman of the Cadwa team) having the pleasure of clinching the match. L.to R.

Paul Hutchings (M), Kevin Dolder (C) Steve Woods (M), Fred Pheysey (M), Peter Taylor (C), Chris Ford (C)



I guess that by the time you actually get hold of this digest you'll all be in the throes of pre-season practice and that last season will be a faded memory. However, it's now time to regress and cast our minds back to the cold wintry nights when we had some great table tennis, some not so great table tennis, some top names on different club cards, unfortunately some unpleasant antics from some players and believe it or not but we nearly had a reconciliation between ex-League Secretary Tony Harris and ex-League Chairman Stan Clarke.

The story goes that apparently whilst travelling home in opposite directions they both accidentally hit each other head on in their cars. The cars are totally demolished but both Tony and Stan crawl out of their cars unhurt. Tony says to Stan, "There's nothing left of our cars but we are unhurt. This must be a sign from God that we should be friends and live together in peace for the rest of our lives." Stan says, "I agree with you completely. This must be a sign from God."

"And look at this" Tony says, "here's another miracle. My car is completely wrecked but this bottle of my home made wine didn't break. Surely God wants us to drink this wine and celebrate our renewed friendship."

So Tony hands the bottle to Stan at which point Stan takes a few big swigs and hands the bottle back to Tony. Tony immediately puts the cap back on and hands the bottle back to Stan. "Aren't you having any?" asks Stan. "No," replies Tony, "I think I'll wait for the police to arrive."

Congratulations to this seasons champions *Cadwa* who managed to pip *YMCA* to the title. On paper *Cadwa* had the strongest squad consisting of Kevin Dolder, Chris Ford, Mike Mahoney and Pete Taylor. However, they, unlike *YM*, were unable to consistently field their best



players and at times resorted to reserves. This gave *YM* a fighting chance and the inclusion of Lawrence Kenwright to the *YM* team countered the signing of Chris Ford. It was just a case of who could play on a regular basis

Cadwa set their stall out with a 9-1 thrashing of *Wavertree* with Roy Smith gaining the solitary point by defeating Peter Taylor. Mike Mahoney will be pleased with a good win over Dave Roberts in the same match but will be disappointed dropping the only set of a 9-1 win over *Harold House* losing to Ray Jackson. *Cadwa* continued in their winning ways with a 8-2 win over *YM'A'* Ahmed Thabet and Tony Whelan both beating Peter Taylor although Peter did save a personal whitewash by beating Miguel Bellac 24/22 in the 3rd. A 6-4 win over *Bath St.* saw Peter Taylor and Ken Hartley both beating the on form Fred Bainbridge whilst Kenny Jackson took his three.

The *Cadwa* v *YM* clash saw each team fielding their strongest teams. Kevin Dolder as expected won all his three but not without a few scares. Omid Khaiyat played a brilliant defensive game losing in the third whilst both Peter Lee and Lawrence took Kevin to deuce games. Again Omid and Lawrence managed to push Chris Ford to three games but walked away empty handed as did *Cadwa's* Peter Taylor who lost all three albeit 18 in the 3rd

to Lawrence. Final result 7-3 in *Cadwa's* favour.

YMCA will probably be kicking themselves for having such a bad start to the season and in particular the uncharacteristic poor performance of Dele Olyumbo. *Harold House's* Ken Connor took advantage of Dele's dipping form which then inspired him to have a great win over Omid Khaiyat. Ray Jackson however stole the lime light with a tremendous win against Lawrence to give *H.H.* four valuable points. The same 6-4 result was reiterated against the *Waterloo* team who were without their youngster Williams. Alan chase threw down the gauntlet to fellow team mates by beating Omid. Ted Birch picked up the gauntlet and continued with great wins over Dele and Lawrence. Alan and Ted ended a terrific night by taking the doubles against Omid and Lawrence. Poor Dele's season continued to crumble when he lost two straight to *Cadwa'A's* Ken Hartley and Billy Hargreaves. Ken went on to beat Lawrence 19 in the third making the overall result 7-3 to *YM*. An 8-2 win over *Bath St.* saw Peter Lee and Omid doing well to win all three whilst Dele (sorry Dele) lost out to Ken Jackson and Brenda Buocy.

I personally always look forward to games against the *YM* because although you know that you're going up against really good table tennis players, you know that if you play well you always have a chance to pull off a win. This to me is always a recipe for a good night of ping pong and *Wavertree's* Dave Roberts was certainly cooking on gas when he beat Peter Lee and Lawrence two straight and then went on to triumph 25/23 in the 3rd against Omid. Roy Smith took the easier route of two straight against Omid contributing to *Wav's* four points.

Editor

At this point in Paul's report he devised one of his typical anecdotal stories of an incident, on this occasion, bad language during matches, in as much that he certainly made the point that there isn't any reason why bad language

needs to be used during matches, his story, 'in my opinion', was a bit specific for printing in the Digest, (sorry Paul), but the next part of his point is well made, but for obvious reasons I have not printed the names that Paul supplied, (or the Clubs, as that would have been unfair to the offending players team mates, who I'm sure are as offended as others). But as these are the Div. 1 notes, I'm sure the players concerned recognise themselves and hopefully realise that their antics are offensive to others. This situation will be monitored during the coming season

EDITOR

Paul's notes continued

It's a shame that I have to comment on the seedier side of the game but similar comments on the rear of numerous match cards dictate and in the words of Gypsy Rose Lee "the cards never lie." So it's an appeal to.....) to basically curtail the bad language whilst on the table. What's noticeable is that neither player does it to gain an advantage over their opponent and when off the table both players are smashing lads. So chaps the motto is simply this, "Chill out" and enjoy the night rather than spoil it.

On the contrary *Wavertree's* gentleman Dave Roberts will be pleased with his teams final position albeit somewhat off the title challenge. Their 6-4 victory meeting with the *Police* team saw Dave capitalize on me being mesmerised by Alice's bottom by beating me two straight. Brother Steve however took revenge against Dave again in two straight but then participated in a bizarre game against Roy Smith. Steve absolutely annihilated Roy in the first but somehow managed to lose it. Then Steve did annihilate Roy in the second but then went on to lose the third 21/1. It was almost comical. Myself and Roy then had a more conventional game with Roy beating me in 17 in the third. In the same game Terri-Ann

had a tremendous win over Dave Roberts.

Roy Smith also hit the treble in their 7-3 win over the *YM'A'* trio of Miguel Bellac, Tony Whelan and Paul O'Donnell, beating Paul 22/20 in the 3rd. Tony took some solace defeating Dave Roberts as did Miguel who went on to beat Alice also 22/20 in the 3rd. Incidentally Paul lost to Dave 21/6. Not as bad as my brother Steve but bloody close. *Harold Houses'* Ray Jackson was his teams sole winner taking two points from Alice and Phil Luxon. I'm told that Phil was moaning to everyone about the fact that whilst at work as a solicitor's clerk he only gets half an hour for lunch. I've heard from a reliable source that his company are worried that if Phil takes any longer they'll have to retrain him upon his return.

Cadwa'A' showed some spirit when they took four points from *the Wav* team. Ken Hartley performed well beating Roy Smith and Alice whilst Bill Hargreaves also succeeded against Alice. Dave Roberts had a good night winning all three whilst *Cadwa's* Alan Davies was unlucky to lose to Roy in the 3rd. Dave was not as fortunate against *Bath St's* Ken Jackson and Brenda Buoy but did make amends beating Fred Bainbridge. Roy to was successful against Fred but Fred stopped the rot when he overcame Alice 20/22 in the 3rd. Kenny didn't drop a game and both teams shared the spoils.

Wav's successful run continued against a forlorn *Manweb* team but Andy Lloyd notched up a good win over Roy and team mate Ray Parkinson joined the party beating Alice to make it 7-3 for the *Wav* team. Unfortunately this result was reversed when *Wav* played *Bath St. A'* with Ian McElwee being inspirational taking all three. Dave beat Claire Newns 26/24 in the 3rd and took three games to finish off Eddie Crowley. Alice managed to do Eddie in two.

Ymca 'A' have had to work hard to earn their position in the league but will no doubt be pleased

with their final placing. They actually hold the record for drawn games with a total of ten throughout the season. Both of the *Police* games were part of this statistic as too were *Bath St 'A'*. In our first meeting, John Rankin secured his three in comfort whilst I lost all mine in great discomfort. I would bet that Ahmed, Paul O'Donnell and Miguel Bellec have not had an easier game. The *Bath St 'A'* game saw Ahmed triumph over Claire Newns and Eddie Crowley whilst Tony Whelan had a good win over Ian McElwee. Poor Miguel unfortunately took the wooden spoon for the night. Miguel continued with his nightmare run losing all three in the *Harold House* game but this was balanced with yet another solid display from Ahmed who was successful against Ken Connor, Ray Jackson and Eddie Clein.

Yet another set of draws were to follow against *Waterloo* and *Cadwa 'A'*. Keith Williams won his statutory three for the *Waterloo* team whilst Alan Chase managed to break Ahmed's good run with great game winning 22/20 in the 3rd. In the *Cadwa 'A'* match Ken Hartley went home with the ball having beaten Ahmed, Tony Whelan and Miguel. Mike Power's windmill shots must've actually connected for once and who should be on the receiving end but poor Miguel. Just for a change *YM'A'* decided a 8-2 win would look good on the card against *Bath St.* Tony Whelan had a great night against Kenny, Fred and Brenda as did K. Bird (sorry don't know first name). *Bath St's* only points came from Kenny Jackson and Brenda defeating Ahmed.

This result probably destined *Bath St* to finish one point below *YM'A'* but I'm sure Kenny, Brenda and Fred will not lose much sleep. Their derby game against fellow team mates saw the 1st team come out on top 7-3. Kenny won all three. Ian McElwee beat Fred Bainbridge but lost to Dave Evans whilst Fred revenged the earlier defeat by beating Claire Newns. The same result featured against *Manweb* but on this occasion Brenda fell foul to Dave Harse and Andy Lloyd. Dave and Ray Parkinson also had a good doubles win over Kenny and Fred.

In both *Bath St's* games against *Waterloo* Keith Williams was firing on

all cylinders, never dropping a set. The first match went 6-4 in *Bath St's* favour with neither Ted Birch or Ricky Brown contributing. The return match saw the points shared and on this occasion Ted managed a 19 in the 3rd win over Brenda whilst Mick Allen struggled to make a mark. *Waterloo* on this occasion were without Keith and ended going down 6-4 to *Manweb*. Dave Harse and Andy Lloyd both fought over the match ball as they were equally successful against Alan, Ted and Ricky Brown. Ray Parkinson however suffered losing all three close in the 3rd. It was good to see the return of *Wavertree's* Ian Black into the division albeit as a reserve against the *Waterloo* O.A.P.'s. Ian unfortunately couldn't rejuvenate his form of old and lost all three. Dave Roberts saved the day winning all three whilst Ted had a good win over Alice making a draw a fair result.

Waterloo's game against the *Police* saw Keith Williams sparing against John Rankin. Keith was on top of his game and beat John in two. On this performance I actually fancied Keith for the 'Closed' but that was not to be. In the same match I beat Ted and both Stephen and I beat Ricky. Ted used all his defensive magic to beat Steve 19 in the 3rd. Once again all points were shared. Keith also featured in the *Cadwa* game but didn't make an impact against Kevin Dolder although Keith did collect *Waterloo's* two points by beating Chris Ford and Peter Taylor two straight. Alan Chase was now back on the scene against *Harold House* but must have felt somewhat rusty losing against Ray Jackson who also went on to beat Ricky. Eddie Clein and Ricky then turned the clocks back to the days of 'Trinity' and 'Jewish' when I can remember both of them having some great games. This went in Eddie's favour but the match ended 6-4 to *Waterloo*.

The mention of 'Trinity' T.T. club makes me reminisce to when I was 14 years old having just started playing in 'Trinity H' in the 5th division. I can always remember that during practice nights at the club I pestered the 1st division players for

a knock. Most would make an excuse. Some wouldn't even give you the courtesy of an excuse. "I'd rather suck Mick Tierney's toes" was one response from Eric Hardman. But one player never said no and in fact I always ended the night with a game against him. That was of course Ricky Brown who at that time was a fantastic player. It was like playing a brick wall. Every single ball came back. It's strange how certain players can make an impact on you and I think that we probably all have a player who has been influential at some stage of our career. Mine would be the great Bill Harris who coached Steve and I for many years and took us all over the country playing in most tournaments. I can honestly say that I have not yet met a player who could read a game as well as Bill. A great tactician.

Harold House may not on previous seasons performances be happy with finishing mid table but when one considers that only 9 points separate them from the third slot then on reflection I think that they'll be satisfied. They certainly can't grumble with a 9-1 win over *Manweb*. Both Ken Connor and Alex Bryce remained unbeaten against Ray Parkinson and Andy Lloyd whilst Dave Harse was *Manweb's* sole provider against Steve Whalley. The tables were somewhat turned when they faced champions *Cadwa* although Ray Jackson did manage to dent the score card with a good win over Mike Mahoney. Their 'A' team was not as resourceful with both Ray and Alex having great wins over Ken Hartley but then both going down to Billy Hargreaves. The final result 7-3 in *H.H's* favour.

Bath St 'A' finished the season on level points with *Harold House* but when the teams met in the latter half of the season it was *Bath St 'A'* who secured a 6-4 win. Ian McElwec won all three. Alex managed to get the better of Claire Newns and Eddie Crowley and Ray finished it off with a fine win over Eddie. A 6-4 win over *Cadwa 'A'* saw Ian, Claire and Eddie all having wins over Alan Davies and name-sake Rob but none of the trio could

impact on Ken Hartley who went on to partner Alan Davies to also take the doubles against Ian and Claire. It was dejavu in the return fixture with Ken again having no problems taking all three however on this occasion he was assisted by Mike Power who had a great win over Ian McElwec. Eddie Crowley was electric in their 7-3 defeat against *Manweb* winning all three. Ian could only manage a win over Andy Lloyd but lost out to Ray Parkinson and Les Molyneux. Claire went one better by beating Ray and Andy but she fell victim to Les.

By the way I'd be obliged if any of the *Bath St* kids could pass on our regards to Alec Gould.

Bath St must have been pleased when *Maghull* turned up without Paul Hutchins and with good reason probably felt that the game was for the taking. They were absolutely right but it was *Maghull* who grabbed the game by the scruff of the neck and come out worthy 7-3 winners. Fred Pheyscy, Matt Wilson and Nick Miller all beat Ian and Eddie whilst *Bath St's* saving angel was Claire Newns who was unbeaten on the night. *Maghull* could only manage a draw against *Bath St* 1st team even with Paul Hutchins playing. Paul collected his three whilst Fred had a good win over Brenda.

Matt Wilson continued with his winning form with a great win over *Wav's* Dave Roberts in a match which also saw Steve Woods earn a credible point against Phil Luxon. Alice Howard was not in a charitable mood and showed no pity against the boys. 7-3 for *Wav*. Again *Maghull* did the business without the aid of Paul this time producing a 6-4 win against *YM'A*. Fred and Matt both beat Ahmed and Paul O'Donnell who also went on to lose against Nick Miller. Tony Whelan managed to steady the *YM* boat winning all three. *Manweb* did well to take 6 points from *Maghull*. Steve Woods beat Dave Harse but lost out to Andy Lloyd and Les Molyneux. Alan Jones had a good win over Andy Lloyd as did Matt Wilson who also went on to beat Dave Harse. Les Molyneux completed his hat-trick. The return game saw *Manweb* edge further with a 7-3 win. Andy Lloyd

revenge his earlier defeat by Alan Jones.

A little bird told me (actually the little bird is six foot five tall , eighteen stone , has bright red hair and whose initials would grace any 70's Dallas soap) that Paul Hutchings 'conjugal' rights are guaranteed when he has a good win . Apparently after winning the 'Closed' he woke half of Lydiate up. Imagine if we all had the same criteria of having to wait for a good win. I'd have to go celibate and attend Sunday Mass. Mike Allen may as well take the bloody Mass. Joking apart I'm actually very lucky because I married Miss Right I just didn't realise that her first name was Al-ways.

Paul did turn out against the *Cadwa* 1st team and by all accounts had a great game against Kevin but lost 23/25 in the 2nd. Lydiate slept soundly that night. Paul did however go on to beat Mike Mahoney and Peter Taylor in comfort as did Steve Woods who must be kicking himself for not being able to repeat this performance during the divisional final. Fred Pheysey had a good win again over Peter Taylor. Both teams shared the points. The two *Cadwa*'A' matches produced wins on each occasion for the *Maghull* team. A 6-4 win saw Fred defeating Ken Hartley, Mike Power and Alan Davies whilst Ken went on to beat Matt and Alan Jones. Alan Davis had a good win in the return match but was the only *Cadwa*'A' winner. *Waterloo* proved a tougher set up. Alan Chase won all three against Steve, Fred and Alan Jones. Ricky was unlucky to lose to Steve 20/22 in the 3rd and Mike Allen (Hallclujah brother) had a great win over Steve Woods.

My *Police* team are somewhat philosophical about our final position. We avoided the drop so all's well that ends well. John Rankin couldn't play as many as we would have liked so it meant relying upon a squad of reserves. John did however turn out against *Cadwa*'A' and not surprisingly won all three. It was also good to see George Lennon back in the division and like previously mentioned Ian Black, they, together with Phil Thompson use to make up the

Liverpool Mens 'A' team during the 80's Formidable players in their time . George is now content to reap the social side of the game but can still turn it on. Unfortunately against my team he did neither. He played crap and was a miserable bugger all night. Only joking George. I except that my 19 in the 3rd win was somewhat fortuitous

I don't think that it come as a great surprise to either *Cadwa*'A' or *Manweb* that they would be playing 2nd division table tennis next season .*Cadwa* relied as always upon Ken Hartley and as always he would come up with the goods as he did when he took his teams points against *Bath St* beating Brenda and Fred Bainbridge . Ken then teamed up with Billy Hargreavcs when both hit the hat trick against *Manweb* cruising to a 9-1 win . Dave Harse was the sole point winner over Alan Davies .The derby clash saw the 1st team come out 6-4 winners. Ken and Alan Davies both beat Mike Mahoney whilst Ken and Billy Hargreaves also went on to beat Peter Taylor. *Cadwa* had a great 7-3 win over *Waterloo*. Ken again won all his three. Mike Allen notched up another win by defeating Alan Davies but Alan rallied himself to beat Ricky Brown.

Manweb's game *Cadwa*'A' on paper was a relegation decider but in hindsight didn't assist any club. *Cadwa* were 9-1 winners with Alan Davies together with Ken winning all three. *Manweb* faired no better against the *Cadwa* 1st team but Ray Parkinson will be pleased with his win over Peter Taylor. I wasn't so pleased when both Dave Harse and Ray Parkinson beat me with some ease. I took some solace against Andy Lloyd and brother Steve forced the draw by winning all three albeit in three .So we must say a sad farewell to both *Cadwa*'A' and *Manweb* and although I say this every season , and I won't apologise for saying it again but we will probably see you again next season .

Anyway time for me to take up my closed season activity of amateur dramatics. I've just

landed a role playing the part of a man who has been married for 30 years. I'm hoping my next role will be a speaking part.

Paul Gittins

THIS COULD BE YOU!

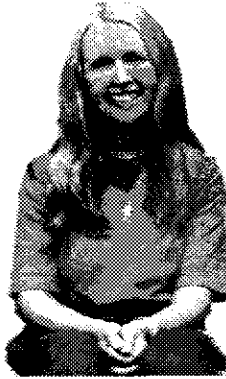
Additional elected members are still required to bring the Management Committee up to strength as meetings are often delayed due to a quorum not being present and instances occur resulting in it not being possible for the same reason for important decisions to be made and these instances can and do affect the ability of the Management committee to function correctly and fulfil its duty to members.

As a league we are fortunate in having six qualified umpires but we would like to increase their numbers. Anyone can take the local umpire test as this does not involve any umpiring commitment but it will ensure you are fully familiar with the rules and just might tempt you to give consideration to taking the county umpire test and perhaps go on to qualify as a National umpire. Umpiring is interesting and if you want to progress to regular tournament umpiring you will make a lot of new friends and find there is much more to table tennis than just being a player.

We are also looking for members interested in working on the control tables at our Grand Prix to be held in August and our junior tournament to be held in January. Control table work can be demanding but we will be happy to train anyone interested in becoming a team member in what can be rewarding as well as demanding.

Ken Armson MBE.

The season's finished and our new divisional champions ...and worthy to be so...are **Marconi**. Not only did they have a breadth and depth to the team: they also were the most consistent team in the division. They very rarely had to play a reserve and the three different styles complemented each other. In summary they were really a class above the rest of us and I think it is unlikely they will darken the second division's doors for a few years... if at all. Congratulations Bob, Paul and Trevor on a good season!!



Runner-up spot predictably went to **Fords** (I was right from the start about promotees!!). Front-runners initially, they just could not keep up the pace and in both of the Ford derby's the first team were pushed all the way by the second team. Graeme Reid from **Fords 'A'** had one of his best seasons to date (my ex doubles partner ...how's you doing Graeme??...long time no see...you're just like a good wine...getting better with age). **Waterloo** and **Manweb** finished 3rd and 5th respectively mainly due to there being one outstanding player in each team. **Waterloo** had Graeme Black and **Manweb** had Les Molyneux. Both will be near the top of the individual averages but promotion is unlikely for either team next season without stronger players backing them up. Sometimes having one good player can be detrimental as it puts a lot of pressure on the remaining players to perform. **Liverpool YMCA** I've decided to rename **Liverpool Progress**. Like their London counterparts you can't possibly decide on tactics against them for the season because they suddenly produce another outstanding player from nowhere. This year it was another university student, Keith Bird, who flew into the 'B' team and worked his way up the pecking order. Since his induction the 'B' team have winged their way to success with the fans flocking to every match. He's a

feather in the cap of his coach and the starling of the division. All I can say for next season is 'watch the birdie'! He should be the number one seed in the division next year.

Merseyside Police 'A' finished mid table and as a young side have the potential to do better. Sometimes they can be a little erratic and shift work means that on occasions they've had to bring in reserves. It's nice to see a team with two females more than holding their own in this difficult division and with a little more effort/control I could see this team getting to the first. **Bath Street** I feel is missing the services of last years' outstanding player, Ian Grant and his understudy Eddie Crowley. Dave Evans continually picked up points for both teams and almost managed to keep them both in the second division last season but I think the nail in the coffin for the 'C' team was the walkover it gave to the **Manweb** side in February. At the end of the season **Bath St. 'C'** were only five points adrift of **Bootle JC 'A'** and I think five points were well within their grasp in that **Manweb** match. Once again both **Bootle JC** teams managed to avoid relegation and I feel that it was the youngsters, Cherith Graham and Tom Bray, who played a major part in keeping their respective teams above water. Rob Wiley was a useful addition to the

'A' team squad and I think the occasional appearance of John Hilton helped. Next year I think **Bootle JC** could start realising its potential and I expect to see both teams higher up the division at the end of the season. **Merseyside Police 'B'**, I feel, were unfortunate to be demoted with 81 points on the board ...it's almost unheard of to be relegated with that many points but again the team had to bring in reserves on many occasions and that doesn't give a settled side or promote team spirit for those tight matches you need to win under pressure

I hope that they will return to the third division with the determination to get promotion having benefited from the experience they have gained this year and ready to bounce back into the second division the following year.

Team captains have been very vociferous with their comments and I'd like to thank them all including my once again bezzie mate...Steve Kee. There have been so many comments that I have had to paraphrase a few so you may have to look a little longer for your comments, but believe me they are all there. The **Police 'B'** team, because they have to leave their premises at a set time, would like to remind everyone that a game should be continuous with towelling down only after 5 points!!! and not in between (please note:- from next season this will change as it will be after every 6 points). I am told that the match between **Police 'A'** and **YMCA 'B'** was a hard contest for not just table tennis but also for the use of mobile phones. Terri-Ann Nolan and Gemma Lloyd both picked up three singles and as they played so brilliantly Steve Kee thinks the phone calls were to their coaches for tips and tactics. He promises to have Andrew Eden as his 'phone a friend' next season but I think he should ask the audience 'cos you can't go 50:50 in three-a-side. Graeme Reid says that he is out to get Dave Evans next season. He states that despite saving up all his fluke shots for this match and having more nets than the Spanish

fishing fleet he still couldn't beat Dave who was the star man on the night. In reply Dave said that he had, had a whale of a time, it was a close match but Graeme had floundered towards the end. Roger Neal was named man of the match in **Bootle JC's** win over Ford's 'A' for a superb performance on the night against Frank James. Tom Bray also had excellent wins in the same match and a rare Neal/Bray doubles win was the icing on the cake.

Police 'B' were at 4-all with **Waterloo 'A'** and all to play for when Len Dyson dug deep to give a battling performance to beat Peter Holmes 19 in the third. Tony Harris continued with another gruelling performance beating Ritchie Cragg 13 in the third to secure a well-deserved victory. **YMCA 'B'** say that Billy Chung, the bamboozling blocker, was at his brilliant best when playing **Bath St. 'B'**. He won all his singles for man of the match. The match apparently was poised delicately at 3-3 when fellow **YMCA** club members entered the fray cheering wildly for their team and roaring them on to victory. Apparently the '**YMCA Kop**' is worth a five-point start in any match so they should be half way to promotion next season when each game will be up to 11.

The whitewash **Police 'B'** suffered at the hands of **Marconi** could have been avoided had Tony Harris not had to concede his set against Bob Edwards. Apparently he had to rush

home as the dog was 'choking'. Paula didn't think it would have made any difference, as **Marconi** was just too strong on the night. This **Police** team seems to have lots of problems with animals as I recall Len Dyson's battle with a moth not long ago resulted in a win for the moth. Lastly, for those psychologists amongst you ...does anyone know how many nets and edges a man can take before suffering a complete mental breakdown???? Steve Kee tested this theory against Rob Peat. He only got 12 pure flukes a game but to give Rob his credit, gentleman that he is, he refrained from committing GBH on Steve and accepted his fate (though I believe the language in the car on the way home was choice!!). Keith Bird and Sue Burgess had a rather bizarre game in that same match. Apparently, you'd think that they each had an identical twin that played alternate games. Keith won the first easily, Sue the second then back to Keith for the third. In the games they won they played brilliantly and in the games they lost they didn't.

Oh, yes! I haven't forgotten the divisional awards for this season. You know the important ones ...here they are

DIVISION 2 AWARDS FOR 2002-2003 SEASON

OUTSTANDING PLAYER

Graeme Reid

MOST SPORTING TEAM

Liverpool YMCA 'B'

MOST MISSED PLAYER

Ian Grant

(close second Eddie Crowley)

BEST CORRESPONDENT

Steve Kee

And lastly the roles of honour

Facesavers:-

Rob Peat (Bath St 'C') beat **Nigel Stopher** (Waterloo 'A') 12,16. **Paul Jennings** (Manweb 'A') beat **Derek Sullivan** (Bootle JC 'A') 10, 15. **Dave Stoddern** (Bath St 'C') beat **Bob Hughes** (Fords) -12,18, 21.

Close Wins:-

John Lau (Liverpool YMCA 'B') beat **Tim Weardon** (Fords) 17, 23. **Mark Paterson** (Bath St. 'B') beat **Rob Peat** (Bath St. 'C') 22, 21. **Graeme Reid** (Fords 'A') beat **Cherith Graham** (Bootle JC 'A') -20,16, 23. **Nigel Stopher** (Waterloo 'A') beat **Alf Perry** (Fords 'A') 20,-20,17. **John Langton** (Bath St 'B') beat **Brian Crolley** (Bootle JC) -15, 22 20. **Gemma Lloyd** (Police 'A') beat **Paul Price** (Marconi) -18,19,20.

Good Wins:

Cherith Graham (Bootle JC 'A') beat **Graeme Black** (Waterloo 'A') 18, -16, 19. **Eddie Williams** (Bath St 'B') beat **Tim Weardon** (Fords) -14, 21, 16. **Tom Bray** (Bootle JC) beat **Bob Edwards** (Marconi) 13, -16,14. **Tony Harris** (Police 'B') beat **Tom Murray** (Fords) 15, -14,19

Sylvia Graham

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Okay, I'll have to admit defeat this time round. With 55 cards to look over, there's no way I can report on every mano-a-mano encounter, let alone the match results. That is unless I ask Roly to issue the report as a 5-page supplement. So, apologies for not 'bigging up' everyone who deserves said bigging.

First card up was mine own, **CADWA-D** losing 10-0 at home to **Wav-Lab-C**. This seems to epitomise the season for the team. A fighting performance, 5 sets going to a 3rd game, but no cutting edge. The team have bemoaned the departure of last years star George Lennon, and few can argue that without him, or an equally capable No.1 things would have been vastly different. As it is, it's a story of straight back down.

A few individual performances of note were Trevor beating **Wav-Lab-A's** Bill Stanley in 3 after losing the 1st from deuce. John O'Sullivan beat sub Ted McGiveron from deuce in't 3rd, then doubled up with Don Davies to beat Bill & Ted in an excellent adventure, 22/20 in't 3rd. **CADWA-C** 8 - D 2. The 2 coming from Mr Critchley winning the scrap of the Steves over Mr Graham, and John beating Rob 22/20, 21/18. Steve-C also had a good win over Les Gee in the 9-1 defeat.

In the guise of encouraging new talent, Tim Ford joined. He's just ten, and has already made a big impression in his handful of appearances. I can appreciate the feeling of his opponents confronting someone so young. I had played a very fresh faced John McCann in the Business Houses many moons hence. This time it was John Mac who faced his younger upstart. Tim didn't beat John, but what was most impressive, was how he listened intently to John-O's instructions at each turn around. Guru John's assessment is that Tim isn't used to the unorthodox style of play on offer in the 3rd. I know the majority of us are too old to change now, but Tim is young enough to learn, adapt and overcome - you have been warned! Tim already has



his first victory to his credit. JohnO not only guides Tim but also doubles up as his partner. It is a very formidable sight to see such a combination. Consider the age gap, 60 plus years!

CADWA-B gave no quarter to their struggling stable mates in January, when they too were fearing the worst for themselves, 9-1. Rob Peverall & Ian Burrows unbeaten and Pete Roberts beating JohnO. Ian had stand out victories over Billy Clayton and Tony Connor, and has been their best player. At **Manweb-A** Rob Peverall traded 21/17 games with Paul Jennings, 2 to 1. Mike Power joined the team to assist in the bale out. However, he was only able to contribute one point against **CADWA-C** beating Steve G, as did Rob Peverall beating Rob Davies in the battle of the Bobs, as **CADWA-C** ran out 8-2 victors. Finding players has been a problem. Against **Bootle-YM** three subs were used. Latterly in match 16 against **Wav-Lab-A**, three subs were again needed, but only one was available, thus they played two short. (No they didn't draw!) Rob and the rest of the 'B' team are happy to have kept out of the relegation zone, but will be looking for better support from the club next season in order to re-establish themselves.

Wavertree-C were just one point ahead of **CADWA-B** at the end of the season. As usual they proved they have the knack of avoiding the drop by the seat of their pants. They would have faired even better if they had made more of Mark Miles. Tony (black magic bat) Connor can look

back on good wins over Alan Evans, Tom Downing, and Peter Howden. Mike Ashton has beaten Richie Jones, Rob Davies, and Kevin Lewis. Both have won out against CADWAs Rob Peverall and Steve Critchley. As a team they combined to overturn the form guide to win 6-4 over their own 'B' team, **Maghull-A** and **CADWA-B**.

Bath-St-D also dwell in the 90's. 4-6 home defeat from **CADWA-C** belying good wins for Eddie Williams and venerable Billy Clayton over Steve Graham, and Peter Ross over Rob Davies. Peter nearly took George Lennon after winning the first game from deuce; Eddie also then took George to 3. A week later versus **CADWA-B** they had Adrian Bramham in the team and secured a draw. A closely fought mid table battle with **Waterloo-B** went their way 6-4 (Eddie winning his two over Julie and Ian). The squad of Bramham, Williams, Gee, Ross and Clayton are a tough act to beat, but winning only 1 in 3 is not an adequate reflection on this. Karen Gibson has also proved herself, beating John O'Sullivan 24/22 in the 3rd game, in a surprising landslide 9-1 victory to BSD.

Maghull-A utilised Nick Miller to achieve victory over **Bath-St-D**, 6-4 beating both Les & Billy in straight sets "much to their moaning". Harry McGanity played his heart out to beat Peter Ross in 3. Next to last spot doesn't guarantee relegation to the lower division, but they accepted it as their fate some time ago. They have shown good spirit. Harry very kindly rearranged a match against **CADWA-D** that they could have quite rightly claimed 10-0. How many captains would do that! It turned out 7-3 in their favour. George Frost & Harry beating Trevor Dolder, Tom Downing beating Steve Critchley in 2, being the stand-outs. The New Year started badly for MCA 'A', successive 2-8 away defeats to **Wav-Lab-A** (Kevin Lewis in at 1 to beat Ian Black) and **CADWA-C** (Kevin again, this time over Steve G). Home to **Wav-Lab-B**, Chris Roberts bagged a brace for the only singles wins in the 3-7 defeat. But the real story that night was of 13 year old Mark Ambrose mak-

ng his first appearance in the 3rd division. He acquitted himself admirably and managed to take a game off John Gratton. Shouts out to Will Gibson beating Harry Nelson after a 1st game deucer, Tom showing signs of recovery from his cyc op by beating Ian Burrows and Ian Lunt both over 3.

Wavertree-Labour-B just managed to break the ton barrier. The pivotal second team for Wavertree Labour in this division has had a caucus of Howden, Gratton, Foulis and Banks. In the 2-8 defeat at Bowring Park, Mr Howden won the battle of the Petes (v Mr Wass, 26/24 in t³rd) and Mr Gratton won the battle of the Johns (v Mr McCann 21/17 in t³rd). Even without their No.1, **CADWA-C** were still stopped in their tracks. 5-5. It could have been even better for **WL-B** as they won the singles 5-3 but lost both doubles narrowly in the 3rd. John was very happy to win both his games. After his brilliant victory over George Lennon he was moved to write: "Glad to see CADWA have done the decent thing and re-ranked George. He is a great player, so fast. I don't normally blow my own trumpet but I somehow managed to sneak up on him when he wasn't looking and beat him. My best result of the season by a long way. He took this unexpected result really well, not like some of the prima donnas I could mention. A really enjoyable evening." Paul also had a clean sheet, in no small part due to coming from a game down to beat Steve Graham. Indeed due to such wins Paul was re-ranked up above Dave near the end of the season. However he was unable to contribute in the 6-4 victory at **Bath-St-D** as both Les & Billy beat him in 3. Ironically Paul lost his two singles against **Bootle-YMCA**, whilst Dave won his two. John G experienced in his words a "mid-season crisis" losing 2, but still considered it to be his favourite game of the season. Both doubles secured a 5-5 draw, **Waterloo-B** have the most balanced score line, winning as many as losing, in terms of matches and games. They started the last third of the sea-

son in scesaw fashion, 9-1 at **CADWA-C**, dipping with a 2-8 defeat at title challengers **Manweb-B**, immediately bouncing back by depriving **Marconi-A** of 4 title points. Julie assuredly taking Ian & Frank. Ted completing Frank's misery, winning over 3. Another title contender to contend with the following week, **Wav-Lab-A**. Julie started the night well beating Ian Black in two, from deuce in the 2nd. Harry squared the scores at 2-2 by overcoming Bill Stanley in 3. But that was as good as it got, despite Julie forcing Mick Tierney into 3 games, and Harry Nelson losing to Bill after taking the first game; - result 2-8. Without Ian, **CADWA-C** walked away 9-1 victors, with only Ted's win over Rob providing solace. Ian was back for the game at **Maghull-A** when the boot was on the other foot, kicking out 8-2. Momentum was maintained when hosting **Wav-Lab-B**, 6-4. Only 2 singles to the visitors but both doubles. Performance of the night was from Harry as he came from a set down to Paul Banks to win the next two 22/20, 23/21. A draw at **Bootle-YM** was a good result, as Roly suffered at the hands of Julie and Ted, who in turn broke free from a tight contest with Richie Winkle to win the 3rd game 21/10. At the end of the singles **Bootle-YM** were 5-3 ahead, and seen as they had won both doubles at **Waterloo**, a 7-3 win looked likely. However Julie reversed the doubles, and although **Bootle** won the opening game in each, **Waterloo's** resolve secured the draw. They have had the most consistency in terms of line up of all the teams in this division. Julie at 1, Ian at 2, Ted at 3 and then Ken or Harry at 4.

CADWA-C appear at fifth place with an asterix. Without the asterix they would have appeared at 3rd place. As the Bard said, many a slip twixt cup and lip. The slip here was playing an ineligible player at **Wav-Lab-A**. So what was an 8-2 emphatic win became a draw with 10 point deduction. **CADWA-C** were motoring quite nicely up until the moment that the news of the deduc-

tion broke at the Open. Who knows how this affected the teams approach to the final few games. Would the necessary extra four points to finish 2nd have been picked up? Prior to this George Lennon was looking too good at No.4 and was brought up to No.1. At the crunch match with **Wav-Lab-A**, Don Davies subbed for Steve-G. Fortunately for **CADWA-C**, **Wav-Lab-A** were also weakened. Don contributed a point in a close 21/19 3rd over Steve Perry. Whilst George L and Rob Davies had good wins over Bill Stanley. 6-4 it was then. At **Bath-St-D**, 6-4, the 2 Georges bagging braces, Mr Lennon over Eddie, and Mr Higham over Billy. Home to **Maghull-A** 8-2. Kevin Lewis frightening George L by taking the first game. Kevin however taking Steve G twice, once in the singles and then in the doubles with Tom, coming from a game down to beat Steve & George-H. That being the only blight as **CADWA-C** showed strength in all departments. With **Bootle-YMCA** seven sets needed a decider. George-L lost to John and George-H had "a mare" losing to Danny and Big Arf. However Steve-G was possessed beating John 22/20, 18/21, 21/18. The same spirit must have inhabited Rob as he went to the wire with Roly and Arthur. Hopefully runners-up in the cup will be some recompense, as they re-group for next year. **Bootle-YMCA** have turned around their season somewhat. Looking like they were neither up nor down, they got a wake up call from Arthur and but for a poor first half of the season could well have finished over the line. The core has been John Higham, Roly, Danny Every and Richie Winkle. It was they who won 8-2 away at **CADWA-B**. This being all the more impressive when you know that 'B' were "depleted" and repleted with Davies, Higham & O'Sullivan. George was the fly in the ointment for Roly and Richie. Danny beat Mr O'Sullivan in two straight, as did Roly over Mr Roberts, but both had to fight through to win one of the games from deuce. At **Manweb-B** only John had joy against Paul & Sharon, despite 6 of the singles matches going to a 3rd game. However a week later and joy was unbounded as they beat **Marconi-A** 6-4 at their social club, to inflict only their second defeat. Admittedly Ian Wensley

wasn't out for the Home team, but 4th men sub Tony Mullally won his two. Roly was the main man, winning both singles in 3 over Frank and John McCann. The McCanns had a very untypical night, as all was lost, both singularly and together. Roly & Danny won second doubles to ensure victory. Chris Roberts led a **Maghull-A** charge, but each man did his duty to gain a 6-4 win. A 7-3 win at **Bath-St-D** was helped by the no-show of Adrian, so 4-3 for the games that were played. Les Gee had the highs and lows. His narrow victory over Richie was the highlight for the home team, as he came back from losing the first game 24/26. But he suffered after winning the opening game from Roly, to then lose the next two. Hosting **Wav-Lab-A**, Danny had a good win over Richie Jones (21/19 in 't 3rd), but lost to Bill Stanley, who in turn lost to Richie Winkle.

Manweb-B: Alan Evans, Paul Jennings, Sharon Norman and Alan Cameron, coming up just 4 points behind Wav-Lab-A. They did all they could, and kept it up throughout the season, except match 18. The New Year had started so well, making the most of home advantage in 2 consecutive matches, Bootle-YM 7-3 (sub Bob Barker delivering 2 points) and Waterloo-B 8-2. Then away to Wav-Lab-C who helped their A team somewhat by taking 4 points. Alan-C unable to counter Williams & Bird. Back to Manweb, and CADWA-B were also beaten 6-4. Sharon was assured in games v Roberts & Lennon, whilst Rob Peverall won in 3 v Paul. CADWA-D were swamped 10-0, despite resistance by John and Don as they were 1 short due to a C-U over picking up Steve C. "Biggsy" made a welcome guest appearance and didn't fail to deliver. No favours were needed when Bath-St-D were put to the sword 9-1. Then the opposition got tougher. Coming away with 4 points off the rampaging Marconi-A was a good result. Sharon the only player to win her 2 against the McCanns, and Ian Wensley losing to Alan-E and Paul in 3. For Ian, the 21/23, 24/22, 23/21

nail biter with Paul must have been the worst to take.

Then the wheel came off, match 18, away to **Wav-Lab-A**. Alan Evans was carded to play, but nobody played at No. 1. So, on the night Sharon, Paul & Alan-C won 5-2. 3 uncontested points gifted to your nearest rivals at this time of the season must have been v disappointing. Maybe it affected performance in the last four games, as they must have looked at the **Wav-Lab-A** book and seen how close they stood. After 17 games Wav-Lab-A were on 113 points, Manweb-B on 108. With this result it was then Wav-Lab-A 118, Manweb-B 113. If Alan-E had played and had won his singles and doubles, the result could have been 7-3, and the after 18 games the totals would have read Wav-Lab-A 116, Manweb-B 115! Wav-Lab-A went on to pickup 20 points from their last 4 matches, whereas Manweb-A picked up 21. So, if match 18's result had been 3-7, the final scores on the doors would have read Wav-Lab-A, P 22, W14, D2, L6, 116PTS, Manweb-B P22, W16, D1, L5, 136PTS. You catch my drift. Obviously they are big ifs and coulda-woulda-shoulda's, but it shows how tight it really was, and how crucial match 18 was!

Wav-Lab-A, who I understand to be in squad order Mick Tierney, Ian Black, Bill Stanley and Richy Jones have played their games and cards wisely and well. Bill and Richy were swapped at Christmas, and Annabelle Sorrentino came in to slot between them mid-January. The New Year started well with 3 strong victories over Maghull-A and their two club mates, providing 23 points out of 30. Bill was the "star-man" at Maghull, coming back against Tom after trailing 13/21 and 2 deuces in the 2nd to sneak home in the 3rd game 17. Mick Tierney has been a tremendous asset to the team, e.g. making short shrift of Bootle-YMs John Higham and Roly Wright, in an imperious 6-4 win, was no mean feat. Whereas Annabelle had to work hard to roll over Roly and Richie-W. As covered above, Waterloo-B and

CADWA-B didn't enjoy their visits to Sheil Road, losing 8-2 and 9-1 respectively. CADWA-D fared little better going down 3-7. In the above-mentioned match 18, Mike beat Paul-J in 3, who in turn beat Annabelle in 2. Annabelle went on to beat Alan-C. Sharon completed a double on Richy And Bill, who had the wrong kind of double losing to Alan-C 21/19 in 't 3rd. How much different could it have been but for matches 16 & 18, where fate conspired to gift them 8 points. Well done to the team for lasting the course and good luck in Div 2.

Saving the best till last, hearty congratulations are due to **Marconi-A** on well earned 3rd Championship and Cup titles. Ian, Frank, Peter & John have been resolute throughout the entire season; only 2 loses and a 7.6 match average. All of which has meant they have steadily moved ahead of rivals, to finish with a grand 30-point advantage. Most of the details you would have read above in their "victims" round up. One match I've yet to mention is their game in week 19, home versus rivals **Wav-Lab-A**. Match comments read "Ian Wensley received a rubber from Peter Ross last week and proceeded to beat Mick Tierney 2 straight. Mick up to tonight had only lost one to John Higham from Bootle YM. Bill Stanley also had a good win in straight sets to Peter Wass." The formula they use is to beat rivals at least 6-4 and anyone else 8-2 or better. It's a tough requirement but they have proved themselves well up to it. **Wav-Lab-C** & **CADWA-D** both 10-0, **Bath-St-D** 9-1, **CADWA-B** & **Wav-Lab-B** 8-2, being the latest examples I can quote you. Good luck to them in the 2nd division for next year, where I am sure they will give a good account of themselves.

Hope you all enjoyed the season and my reviews. I would like to give my many thanks to all the Pen Holders - i.e. those who wrote on the back of the cards. Sorry I didn't manage to get all your colourful comments in.

Doug Baker

(Roly please use enclosed photo of myself taken when I was 22 to replace that naff one you've been using.)

As Doug didn't enclose a photo, I've used a recent one, must have been taken after the barbers, some may not even recognise him.

Roly.

Well what can I say? I finally broke the habit of a lifetime and managed to get a couple of predictions right! So, it is congratulations to **Marconi 'B'** on winning the division, and commiserations to **Aigburth 'A'** who will be moving down to division 5 next season.

Marconi finished a very healthy 13 points clear of **Manweb 'C'** and the cards show the advantage of having a settled team in most of the matches, backed up by more than capable reserves. Most matches this season they have been represented by Andrew Owens, Bobby Bell, John Rowan and Ian Woods, all of them having a consistent season, the team suffering just 3 defeats. I am sure that this team will give it a good go in the third next season and should have enough quality to give a lot of teams a tough fight at the very least.

At the other end of the table **Aigburth 'A'** finished 19 points adrift and seem to have suffered from the opposite of **Marconi** in that they have had problems putting out a regular four, a difficult situation for any captain to deal with.

Also going up to the third division next season will be **Manweb 'C'** chasing **Marconi** for most of the season, and again another team having a consistent time of things, losing only one more game than **Marconi** and if they can keep the same team together next season can also at least consolidate in the third.

Only 15 points separated **Street 'E'**, just one point behind the next six teams in the league,



proving my point earlier in the season of this being one of the most competitive divisions I have played in for some time. **Liverpool YMCA 'C'** recovered from a relatively poor start to the season to finish third, they were able to strengthen the team as the season went on and this obviously had a positive effect for them.

Maghull 'B' have been consistently around "mid-table" and finished just 2 points behind **Liverpool YM**, and 3 points ahead of **Bootle YMCA 'A'**, another team having a better second half of the season, largely due to injuries depriving them of a couple of players earlier on.

Wavertree Labour 'D' started the season like a team "on fire" but fell away somewhat to finish in seventh spot, and I am sorry Ken, but I am not buying the line about getting worried that you were doing too well and might get promoted, having to ease off, just in case!

In eighth spot were **Bath Street 'E'**, just one point behind de-

spite of a little bit of an up and down season for **Bath Street** with both 9 wins and 9 defeats. Just behind **Bath Street** were **Wavertree Labour 'E'**. A season which could have turned out better had they been able to convert their 5 drawn matches into victories, still one consolation was not suffering a defeat to their 'D' team despite predictions of landslide victories from one source who shall remain nameless!

Aigburth managed to arrest something of a mid-season slide to finish in ninth place, I know Eric Wood was wearing a worried look for some time as **Bath Street 'F'** were just behind them and **Aigburth 'A'** were threatening to string a run together. As it turned out they just had enough to hold off **Bath Street** and the run from their 'A' team failed to materialise.

So that's it for another season, we all look forward to giving it another go in September when we will see what effect the new 11-up scoring system will have on our league. I know from comments made that the majority of players are not in favour, but unfortunately table tennis in this country has to come in line with the rest of the world, and previously had to be one of a very few sports operating two separate scoring systems which is certainly not an ideal situation. At the end of the day we now have no choice in the matter and have to accept the decision. It may well be accepted just as quickly as the 40mm ball despite all of the reservations raised prior to that introduction.

So have a good summer and I look forward to seeing you all again next season and resuming battle!

Tim Ford Aged 11 Currently plays for CADWA 'D' in Liverpool League Division 3

Began playing table tennis on a coffee table at age 4 years!

Played competitively for the last three years.

Trains with the North West Regional Squad and was a member of the U-10 Squad in 2001 when they were runners-up in the National Squad Championships in Stoke.

Runner-up in the U-12s in the Wirral Festival of Table Tennis 2001

Halton U-12 Singles runner-up 2000/01

Team member for Halton TT club in the National Cadet and Junior league with the following results -

Junior league North West region - Divisional runners up 2000/01

National Cadet League Divisional winner 2000/01 and runners up 2002/03

North West Cup singles winner in both U12 and Cadet groups - 2002

Tim's coaches are Arthur Brindle and John O'Sullivan



I start with the Stamp Cup final between **Linacre** and **Harold House "A"** played at Bootle Y M on 22nd April. You may already have a report on this match compiled by the League Cup Secretary elsewhere in this publication. I make no apologies for a second one, but then you buy more than one paper to read your favourite teams football match report.

Linacre got to the final via a walkover courtesy of the Police who could not find a team in the semi final. **Har Hse** defeated my team in the other semi-final. When they both met in the final the outcome of the league championship was not to **Har Hse** and I have only just received the final league table this week Near the end of March both teams met in the reverse fixture of the season and **Linacre** won this 6-4. However **HH** did not have their strongest side out, being short of **Martin Roberts** and a reserve from their "B" team filling in. Even so **Harry Reeve** still won his two beating **Paul Morgan** and **Mike Poole**. **Jack Davidson** also losing to **Paul**.

I give you this background because it makes interesting reading to compare against the final scorecard. This final was one of the very best I have ever attended, and would not disgrace a first div final. The outcome was not decided until the final match. The match was played in a friendly, but very competitive spirit.

Har Hse decided to be the away side and called on **Paul Morgan** & **Jack Davidson**. do doubt assured he could repeat his win from their last league encounter. But **Jack** had other ideas and with a very fluent backhand attack and smothering **Paul's** backhand flicks won the match 18 and 19. First blood to **Linacre** against the call.

A shrewd call by **Linacre** saw **Harry** take on **Martin Roberts** and for providing some lovely **Tesco** keeping the topspin going ran out a winner in three. This was a great match with neither player deserving to lose. 2-0 **Linacre**. **Mike Poole**



stopped the rot for **Har Hse** taking out **Norman Appleby** in two. 2-1 **Linacre**

Ken Ainsworth was next call for **Linacre** and as is normal for **Ken** wore down **Dave Cohen** in three. 3-1 to **Linacre**. The doubles was the next call by **Har Hse** and this was the pivotal match. It went the way of **Har Hse** 21/17 in the third. Had **Linacre** won this then they were almost home and dry. **Jack** had tension in his arm and did not flow as in his first match. 3-2 **Linacre**.

Linacre had the next call, and I expected to see **Harry** go on against **Paul** to endeavour to increase their lead to 4-2 and put the pressure back on **H H**. I know this would have meant playing two in a row, but it was the same for both teams.

Wins for **Dave Cohen** over **Norman** and **Martin** against **Ken** saw **Har Hse** take the lead 4-3.

Harry then had to beat **Paul** to square the match instead of going on to win it. 4-4

The final match saw **Mike Poole** beat **Jack** 21-17 in the third. **Jack** coming back very strong in the third to almost level, but the tension was there and **Mike** kept it very steady after some wild backhands early on.

Final score 5-4 to **Har Hse**.

A great night and one the div can be proud of and not least the **YM** for providing some lovely **Tesco** sandwiches to round things off. **M.O.T.M** Without a doubt **Harry Reeve!**

Linacre have won the league after leading from the start, they were in fact looking for three titles but had to be content with just the league after losing out to **Fords 'A'** in the **Frank Murphy** final. It was only a handful of points at the end but the extra class of 2nd Div players told eventually and they gradually wore down the handicap.

Harold Hse finished as league runner up but some 21 points behind the champions. Playing short and using reserves from their lower teams did not help the cause. They were gifted 5 sets by **Police** who played two short when they met **Febriary**. Only **Dave Oakes** going to three with **Paul Morgan**. They in turn also gave three sets away at home to **Bath St H**. So if they could have fielded a full team every week, the challenge to **Linacre** would have been on.

Maghull "D" were in third spot on 91 points and in the "Derby" match against their "C" side won 8-2. **Mark Ambrose**. (Younger brother of **Ian Ambrose** who plays for **Bath St**) continues to improve and in this match he had wins over **Jeanette Hutchings** and **John Gillibrands**. The only sets lost were to **Naresh Tagore**. Captain **Alan Smethurst** is one of the few captains to record some match comments on the scorecard. They could only record a 6-4 win over my team **Bath St "G"** in Feb. **Keith Whittaker** losing to both **Dave Batty** and **Richard Woodley**. **Andy M Court** won his two against **Douggie Marriott** and **Richard**. Against **Bath St "H"** they could only manage a draw. **Alan** losing in three to **Myra Lovelady** and also by the same set score to **Albert Parker**. When they played **Police** they were thrashed 8-2 but they were short of **Alan Smethurst**. so **Jeff Banks** and **Keith Whittaker** had to go in at 1 & 2, but **Police** take no prisoners in these events.

Maghull "C" only finished 10 points behind the "D" both teams winning ,drawing, and losing the same number of games. High spot of their season must have been the 7-3 defeat of **Linacre**, who were short of **Harry** for this match. Ageless **Jack Davidson** got

two of Linacre's 3 the other coming from Ken Ainsworth. But Denise Jeanette and John Gillibrands got four sets between them and both doubles. The New year was also looking good for them when they entertained "H.HSE" B handing out an 8-2 thrashing. Naresh losing in this match in three to Steve Simpson. Mercurial Greenbank put a stop to the New year run at the end of Jan, losing out 6-4. Mark Palmer and John Sherratt doing the damage with two wins apiece plus the doubles. They bounced back to win at home in March, a 6-4 defeat of Bath St "H" despite playing one short.

Greenbank did not complete all their matches! But still finished mid table and there is no doubt that if they could turn out their strongest team each week the league title would have been within their grasp. Only the quality of Harry Reeve who beat both Tony Edge and John Sherratt when they both met in Jan kept them from a 6-4 win. With the addition of Mark Palmer, who did not play in this match, I am sure they would have won by a good margin. However they are a very sociable crowd and supply the best supper in the whole of the league.

Police suffer, as they do every season from player availability, and for this reason they are destined always to finish mid table, or thereabouts. Mainstays of the team are Bob Rawlinson and Dave Oakes. Alan Woods has turned in some fine performances at number 3 and the ever improving Neil Thomas, when he plays is also finding a winning streak. They trounced Maghull "D" 8-2 in Jan and won 7-3 against "H H" a fortnight later. Bob Rawlinson lost in three to Steve Simpson, who came from behind to win -10 .21.21. Neil Thomas beat Richard Blackburn and teamed up with Bob to win the second doubles. They got to the cup semi final only to have to give the match away through lack of a team. Table tennis, I am afraid has to take a backseat when duty calls for the Police. My own team Bath St "G" managed to cobble together 68

points and finish 3rd from the bottom. Not being able to field our strongest side early in the season had its effect, but Richard Woodley, freed of any captaincy responsibilities turned in some resolute and determined performances. Duggie Marriott found it hard going and just needs to have a little more patience to choose the right shot, but it's his first full season after a return to the game from a long break from it. Dave Batty was not available for most of the early part of the season for health reasons but came back to steady the ship and had some notable wins too, notably against Naresh Tagore 19 in the 3rd in a draw with Maghull "C" and Ken Ainsworth, again in 3 when we entertained Linacre in the home fixture. A player who has played for many years in the Bath St teams of the past signed on to play as a social member, but got the bug and made himself -- health permitting -- available to play in the league again. Norman Cooke turned out for the team on two occasions, winning one against Har Hse and one at Greenbank. It's a bit faster than bowls Norman!

Har Hse "B" who I remarked in my last Digest notes would struggle to obtain a middle of the table position did not make it. They finished second from bottom, one place lower than last season. They seem to keep a settled team with Steven Simpson leading the way with wins against Bob Rawlinson (Police) and Naresh Tagore (Maghull). No 2 Gary Abrams gets his share of scalps, notably against Myra Lovelady (Bath St) and also Barbara Alcock, and against our "G" team Doug Marriott and Graham West. Ritchie Blackburn also got two in the same match against Richard Woodley and Mark Rawlinson. Good to see Nick Shoham get on the scoreboard the right way, H H winning 9-1. This was one of their rare heavy wins, and only two more would come their way for the rest of the season.

Finally Bath St "H" finished bottom with 6 more points than last

years total but only played 15 matches. The return match due against Greenbank was never played, so no points to either team. Regrouping at the halfway stage helped their cause, allowing Myra to come down the order and Albert Parker in a more rightful position at No 2, instead of no 4. No joy when they went to Linacre and came back with only one set that of Albert in two against Ken Ainsworth. But Myra was very unlucky to lose 19 in the 3rd to Peter Barton. A draw at Maghull "D" saw Albert and Myra win both the doubles and both their singles, claiming all the sides points. Barbara Alcock being absent for this match. They went one better against my team running out winners 6-4, myself falling foul of both Barbara and Albert. Captain Lil Randles seeing off Richard Woodley in 3. This was a big improvement on their opening match of the season when my team won 10-0. But they enjoy the match nights and practise every Wed morning, also making a very consistent contribution to our lifeline club monthly lottery scheme.

What of Div5? This, in my opinion has been the poorest season ever. Nine teams only and some teams not even getting their 16 games in. With only having a reduced league there are gaps galore in matches, add to this free weeks and cup dates and you can find your team has not had a match for, in some instances a month. This situation can easily take the sharpness and fitness level out of your game. I appreciate that the lowest Div is always the one to suffer when it comes to having the right number of teams to make it viable, and there is little the committee can do about this if clubs cannot enter additional teams. In terms of costs the £59 to enter a four player team playing 22 matches works out at £2.68 per match. The same team playing only 16 matches works out at £ 3.68 per match. If team fees were based on this simplistic approach then Div 5 costs to enter a team would be 16 matches @ £ 2.68 totalling £43.

This is one way of looking at the situation, but to make up the deficit the committee need to find ways to increase the number of games where divisions are not up to strength. Teams could perhaps play one another more

than twice, or an extra tournament, possibly one of a handicap nature. I am sure with all that experience on the present committee a way can be found to remedy the situation.

One sad note to end on. A former Bath St player who played for the club in the 50s and 60s and won the Liverpool Closed title on no less than four occasions in 1956, 58, 59 and 60, has passed on. I refer of course to **Arthur Taylor** a player of

great style who had every shot in the book at that time and was a joy to watch. I personally never had a lot of contact with him, in those days lower team players never came into contact with 1st Div stars. I am sure there are many players still playing in the league, and on the committee who will recall him. I believe he was 67 but had not enjoyed the best of health recently. I know Alex Gould will be sad at his passing.

That brings the curtain down on Div 5 this season. Let us hope our committee digest my comments and come up with a suitable solution!

Ron Georgeson

Cup Fixture Sec.

You may have noticed a couple of pointers to the fact that once again you have a 'new' cup fixture secretary, "me", your humble Digest Editor.

John Langton, who has done a creditable job for the last 3 seasons, and has made the Cup Competitions run smoothly from start to finish, has decided to pass on the reins, as most players don't follow up the progress of cup

games once they are knocked out, not many would appreciate that John attended every Cup Final. John has already passed over the "papers of power" to make life a bit easier for me and with promised help also from previous cup sec. Mike Power, life will go on, (but please, no hassle). John will still be keeping up the great work he does on the L&DTTL web site.

Coaching



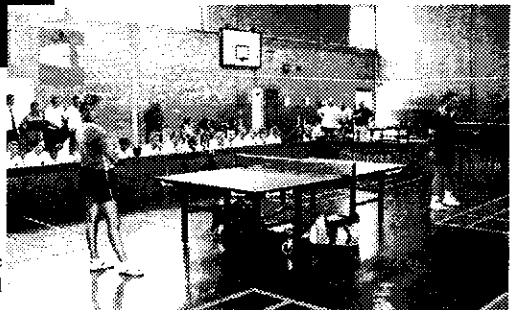
above

Bill Salter of Maghull shows Andrea the "4th" spin, a high top spin with lots of side, as you can see, Andrea wasn't quite sure about that one, and awarded Bill 'the wooden pizza' and scorers job to keep him on his seat

Liverpool League players who coach at Formby are Dave and Sylvia Graham of Bootle J.C. And John Langton and Ian McElwee of Bath St.

Formby have quite a strong following of young players of a high standard who will hopefully find their way into the Liverpool League as well as the Southport League.

An Exhibition of Table Tennis was organised by the Formby Table Tennis club at Formby High School on July 16th. Showing their skills were John Hilton, No.1 England Vet. and Andrea Holt, present England Ladies Champion. Two sessions were organised, an afternoon session for the school pupils, and an evening session for anyone interested, but as usual, lack of interest prevailed for the evening session, even though it was publicised on the L&DTTL web site, but for those who did go, John and Andrea showed some expert coaching skills on speed and control, "why can't I do that", says I as I'm leaving. **EDITOR**



above

Andrea and John showing the attentive pupils at the afternoon session, how its done

The City of Liverpool Open Butterfly Grand Prix

This first major tournament of the 2003-2004 season took place Bank Holiday weekend 23/24th August at the Liverpool Tennis Centre, with an strong entry of over 250 headed by England No.4 Alex Perry, who won the Men's singles title in 1997; Bradley Billington No. 8, Jason Sugrue No. 13, and top Welshman Ryan Jenkins. the present holder of the title; There was a strong local challenge, lead by Kevin Dolder and John Rankin, for the men, Brenda Buocoy and Alice Howard, for the ladies, Juniors taking part were Tom Bray, Clara Howard and Cherith Graham, Cherith has had a good season, winning the Ladies singles at the Liverpool closed tournament, at the recent Blackpool Butterfly Grand Prix, Cherith knocked out Lindsey Thornton (Nationally ranked 18, Lindsey had recently knocked out England Ladies champion Nicola Deaton at the National Championships), so fingers crossed for some good performances. The biggest concentrated challenge from local players was 11 entered in the Mens Veterans singles, lead by John Hilton, currently ranked England No.1 Vet.

Results from the Grand Prix

Men's Singles

A. Perry (Dv) bt. B. Billington (Dy) 3-0

Women's Singles

F.M. Tong (Tpe) bt. H. Lower (St.) 6.7.10.

Men's Star Singles

A. Perry (Dv) bt. R. Jenkins (Wal) -7 6 7 7

Women's Star Singles

F.M. Tong (Tpe) bt. M. Myscova (Dv) 8 9 4

U21 Men

P. Drinkhall (Cv) bt. L. Thomas (Wal) -9 7 -9 6 10

U21 Women

N. Owen (Wal) bt. L. Durant (Ng)

Veteran Men's Singles

I. Girdler (Sy) bt. D. Godbold (Nd) 12 -7 5 -8 9

Veteran Women's Singles

Brenda Buocoy (La) 1st. J. Morley (Gs) 2nd

Men's Band 1 singles

C. Gascoyne (Ng) bt. D. Moads (Du) 8 6 -9 6

Men's Band 2 singles

N. Baxter (Sco) bt. C. Beckley (Sy) -8 6 6 7

Men's Band 3 singles

M. McDonnell (Irl) bt. A. Frost (Sx) 5 8 -9 7

Men's Band 4 singles

M. Simpson (Du) bt. G. McLeod (Bd) 10 -9 14 -8 8

Men's Band 5 singles

Young bt. W. Y. Chan (Sy) 5 5 6

Women's Band 1 singles

M. McGreevy (Irl) bt. S. Noutch (Y) 8 -8 5 8

Women's Band 2 singles

P. Thorley (Dy) bt. J. Meads (Du) 12 9 7

Women's Band 3 singles

A. Moge (Irl) bt. S. Perks (Ng) 6 -12 13 -7 9

The seedings were "on the ball" as all the top seedings, men and women, finished up fighting for the top places. An excellent tournament. EDITOR

Editorial

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11Up, as one of those players who would have preferred to keep 21up, I have been practising through the summer the "ncw" game of 11up, no doubt about it, it's a different game, but only in the mind, you can't afford to get too far behind too soon, but the change every two services evens that out a bit, play tends to be a bit careful, you can't really go for the 50/50 smashes, but I'm sure most players will still have a go, better players than me have related it to "playing in a handicap game", me being an ordinary player wouldn't know about that, all I can say is for the doubters to accept the changing game and play, it's the same for all players.

Hopefully my 'Postbag' will have loads of letters from, "Happy, satisfied, slowly getting to grips, or still disgruntled" players, as the season goes on, so air your views.

Content and Quality of the Digest I hope, is improving I have had to use a smaller print in order to get so much in, some keep saying to me "that photo doesn't look like me" my apologies to them. **Editor**

Ocean International Continental Masters

9th August 2003, The Crucible, Sheffield

I was away for the weekend of the tournament, so made a point of recording the BBC. Grandstand program on the Sunday, and watched it on the Monday, as with any sporting program which is condensed, you usually see the best parts, with some football matches, it can be looked at as a plus as a lot of the game is a bit uncompetitive anyway, but the Continental Masters Tournament being reduced to an hour program, was packed with exciting attacking table tennis, and when Matthew Syed played, exciting defensive table tennis, I'm sure, the parts that didn't get shown would have had a lot more of the same. Only 6 players in the tournament, in the quarter finals, Samsonov beat Waldner, and Boll beat Weixing, 1st Semi, Samsonov beat Kreanga (just); 2nd Semi. Boll beat Syed; the Final was completed by Boll beating Samsonov 3-1, all top class games, but I would have thought, and I'm sure all those watching on the night, would have wanted the final to go to the best of 7. My vote for exciting play went to Kreanga, a 100% attacker. Samsonov seemed to have a casual control of the game, and of course, Syed when on form is always exciting when playing top players, but just seems to get 'pipped'.

The BBC put on a good coverage, and hopefully will feature more TT. The chances are that this will not be a one off. The BBC were also delighted with the event and whispers in the corridors of power suggest that between now and next year's Olympics table tennis will be high on the list of BBC sports it wants to cover, if you are on the Web, why not send a congratulation to "grandstand@bbc.co.uk". **EDITOR**