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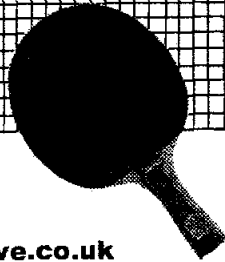
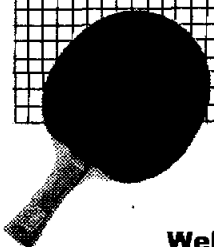
December, 2003

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT
TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE



SEASON 2003-2004

TABLE
DIGEST
TENNIS



Web Site. [WWW. Liverpooltt.Freeserve.co.uk](http://WWW.Liverpooltt.Freeserve.co.uk)

EDITORIAL

Well, have you or haven't you ?? I refer to 11-up, have you got used to it yet, have you accepted it yet, I'm sure 90% will say yes, don't like it, but will just get on with it, 9% are still quite vociferous against it, and threatening to start a revolution to overthrow the establishment (back to the "good" old days), and 1% felt so disillusioned about it that they have packed up playing altogether, hopefully this 1% will come back to play when the dust settles. Personally, I have adjusted to the change, and forgive me for saying it, have started to enjoy it, I now have 5 chances to win a set

'Commitment', what does that mean to individuals? read Don Davies's report (page 4) on attempts to get a City team to a match.

instead of 3, but I'm still capable of losing in 3. For those who say matches finish too soon, do as my team does, use the extra time to get in a bit of practice, something we can't normally do during the season, and the away team may like to get home a bit earlier than usual (if the bar's not open that is, we enjoyed those after match discussions). One suggestion I have heard is that the top 2 divisions play 11-up as that will be where the top / rep. players with aspirations will be, and the rest of the divisions play 21, I can't see it being a practical solution because of open tournaments, etc. but would it keep the 21 flame alive?

Greenbank have just held the First Liverpool Wheelchair International Table Tennis Open tournament, acknowledged with qualifying status (the last one) towards next years Paralympic

Games. It was a fantastic success for Greenbank, and all the Officials and helpers who took part, the feed back from many of the 99 players who took part, was so complimentary, that I'm sure we will see more of these high profile Wheelchair events at Greenbank, the standard of play was tremendous.

The English National Championships are to be held again in Sheffield 26/27/28th March 04, this year in the bigger EIS Centre.

Another top tournament to come to Liverpool will be the "Top 12", a competition that brings together the best players in the country,

and last played 15 years ago due to an overloaded calendar. This event is being resurrected in partnership of the ETTA and Liverpool City Council, (considering the dismal turn out by the local TT fraternity at the England v Israel game, I can only think that it is the badgering of the likes of Ken Armson and associates that has kept Liverpool Council willing to give TT another chance with sponsorship on this scale, so come on, support it). It takes place 28th/29th/30th May 2004, at the Greenbank Academy, so plenty of time to keep that weekend clear, its not free, ticket prices to be announced later, so save some of your

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Christmas present money for what should be some classic TT.

For the Globetrotting fraternity, did you see the publicity for the Killerspin Extreme Weekend in Chicago US. December 27-29th. This \$350,000 extravaganza of Table Tennis was a collection of the Worlds top players competing for BIG prize money, a re-match of this years Mens' World Championship Final, and a round of the Japan Million Dollar "Super Circuit", then to finish up with New Year in the States, not bad if you have a 'few bob' to spare.

The league has lost a well regarded top player, and Wavertree Labour, a popular club man, John Gratton, John having been out of work most of the year, after many, many attempts, recently accepted an offer, which will mean eventually moving to Sheffield, I'm sure John will soon be playing again, as I believe Sheffield has a thriving table tennis scene, with more leagues and clubs than we have, so 'good luck' to John from everyone here.

There are a few contentious issues you will read about raised in the Div. Reports,

Players gaining advantage by the use of foul serves, always a problem, but what is the answer, I know there should only be one answer to that question, but I would love to hear "YOUR" thoughts on this one. Another is when Clubs rank players below their known capability, my thought is that some players just want to play in a certain team to play with their 'mates', it isn't a new problem, but at the end of the day, the "spirit" of the game is made a little hazy. What does stretch the rules a bit is when a 'B' team gets relegated from a higher division, and a 'C' from the same club, gets promotion into the same division, with the make up of the teams more or less the same as before, why does the 'B' team then become the 'C' and the 'C' team the 'B' team, I was told that it helped with the unavailability of players,

and it's better than playing short, that may be so, but that simplified thinking certainly gives a big advantage to a club, how can a 2nd. Division team be ranked lower than a 4th. Division team the following season I think there needs to be a bit more thinking on this one.

While I have been putting this together, my favourite magazine has just dropped through the letter box, Table Tennis News, all the years I have been playing TT. I didn't know it existed, only since taking on the Digest, did I come to read it, (my thanks to Brenda Buoei who lent me a few back issues got me started, I get my own now) I know some players just want to play a game, but if you want to understand the in's & out's of the sport, I thoroughly recommend this

mag. A full A4 glossy, loads of pages and pics. and information on your sport, only £21 for 8 issues through your letterbox, I know we could pass them around, but what's that classic "cheaper than a packet of cigs a week" more information can be got by asking around.

I have included a page on Table Tennis in Merseyside Schools, (page 7) prepared by secretary, Frank Sorrentino, hopefully more of these young stars will find their way into our local leagues and carry on playing.

As I was unable to wish you a Merry Christmas in Advance, can I at least send you best wishes for the coming year

EDITOR

Your CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS

We have finally agreed a date for our Closed event with the Tennis Centre and this will take place on Sunday 15 February, an entry form has been included as part of this magazine.

On the same day at the request of the City Leisure Services we will be running alongside our event a Cadet & Junior event open only to boys and girls resident in Liverpool who do not play for a club in an organised league. This being part of the Leisure Services Sports Development programme.

Entries have been steadily reducing over the past 3-4 years and this trend needs to be reversed if we are to continue organising this annual event. This applies particularly in respect of our divisional championships as this event has been very poorly supported and requests for your views have met with no response. Our divisional championships should be seen as an opportunity to compete against players in your own division away from league competition and also an opportunity to socialise. Entry to other events giving you a full day's competition and an opportunity to meet and compete against league members who you would not normally play against.

A number of people put in a lot of hard work organising and running this competition and they do so not for any personal gain but for the benefit of league members and that includes you. If you usually enter then please try to get your entry in early and encourage others to also enter. If you do not normally enter then why not give it a try, you just might enjoy it and could even be a winner.

Finals Night will take place on Tuesday 17 February at the Police club and this has also seen a fall in attendance in spite of efforts by your Management Committee to make this a social affair by providing hot refreshments for everyone when play has been concluded. Clubs are also allowed to postpone a league match should it fall on that night to enable members to attend finals night.

Remember the date, Sunday 15 February, put it in your diary and get your entry in the post and make sure you attend finals night for what is always an enjoyable night of table tennis and another opportunity to socialise over a pint.

Ken Armson MBE. Tournament Secretary

With open division matches now played at weekends, the 1st team's defence of their premier division title is at the half way stage, boasting a 100% record after the opening four matches at Lancaster and Morecambe College. Six nil victories over Manchester, Mid Cheshire and Ellesmere Port plus a 5-1 success against Bury, should be enough to retain the title. Rivals and second placed



Bolton led 3-2 against Tameside with John Hilton facing Phil Biggs in the final set. The former European champion though was surprisingly edged out in the fifth game which leaves The Trotters requiring maximum points from their last three encounters which

probably means a victory over the champions to take the title



Keith Williams, John Rankin and Chris Ford opened their veteran premier division title defence with a comfortable 10-0 victory over Oldham. At Bath Street.

The A team of Ken Jackson, Ahmed and Fred Bainbridge returned from Trafford with a 7-3 scoreline although their next match was postponed by Preston due to their 75th anniversary dinner on the same night.

The A team were division two champions last season one but the line-up for their opening four matches, also in Lancaster, and the subsequent results deserves an explanation. The title winning side was due to kick off but Les Molyneux withdrew due to illness just a few days before the matches - Omid Khaiyat then dropping out for family reasons

which left just Ahmed Thabet. I then tried more than a dozen suitable players but for various reasons, was unable to obtain a full team. With just one day before the matches and still without a full compliment, I left for an evening dinner in Cumbria, still waiting for confirmation from a couple of players. Both before and immediately following dinner, I continued on the mobile until at 10.50pm, I persuaded two already 'signed on' players to travel. A few minutes later though, due

to a change in circumstances, one pulled out and on telephoning Ahmed to advise that we had only two players, he reluctantly withdrew due to a family illness. By now it was after 11 pm. and the one remaining player decided against it, which left me without a team.

At that point I rang my brother Rob and we decided to play, mainly to avoid a £60 fine. I arrived home at 3am and we left for Lancaster at 7-30. Each match was lost 6-0 which reduced the fine to £20 for playing just one short. This leaves us bottom but with three matches to play and providing we turn out a good team, we should avoid relegation but it was not a satisfactory state of affairs.

National Rankings of Local League Players

Senior Men	rank
Kevin Dolder	34
Keith Williams	71
Chris Ford	93

under 13 boys	
Timothy Ford	35

Junior Girls	
Clare Langford	13
Clara Howard	16

Cadet Boys	
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Veteran Women	
Brenda Buocoy	15
Sue Burgess	34
Sylvia Graham	37
Steph. Howard	73

Senior Women	rank
Clare Peers	24
Alice Howard	37
Gemma Lloyd	47
Brenda Buocoy	52
Clare Langford	55
Cberith Graham	56
Terrri-Anne Nolan	71
Annabelle Sorrentino	77
Sue Burgess	89
Sylvia Graham	94

Junior Boys	
Tom Page	23
Tom Bray	72

Veteran Men	
Keith Williams	15
Chris Ford	21
John Rankin	29
Ian Girdler	31
Wayne Percival	56
Ken Jackson	91

The British League Premier Division.

For those who like to watch top class table tennis why not go along to the Halton Table Tennis Centre, which is at the Auto Quest Stadium, Widnes, 'just down the road' to see the 3rd. round of the new format British League Premier Division, now played over 4 various week ends, the next one is a one day event on Sunday January 25th, with the top 8 teams in the country taking part, 4 matches in the morning and 4 in the afternoon, the morning matches start at 10am. Our local interest is of course the Seasiders, who have local players Kevin Dolder, John Rankin and Ian Girdler playing in the Premier Div. team, (but also includes many other locals who play in other British League divisions for Seasiders), last season was Seasiders first season in the Premier Div. and would have got second spot if it were not for a controversial last match between two London Clubs. This season Seasiders got off to a bad start, not being able to field their full strength squad for the first weekend, and consequently closely losing all their matches.

The second weekend was the other side of the coin, with a full strength squad to pick from, the team being Jonathan Taylor (former England International) a young Adam Bleakly, National Junior Boys No.6, (recently moved from the Halton Croda Club), Greg Baker, National Junior Boys No.7, and Kevin Dolder. National ranked 34. Seasiders started off what was to be a very memorable weekend by polishing off Batts Team Peniel 1, (the team that "pipped" Seasiders into 2nd. Place last season) 6 games to 2. But the afternoon match was the icing on the cake, against a full strength London Progress team, no team is supposed to beat Progress, but Seasiders had forgotten that one, and powered on to a fantastic 5-3 win, only the second defeat in 5 years for London Progress 1. The next day started well with a 7-1 win over Derwent 1, but the bubble burst with the last game, going down 5-3 to a Barnet team that included stars of the future young Tim Yarnall and Darius Knight, currently ranked National Juniors at 2 and 4 respectively.

So the next weekend could be full of high class table tennis, with a lot of star names, and maybe a few surprises, so put it in your diary, January 25th. The Auto Quest Stadium, Widnes, starts 10am.

Here are a few of a list of 25 table tennis questions on the local scene sent in by **Don Davies**. Don did offer a bottle of wine as a prize, but space limitation prevents use of all 25 questions at once, and he's probably drank the wine by now.

2 The first 32 division one title winning clubs are no longer in the League, but the 33rd winners are still with us.

4 This 1951/52 Liverpool Junior champion was a class A.C.T. but he sadly passed away this year.

5 She married in the summer and teamed up with a near name-sake of the League's Match Secretary, to win the Merseyside Open women's doubles title in the late 1990's.

6 This 'policeman's fancy', won the City of Liverpool women's doubles title and the under 21 crown in the same season.

12 This lady won the Closed consolation singles in 1956, played for Cadwa, and her two children have won Closed singles titles.

15 He has appeared this season in division 3 and was the 1972 Merseyside Open veteran champion.

17 Still playing and has won 5 different Closed events plus the Merseyside Ladies veteran singles crown plus other national Grand Prix titles

21 A current second division player and the longest serving Closed title winner

Answers can be found on page 19

"Overheard at a D4 match at Liverpool YM. Eddie Clein, a member of Harold House team, speaking to a YM player knocking up "you shouldn't be playing in this team, you're too good for this division!" Eddie then went on to win his two singles, as usual.

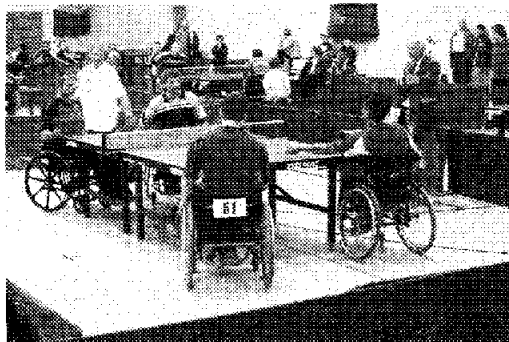
Eddie must have had 'tongue in cheek' with this advice, bearing in mind him having had a good average helping out in the first division last season. But all is not plain sailing for Eddie in the lower divisions, an unusual defeat in 4 games to Ken 'the bat' Armson. Moral of this story is "don't be put off".



This photo of 4 athletes in action, 3 of them can't play table tennis, the odd one out displays the calm control and poise required by good TT. Players, but who is he, read on to find out in this issue

The first Liverpool International Wheelchair Table Tennis Open.

The Greenbank Academy was host to the last qualifying round before the Paralympics due to take place in Athens next year. 98 competitors took part at Greenbank from 19 countries, as far away as Japan, with a large contingent from the UK, including local players Tony Edge, Ian Littlewood and Lynne Riding.



wood and Newcombe of Gb in the class 4 team final and then made a clean sweep in the class singles event, with palmer gold, Chan silver and Newcombe bronze.

Joy Gerber and Claire Harris completed Britains success with a bronze in the female class 4 event.

The tournament was a triumph for the organisers, proving Greenbank Sports Academy as a World class venue, while being superbly supported by the Merseyside and North West region as a whole.

The standard of table tennis played was quite amazing.

The logistics of a tournament like this doesn't end with the table tennis, the well being, transportation, down to the retrieving of the balls in a match, all has to be thought out, and going by the feed back from the competitors, was a huge success. So Greenbank CEO. Gerry Kinsella, Tournament Director Ian Littlewood, Tournament Referee Ken Armson MBE, all the Umpires and helpers can feel completely satisfied with the outcome

Everybody who took part can feel proud.

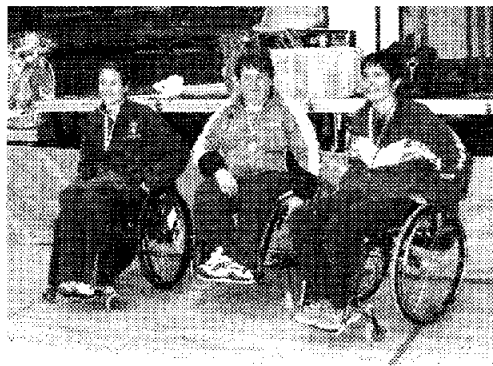
The Men's team doubles match between GBR 1 v GBR 2 in the class 4. The GBR 1 team of Mark Palmer and Arnie Chan won the Gold, with GBR 2 of Ian Littlewood and Shaun Newcombe taking the silver

The most notable wins in the City of Liverpool open, were by Neil Robinson and Lynne Riding. Robinson won the class three event, beating Oerjan Kylevik of Sweden in a thrilling five set final. Robinson actually winning the 3rd set 19-17. Riding beat the top ranked class 2 player, Genevieve Clot, France, in her final within 4 sets.

This was Lynne's best win to date, as Clot was ranked at number one at the mid term of this year.

The women's open tournament was won by Satoko Fujiwara from Japan, beating Alena Kanova in another close match. The men's open was won by Germany's Selcuk Cetin who out fought his compatriot Jan Gurtler in the final. World number two, Christophe Durand won bronze in this event, gaining his revenge later in the class five final beating our own Scott Robertson. Robertson also won bronze in the Class 5 Team with Stefan Trofan.

Other notable GB performances were by Mark Palmer and Arnie Chan, who won Gold against Little-



Lynne Riding (centre) after the presentation of her Gold medal, flanked by Genevieve Clot (France) Silver and Eimear Breathnach (Ireland) Bronze

Only downside was from the local playing fraternity, same few faces, moving and setting up the tables, and clearing up after !!.

Merseyside Schools Table Tennis Association

Newsletter no. 12 October 2003

Secretary: F.Sorrentino

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2003 has been another very successful year for the MSTTA.

Tom Page, Arjun Chadna, Joe Caldwell, Matthew Evans and Mike Horobin from Calday Grange Grammar School, Wirral, reached the National Grand Final at Hinckley Leisure Centre, Leicestershire on the 15th March 2003 and finished as one of the top four School Teams in the country.

Following some great performances at the National Individual Finals at Fenton Manor, Stoke, these Merseyside players were invited to represent English Schools at the British School Championships on the 27th to 29th June 2003 at the Sport Scotland National Centre in Inverclyde, Largs, Scotland.

Under 18 Boys **Daniel HORNER** of **Wirral Grammar School**; Runner up in the Nationals.
Under 18 Girls **Cherith GRAHAM** of **King George V High School, Southport**, Semi finalist in the Nationals.
Under 13 Girls **Jordyn LAYFIELD** of **Prenton High School, Prenton, Birkenhead**, Semi finalist in the Nationals.

Daniel excelled by winning the Senior Boys gold medal, the Team silver medal and the doubles bronze medal. Cherith, won a bronze in the Senior Girls Individual and Doubles and a silver medal as a member of the England B team. Jordyn, won a bronze in the Cadet Girls Doubles. In the Individuals she came through as a group winner and reached the Quarter Finals; also in the Cadets, she finished 4th. In the Team event playing for the England B team,

Also called up to represent England was **Mitchell BARKER** of **Devonshire Park Primary School, Birkenhead** who was Runner up in the under 11 at the Nationals

At the British Primary Schools International Championships at Shadsworth, Blackburn on the 4th to 6th April 2003, Mitchell won gold as a member of the victorious England team.

MSTTA 2003/04 Calendar

All MSTTA tournaments will be held at New Ferry Village Hall, Wirral

School Team Championships held on Sunday 30th, November 2003

18 school teams entered, (all boys I'm afraid) from Wirral, Liverpool, St.Helens, Knowsley.

These are the results:

under 13 boys winners: Calday Grammar School, Wirral

r/up: Birkdale High Sports College

under 16 boys winners: Birkdale High Sports College

r/up: Sutton High School

under 19 boys winners: Calday Grammar School, Wirral

r/up: Wirral Grammar School

Individual Championships

Sunday 29th, February 2004

MSTTA AGM.

TBA. (ring Frank)

ESTTA 2003/04 Calendar

All Team Championships

(Winners of own County Championships)

Zone Finals

Saturday 17th January 2004 at Shadsworth, Blackburn

Regional Finals

Saturday 7th February 2004 at Shadsworth, Blackburn

National Finals

Saturday 6th March 2004 at Hinckley, Leicestershire.

Secretary: F.Sorrentino

FOnce again I'm haunted by bad dreams and I'd be grateful if anyone out there could help to make sense of this one particular reoccurring dream. I'm out and about in my Police uniform walking my local beat when I see six fellas beating up Stan Clarke. A passer by comes up to me and says, "Arn't you going to help?" To which I reply, "No, six should be enough."

Any ideas? Answers on the back of match cards please. Just fit the answers in between all your match comments.

What a difference a signing makes or in Waterloo's case two signings. Keith Williams and Wayne Percival have not only erased the club's annual relegation battle but have also made them potential title contenders. In recent years my reports for Waterloo have always been reserved for the latter stages of the digest as this usually reflects their divisional position but look at them now. Leading the way after six matches and by all accounts well deserved.

Ted Birch's season effecting injury during the opening game against Cadwa has probably resulted in Wayne being called upon much more than initially expected. Ted having lost to Peter Taylor, played the first set against Ken Hartley before retiring injured. Regardless of this, Waterloo still managed a respectable draw thanks to a clean sheet by Keith, which incidentally included a comfortable win over Chris Ford, and a strong performance by Alan Chase who will be pleased with his wins over Ken and Peter.

A 6-4 win against YMCA 'A' saw a deja vu performance with Keith again easing his way through the night ably assisted by Alan



Chase who had good wins over Tony Whelan and Dele Olyumbo although losing out to Ahmed Thabet. Richie Cragg also pulled his weight by producing a good win against Dele. I'm told that apparently this match was interrupted by a total stranger entering the club house and explaining that he was new to the area and where could he find the nearest boozer? Richie Cragg replied, "You're looking at him."

YM's Lawrence Kenwright gracefully admitted that both Keith and Wayne were in a different class when their respective teams met. Their performance obviously filtered down to Alan Chase who played his part with great wins over Peter Lee and Omid Khaiyat to add to the 8-2 win. Peter Lee said that regardless of the result it was a great night of table tennis.

Alan Chase took up the number one mantle against Marconi and continued the tradition of three straight wins. Mike Allen must've been possessed on the night when he produced two great epic wins over Bob Edwards and Trevor Owen giving the Waterloo team a 6-4 win.

Regardless of Waterloo's fortune I still believe that YM will succeed as champions. Peter, Lawrence and Omid are playing on a regular basis and will impact more often on teams throughout the season. Wav's Alice Howard and Roy Smith did however manage to stop the rot in their 8-2 defeat at the hands of the YM boys with a good win by Alice over Pete whereas Roy showed us all how it should be done against the defensive Omid. Apparently you just smash every single ball past him. Ahh, so that's the secret.

YM dropped a further two points when Ford's Tim Weardon and Tom Murray both got the better of Ahmed Thabet and although James Eaton went home empty handed he should take some solace that he took Lawrence to the 5th set. Lawrence continued his form against the Police team by taking all his three, John Rankin included. John made amends against Peter Lee, as did Steve but, true to form, I fell under the Peter Lee curse and lost 15 in the 5th. Humbug.

Neither Peter or Lawrence were available for YM's clash against Bath St. but Omid, Keith Bird and Miguel Bellec all raised the victory flag over Fred Bainbridge and Brenda Buoy but were then subdued by the ever consistent hat trick man Kenny Jackson.

Cadwa's title prospects have been somewhat abdicated by Kevin Dolder's transfer to the Ford's team. Kevin didn't feature in his new teams 6-4 defeat against his old club but Tim Weardon will be pleased with good wins over Ken Hartley and Peter Taylor. James Eaton also added salt to Peter Taylors wounds with an equally good win. Chris Ford cruised to three comfortable wins. Chris is

still a formidable force at Cadwa and will take some beating although Wav's Roy Smith nearly succeeded losing 11/5 in the 5th to Chris during a 8-2 defeat. Mick Tierney went one better by beating Ken Hartley 11/9 in the 5th and then combined with Alison Howard to take the doubles from Chris and Pete Taylor.

Bath St.'A' are having a great start to the season. There 7-3 win over Marconi saw Claire Peers (nee News) and Ian McElwee get the better of Bob Edwards although Marconi's Tim Ternent reeked revenge upon Claire and John Langton. Incidentally John seems to have improved no end. This was evident when the Bath St teams clashed for their first derby of the season. The 1st came out 6-4 winners but John played a stormer beating Brenda and losing out to Ken and Fred both in the fifth set. Ian McElwee beat Fred and Brenda but lost to Kenny Jackson who in turn then lost in another nail biter to Claire. All in all a great match.

You'll all notice that Claire News is now Claire Peers having recently tied the knot. Apparently whilst on honeymoon the new bride was a bit embarrassed to be known as a honeymooner. So when Claire and her husband pulled up to the hotel she asked him if there was any way that they could make it appear as if they'd been married a long time. "Sure" he said. "You carry the suitcases."

The 'A' team continued their winning streak with a 6-4 overall of Cadwa but individual performances suggest a night of conflicting styles. Ian McElwee eased through Peter Taylor but struggled to keep up with Ken Hartley whereas, conversely, Claire Peers couldn't control Peter but hit through Ken for a comfortable result. Mark Patterson won the re-

serve battle with a four set win over S. Rone.

Take no prisoners was the motto when Bath'A' slaughtered Maghull 9-1. Matt Wilson preventing the duck by beating nice guy Ricky Brown. Matt was however unlucky losing in five to both Ian and Claire. Harold House to date have been the only team to inflict a defeat upon Bath St 'A' but did have some help as Bath St were playing with one short. Alec Bryce was the only Harold House winner having two epic games against Ian and Claire. Alec was joined by Ray Jackson to take the doubles.

The Harold House squad remains as consistant as ever. Ym's Dele Olyumbo was the fall guy during their match losing all three in a 6-4 defeat. Ray Jackson went home with the match ball with impressive wins over Tony Whelan, Dele and Ahmed. Alec just missed out on his hat trick losing 8 in the 5th against the unorthodox but effective Ahmed Thabet who also went on to wreck havoc with Ken Connor. Ray obviously enjoys threesomes as was the case in their 6-4 win over the Wavertree crew of Alice, Roy and Mick Tierney. The same match saw Roy Smith uncharacteristically losing all his three to Ray, Alec and Steve Whalley.

Harold Houses single defeat to date was against a Kevin Dolder led Fords team. Tim Weardon had a bad night losing all three to Alec, Steve and Eddie Clein who also went on to beat James Eaton. Kevin barely broke sweat in any of his matches. I'm told that during the evening Eddie Clein's mobile telephone went off and the caller was told by one of Eddie's team mates that Eddie was just about to start against Kevin Dolder. "That's fine" the caller said. "I'll hold."

Fords will obviously be pleased with their signing of Kevin as this will no doubt allow other

members of the team to concentrate on enjoying the season without the worry of any relegation prospects. This was certainly the case in their 9-1 win over Bath St. which saw Kenny Jackson losing all three to Kevin, Tim and James. Brenda Bouey spoilt the party with a win over Tim. Fords game against Marconi produced the battle of the 'Tims' with Tim Weardon losing out game 8 in the 5th to Tim Ternent who then went on, as did Bob Edwards, to beat Tom Murray. Trevor Owens, who incidentally is playing some good ping pong this season, also had a good win over Tim Weardon. Final result 6-4 to Fords.

YMCA 'A' will also be happy with their start to the season. A 6-4 win over possible relegation rivals saw YM's Tony Whelan produce a hat trick performance. Magull's Steve Woods did however make his mark with important wins over Miguel Bellec and Keith Bird. Tony continued his good form during the 6-4 win over Wavertree with a comfortable victory against Roy Smith and a four set win over Gary Watson. Ahmed Thabet matched Tony's defeat of Roy Smith but fell by the way side against Alice and Gary, although, Keith Bird had little trouble with Alice and also went on to beat Gary 9 in the 5th.

I'm expecting the Bath St. first team to start working their way up the table sometime after Christmas. I know that Kenny has been unavailable for a match or two and that this has coincided with Brenda's reoccurring back injury. Unfortunately for Maghull Kenny was available during their match and was back to his winning ways in the 7-3 win. Matt Wilson did however make a match of it with good wins over Fred and Brenda. Alan Jones was unfortu-

nate to lose game 8 in the 5th to Brenda.

I'm not however expecting Marconi to start making their way up the table after Christmas because if they do, my Police team will be in real trouble. It is going to be very tight at the bottom of the table and both Marconi and the Police team will be fighting for every point. Their 6-4 win over Wavertree certainly helped the cause and was the result of a great team performance. Bob Edwards beat Roy Smith, Alice Howard and Ricky Jones whilst 'mad as a hatter' Ian Wensley had great wins over Alice and Ricky. Frank McCann was unlucky to lose 11 in the 5th against Alice but made amends when he partnered Bob to take the doubles against Roy and Alice.

The Police team did draw first blood towards the relegation battle with a 7-3 win against Marconi. Steve Gittins and young Tom Page fought over the match ball, winning all their three, whilst I fought to put a ball on the table, losing to Bob and Trevor and lucky to scrape a win over Ian Wensley. The result was reversed against

Harold House with Steve continuing his form over Ken Connor and Alec Bryce. Police's Tony Harris and Len Dyson were both unlucky not to pick up a win, Tony losing in the 5th to Alec and Eddie whilst Len was 2 nil up against Ken Connor but unfortunately let it slip.

Maghull don't need me to remind them of the struggle they face now that Paul Hutchins has moved on. Like previous seasons they will endeavour to make their mark and take each game as it comes. Steve Woods had a good win over Ray Jackson in their 7-3 defeat at the hands of the Harold House team. In the same game Fred Pheysey and Alan Jones both beat K. Ingham. The secret of success when playing at Maghull is to make sure that you pick the end that goes up hill. If you don't know what I mean then try placing a full cup of tea on the table.

Anyway, time to close and get back to my mundane life. You'll notice that I haven't mentioned the new 11 up system. I was hoping that players would've endorsed the match cards with their comments and in that way I could've had a

consensus of opinions. How naive of me. Still I will keep my fingers crossed for the next batch of cards.

I'm also very sorry if I missed anyone out during this feature but I have been suffering with bouts of amnesia lately and it's all down to my wife's Christmas present. I'd recently paid for membership for Jeanette at Formby Golf club and last week we went for a game. I'd been having a great game but unfortunately Jeanette was playing awful. On the 15th tee I hit a beautiful shot, 270 yards straight down the fairway. Jeanette steps up and hits a tremendous slice that leaves the course and lands in the pasture out of bounds. We both went looking for the ball and just as we were about to give up I spotted a glint of white coming under its tail. I lifted the tail to make sure and then called to Jeanette saying, "Here, love, this looks like yours.".....That's the last thing I remember.

Have a good Christmas.

Coaching at Maghull TT Club

Mark Ambrose, 14 years old, started playing at Maghull Community Association about 3 years ago, played regularly in the Southport League, helping his team to gain promotion to the 2nd. Division last season. Has been called up to play for Southport Cadets, also Lancashire Cadets and Juniors during last season.

He has won 5 out of his 6 games played in the Southport 2nd. Div. This current season.

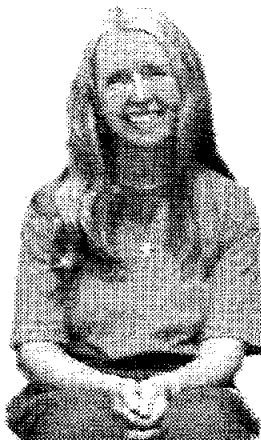
This season he has moved into the Liverpool League arena, playing for Maghull 'A' in the 4th. Division.

Lost his first games at Bath St, next match just happened to be a 'Derby' game with their 'B' team, losing one singles to his "coach" Bill Salter, but wins in his other visits to the table to help in a 9-1 win for the 'A' team.

His next match produced good wins against Paul Morgan and Dave Cohen of H.House 'A', and his doubles, so at time of writing this, Maghull 'A' are in 3rd spot in Div. 4, will he be playing in Div. 3 next year?.



After the usual millions of pounds spent in pre-season transfer fees, the most notable being Graham Black's move to Cadwa and Dave Evans to Bootle JC, I can say that the new season's well under way but I'm a little flummoxed about what I should put down on paper. Normally, by this time the division would have settled down and the teams would have got themselves into some semblance of order ...y'know what I mean...a couple of teams going for promotion, several pretty safe in the middle and a couple fighting desperately to avoid relegation ... but no!! ...not our division!!!! ... we've got six teams trying for promotion, a couple safe in the middle and two or three in the relegation zone. I never thought the second division could get any stronger but once again I'm wrong and the really sad thing is that at the end of the season after slogging away at every match there's only going to be two teams getting promoted to the first and I'm not even going to try and predict who they are. Whatever happens I think the two must come from either Manweb, Cadwa 'A', Police 'A', Bootle JC 'A', Liverpool YMCA 'A' or outsiders Manweb 'A'. Rumour has it that Manweb 'A's challenge may fall by the wayside if star player Les Molyneux gets re-ranked into the first team. But if that does happen will the squad stay together in the first and leave the 'A' team open to relegation next season?? All six teams mentioned have strengths and weaknesses and there will be no runaway winner to this division. All I can see is hard graft for each team and woe betide those teams that can't get their full strength sides out each week...but it's not all doom



and gloom because we should see some great table tennis along the way. One factor I think could have an influence is that the Police and Bootle JC as young teams can be expected to improve dramatically during the season. To date Police are the only team not to have lost a match but of their first eight matches, six were either draws or 6:4 wins. The JC youngsters under the steady influence of their captain should turn around some of this half's defeats.

Well I must say how nice it is to see Alan Davies in this division...last time I saw him was yonks ago and I can't believe the improvement. He seems to have calmed down a little and although he still has that flamboyant style that we all love him for, he isn't making the same number of unforced errors that he used to make. It's obvious that Graham Black and Mike Power have had a stabilising effect on him and this has kept the Cadwa team up there with the rest. The Manweb teams and YMCA are strong throughout and I look forward to some exciting matches to

report. As far as relegation is concerned there are two teams well down in the relegation zone: Waterloo 'A' and Wavertree Labour 'A'. If Wavertree have lost Mick Tierney then I think that really does mean they will be relegated but they can carry on and enjoy their table tennis for the remainder of the season without pressure. Waterloo is in much the same position by not being able to field a regular side. Bootle JC has pulled itself to safety by fielding Rob Wylie and Julian Quirk in the same team and I think Bath St. and Marconi are also safe. Bath St. held Marconi to creditable draw when fielding only two players.

Team captains seem to have had a bout of laryngitis so far this season, except for Graeme Reid, but thanks to all who managed to make me titter in between cards. One from Police made me decide to have a festive competition (see end of article for details) whilst the one from Waterloo held a plaintive message for this season 'HELP!'. Fords say that you always feel you have a chance against Manweb but that they give you no easy points ...still the 6:4 result must have been quite pleasing against a team vying for promotion. In the last issue Graeme Reid said that he was out to get Dave Evans this season but he couldn't keep up the nets and edges and went down 7, 8 3 in Fords clash with Bootle JC 'A'. Graeme Reid from Fords commiserates with Wavertree Labour for not having Mick Tierney at their match. Mick was called up for '1st team duty' and Fords were quick to grasp this fortuitous opportunity and collected a much appreciated 10 points. However, a little birdie

has also told me that Mick Tierney is no longer eligible to play in this division and also that Frank James will be missing for most of Ford's next 12 matches due to work commitments. Police confirm that they had a very competitive match against Manweb and at the end of the night the honours were deservedly shared. Either side could have snatched victory and Jon's win over Andy ensured Police went away with the match ball (hang on ... it was their home match!!). It's a rare match when Dave Harse loses two and Gemma Lloyd had her first loss of the season to Ray Parkinson. When Ray's on form he can take most players in the division. Dave and Ray then came back from 6-1 down in the fourth game in the doubles to win the fifth impressively 11:6 to tie the match.

And lastly the roles of honour:

Facesavers:-

Mick Tierney (Wavertree Labour 'A') beat Roger Neal (Bootle JC 'A') 6, -11, -19, -7. Rob Wylie (Bootle JC) beat Ray Parkinson (Manweb) 7, 3,9. Mick Allen And Ritchie Cragg(Waterloo) beat Graeme Reid and Rob Goldson (Fords 'A') -11, 7, 9, -9, 9. Ian Lennon (Marconi 'A') beat George Lennon (Cadwa 'A') -9, -7, -11. Dave Stoddern (Bath St 'C') beat Bob Hughes(Fords) -12,18, 21.

Close Wins:- Bill Stanley (Wavertree Labour 'A') beat Frank McCann (Marconi 'A') 10, -9, 9, -13, 6. Dave Tagg (YMCA 'B') beat Ritchie Cragg (Waterloo 'A') 11, 12, -11, 6, 9. Ian Wensley (Marconi 'A') beat Alan Davies (Cadwa 'A') -9, -8, 6, 10, 14. Ritchie Jones (Wavertree Labour 'A') beat Paul Evans Manweb 'A') 11, -11, 10, -8, 9. Teri-Ann Nolan (Police 'A') beat Nigel Stopher (Waterloo 'A') 10, 8, -7, -10, 9. Rob Wylie (Bootle JC)

beat Ritchie Jones (Wav. LAB. 'A') 4, 5, -10, -13, 10. Mick Tierney and Ian Black (Wav Lab. 'A') lost to Mikael Belloc and Paul O'Donnell (YMCA 'B') 8, -11, -8, 12, -10. Mark Patterson (Bath St 'B') beat Peter Wass (Marconi 'A') -11, 10, 9, 9.

Good Wins: Pete Holmes (Waterloo 'A') beating Dave Evans and Tom Bray (Bootle JC 'A') 9, -4, 9, 8, and 9,-8,-3, 8, 8 respectively. Sue Burgess (Bath St. 'B') beating Alan Davies and Mike Power (Cadwa 'A') 4, 4, 8 and -7, 6, 10 7 respectively..

Christmas Competition:
Guess Who Terri-Anne's fave person is in DIV 2.

"For this teaser go to page 16."

Tony Harris

Division 3

Merseyside Police

After a long hard season in Division 2 it is a pleasure to be back in Division 3 where matches are just as keenly contested but the players and the all round atmosphere is much more friendly. (apart that is from the player who got rather upset that the umpire, me, spoke some quiet words of encouragement to my team mate who had just lost the first game to the player concerned. 'NO COACHING', he shouted several times, 'THE UMPIRES SUPPOSED TO BE IMPARTIAL' Oh really!!)

Anyway, welcome to a new season where the talking point remains the 11 up scoring system that was imposed on us. I've found that the 11 up is great if you win but a



load of rubbish if you lose. It certainly makes our sport different with many games won and lost in the head (if you know what I mean!).

After agreeing to write these notes I intend to use the power of the pen to raise some of the contentious issues (fiddles) that arise

every season and are seemingly allowed to happen by our Management Committee (more of that later).

But back to the business in hand. The division is headed by Police 'B' with just a few points separating the chasing pack of CADWA 'C', Bootle YMCA, Manweb 'B' and Bath St 'D'.

Police 'B' remain unbeaten after 6 matches and their regular foursome of Tony Harris, Paula French, Len Dyson and Brian Burrows have been strengthened by cameo appearances by Gavin Lloyd and Clare Langford. They had a tough opening match at Manweb 'B' and were surprised to see Trevor Barraclough play-

ing at number 4. Trevor is the same tough opponent he has always been and he won his two for Manweb, bemusing Brian Burrows and then coming from two games down to beat Len Dyson 11-8 in the fifth. Another tough game in week 2 saw a Police 'B' 6-4 victory over Bootle YMCA, the winning margin being guaranteed by Police taking both doubles points. Further 8-2 wins versus 'Wav. Lab 'B', 9-1 versus CADWA 'B' and 9-1 versus Marconi 'B' have put Police 'B' in a strong position at the top and it's going to take a good team to dislodge them.

The CADWA 'C' team of George Lennon, Steve Graham, Rob Davies and George Higham are a strong outfit and quite capable of winning the race for the title, especially as they can and have called on Colin Rourke as a reserve on a couple of occasions. Week 1 saw a comfortable 7-3 win over Bath St 'C', George Lennon winning his two v Rob Peat, 11-4 in the fifth and Dave Stoddern in three. After a 10-0 win over Waterloo 'B' they beat Manweb 'B' 7-3. George Higham starred for CADWA as he won his doubles, beat Alan Cameron and topped the evening off with a magnificent fight back win over Trevor Barraclough, 8-11, 10-12, 11-9, 11-6, 12-10 (some game!!). The only blip to CADWA 'C' s excellent start to the season was a 3-7 defeat at home by Bootle YMCA, who were strengthened at number 4 by reserve Matt Poershke who won his two. They bounced back in week 5 with an 8-2 away win at Wav. Lab 'B' where number 1 George Lennon kept up his 100% start to the season.

The Bootle YMCA team of John Higham, Roly Wright, Danny Every and Ritchie Winckle are lying in third spot and are quite capa-

ble of making a push for promotion (if they really want it that is!) A 6-4 win over Manweb 'C' in week 1 was followed with a convincing 9-1 victory against an under strength Wav. Lab. 'C'. They then beat Bath St 'C' away, 7-3, despite Ricky Brown coming in at number 1 for Bath St and winning his two. Danny Every had good straight games victories over Rob Peat and Billy Clayton. New slimline Ritchie Winckle seems to be getting to grips with his long pimple forehead rubber (what is it about Bootle YM and funny rubbers anyway?) and he had an excellent double over Dave Stoddern, 3-1, and Billy Clayton, 11-9, 12-14, 11-3, 14-12. (I don't think that would have happened a couple of seasons ago!)

The Bath St 'D' team of Steve Nield, Les Gee, Peter Ross and Billy Clayton are a very experienced set up and they will be there or thereabouts at the finish. Steve Nield won his two in a week 1 6-4 victory away at CADWA 'B', coming from two games down to beat Billy Hargreaves, 11-9 in the decider, and also took part in a five gamer with Rob Peverall, 11-8 in the fifth. Week 2 saw the Bath Street derby resulting in a convincing 7-3 victory for the 'D' team over the 'C' team.

Which brings me to my first contentious issue.

It is obvious to everyone, and results and divisional positions confirm it, that the bath St 'D' team is much stronger than the 'C' team. **Why then are the club allowed to place the obviously stronger group of players below the weaker group, therefore gaining an unfair advantage when it comes to playing reserves?** Any member of the 'D' team, or in fact all of the 'D' team could play as a

reserve (s) in a match against another team.

COME ON MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - THIS CANNOT BE RIGHT!! These loopholes in the rules that allow clubs to 'fiddle' albeit within the existing rules, need sorting out!

The exact same situation exists with the two CADWA teams in this division, the 'C' team pushing for the title and the 'B' team fighting relegation, but able to call on stronger 'C' team members when needed.

Back to results. Bath St 'D' had a convincing 8-2 victory away at Marconi 'B' followed by a tight 6-4 win at Waterloo 'B' where Billy Clayton starred, winning his doubles and defeating G. Oates 3-1 and K. Wright in three straight. The absence of Les Gee in week 5 against Manweb 'C' may have been a factor in their 4-6 defeat.

The Manweb 'B' team of Alan Evans, Paul Jennings, Sharon Norman and Trevor Barraclough are another side capable of mounting a serious challenge for the title. Their 7-3 week 1 defeat by police 'B' was followed by a strong 8-2 victory away at Wav' Lab' 'C' (both doubles to Wav) but they then came up against a strong CADWA 'C' and were without the services of Paul Jennings. With Colin Rourke at number 1 CADWA 'C' were too strong although Sharon had a good win over Rob Davies, 11-9 in the fifth. Restored to full strength in week 4 Manweb 'B' thrashed Bath St 'C' 9-1 and followed this with a 10-0 walloping of Waterloo 'B'

Both Wav. Lab teams should manage a mid table position but with the loss of John Gratton (new job in Sheffield, well done John!) the 'B' team may get sucked into the relegation battle. This **Wav. Lab. 'B'** team of Peter Howden, John Gratton, Paul Banks and Dave Foulis started the campaign with a good 8-2 victory over newly promoted Marconi 'B'. A 6-4 away win at Manweb 'C' where the much improved Paul Banks won his two, 11-7 v Peter Carney in the fifth, and 3-1 v Arthur Harrison, was followed by an 8-2 defeat to Police 'B'. In this game Peter Howden and Paul Banks both played well beating Police number 1 Tony Harris.

The Wav. Lab derby match resulted in a 5-5 draw. Tony Connor starred for the 'C' team with wins over Peter Howden and John Gratton, both 3-1, while Paul Banks for the 'B' team beat Dave Williams, 3-0, before an epic battle with Mike Ashton went Paul's way 13-11 in the fifth. An 8-2 defeat by CADWA 'C' brought the Wav. Lab 'B' team back to earth although Peter Howden and Dave Foulis did well to earn a point each with wins over Steve Graham and Rob Davies respectively, both in the fifth.

The **Wav. Lab 'C'** team of Tony Connor, Mike Ashton, Colin Fyles and Dave Williams should be good enough to stay in the division if they can field this foursome on a regular basis. They opened their account with two reserves against Waterloo and still came away with a 6-4 win, Tony Connor winning his two v Ted Cramsie and Harry Nelson. Back to full strength against Manweb 'B' they lost 8-2 mustering the two pints from the doubles. Another heavy defeat followed, 9-1 away at Bootle YMCA, Tony Connor picking up the sole point with a 3-1 win over Roly Wright, who

admits, 'I just can't seem to do anything with Tony's bat (Roly, you could have hidden it, sat on it or put it on a bonfire!!). A good result was needed in week 5 and it came with a 7-3 victory over CADWA 'B'. Tony Connor and Mike Ashton were the stars on the night, pairing up for a doubles win, and four further points with wins for Tony v Rob Peverall, and Mike v Rob 11-5 in the fifth and peter Roberts 3-1.

Manweb 'C' don't seem to have a regular foursome but looking at the players available to them they should finish above the relegation battle in mid table. Up to now (five games played) they have used 8 players but their 'regular' teams seems to be Neil Jennings, Peter Carney, Alan Cameron and Allan Biggs. A battling performance v Bootle YMCA in week 1 earned Manweb 'C' 4 points, Rob Barker winning his two v Danny Every and an excellent win over John Higham 11-4 in the fifth. The same result away at Wav. Lab 'B' doubled their points although with a very different team, John Ashley and Arthur Harrison coming in to the fray. They earned a draw at CADWA 'B', Rob Barker again winning two, over Rob Peverall 11-7 in the fifth and Peter Roberts in straight games. Man of the Match however was Doug Baker for CADWA 'B' as he gained a valuable doubles point with Peter Roberts v Rob Barker and John Ashley, coupled with fine wins over John and Allan Biggs, both 3-1. They recorded their first win of the season in week 5, a tremendous 6-4 away win at Bath St 'D'. Allan Biggs starred with wins over Peter Ross and Billy Clayton as well as his doubles.

At this early stage of the season the relegation battle looks like being between Bath St 'C', CADWA 'B', Waterloo 'B' and

Marconi 'B'. My favourites for the drop are the latter two as they don't have stronger reserves to draft in when needed, from their stronger groupings below (see previous contentious issue paragraph)

The **CADWA 'B'** team of Rob Peverall, Ian Burrows, Peter Roberts plus one other are still to record their first win in Division 3. A 4-6 defeat at Bath St 'D' in week 1 was followed by a battling draw at Marconi 'B' considering CADWA only had three players on show. Rob Peverall played a captain's innings picking up points with wins over Andrew Owens and Ted Gilmour. Rob Davies came in as their 'plus one' in the home match v wav. Lab 'C' and was engrossed in two grueling encounters with Colin Fyles and Dave Williams. Rob came back from two down to beat Colin 9-11, 3-11, 20-18, 11-8, 11-9, and then to prove it was no fluke he beat Dave 11-9 also in the fifth.

Bath St 'C' will also struggle especially when it appears that they don't have a team. Rob Peat and Dave Stoddern are regulars but you can perm any two from the rest of the club to see who makes up the foursome. The started with a 3-7 defeat v CADWA 'C' with Dave Stoddern and Peter Joiner picking up points with wins v Rob Davies (11-4 in the fifth) and Steve Graham respectively. Defeats at Waterloo 'B' 4-6, Manweb 'B' 1-9 and Bootle YMCA 3-7 have left Bath St in a mess. Rob Peat is a battler and he will continue to pick up points but I must admit I feel sorry for him as he struggles each week to find a team.

Marconi 'B', Andrew Owens, Ted Gilmour, John McCann and Bobby Bell, are finding life in Division 3 tough going after coming up from the fourth. They were beaten 8-2 away at Wav. Lab 'B' with Andrew Owens and Ted Gilmour picking up the points courtesy of Peter Howden. The same score line followed away at bath St 'D', John McCann beating Peter Ross and the other point coming from the doubles. However, a 6-4 victory at Manweb 'C' could have been even better as three of Manweb's points came from tight fifth game deciders. Man of the Match John Moore beat Peter Carney and John Ashley as well as a doubles win with Bobby Bell who also beat John in the singles.

Waterloo 'B' are propping up the division and although Ted Cramsie, Harry Nelson, Ken Nelson and G. Oates will battle all the way it's difficult to see how they are going to escape (what's happened to Julie and Ro?). In the week 1 defeat to Wav. Lab 'C', 4-6, they managed to pick up both doubles points with Ted Cramsie and G. Oates chipping in with wins v Colin Fyles and Gordon Langshaw respectively. A 10-0 thrashing by CADWA 'C' was followed by a 6-4 victory over an under strength Bath St 'C'. G. Oates starred for Waterloo with wins over Karen Gibson and D. Marriot (11-5 in the fifth) Number one Ted Cramsie starred in the 4-6 defeat to Bath St 'D'. With

partner K. Wright he won a doubles point v Gee/Ross, 11-8 in the fifth, before going on to beat Les, 11-6 in the fifth, and also beat Steve Nield.

Predictions:

Promotion Police 'B' and CADWA 'C' (not sure what order)

Relegation Marconi 'B' and Waterloo 'B'

Enjoy the rest of the season and a very merry Christmas to you all!

Steve Perry

Division 4

Wavertree Labour

Well with only 6 games of the season gone division four is already showing gaps between the teams. At the top it looks like being a close run thing between 3 teams, Harold House 'A', Liverpool YMCA 'C' and Maghull 'A', while at the other end of the table Bath Street 'F' are already showing signs of the season being a long struggle.

Harold House started the season with a convincing 9-1 victory over **Linacre**, Harry Reeve saving the whitewash for **Linacre** with a win in 4 over Paul Morgan. **Harold House** have strengthened this season with the return to the Liverpool League of Rod McPherson who started his return with wins over Jack Davidson and Peter Barton before teaming up with Eddie Clein to beat Harry and Jack in the doubles.

Liverpool YMCA 'C' are another side with some changes of personnel this season and certainly



look strong enough to maintain a title challenge with Billy Cheung, Steven Kee, Alvin Tso and Francois Boll as their preferred line-up. They started with an 8-2 victory away to **Bath Street 'E'**, the only defeats for YM coming at the hands of Alan Willis, who beat Alvin Tso, and Dave Batty, playing as a reserve for the E team, defeating Francois. **Maghull 'A'** faced a difficult opening match at home to **Wavertree**

Labour 'D', who have a new number one this season in Helen McCreary enabling Stan Clarke to move down to number three, you shouldn't be losing too many down there Stan! **Maghull** dominated the match, emerging 8-2 victors, Ken Armson defeating Phil Christie before teaming up with Stan to win the doubles, depriving **Maghull** of a perfect start. The other **Wavertree Labour** team in this division, the **'E'** team, started off at home to **Aigburth**, a typically close match between these two teams saw **Wavertree** scrape a 6-4 win. **Aigburth** seem to have mainly the same squad this season, but have re-ranked the players with Carl Anderson moving down to number three and Eric Wood moving to number one. From the results that I have seen so far this seems to have strengthened them overall, but in this match Eric was beaten by

both Andy Bird and Anthony Mitchell, Anthony also beating Carl while Andy went on to secure his double by defeating **Graham Rolinson**. **Wavertree** have just the one change from last season, Andy Bird returning to the club on a regular basis and replacing Ken Roberts who has decided not to play Liverpool League this season.

Another team with a new number one this season is **Bootle YMCA 'A'**, the man in question being Matt Poershke who showed the strength of his game by defeating both Tom Downing and Bill Salter in a 5-5 draw away to **Maghull 'B'**, unfortunately for Bootle, this is the only game, so far, that Bert Rivers has been available to them.

Cadwa 'D' opened with a 7-3 home win against **Bath Street 'F'**, a result certainly helped by the fact that **Bath Street** turned out a player short. **Cadwa** found themselves in the reverse situation a couple of weeks later when they visited **Bootle YM** when they also found themselves one short, showing tremendous fight on the night to take a draw from the game.

After surprising myself last season by getting my predictions

correct at both ends of the table, I am going to rest on my laurels and say that this season is going to be too tight to call! A lot will, as usual, depend on consistent availability of players, for example, how much of the season will **Harold House** have Eddie available for before he plays too many games up to be available for them, on the other hand they do seem to have a stronger "back-up" squad this season compared to previous campaigns. **Maghull 'A'** seem to have a settled squad with strength throughout, and will be there or thereabouts at the end along with **Harold House** and **Liverpool YM**, possibly **Wavertree Labour 'D'** managing to sneak into the shake-up.

Unless **Bath Street 'F'** can get a consistent side out and start picking up points they already look in danger of slipping down into division 5.

I guess I will not be able to get away with not mentioning the first game between **Wavertree's** two teams this season, a match which saw a comprehensive 9-1 win for the **'D'** team, (nearly got the 10-0 Ken), all I can say is that we hope to do better next time, no excuses, the better team on the night won.

At the risk of being called boring or controversial, I feel the need to raise a point regarding the services that we see in the league. There are still some players in the division, and in the other divisions I am sure, who don't go anywhere near to complying with the old service law never mind the current law. I know it is difficult to call your own teammates for a dubious serve, but some I have seen again this season have been verging on the ridiculous. I really don't understand the stock answer of "oh he/she has been serving like that for years, you can't expect him/her to change now." This is totally missing the point, the fact is that the serve is illegal and is often used to gain an "illegal advantage" for that player. Players often seem to be scared of saying anything about a service at the risk of upsetting the server and "ruining the game," but surely by doing nothing it is actually ruining the game for the receiver having to face a serve that is against the rules of the game.

Anyway, rant over, but something for you to think about. I wish you all a good season and I will see you around.

Christmas Competition: from Sylvia Guess Who Terri-Anne's fave person is in DIV 2

It's a dead cert that someone in the division will recognise him from this skeleton description. His favourite TV character is Victor Meldrew and he'd be the first to admit that Religion pays a great part in his life. He always calls a spade a spade and he is forever seen digging himself out of the holes he creates. He enjoys good health but is sometimes prone to coughing fits. Friends say that he finishes any job he undertakes and that he can be relied upon in a life or death situation. He has a great six-pack yet he doesn't go to the gym. He plays every match as an eighteenth Century battle yet Richly deserves his table tennis wins.

WHO IS HE???

(friends, family and relations of T-A cannot enter)

Please forward all entries to Terri-Ann C/O Police TT, Address as Handbook

I am writing this 1st.report of the current season because Div. 5 has lost its normal scribe, Ron Georgeson, as he is now playing in the 4th. Division, and have been unable to attract another interested writer to take up the pen, not through lack of trying I may add, I managed to get close, suggestions of somebody else, which never materialised. I will keep trying until the next Digest, so if anyone out there who plays in the 5th. fancies having a go, let me know, you don't have to be an author.

Anyway, after 6 league games into the season, (4 in Div.5 due to the shortage of teams), **Greenbank** (who have a few Globetrotters in their ranks), sit on the top of the Division, but a close 2 points behind are **Wavertree Labour.'F'** having played one less game, mind you this **Wav. Lab.** team will take some stopping with John Rowan and Ian woods playing 1 & 2. **Aigburth 'A'**, mid table with 18 points having been part of the only draw in the div. up to now, against **Maghull 'D'**. Their first game of the season put them up against a **Greenbank** team practicing for their forthcoming Wheelchair International Open Tournament at Greenbank (7-9th Nov.), **Greenbank** winning 7-3, young Ian Laird had a good result against Lynne Riding winning 11-7 in the 5th. Up to date **Aigburth** have used 8 players, another signing may have may have resulted in another team, maybe next season!

Maghull 'D' have a settled team of 4 from 5 with captain Alan still letting I up get to him, having got a good draw out of **Aigburth 'A'**, next met a strong **Greenbank** team who were taking no prisoners at the time, going down 8-2, **Maghull's** 2 wins came from Steve Banks in 3 over Ian Littlewood and

Keith Whittaker in 4 over Lynne Riding, Alan did manage to take one game off Tony Edge. They must have been wound up for the next game, against **Bath St.'G'**, (who had 2 ladies from the 'H' team helping out) getting an 8-2 win, 3 sets going to 5 games, Alan losing one of them to Albert Parker, mind you Alan was 2-0 down, starting his fight back with a 16-14 win, (bet he was glad this one didn't go to 21), then winning the next 11-7, 2-2, Albert winning the last 11-5, there must have been a bit of tension here!!, "but we still want 21- up back, even though we won" says Alan, consolation for the **Bath St.** team is Alan's praise for Lil's umpiring, take note other teams.

Bath St.'G' started the season with a close 6-4 win over their 'H' team win, the 'G' were 5-1 up, and on the way to a rout, but Myra went on to win her match against Norman, then Albert won against Eugene, 5-3, but the the last two sets, the doubles, were shared. Their next 3 games were 8-2 losses, one game playing short, the other two with the Ladies helping out again, only ever present, Richard Woodley, never thought **Bath St.** would be short of players. Bath St 'H', only played 2 to date, lost 2, but does that deter them, no!, unlucky to lose to their 'G' team, and going down to **Maghull 'C'** 7-3, **Bath's** Albert Parker winning both his games, and Myra winning in 4 against Jeanette, but losing both doubles, and we know how the doubles swing the nights. **Maghull 'C'** started the season with a tough one at **Wav.Lab.'F'**, going down 7-3, but what a good doubles win for Denise and Jeanette beating Kevin and Eric in 4, with 2 wins after that, puts them in the top half, with a game in hand. **Wav. Lab.'F'** are sitting two points behind **Green-**

bank at the top, with a game in hand, 25 points from 3 games, with John Rowan keeping up his 100% record. **Wav.** Have only dropped one doubles, against the ladies of **Maghull**.

H. House 'B' started off well with a win at **Greenbank**, followed by 2 wins against **Maghull 'D'** and Police, but ran into a full strength **Wav. 'F'**, going down 9-1, Gary Abrams saving the whitewash. Lewis Rosenbloom had a good win against **Maghull's** Keith Whittaker in 4, (Lewis was recommended for Div. 5 writer, but gracefully declined, so I don't know if he deserves that mention!). **Police 'C'** are propping up the div. at present, but only because they have only played 2 matches, and only 2 sets going to 5 games in these 2 matches, one Dave Oakes losing in the 5th. to Jim O'grady of **Aigburth**, and Bob Rawlinson losing the 4th.& 5th. to Dave Cohen of **H.House**, but with the settled team they turn out I'm sure they will move up a bit.

Greenbank are top at the moment, having won 3 from 4, their only loss was against a strong **H.House** team, **Greenbank** not fielding the strongest team they can manage, **Greenbank's** David Finn maintains a 100% with 6 Out of 6 singles and 3 out of 3 doubles. Lynne Riding must have been using these league games as practice, as she went on to win Gold medal in her class and Ian Littlewood got silver in the class 4 team event, during the recent Wheelchair International Open tournament held recently at the Greenbank Academy, well done to all those at Greenbank who took part.

The Frank Murphy Handicap Cup Round.1

CUPS

There were 6 clubs who overtook the handicap barrier, the biggest final score margin being 81.

Two of these games deserve a special mention because one game was won by 11 points, and the other by 9 points.

Waterloo 2 gave Manweb 2 a 20 point start, Manweb held on to the lead up to the 5th game, Waterloo 324 Manweb 320, Waterloo holding the lead (just) to the last game, Waterloo 437 - Manweb 426. The tension must have been electric as the two No.1's came to the table, Peter Holmes for Waterloo and Paul Jennings for Manweb, they must have served up a tremendous game, because incredibly, the games finished up level at 21-20 / 20-21, so that 11 point lead was maintained, I'm sure the bar did well.

The other close match CADWA 2 - 393 v MANWEB 1 - 402, MANWEB gave CADWA a 64 point start, Manweb kept snipping away at the lead, but it was only after the 8th game that they actually moved into the lead, so the last game started with the score at CADWA 351 - MANWEB 372, so again , the match hinging on the last game, the two No.1's, Graeme Black for CADWA, and Dave Harse for MANWEB, Graeme wins the first 21-11, on target, (I can feel the tension just writing this report), but Dave must have found that little extra, Graeme won the game, but Dave stayed in there for 19 points, and so gave Manweb the match by 9 points, don't know if they managed to get to the bar to celebrate, but I would say well done to all.

Bootle JC. 2 overcame a 122 handicap to win by 22 points. The next round takes place the last playing week before the Christmas break, with the only Club guaranteed a place in the next round, Bootle YMCA

Round 2

Match 1. Liverpool YM. v Manweb 3.

YM. Started with a 27 point lead, and never lost it, after the 8th game YM. were still in front, but only by 24 points, and that was it, the last game wasn't played, both captains signed the card, match over!!, YM. winners by 24 points.

Match 2. Bootle YMCA 2 v Bootle YMCA 1

YM 1. started with 79 points to pull back, which was accomplished after the 4th game, going on to win the match by 64 points, Arthur Garnet saving the whitewash by taking a game off Roly W. 21-12.

Match 3 Police 1 v Bath St. 5

Police started with a massive 173 points to pull back, and kept whittling away at this total, but along the way lost two games, and came down to the last game, the two No. 1's, Paul Gittins v Dave Cunningham, with Bath St. 29 points in front, not an impossible task for Paul, but Dave decided to make it difficult for Paul, Paul won both games, but Dave collected 25 points on the way, giving Bath St. the match by just 12 points.

Match 4 Bath St.2 v Waterloo 1

This match of first and second div. players got off to an unexpected start with Bath Streets Sue Burgess having to drop out at the last minute due to fog in Cheshire where she lives, and Richard Woodley, who normally plays in the 5th div.

stepping in, so with Richards handicap of 100, gave Bath St. a 126 point start. It took a strong Waterloo team to the 8th game to overtake the handicap, the last game of Alan Chase v Richard wasn't going to leave the match outcome in doubt, but Richard managed to add 21 points to his 40 point total, (from gentleman Alan).

Match 5 Linacre v Bath St. 1.

Linacre started with a 175 point lead, some battle for Bath St. who started by pulling back 50 points in the first two games, but Harry Reeves stepped in next to win two of Linacre's 3 only wins, so into the last game, the two 1's and Linacre still in front by 41 points, Bath St.'s Ken Jackson won both games, but Harry pulled in 12 points, giving Linacre the match by only 11 points, so from 175 to 11, close !!.

Match 6 Manweb 1 v Bath St. 3.

Not much between these teams, Bath St. started with a 17 points lead, and maintained the lead into the 5th game, after that Manweb stayed in front, even though Bath St. won 5 of the next 8 games Manweb kept hold of the lead, finally winning the match by 13 points.

Match 7 Bootle JC. V Aigburth.

Bootle started with a 157 point hill to climb, but with Aigburth gaining valuable points in the early games, and only winning two of the total 18 games played, but kept on winning valuable points along the way, and finally ran out 38 points in front.

Match 8 Waterloo 2 v Fords.

This match must have been a cracker, two second div. teams battling it out, with only a 9 point advantage to Waterloo, the lead changed virtually every other game, after the 7th game Fords were just 2 points in front, after the 8th game they had increased this lead to 21 points, so the final game between Pete Holmes and Grahame Reid could decide the match, Pete won the two games but Grahame was close, picking up 36 points, to give Fords the match by 15 points.

Another good round of this popular tournament where the handicaps seem to be just keeping the lower teams in front, but that need not have been the case in a few of the matches played, the lower players just got stuck in, well played everyone concerned.

The Draw for the last 8 to be played week of Monday 26/01/04

FORDS	v	LIVERPOOL YMCA
MANWEB 1	v	AIGBURTH 1
WATERLOO 1	v	BOOTLE YMCA 1
LINACRE	v	BATH STREET 5

DIVISIONAL CUPS

CUPS

Are Liverpool YMCA going to do a "Marconi" this season! with their "strength in depth" and the way they are winning their games, it could be on the cards, let's see what the next round draw

throws up.

DIV. 1. Fords got off to a good start, by the time a delayed Cadwa's Chris Ford had got to the table, Fords were already 4-0 up. Kevin Dolder chipping in with 2, to complete a 5-1 win. Waterloo went out with a much weakened team, but at least they played. Liverpool YMCA's 1st team are going to take some stopping if they can field their top team each match, winning 5-1 against a strong Police team. Are the YM thinking about the double..

DIV. 2. No 5-1's here, match of the Div. must have been Police 'A' v Cadwa 'A', right to the last game of the last set, to finish 11-9 in the last game to give Police a 5-4 win. L'pool YM 'B' had a good 5-2 win against Ford 'A'. Wav.Lab. 'A' beat Waterloo 'A' 5-3. And the young Bootle JC.'A' march on with a good 5-3 win over the close knit Manweb 1st team.

DIV. 3. No surprises here, only Manweb 'C' march on to the Semi's with another W/O, but I'm sure they would prefer to play.

DIV. 4. Match of this Div. Wav. Lab. 'E' v Linacre. Wav.Lab.Pulling it off 5-4. Eddie Clein, Billy Cheung, Steve Kee, those names in the 4th. It's tough at the bottom as well, it seems.

DIV. 5. "Boy of the Match" accolade went to young Ian Laird of Aigburth 'A' for his two wins in two visits to the table, he beat the two ladies of Maghull 'C' to help Aigburth win, in fact Aigburth were 3-0 down when Ian went on for his first game, winning 3-0, his win being just what Aigburth needed to take the next 4 matches, to win by 3sets to 3. Bath St. 'G' got a W/O, (but at least they won their 1st round match), and Police 'C's' season started to move forward with a 5-2 win at Greenbank.

So with Cadwa having been eliminated from the Roadman Cup, we are going to have new names on all of this seasons Divisional Trophies.

It's disappointing to see W/O's given after the first rounds have been played, teams would sooner play, I'm sure.

SEMI FINAL Draw

Division 1 - Readman Cup

HAROLD HOUSE v BATH STREET 'A'
LIVERPOOL YMCA v FORDS

Division 2 - Rumjahn Cup

BOOTLE JC. 'A' v L/POOL YMCA 'B'
M/SIDE POLICE 'A' v WAV. LABOUR 'A'

Division 3 - Hyde Cup

MANWEB 'C' v BOOTLE YMCA
CADWA 'B' v M/SIDE POLICE 'B'

Division 4 - Forrest Cup

L/POOL YMCA 'C' v WAV.LABOUR 'E'
WAV.LABOUR 'D' v HAROLD.HOUSE 'A'

Division 5 - Stamp Cup

BATH STREET 'G' v WAV.LABOUR 'F'
AIGBURTH 'A' v M/SIDE POLICE 'C'

Matches to be played week of Monday 2nd. February 2004

Answers to Don's questions

2. Liverpool YMCA
4. Arthur C.Taylor
5. Clare Newnes
6. Alice Howard
12. Betty Black
15. George Smith
17. Brenda Buoeuy
21. Bill Harris

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After a very successful City of Liverpool Junior Tournament this time last year, and having been upgraded to a 4 star tournament, plans by our Tournament Committee were well under way for this years event to be held at The Greenbank Academy, but due to lack of entries has had to be cancelled, a big disappointment to all concerned after so much work by Ken Armson and Arthur Garnet.

In Memoriam

Alex Gould Bath St 1919-1984.



It would be impossible for me to go back to Alex Gould's beginnings at Bath St, mainly because in the first place I was not a member at that time in 1948 when Alex and several other enthusiasts (some of them still alive today, two of which attended our 50 years in existence celebration in 1998) laid the foundations of a table tennis club which today is just about the largest on Merseyside in the Liverpool League.

My earliest recollection of Bath St is joining sometime in the late 50s and Alex was a person I never really came into contact with. We did not run as many teams then and we played wherever Alex told us to. Playing wise I do not recall ever playing Alex at any time until well into the 70s in a club competition. I know I was beaten out of sight, not having come up against many "pen holders", and certainly not of Alex's calibre. Alex was at his peak then and was probably still playing in the 1st Div. The only time the club met as a body was at the pre-season Handbook meeting and Alex chaired the meeting and did most of the talking. This is when we learned which team we were to be in. Alex hated for any team to play short and could always be relied on to find a player from somewhere, he would even take teams in his car; and always his own team by car.

Alex was not a person you could get to know and kept himself mainly to himself and it wasn't until the early nineties, when I had passed my County Umpires exam and started to umpire at British League and Nat Vets comps in the company of Alex that I learned more about him. He let me umpire my first match at Oldham on a Saturday afternoon. I did one match he did the other seven not having seen any matches outside our club I was amazed by the high standard of play in the Nat Vets league. I watched Alex check the room and the table, plus the net and nothing started till he was ready. Mabel Neary came with us on lots of occasions and I also got to know her quite well at the end. Mabel was the map reader and reminder to Alex when to turn etc. Later on I realised driving with Alex was both educational and stimulating. And it paid to stay awake as not for the first time having dozed off on the way home to awake and find we were coming back a totally different way to the way we had gone. There was never any admittance we had taken the wrong turning, instead something like "I've found a short cut" seemed to explain it all away. I did not mention the extra miles we had travelled.

Alex did a lot of community work and I learned he worked at the Law Courts in the city helping to serve the teas at the tea bar. He also was involved in the Meals on wheels scheme delivering meals throughout Crosby, and latterly with the Crossroads Centre in Crosby. He would be very pleased that this centre has now relocated to new purpose built premises, just down the road from where they used to be. He also used his carpentry skills to carry out many repair jobs at the club and there was practically nothing he could not do, and when there was a job not within his scope, such as electricity; he would find someone who could do it.

Alex was a magnificent worker and influence at Bath St and certainly kept the club running in days when the present committee were earning a living and too busy to get involved. I have certainly found the job of secretary and match secretary a time consuming one, and this with the help of a computer and willing committee. His last unfulfilled ambition was to win a medal in a world competition for 80 year olds, and this he achieved, I think it was in 2000 at Vancouver. We aim to keep the club going and if we do move to new premises in the future I am sure we will find a way to perpetuate Alex's achievements over the last 55 years.

Ron Georgeson

Bath St Secretary Dec. 2003.