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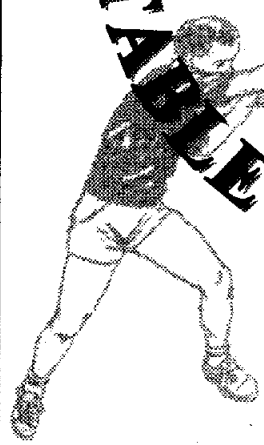
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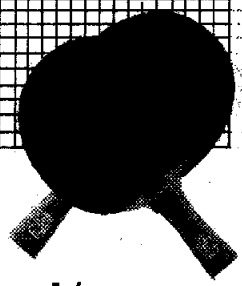
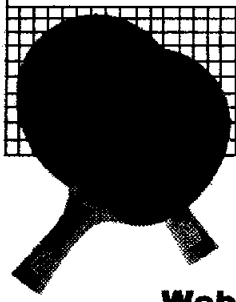
LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT
TENNIS LEAGUE

DECEMBER 2004



SEASON 2004-2005

TABLE
DIGEST
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EDITORIAL



First of all I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr Bill Fawley as our new President of the L&DTTL, Bill was approached during the summer if he would be prepared to undertake the Presidents role, and I'm told, accepted immediately. Bill played table tennis many years ago, and must have been pretty good, as he managed a few games representing the City, and of course, is the main sponsor for our own closed tournament. I don't think Bill is prepared just to be a figurehead, as he has attended both Man. Com. Meetings recently, while still finding his feet (League wise) his input is most helpful.

The new season is now well under way, and has already brought a few administrative problems, as the Digest Editor, the Cup Secretary and member of the Management Committee, I'm having to read the League Rules more than ever due to more instances of, to put it mildly, lack of knowledge of the rules, and also "trying to get around them". This season all clubs were given the latest printout of the League Rules, in a handy size Filofax type Diary, one for every team captain as well as the Club Secretary. It would take about 15 minutes to read through the rules, just to get a rough idea what they are about, and if followed, to save any disagreements later, rules are for every ones benefit.

At the first Man. Com. Meeting of the season, 2 controversial subjects came up, one a case of wrongdoing, the other a case of possible unfair advantage.

The first was from the first round of the Divisional Cup, a 1st. div. home team decided they couldn't play the match and contacted the away team to give the walkover, but then the home team decided to send in a match card (unknown to the away team) to say that the away team had won by 5-1, this obviously to save a fine. This misdemeanour was picked up by the fixture secretary on two counts, only the home captain had signed the card, (match regulation 15 requires both captains to sign the card), but also an ineligible player had been entered into the away teams list, so the innocent away team could easily have been disqualified from the cup, so we have two rules involved here, match regulation 7 "no club shall play an ineligible player; or send in as having taken part in a match, the name of a player who did not do so" and Penalties and protests Rule 19a, "any team playing an ineligible player in a cup match shall forfeit the match". But the fixture Sec. decided to check this out, and his call to the captain of the away team started what

turned out to be about 18 telephone calls involving the home team sec., the away team sec. the two team captains, the Cup sec. the League sec. the fixture sec. a ridiculous amount of chasing around to get the facts, all to save a basic fine, we know everyone prefers to play the matches, but lets be above board, what started as a take a chance card has caused a lot of extra work for a lot of people, and a hefty fine for the offending club.

The other subject is a possible case of unfair advantage, again in the cup, but this time the Frank Murphy Trophy, at present Clubs can enter any number of teams with enough players to cover, the draw is made, the matches played, once a player has played, he is "cup tied" and cannot play for another team, Vet. Cup Regulation Rule 6. "no player may play for more than one team". But where a club has teams playing each other and one team gives the other team a walk over, for whatever reason, and no players are entered on the card, (at present, no requirement to do so), all those players go through to the next round, is this an unintentional advantage! Do we need a Rule change to require clubs entering teams, to list players to a team, when that team goes out so do 3 of those players listed on a match card, your thoughts on this to your secretary for discussion.

It is said in various quarters that our fixture secretary "enjoys giving out fines", I know that isn't true, but he does have to abide by the Rules (as existing) of the League. We can't expect him to be Judge and Jury over why rules are contravened. If a team plays short, an automatic fine, he would sooner they played a full team, for the sake of the opponents, we can't expect him to pass judgement on the reasons given for playing short, as this would open him to possible accusations of favouritism. Late cards lead to another fine which could be avoided if cards were posted straight away. Lost cards, but who's lost them. Playing ineligible players, with the hefty penalty points that go with this one, we know no club does this knowingly, but if a player's registration is not with the League Secretary before he plays, he is an ineligible player, no "ifs" or "buts". When a club registers a player after the season starts, it would always be safe to check that the registration had been received and accepted before he plays. It has already happened this season, with a club being penalised twice, for playing an unregistered player in two games before it was picked up, the reason being that the second match card arrived before the first, but the rules are there for the safeguard of all teams, if as it seems, people don't agree with the level of fines, let's change the rules, it's as easy as that!

The three clubs who finished last season with the threat of 'find new premises or disband', have all managed to save the day, and all are now established in new homes. Waterloo have moved to the same Methodist

Church as Linacre, in Waterloo, the club did break up a bit (player wise) with only the 1st. team playing from here, most of the other players moving to other clubs. Liverpool YMCA are playing in commercial premises off Long Lanc, Aintree, thanks to one of their members, Lawrence K., but the players have worked overtime to clean the rooms up, decorate them, and fit new lighting, they will miss the wide open space of the old YMCA, but the space is on a par with some other clubs, and they have the added bonus of use of the premises 24 hours a day 7 days a week, you can't ask for more than that, the YM also have a new secretary in the shape of Steve Kee, who with Mikael Bellec, will keep the club in front. Ex secretary George Smith has moved on to Cadwa to help with their shortage of players. Last Club, Marconi, are now playing from Childwall Methodist Church, a big hall, with two matches in the same room, so lots of respect and patience needed from players for the other match going on. So thanks to those club Secs. who have put in the extra work through the summer months.

The 5th division started the season in a little bit of confusion, even though fixture Sec. Trevor Owens had spent loads of time to devise a fixture list based on the expected 8 teams, so that they would get regular games. (not like last season), as soon as the season started, there were clubs cancelling games, and then Police 'C' dropping out of the League, to once again bring the prospect of free weeks for the other clubs. I wouldn't mind but a club were looking at the prospect of putting another team into the 5th, but it would have been impossible to organise a fixture list with the additional team. (9 teams) at short notice.

August Bank Holiday was again the date of the Liverpool Grand Prix at the Liverpool Tennis Centre, with over 250 entries, Scotland's Euan Walker won the Men's singles title, beating Michael Rogala of Poland in the Final, . Clare Newns won the women's band 1 singles, and Brenda Buocoy won the Vets. Women, both players from Bath St. TT Club. Thanks again to the small band of helpers who set up and dismantled all the the equipment that makes this event possible.

The next big tournament in Liverpool is the City of Liverpool Junior 4 Star tournament, Sat./Sun. 8th and 9th January 2004 at the Greenbank Academy, so to see the stars of tomorrow, and some who are already class acts, make a point of going, it's free to watch.

Once again, the old adage "many hands make light work" anyone able to help with the setting up etc. please contact Arthur Garnett, Ken Armson, myself, or any of the Man. Com.

You will be pleased to know our Divisional writers are again at full strength, Paul has agreed to carry on with Div.1, as we couldn't get a volunteer to cover, Sylvia is still in Div.2. for the 10th year it seems. Tony Harris's team was promoted to the second div. so Steve Kee from Liverpool YMCA has accepted the challenge for Div. 3. Div. 4 welcomes Stan Clarke who

has taken over from Steve Perry, and Doug Baker takes Div 5 off me, thank goodness, Doug assures me, the ink hasn't dried up in his pen, remember those epics! So many thanks to those who have gone, and thanks to those who now have the cards

My team mates at Bootle YM, have asked me why has my photo in the Editorial got bigger each Digest, they can be forgiven for the misconceptions they have formed, (big head), not having the vast media experience that I have, (3 years and still learning!), when I tell them that it's to fill up the 'white space', they look at me with that blank disbelieving look, I reckon they owe me a few pints.

We welcome three new names who have recently appeared on match cards in the third division, Michael Rogala. (Poland), Yann Sladek. (France), and Robin Ashleigh, I first heard of Michael Rogala playing in the recent Liverpool Butterfly Grand Prix, where he finished up narrowly losing to Scotland's Euan Walker, in the Final in 5 games. On the way to the Final, Michael accounted for Craig Bryant in 5, and Fabio Mantogazza from Milan, in 4. So, what must be termed a "coup" for the Greenbank Club, Michael may appear at the other end of the table in division 3. Yann Sladek, now playing for Cadwa 'B', will stiffen up what was already a strong team. Yann has been a regular league player in the Paris area, but is now studying at the J.M. University in Liverpool. He was so nearly a Bootle YMCA player, appearing at our club one evening during a league match; he said he lived in Aigburth, but it only took him 20 minutes to get to Bootle, and that he was keen to sign, we thought he must mean "20 minutes from the JMU", so after a chat in the bar after the match, he left to catch the bus just around the corner, which he knew the time of from the timetable, (remember the days long ago, of getting to matches on the bus!), and we were left with the rosy prospect of some new young blood. Unfortunately, a couple of days later I had an e-mail from Yann saying he had decided to decline our offer as it had taken him 3 hours to walk home that night, the bus didn't turn up. surprise! We should have told him not to rely on the bus time table, as sometimes the drivers don't follow it either, but we could assure him he wouldn't have to walk home again!, but at least he has signed for another League team (CADWA). Another student from the JMU, is Robin Ashleigh, now playing for Liverpool YMCA 'C', another class player I'm told, coincidentally Robin and Yann met in match 7, Yann winning in 5. So another stiff season for Div. 3. There are a few more new names in other divisions, so welcome to them also.

Don't forget, if you, as members, have any disagreements with any of the League Rules as they stand, you must send in any proposals or amendments for the Preliminary AGM Agenda, by the **last Saturday in February**, through your club secretary, full details are given in Rule 9 (a), page 5 of the new Rule Book.

10 Years Ago

I've been asked about doing an "all our yesterdays" type page, and while thinking "what a good idea", I have also thought of the input needed to do it, and also the space required, as we always seem to be able to fill the space available, (24 pages). But now that this Digest is under way, and while I'm waiting for the return of the Div. writers reports, I decided to give it a go, using a Digest exactly 10 years old which I happened to have on loan from John Higham. Vol 49 No.1. there are lots of interesting snippets, which most players still playing will be able to relate to, too many really, but hopefully I can get a fair cross section of comments, (*my comments as I go along, will be in bold italics*)

Jack Lambert was Editor then, aided by Ken Armon (before his title), this Digest was memorable for the changes that took place exactly 10 years ago. Jacks Editorial spoke of the worry that the Digest was "taking too much money out of the Leagues coffers", that was for 4 x A4 pages, you now get 6, in those days, the Digest was put together by a volunteer typist (usually Jack's wife) then passed to the printer for printing. The advent of Home Computers has made what must have been a difficult (*keep the cost down*) job for the volunteers of the day into something more visually rewarding.

Anyway, 10 years ago, fixture secretary for a "loralora" years, Eddie Cameron stepped down to be replaced by heroine of the day Paula French; and League organising secretary for 39 years, John McKim, gives notice of stepping down after this coming season.

Last season, English Electric finally closed the doors on their Sports and Social Club, and with it the table tennis, which in its heyday, had supported 6 teams under Jack Lambert, the first team had just ran away with the 2nd Div. title and resurfaced in the 94/95 season as Waterloo, in the first Div., the trauma of the upheaval must have been too much, as they lost all of the first 10 matches. Ken Armon was also Div. 1 writer and was questioning the "sudden changes in direction by our League planners" regards promotion and relegation, (*have times changed*).

The first season for Manweb after M.M.'S enforced absence, throwing their first team into turmoil culminating in disqualification from the Readman cup for playing an ineligible player.

Ken Jackson was having a great season beating among others, Keith Williams, Chris Ford, Peter Taylor, Bernie Wentworth, but going down to Julian Quirk of Bootle J.C. (*Julian is now making a comeback with B.J.C. and doing pretty good*).

Ken finishes his report with "Next issue I will deal with the relegation issue in greater detail", *look out someone!*

Div. 2 had a new writer, Sylvia Graham, (*I wonder if Sylvia realises it's 10 years doing Div. 2, she was also doing others before that, she's still doing a good job!*). "Congratulations to David Cohen", writes Sylvia "for completely re-writing Jewish's fixtures and issuing a really thick white paper", (*has David been doing it for that long, some things never change!*). As now, Sylvia's format ends with her 'good wins, close matches & face savers', *here's a few*, Brenda Buoey and Paula French both beat Eddie Clein in the same match, (*I wonder if Eddie remembered there were ladies present*), and a face saver, George Higham beat Steve Woods, 22 / -25 /23.

Editor Jack, had to do Div. 3, still awaiting a volunteer, I even get a mention off Jack, for writing comments on the match card, (*didn't think I'd been captain that long, shows what the rest of the team are getting away with*), and I must mention this bit, Jack writes "A 10-0 win for Bootle YM over Bath St. 'B', but a couple of corking games, Karen Gibson losing 18m the 3rd to Tom Kilip, and Billy Clayton 22-20 to Roly Wright in the 3rd, with a couple of walkovers, as Billy wasn't too well, (*sorry Bill, must have been having to put rubber on your bat, couldn't imagine winning against your varnished one!*)

Div. 4 turns out to have Tony Connor writing what was a lengthy set of notes, (*must remember that Tony*), Steve Graham leading a strong Cadwa 'C' team on top of the division, Eric Young has been spotted trying his hand with Curl, Tony mentions a classic match of attack v defence, Kathy Haydon's attacking style just getting the better of Mike Ashton's retrieving, Mike Hughes, (like Tony Sales) combines long pimples backhand with forceful attacking forehand spin, (*bet Mike liked that one, he's still got the bat*). Linacre had to contend with a good start to the season, then losing Harry Reeves to the sea, (*but whether it was he had a TT table on the ship, or the roll of the sea, he was still hard to beat on his return for the second half*).

What's this, Arthur Garnett doing Div. 5, Arthur has quickly spotted that Div.5 is made up with good players, average players, and new players learning the ropes. (*not many of the latter these days*), Arthur says "Ken Armon is undefeated with his new bat, mention it to him and he'll say it's legal" (*Ken's still saying that now, but everyone's used to it, and he's still hard to beat, ask Eddie C.*). Special thought for Barry Meyer

(Aigburth), who played in a match two and a half hours after being discharged from hospital after surgery. Such dedication to the game – must tell the wife! A penalty point was awarded against a player for continuously stamping his feet when serving, (ungentlemanly conduct), I trust that this was done in a friendly manner and followed a warning. Arthur's final point was a remark made to him about an umpire in a match, shouting support to his team mate in between points, (*my thoughts are that while each game is in progress, the umpire should just umpire the game, and be as impartial as possible, If you are the vociferous coach of the team, don't umpire*).

Last page of the Digest had an explanation from Paula on how to fill in the match card fully, *we still have some problems with card filling!*

So that was 10 years ago, that seasons Digests were to be the last of Jack Lambert's Editorship, after 27 years, of keeping the Digest going against the odds, deservedly stepping down for a rest, and the new Editor

was to be Ken Armson, the natural progression, with his "threat" to adopt High-Tech methods (the PC no doubt) to reduce costs, The new Digests were immediately different, probably browbeating others to contribute general articles, and himself starting his award winning "Nets and Edges", *where, if I keep this page going, is where I'll find most of my 'ammunition'*.

The league tables at the back of this Digest had 4 divisions of 12 and the fifth with 11 teams, 12 matches gone.

Div. 1	Wav.Lab.	top	Bootle J.C. 'A'	bottom
Div. 2	G.P.T.	top	Manweb 'A'	bottom
Div. 3	Waterloo 'B'	top	University	bottom
Div. 4	CADWA 'C'	top	Aigburth	bottom
Div. 5	Waterloo 'C'	top	Police 'C'	bottom

Editor

Apology

I have mentioned in my Editorial how good it was to be at full strength with all the Divisional writers, that's still the case, I think, but at the time of going to the printers, (28th.Nov.) I haven't received anything from Divs. 1 & 2, I did request from all to have whatever copy in by 24. Nov. So page numbering has pages 8.9.10.& 11 missing.

When I do receive late reports I will print out limited number of copies myself, and send to Secretaries of Divs. 1 & 2 after Christmas break.

Editor

A few Items from a much longer ETTA Chairman's November Newsletter, which may be of interest to you.

3. Scoring System

The vote at this year's AGM for all competitive play to be under the ITTF Laws is a major step forward in conformity with the rest of the world.

4. Individual Registration

This continues to progress and it is hoped that we can bring this into operation for the 2006/7 season. It is not a decision that can be made easily and needs involvement and support from the grass roots of our sport. Further details on this will be circulated in the coming months including fee levels, benefits and costs.

5. Modernisation

We have taken a number of steps to improve communications with the new website and a new database programme should be functioning early in the New Year. Our goal must be to communicate with our members as much as possible via email.

We have a number of issues to work on during the coming 12 months and here are a few examples.

- (i) Individual Registrations
- (ii) Update of the ETTA Rule book including a review of the AGM voting procedures
- (iii) Improved Coaching Strategy linking with the Government Coaching Policies
- (iv) Events Calendar
- (v) Regional Committees
- (vi) Effective ETTA Database
- (vii) More email communications
- (viii) General improved communications and better media exposure
- (ix) Volunteer Programme
- (x) Skills Programme for schools
- (xi) Performance and Development Centres across the country
- (xii) Changes in our Corporate Governance

Alex Murdoch
ETTA Chairman

Kevin Dolder, Keith Williams and John Rankin, gave Liverpool a great boost in their quest to claim the Lancashire and Cheshire League premier division title for the ninth time in ten years, when they won all four matches in the opening group stage of the 2004/05 competition at the Autoquest Stadium in Widnes.

They kicked off with a 5-1 victory over Blackpool. (Kevin, adopting an away from the table defensive style, losing to Steve Bovan), before overcoming Manchester, also for the loss of just one set. Rankin going down to Brian Clements. Bury were their next victims, the East Lancashire side's top player Paul Cicchelli, (a native of Norwich) being their star man, beating Williams in the second set before losing 11-8 in the fifth game to a relieved Dolder, who had to pull out all the stops against one of the best defenders in the League. Their fourth opponents, Mid Cheshire, without Brian and Mike Johns, went down 6-0, which left last season's runners-up, with matches against Tameside, Oldham and champions Bolton to come in March.

At the same time, the Liverpool A team were in action at Accrington in division two, with Alice Howard, Dave Evans and Mikael Belice, all playing for the first time for Liverpool at this level. They turned in a tremendous show, beating Trafford A 6-0, Halton A 5-1, Blackburn 6-0 and Lancaster & Morecambe 6-0, to top the division, with seven matches still to play.

The Liverpool men's team, Wilmott Cup finalists for the past two years in the National Team Championships, visit Leamington Spa in January, where they take on the hosts and Nottingham, who pipped Liverpool to the title two years ago. They need to finish top or runners-up in the group, to progress to the second stage.

In the J.M. Rose Bowl, the Liverpool women's team, national champions in 2003 and runners up to Wolverhampton last season,



also make the journey to Nottingham, where they face the hosts, plus Birmingham and Wirral, aiming to win at least two matches to qualify for the penultimate group of matches in March.

The Liverpool veteran team, winners of the Alce Brook Memorial Trophy in 2003, also play Leamington Spa and Nottingham on Saturday December 18th, the top two going on to the semi-final stages in February.

A total of nine leagues have entered the Pat Archdale Cup for veteran women. Liverpool, North Herts and Leicester, all travelling on December 18th to play former champions Wolverhampton.

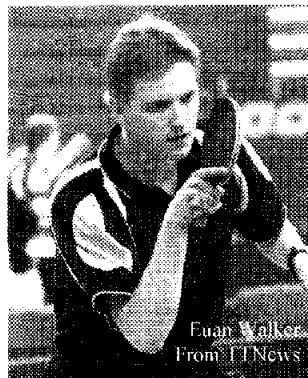
The draw for the five competitions has not been kind to Liverpool, yet again in the Carter Cup, our team has to travel. This is first time in many years that a Liverpool team has entered the junior boys competition and they face a stern test in Birmingham against the hosts plus Barnet and Milton Keynes, the winners and runner-up going through to the second of three qualifying group stages.

The saga of the Veteran team's fiasco of last season, continues to spill over into the 2004/05 campaign. After Liverpool had been officially declared as Premier Division champions, following Tameside's failure to fulfill the fixture in Liverpool on December 12th 2003. I have received a letter from Tameside (November) stating that they are not prepared to play us in the forthcoming match on

their table on 9th December, until we play the outstanding match!! Words fail me.

On the 75th anniversary of the City of Liverpool Open table tennis championships', supported by Liverpool City Council, the men's singles title went to a player from north of the border for the first time when Scotland international Euan Walker beat Poland's Michael Rogala, in the final. Walker, the runner up three years ago to Garth Herbert, notched wins over former Wirral man Mark Newns, England number 6 junior Adam Bleakley from Bury and Wales' Commonwealth Games player Stephen Jenkins from Pontypridd. His semi-final opponent was England number 2 junior Paul Drinkall, who led Walker by 2 games to 1 but the Scot recovered, taking the next two 11-9, 13-11. The unscoded Polish number 30, who speaks no English and is currently working

in Liverpool, cruised through the early rounds, but nearly came unstuck when he took five games to dispose of Devon's England number 4 junior Craig Bryant, 11-6, 5-11, 10-12, 11-8, 11-9 in the last eight, before meeting Italy's Fabio Mantegazza in the semi's, winning 11-9, 13-11, 13-15, 11-8. Drinkhall didn't leave empty handed though, the Cleveland youngster taking the junior boy's title against Liam Thomas (Wales), 11-6,



Euan Walker
From ITNews

6-11, 11-7, 11-8, in the final. Scotland's Laura Rumgay dropped the first game to Clare Langford 11-5, but hit back to win the next three 11-8, 11-6, 11-4, to take the junior girls' crown.

In the women's Band one event, Bath Street's Clare Peers (nee News), beat Helen McCreary, (Wav. Lab) 11-6, 8-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-6 in the last 16 before accounting for Clare Langford, also in five games in the next round, 11-6, 13-15, 11-5, 5-11, 11-9. Gemma Yarnley was her next victim, 8-11,

11-1, 11-8, 11-6, then taking the title with a comfortable straight games victory over Michele Cohen 11-5, 11-2, 11-6.

The women's open singles was predictably won by the 2000 champion and current England number one, Helen Lower from Staffordshire, beating Marketa Myskova (Devon), 11-8, 11-9, 11-13, 11-7, in the final.

England number one veteran John Hilton, was unfortunate to meet Italy's Roberto Giuntella in his first trip to the table in the veteran men's singles. The Italian then followed up

by disposing of Keith Williams 11-4, 11-4, 11-6, before dismissing Preston's Steve Turner 11-6, 11-6 4-11, 11-7 in the last semi's. His final opponent, Henry Medellin, ranked at 38 in England, enjoyed a walk over against the two times champion Nigel Eckersley, who withdrew through injury and although Medellin took the opening game 11-5, he succumbed to the Milanese man, 7, 7, 6 in the next three games.

National Ranking of players in the Liverpool League at 29/09/04

Senior Men	Rnk.	Sen. Women	Rnk	Vet. Men	Rnk.	Vet. Woman	Rnk.
Rogala M.	9	Peers C.	19	Williams K.	4	Buoey B.	6
Dolder K.	31	Howard A.	28	Ford C.	19	Burgess S.	23
Williams K.	75	Lloyd G.	36	Rankin J.	33	Graham S.	35
Rankin J.	95	Graham C.	41	Percival W.	47	Howard S.	58
		Buoey B.	42	Jackson K.	95	Junior Boys	Rnk.
		Nolan T.A.	61			Page T.	16
		Howard C.	84	Cadet Boys	Rnk.	Taylor J.	47
		Howard S.	100	Hewitt J.	43	Bray T.	48

A few more items picked up by Don from a n old Digest of 50 years ago

I was reading a copy of the Digest, the sixth and final edition of the first season of publication, in April 1951, and an article by Bill Stamp regarding a 25th anniversary function on Wednesday May 9th. The League became the first private organisation to charter The 'Royal Iris', the ship having entered commission at the end of April, after it had been converted for cruising. The article stated that it had a capacity of 1000 and after leaving Liverpool at 7-30pm, called at Seacombe, 7-40, returning at 10-40. Tickets were 4/- and fish and chips and ices could be purchased on board, with a licensed bar and smoke room available together with air conditioned observation points. Dancing was to Reg Edwards and his orchestra - no surely not the Bath Street man. Incidentally, I heard recently, that Reg has had to take a break from playing, hope you recover as soon as possible Reg.

Players mentioned in the first ever Digest and still playing today, include Jack Davidson, Linacre (men's club) as they were then known. A quote from Jack could well be applicable today. "We have nine registered players and only one playing night each week. Our club

members are keen and will put up hard fight". Tough talk for those days Jack, but seriously, that maxim still prevails at the most genuine club and set of men in the League.

Jack Lambert told the Digest writer J.E. Neill, (who was the North Regional secretary from 1935 to 1939), we, English Electric, recently purchased a new Jaques table for £40. Not a cheap buy for that time. I still have a second hand Jaques for which I paid £25 not ten years ago!

Another interesting article relates to Aigburth Methodists who in their opening match, used A, B, N, & S Wilkinson. Although I wasn't a player then, I'm 100% sure that Stan played in that match and I met him at this season's Lancashire & Cheshire AGM when he was representing Wirral. He played in the Sunday School Union team with Dave Williams (Wav. Lab.) and his son, Andy, is the current world record holder on a recumbent (lying down) cycle from Lands End to John O' Groats, in a time a motorist would consider respectable.

Greetings to everyone here in the 3rd division from your new correspondent! Now that Tony Harris is enjoying the higher clime of the 2nd they wanted someone young and enthusiastic to take over, but unfortunately they got me, so be nice and write lots of interesting match comments and I'll do my best to try to incorporate them in these notes.

No 1 seed in the writing stakes so far has to be Roly Wright. Bootle YMCA has made a steady if unspectacular start, but with Richie's back, Danny's arm, John's holidays (or is it the other way round?) they have not been able to field their dream team very often. Nevertheless, they have still been able to win 4/6 matches, and could sustain a promotion challenge. One of their defeats was a 4-6 home reverse to CADWA 'B', which featured

a five setter between John Higham and Colin Rourke, with Colin's fast game being parried by John's long, low returns, John scoring a spectacular victory 11/8 2/11 12/10 11/13 11/9. Colin was 100% last season, but like Arsenal, has found an unbeaten run a millstone too far to carry over one season!

Steve Graham recovered from 2 down to beat Roly, who has bet that when George Lennon rejoins them from injury, CADWA 'B' will be the irresistible force of the 3rd. Now that French student Yann Sladek has joined them (after originally intending to join Bootle), Ladbroke's is making CADWA 'B' evens favourite. Get your money on, (says Roly!)

The immovable objects must be BATH ST 'C', where chopping is a way of life (don't really mean you Rob, haha!). The squad of Ricky Brown, Rob Peat, Jamie Hewitt, Eddie Williams and Dave Stoddern have remained unbeaten so far, accounting for BOOTLE YM 9-1, losing one doubles, and drawing with CADWA 'B' where Dave won his two, including an 11/9 fifth set defeat of George Higham. Another



draw, against newcomers GREENBANK, saw the shock introduction of arguably the best player in Liverpool! I bet there was truly two minutes silence when Michael Rogala (runner up in the Merseyside open singles this year beating Kevin Dolder on the way) walked in to play for GREENBANK. The polish master duly polished off Ricky and Rob, and Scott Robertson clipped in, also beating Ricky, to give the 'away' side (having wheelchair players they play most matches at home, I think) a draw.

GREENBANK have a good squad of players (well ok, Michael Rogala might be slightly better than good!), who have gained promotion from the 5th div, by passing the 4th, on account of some astute letter writing during the summer I am told. Scott Robertson, Dave Finn, Mark Palmer and Tony Edge are more than holding their own so far, with Scott and Tony being particularly successful. Scott Robertson is ranked world No.14 in the wheelchair class 5, and both Scott and Tony won both their singles to help them to a crushing 8-2 victory over a Colin Rourke-less CADWA 'B'.

LIV. YMCA 'C' have, as you probably know by now, new premises. Although we are based in Aintree trading estate we thought we would keep our club name 'cause it made us all feel younger, and because any change could mean us all starting

off again in the 5th! Compared to where we used to be, it feels like we have to get an Easyjet flight when we want to practise. Even JC (not the bloke from Nazareth) has had to cut his pracey down to just 96 hours a week. One memorable encounter was against WAV LAB 'B', and a cracking game between Billy Cheung and Mike Ashton. Between them they brought the crowds back with some spectacular stuff. Deciding to start every game at deuce, and with each point a classic, the final point of the final game was pure barrier-hopping by Billy (aka 'Chen Xinhua'), but Mike's tenacious non-stop(!) attacking would not be denied, winning a game of interminable rallies 13-11 in the 5th. Next time, remember to do the cartwheels Bill!

The WAV LAB 'B' team of Tony Connor, Mike Ashton, Colin Fyles and Dave Williams have had a slowish start to the season, but they managed to find some form in the drawn derby against their 'A' team, with Tony winning his two against Clara Howard and Dave Foulis, and Colin beating Paul Banks in 4. Good to see young Tom Creevy making an appearance here, where he combined with Colin to win the doubles against Paul and Ted Megivern. In their match against BOOTLE YM, they were again without Mike Ashton, and stumbled to a 7-3 defeat. But Roly was very pleased to beat Tony - his bogey player- 11-7 in the 5th, although Bootle had a few players missing themselves.

WAV LAB 'A' have also made an erratic start, but have shown they can compete with the top sides, scoring an

impressive 6-4 away win to CADWA 'B', where Paul Banks and Dave Golden won their singles, and taking BATH ST 'C' all the way in a 4-6 defeat, where Bill Stanley did likewise, just edging out Dave Stoddern 12-10 in the 5th. However, they suffered 3-7 reverses at the hands of both MANWEB 'C' and HH 'A', and have to thank the form of Paul Banks,

who won all of his singles in these matches, that these margins weren't greater.

Newcomers HAROLD HOUSE 'A' have made a good start, with just one defeat so far. Should they all turn out regularly, the team of Eddie Clein, Paul Shaw, Rod Mcpherson and Martin Roberts could well be considered as dark horses for the top places, although to date they have yet to play either Cadwa 'B' or Bath St. 'C'. Eddie is always consistent of course, and Martin has only lost 1 so far. They predictably thumped us 7-3 at their place (not unusual, they did the same to us three times last season), but at least Mr Kcc finally managed to overcome Mr Clein! "The hard part," he told me afterwards, "is not beating me, it's beating me a second time!". No, the hard part is bloody well beating you Eddie! Bet you didn't know that Eddie used to be in a band called the Mersey Coast and they used to play at the Cavern, occasionally jamming with the Beatles! At least that's what he told me, maybe he was still in shock! hehe.

Another team to watch out for is BATH ST 'D'. With an ever-present 'funny bat' line-up of Mark

Patterson, Les Gee, Billy Clayton and Peter Ross they are equipped to give anyone a game. Mark starred against their C team with wins against Ricky (11-3 in the 5th) and Rob (14-12 in the 4th) in a 4-6 defeat, as well as wins against Paul Shaw (HH 'A') and John Higham (BOOTLE YM), and is ably backed by his band, the doubles harmony of Les/Billy being particularly effective so far, losing only to Roly/Danny of BOOTLE YM.

MANWEB 'C' appear to have started the season using the Claudio Ranieri rotation method. The inconsistency of their results is totally baffling. Kicking off with a 3-7 loss to MAGHULL 'A', and a 1-9 reverse to BOOTLE YM, they have gradually moved up the table, lately winning 7-3 and 6-4 against CADWA 'C' and LIV YM 'C'. Things seem to have improved since they featured the strike force of John Hardy, Neil Jennings, and Robin Barker more regularly, supported by Alan Cameron and Alan Biggs. Mention should be made of Alan Biggs, who is well along the road to recovering some of the mobility that the knee operations deprived him of, as his double against our own Alvin Tso and Francis Lay showed.

MAGHULL 'A' have had a tricky start to the season, playing most

of the top teams, and seemingly without last seasons' no1 Chris Roberts. They have had some good individual performances nonetheless, Rod Bulmer defeating Ricky Brown 11-6 11-5 12-10 and Mark Patterson 11-6 in the 5th (BATH ST 'C' and 'D') and Mark Ambrose and George Frost both with a double against MANWEB 'C'.

CADWA 'C' have obviously had player availability problems. George Higham seems to be the teams' mainstay, chipping in with wins against Neil Jennings (12-10 in the 5th), and Steve Graham and Tony Connor in 3, but George, Peter Roberts, Ian Lunt and John Ashley need more *va-va-voom* if they are to recover their shaky start. Perhaps they could take some inspiration from Jack Highton, who returned after a years absence to edge Alan Cameron 11-9 in the 5th.

Predictions? BATH ST 'C' and CADWA 'B' look like they are both well equipped for the long haul, but with only 13 points separating the top 10 teams after 6 matches anything can happen. We might even offer Michael Rogala more money to play for us! Who'd like to start the bidding? See you..

DIVISION 4

Stan Clarke

You can always tell when an editor is getting desperate, it's when he turns to old worn out writers to provide copy for his magazine, and so it is in this case as in his desperation he turns to me, sad but true. But don't despair it might not be long before I get the sack.

It is a rather strange division this year with seven of the teams coming from three clubs, so not many venues to remember and loads of inter club rivalries. We, Wavertree Labour "C", have already played both of our club rivals, the "D" and "E" teams, and although we were unable to inflict the sort of defeat predicted by our somewhat insane secretary, we did win both matches handsomely.

Before I go any further with reports on the various teams I have to say



that I find the standard of serving in this division to be appalling, many of the serves being dished up were illegal forty years ago. I have no problem with players winning points directly from a good service,

that is down to skill, but what I do not condone is the deliberate cheating that takes place during the course of serving, harsh words? maybe, but if you deliberately break the rules when serving then which other rules are you going to ignore?

Having got that off my chest, time to look at how the division is shaping up. Bootle Y.M.C.A. 'A' are on top of the heap having won all six of their matches played and gained 44 points which puts them well ahead of Wavertree Labour "C" who are in second place with 36 points from 3 wins, 1 draw and 1 defeat. The Bootle team will be hoping that Bert Rivers can be available for the whole season, whereas W.L."C" will be without the services of Ken Amson for a whole month as he cruises the high seas.

In third and fourth places are Bath St. "E" and Wavertree Labour "D", just two points off the pace, tied on 34 points each, and close behind are Maghull "C" and Marconi "B", also level on points, each with 32. Wavertree Labour "E" and Linacre are also tied on 30 points each, so all in all it is a very close division with only six points separating second and eight place.

Perhaps the biggest shock is Harold House languishing in ninth place, mind you that may well be because they have used nine players in just five matches, strange from a team that is so strong on paper.

It is noticeable that the teams that have started the stronger have settled squads and seldom need to go outside the squad for players, Bootle Y.M.C.A. have Bert Rivers and Arthur Garnett as the backbone with Mike Hughes, Peter Wil-

liams and Jim Geddes apparently rotating the other two places. Wavertree "C" have Bill Stanley, Ken Arnson, Stan Clarke, Stephanie Howard and Tom Creevy in their squad.

It is good to see that we have a number of young players in the division, with Tom Creevy, Ian Laird and Cairan McAleese all still juniors and Lee Proffitt and Tony Mitchell not much older, four of these players coming through the League coaching scheme, which is still running every Monday evening at Gateacre Comp. School, and has a couple of promising youngsters in the pipeline.

Have you noticed how some players seem to get better value for their fees than the rest of us, as an instance I give you Steve Perry and Stephanie Howard, in their first encounter of the season their match took 44 minutes 32 seconds of playing time, not allowing for breaks at the

end of games, the only game going to expedite being the last, but as the score was 9/9 at the time expedite could not be introduced, Steve running out the winner 11/9 after fourteen minutes. However in the cup match between the two teams, Steve called Stephanie to play him in the first set, mistake, this time the first two sets were over in a record 5 minutes each, Steve winning both, but the third game reached expedite with the score 8/7 in favour of Steve only for Stephanie to go on and win the. Remaining points in that game, and the next two games, to win the set. As yet there have been no whitewashes in the division but three matches have finished 9/1, Bootle Y.M.C.A. "A" over Aigburth "A" where Paul Crugel beat Bert Rivers to save the whitewash, Ray Jones beat Ken Ainsworth in the only success for Aigburth against Linacre, and Bill Salter and Brian Gregory teamed up to beat Andy Bird and Gordon Langshaw in the doubles when Maghull "B" lost to wavertree Labour "D".

DIVISION 5

Doug Baker

Well here I am again, I started out my Table Tennis Journalistic career writing reports for the 5th Division. So, it's nice to get back to one's roots.

A short division this, with just 8 teams, so we will quickly see who are the strong and who the weak teams. Additional fixtures have been introduced to provide more games, as last year, due to one team dropping out, only 14 matches were played when all other divisions could look forward to 22 matches. With 8 teams signed up at the start of the season, and accounting for the additional fixtures, there will be 21 matches for each team to look forward to. (Fingers crossed.)

Last season saw 9 teams in this division. One of the Bath Street teams dropped out. Wavertree "F" won the title by 24 points, Greenbank 1st were the runners up, between them and the Stamp Cup winners Aigburth "A" in 5th place were Maghull "C" & Harold House "B". Now, this year started with 8 teams: Wavertree "F", Bath Street "F" & "G", Maghull "D" & "E",



CADWA "D", Police "C" and Greenbank "A". From an outsider's view it looks like last year's league winners are still here and the 4 teams that finished below them all got promoted! How bizarre! Have we entered the twilight zone?!

Well, no not quite. And it takes some effort to explain it all. It's the knock on effects of Wavertree withdrawing their "A" team from the 2nd division during last season and Waterloo dropping two teams out of season, one from the 2nd and one from the 3rd.

This proved quite fortuitous for the aforementioned teams, but especially so for Greenbank who expanded the size of their club. Their new first team were able to enter straight into the 2nd division. Technically Greenbank "A" are also new, but which players from last year's 5th div team are here and who is new is the question.

Bath Street have also benefited from other clubs ructions, as they have given refuge to some ex-Waterloo'ers. They have (had to?) accommodate the new players in their existing team structure. Hence the "F" team won't be the same bunch of players who were relegated from division 4, and that may ripple down to their "G" team. We can expect a much stronger showing from them this year. Neither do I imagine that the limpet like Wavertree "F" team will have the same constituents but for different reasons. Resident Maghull & Police teams will know their way around here very well.

What I can say with certainty is that the CADWA "D", who were

The time is 5 past 12 (you know! the 11th hour), missed the printers, I'm doing it at home!!! Sorry about Div.1 Editor

DIVISION 2 Sylvia Graham

All I can say is that the new season's well under way and I think that by the time this gets to print the division will have well and truly settled down. Once again we've had the usual pre-season transfers and most of them seem to be pointing towards Maghull who are now fielding Tony Kendal and Pete Holmes both of whom can beat anyone on the night. Cadwa have tempted George Smith away from Liverpool YMCA and that was either just before (or after?) his ruby jubilee with them. Wavertree Labour have tempted yet another female into this division with Sharon Norman, Manweb 'A' are fielding Neil Powell and Police 'B' are fielding Wirral junior, Jonathan Taylor, in their line-up. I'd also like to welcome the new teams to the division, Marconi and Maghull from the first and Police 'B' and Manweb 'B' from the third. I think they will find the division is very strong, competitive and on the whole a good place to play.

However, unlike last season when there were several prospective candidates for promotion I think that this season there are two teams playing and themselves into the promotion groove and they are Liverpool YMCA 'B' and Maghull and YMCA are the only team in the division with an unbeaten record and averaging over seven sets a match. What can I



say about both these teams except they have a good squad and each team has depth and breadth and that's what you need to gain promotion That doesn't mean we can't do our best to upset them and take points off them ... because there are several teams not doing themselves justice at the moment that are capable. For instance, I would expect better from Cadwa 'A' who are averaging five a match. When they can field both Graeme Black and Alan Timewell with a good third player from Alan Davies, Mike Power or George Smith then I would be expecting an average of six or seven. Marconi too is having a problem getting the sevens necessary for promotion and are only averaging four. Good enough too stay in the second but not nearly good enough if they want to return to the first. Manweb 'A' are another team who can go up another notch though at the moment they have lost Neil

Powell through illness but I've been informed that they expect him back before long (hope you are better soon Neil!), then we've got Police 'A' and I just don't know what's happened to them. To me they are one of the most talented teams in the second division yet at the moment they are stuck at the bottom of the division whereas last season they never lost a match until well after Christmas... and it's not as if they are playing badly. Saying that, we're only a quarter way through the season and slow starters often are the strong finishers at the end of the season. I'd like to see them gain promotion as they are a team that would benefit from playing in the first.

I'm not going to make any more predictions because I think things will change of the next half of the season and I'm not sure where the relegation duo will come from. I might commit myself in the next issue and besides that the captains have been trying to get their names in print. There have been several notes on the cards this session and I must thank all those that have put pen to paper...and as I have always promised to include whatever you write here goes!!!

Graeme Reid after their first match of the season when Fords lost 9:1 to Police 'B' said that Tony Harris might not be as good as Dave Evans with

Dave's more attacking game but he will surprise those who are expecting a half volleying defender, whilst the two youngsters (Gavin Lloyd and Jonathan Taylor) are every bit as good as Tom Bray and Cherith Graham so expect them to be in the promotion dog-fight. He said that Fords might have pinched another point on a different day but more than two would have flattered. In Police 'A's' first match against Bootle JC 'A' where they lost 6:4, Jon Dyson says that it was a great start for JC but a disappointing start for them as they expected to take a few more points from their opening match. Player of the match, he says, without a doubt was Sylvia Graham who claimed an impressive hat trick - a convincing win over Gemma and holding her nerve against Jon (13:11) and Terri-Anne (11:4) to claim fifth set victory. Good wins for Gemma and Jon over Julian Quirk. Brian Crolley showed his fighting spirit hadn't lessened with a solid three set victory over Gemma. Brian Crolley comments that Bootle JC had an excellent match against Manweb 'B' and that Manweb were extremely unlucky to only get one point. Both teams fought tooth and nail and Sharon Norman was particularly impressive for Manweb. The match was so hard that the Job Centre's doubles pair just ran out of steam in the last set against Alan and Sharon who won the last two games 2 and 4.

By match three Jon Dyson says that Police 'A's' draw against Manweb 'A' means that hopefully Police 'A' are getting nearer to their first win but the draw was a fair reflection of the match. The 'new kid on the block' Neil Powell claimed a hat trick for Manweb and showed himself to be a very strong player. Fords 'A' had their first win (6:4) against Bootle JC 'A' and Graeme says they had to take advantage of the home match. He also states he can see Fords going the whole season without winning a doubles. In this match Rob Wylie was the boss in the doubles despite the apparent closeness of the score. In the next home match against Manweb 'A' Graeme's magical quote is 'get the ball back on the table and you've always got a better and hit well when they had the opportunity. He says that Manweb will be thinking that they're not 8:2 worse than Fords 'A' and they're not but it was just Ford's night.

And finally, Mike Power makes two short comments on his match cards. Against Fords 'A' he states 'It's a good job Mr Black keeps turning up' (Graeme got a hat trick!!!) and against Police 'A' he says 'Jon Dyson gets better and better' (Jon also got a hat trick!!!)

And lastly the roles of honour:

Facesavers:-

Ian Wensley (Marconi 'A') beat Rob Wylie (Bootle JC) 10, 2, 6 and Pete Holmes (Maghull) 9, -9, 8, 9. Trevor Barraclough

(Manweb 'B') beat Fred Pheysy (Maghull) -5, -9, 8, 12, 10. Alan Evans and Sharon Norman (Manweb 'B') beat Rob Wylie and Roger Neal (Bootle JC 'A') 10, -7, -4, 2, 4. Graeme Reid (Fords 'A') beat Tony Harris (Police 'B') -6, 7, 11, 11.

Close Wins:-

Andy Lloyd (Manweb 'A') beat Fred Pheysy {Maghull} -7, 10, 10, 13. Julian Quirk and Brian Crolley (Bootle J.C. 'A') beat Tony Harris and Len Dyson (Police 'B') 11, -7, -8, 9, 11. Andrew Owens (Marconi) beat John Langton (Bath St. 'B') -9, 13, -13, 10, 9. Graeme Reid (Fords 'A') beat Mike Power (Cadwa 'A') 12, 9, -11, 10. Robbie Goldson (Fords 'A') beat S. Dean (Manweb 'A') 3, 10, -17, 10.

Good Wins:

Sharon Norman (Manweb 'B:') beat John Langton (Bath St. 'B') 7, 8, 8 and Mike Power (Cadwa 'A') -9, 10, 11, -4, 8. Gemma Lloyd (Police 'A') beat Bob Edwards (Marconi) -7, 10, 3, 11. Jamie Hewitt (Bath St. 'C') beat Tony Harris (Police 'B') -11, 7, 3, -4, 9). Alan Davie (Cadwa 'A') beat John Lau (YMCA 'B') 8, 11, 9). Miguel Bellec (YMCA 'B') beat Alan Timewell (Cadwa 'A') 3, -5, 10, -10, 7). Jon Dyson (Police 'A') beat Graeme Black (Cadwa 'A') -6, 7, 8, -5, 8.

relegated last year, will be the same team members. CADWA 'D' (Andy McNabb, John O'Sullivan, Don Davics, Jack Highton and myself) are proper little angels. At the end of last season we could have carded a 10-0 against LYMCA 'C' due to failure to show. But we choose to play the match in the interests of fair play as they were in 3rd place in the league vying for promotion. YM fielded a strong side including George Smith. We lost the match 10-0 and got relegated. The YM won the division by 1 point. CADWA 'D' got relegated by 3 points. George signed for CADWA. As it turns out the team in 3rd, Harold House 'A' also got promoted, again due to those higher teams dropping out. Thus CADWA 'D' were the only losers. So, watch out division 5, there's nothing worse than a p****ed off angel out to prove themselves.

Well that's pretty match how we all got here. The season kicked off with a match played before the official start of the main season, an additional fixture. Police 'C' who were stretched last year hosting Bath Street 'G'. The card records that Bath St 'G' won 2-8, only one game won in 3 straight, so Bath Street 'G' slightly flattered by the score line. However, this was to be the only game Police 'C' were able to play and they folded weeks later. Speaking as a club secretary I know the amount of effort that goes into organising a team which does not have a good pool of available players, and it's a real sickener when the team is forced to fold. I hope that Steve Riley will be able to re-assemble his troops and be back next year, but with their lowest team now being in the 2nd division, it makes it difficult to take on new players of this calibre.

A couple of months into the season, and the hierarchy of teams and clubs seem to have already established themselves. Bath St can lay claim to being stronger in this division than Maghull. Their lower

team, 'G' beat the Maghull 'D' team, 7-3. Their higher team 'F' has beaten both Maghull teams; 'D' home & away 10-0 and 'E' 10-0 at home & 9-1 away (Keith Whittaker winning the only Maghull point). Amidst this was the irony that in their match with their own 'G' team, they dropped their first point. In the first match of the night Dave Batty beat George Crowley, 3 straight. However this was just a blip as all other games went the 'F' team's way. Thus they amassed a mighty 48 points out of a possible 50 in the 1st 5 games. Things haven't gone so smoothly as they have had two major setbacks. One is the loss of Reg. Edwards who is going to have to sit things out due to Doctors orders, leaving Cunningham, Lindsay, Willis, Crowley and Foley to carry on. Get well soon Reg.

The second is the loss by 2 games to 8 to CADWA 'D', on a night when a draw would have been a fair result. As exemplified by the battle of the fours, Jack Highton v George Crowley. After winning the first game 11-0, Jack saw George turn things round to be standing 10-6 up in the fifth. However, Jack took six in a row, including an edge, to sneak home. Four other sets went to deciders, Andy McNabb involved in two, one with Norman and in the battle of the ones, 16-14 in the fifth versus Dave Cunningham.

This was only CADWA 'D's second game of the season. They had to wait until the last day in October to play the first match of the '04-'05 season. That's 6 months, half a year, between matches! However the layoff didn't seem to affect us as with home advantage we beat Maghull 'E' 9-1. The point for Maghull 'E' coming from the first doubles where John & Don lost from 2 up to Steve Banks & Andy McCourt. Andy was magnanimous in defeat saying he thought CADWA 'D' were the best team he'd seen in this division so far. Perhaps due to such kindly compliments, CADWA 'D' played at the third attempt the first Maghull 'E' match. The scheduled

fixture was called off at the last minute due to a death in the family of one of the Maghull team. The first rearranged match was called off due to Maghull only having 2 players. A 0-10 card was duly entered by Maghull, but the good sports at CADWA went ahead and played the game for the 3rd time of asking. This time no slip ups from John & Don who contributed to the 10-0 result.

Bath Street 'G' have had a chequered start to the season. Expunged results, walkovers and no shows. After Police 'C', Bath Street 'G' then visited Wavertree Labour 'F' and Greenbank 'A' in consecutive matches, only to find nothing. No home team opposition! Understandably 10-0 walkovers were submitted on card. It'll be a great shame if these games don't get rearranged and if this affects the end of season promotion list. By mid October, Bath Street 'G' were left to reflect that, due to no fault of their own had only played 1 match and even that was expunged!

In the 7-3 defeat of Maghull 'D', they benefited as they turned up one short. So the result was 4-3 on games played. Ron Georson and Dave Batty collected those 4 points in their singles matches. But their opponents, Jeanette Hutchings and Jimmy Ambrose rallied to win their other singles and Jeanette and John Gillibrand combined for the doubles victory. Fate was not so kind in Bath Street 'G's away match to Maghull's 'E' team. Ron lost in 5 to both Banks', Steve & Jeff. Alan Chan got the better of Al Parker over 5 games. But worse was to come after the match was drawn 5-5. It was noticed that Bath Street's numbers 3&4 had played out of order. The revised score then being 3-7. It could have been worse, as only 2nd doubles and Barbara's 3v4 win over Ronnie Cockeroff were reversed. Al Parker's win over Ronnie, still stood as this would have been 3v4 rather than 4v4.

Andy McCourt and the rest of the Maghull 'E' lads had got off to a great start at Greenbank 'A', surviving 3 deciders to run out 10-0 victors. Wavertree Labour 'F' suffered exactly the same experience, losing 10-0 in their first game of the season to the other Maghull team. At least in the reverse fixture Wavertree's first doubles of Dave Murray & Dean Nickson enabled them to prevent another whitewash.

A completely changed Greenbank 'A' took on Wavertree 'F' in what could be deemed a bottom of the table clash. They asserted their supremacy over Wavertree Labour 'F' 8-2. Thanks to impeccable performances from Claire, Lynne, Anthony, and in the doubles.

With walkovers and post-ponements flying about, Greenbank 'A' are in danger of going over the 3 strikes and you're out line. Having players representing the country in the Olympics is a great honour, and it would be a shame if

this led to a failure to meet fixture obligations in this league. It may be that there is more to this, and that by adding an extra team, Greenbank have over extended themselves. If Greenbank 1st team are doing well in the 3rd division, then it will be Greenbank 'A' that are forced to withdraw.

With one team withdrawing we are now down to 18 matches per team. Still that's a better than prospect than last year. However, to have a 2nd team drop out of this division would be a great blow to the schedule and make the whole thing seem like a farce.

Even if this "play everyone 3 times" format is liked by the players, the lack of teams makes it poor alternative to having a full quotient of 12 teams. You have to remember that this division is oft regarded as being the home of players looking for a less competitive, more sociable match night, and also the nurturing ground for young talent. But with only 8 teams (now 7) it feels like a super league! It also feels like we

are the guinea pigs for a new format. I wonder if this new format will be grafted onto the elite of division 1 if successfully taken here? Mind you that might not be such a daft idea, as there is a bigger gap in ability between the top and middle of division one than there is between 4th and 5th! The top division is also said to be not attractive to the best players, so may be they will back a trimmed down higher quality premier division one? This will also ripple more teams down the league!

It's not for me to suggest such a thing in a divisional report, nor can I guess the effect of such moves. Obviously this is a big shake up we are talking about here and will be hard to stomach. So don't fret. It won't happen. In fact, forget I mentioned it.

Now don't let it spoil your Christmas by thinking about it too much.

Have a Cool Yule and see you in the New Year.

Player Profile

Young at 80



Myself, and the members of Aigburth Table Tennis Club thought Eric Young was the oldest in the Liverpool & District Table Tennis League, but on our recent visit to Linaere, we found that one of Linaere's founder members, Alec Davidson, was a bit older, but nevertheless, a great achievement to be still playing competitively.

Eric has been quite a sportsman in his time, he's done some boxing, ran for one of the top running clubs, Liverpool Harriers, an accomplished water skier, and top class Roller Skater, then for another branch to his sporting tree, decided to have a go at Table

Tennis. Eric was a late starter, and joined the Victoria Park Club in 1959, Victoria Park had originally been playing in the Sunday School and Church leagues, but were now playing in the Liverpool League South, under the guidance of Eddie Cameron, (League Secretary 1955-1994). Eric can remember those early coaching sessions from Eddie, and must have been encouraged by Victoria Park winning the J.Rumjahn Cup that season. In 1961 Eric left Victoria Park to join Wavertree Labour, where he helped the 'B' team win the W. Stamp Cup in 1963. Eric moved on to Sefton General Hospital, and then on to Liverpool Jewish in 1965, he won a Division 6 medal with them in 1998. Finally moving on to Aigburth in 1999, ending last season (2003-04) with what must have been one of his most satisfying wins, helping the 'A' team beat Div. 5 run-away leaders Wavertree Labour 'F', in the W. Stamp Cup Final.

So let's hope we have many more Joking years with him.

Eric Wood
Secretary, Aigburth T.T.C.

The Paralympics 2004

Great Britain had a team of 166 athletes in Athens competing in 15 sports at the 2004 Paralympic Games, which took place from 17th to 28th September. In Sydney four years ago, the Paralympic team became one of the most successful British sporting teams of all time when it won 131 medals (41 gold, 43 silver, 47 bronze) and came second only to hosts Australia on the overall medal table.

Neil Robinson and **James Rawson** performed arguably one of the greatest come-backs in Paralympic table tennis history, to clinch a place in the Class 3 team final. Great Britain looked dead and buried in the fourth rubber of the semi-final against favourites France, when Jean Philippe Robin, the world number one, held eight match points over Robinson which would have clinched an overall 3-1 victory for the French. Incredibly an inspired Robinson fought back to take the match and the transformation was complete when Rawson won the deciding rubber. The British pair beat France 3-2 to face Korea in the final

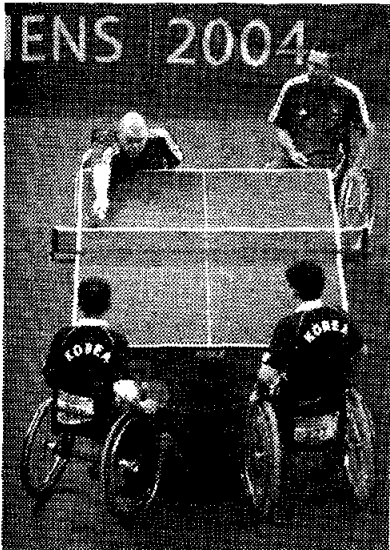
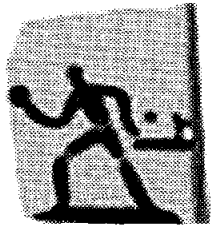
place at the Galatsi Olympic Hall, but the GB team couldn't repeat their world class turnaround over the French, going down 3-0 to the Koreans, but well done nevertheless.

The Class 5 team of **Arnie Chan** (Mansfield) and **Scott Robertson** (Deeside, Flintshire) failed to make it through to the knock-out rounds after losing 3-1 to Serbia & Montenegro. Robertson was involved in a marathon match with Ilija Djurasinovic in the first rubber with the Briton twice coming from behind to force a fifth game which Djurasinovic won. The second singles match was equally close. Chan fought back superbly from two games down against Zlatko Kesler, but couldn't quite finish the recovery as Kesler won the final game 11-7.

Cathy Mitton (Leeds) pulled off an excellent victory for Britain in the women's Class 1-3 team event, but it wasn't enough to stop Japan from securing an overall 3-1 match score. Due to the grouping of classes in this event Mitton and team-mate **Lynne Riding** (Preston), both C2 competitors, had to face C3 opponents which was always going to be a difficult step up in class. Mitton however made light work of Satoko Fujiwara in her first match, winning 11-6, 11-8, 11-5. This came after Riding had been beaten in the opener by Tomoko Fukuzawa. The pair then battled well in the doubles, particularly in a tight second game, but lost the match 3-0.

The G.B. Table Tennis - Team
Mon

Arnie Chan (Mansfield) James Rawson (Nottingham)
Scott Robertson (Deeside) Neil Robinson (Bridgend)
Stefan Trofan (Sheffield)
Women
Suc Gilroy (Barnsley) Cathy Mitton (Leeds) Lynne Riding (Preston)



The GB Class 3 team, James Rawson and Neil Robinson, up against the Koreans in the Final for Gold.

By reaching the final, the British team was guaranteed a silver medal thereby matching their achievement at the last Games. The final, against a strong team from Korea, took



So Scott is playing his part in a very strong Greenbank squad in the 3rd Division, and Lynne doing the same in the 5th Division.

Editor.



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7. STATION ROAD, PRESCOT

COACHING

ETTA Technical Manager

visits the North West

As part of the continuing support given to Table Tennis coaches throughout England, the ETTA Technical Manager, Steen Kyst Hansen delivered the annual North West coaches update seminar at Halton Table Tennis Centre on Saturday 6th November. The seminar was organised by Andrea Holt (North West Regional Development Officer) with a welcome from Karen Tonge the Halton Centre's Director and Chairperson.

The seminar, entitled "Always looking to the future 2004-2005", outlined targets for the years 2004-2012. This was to build on the recent successes at the European Youth Championships, through to the Commonwealth Games in 2006, the world Championships in 2007, Beijing Olympics in 2008 going right through to hopefully the London Olympics in 2012. Questions were taken from the floor after each topic was delivered. This provided an interesting and stimulating discussion between Steen and the assembled coaches.



A short presentation of the recent European Youth Championships was given by Jill Parker using her laptop and digital projector. This showed video footage of some of the team matches for both boys and girls junior players.

Steen emphasised that although we are strong at Boys Cadet level, taking a silver medal at the Europeans, we still need to produce a steady stream of youngsters coming through to challenge the current players. We need 7 or 8 players of similar ability at both, Cadet and Junior levels, boys and girls to stimulate competition for places in the teams.

Costs of training these youngsters are quite considerable with some players going to Beijing two or three times a year to the Chinese National Table Tennis Centre whilst

others have attended other training events in Hungary and Sweden.

How do we make all this happen?

Steen outlined his ideas and where we, as coaches, come into the picture at grass roots level. We are all a team even though we are at the grass roots level and he is at the top with the England team. It takes about five years serious coaching and training to bring a youngster through to become a reasonable player, so coaching Juniors is a long term project.

After lunch we went to the tables to practice the shot training and routines to produce quality players. Steen outlined the role of the coach before and during the season at practice and at tournaments. Emphasis was made on the importance of footwork, movement, service, physical training and shot production. Later discussion related to a typical week at a training camp outlining good practice, warm up, technical warm up, first exercise and match play. Key points in every training session were covered, this applies to all levels of players from internationals to grass roots players.

I went away from the day with plenty of ideas and enthusiasm and I made a new pal in Ken Richardson from Lancaster, my practice partner. He was telling me at lunch how he coaches four times a week in High schools around Lancaster and Morecambe dealing with 100-110 youngsters each week. The local league has now grown from two divisions to four. That's what you call commitment! He looked so fit and well and is obviously thriving on it.

John Langton Bath St. TT Club

Have you ever thought about becoming a qualified umpire?

There are many rewarding benefits to becoming an umpire. A lot of adult players take up umpiring to get a ring side view of some of the best matches in England or abroad, and find it a very rewarding way of giving something back to the game. Many also enjoy the social side of meeting new people at events throughout the county and further afield.

There is no age restriction to becoming an umpire. Starting with the Junior Umpire Award (JUA) with no minimum age limit, you can rapidly move up the umpiring ladder to become a Local Umpire (LU), County Umpire (CU), National Umpire (NU) or International Umpire (IU).

The Local Umpire qualification is a basic umpire test for those whose interest is initially in umpiring only at local level. It requires a sound knowledge of the Laws and basic scoring procedures. Contact Ken Arnson MBE for more details.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was most surprised to read the letter in the latest Digest concerning 'allegations' I am supposed to have made against the Bootle J.C.T. Club.

Rather than being an attack on Bootle JC my previous letter was to highlight a 'loophole' in the rules that allows any club to rank players grouping lists in any order they wish without regard to which is the stronger team and the situation that can arise the two teams are in the same division.

As I was playing in the 3rd division at the time I mentioned facts and match results from that division (in my letter and in Div. 3 notes) to highlight how players could (and actually did regularly in Div. 3) play up and strengthen an otherwise weaker team, thus affecting promotion and relegation issues.

I did not make any allegations against the Bootle JC club, I merely stated a fact that existed at the time, i.e. 'Any team battling it out with Bootle JC are in

fact battling with all of the Bootle JC club as any member of the club can (not did) play for the 'first' team. I do not have any complaints against the Bootle JC club and in fact congratulate the 'A' team for a magnificent achievement in winning the Division 2 title.

The Management Committee also must have considered this 'loophole' a problem as they put forward rule changes at the A.G.M. to counter it, which was surprisingly (considering the numerous comments of support I received last season) defeated by the membership.

Finally, as regards to making a complete fool of myself in front of my fellow table tennis players, I manage to do that most weeks anyway when I pick up a bat and play.

Best wishes
Tony Harris 5/9/04

Divisional Cups 2nd. Round Report

Division 1. Readman Cup			
2	LIVERPOOL YMCA 'A'	v	MESIDE POLICE
4	WATERLOO	v	BATH STREET
5	CADWA	v	LIVERPOOL YMCA
5	FORDS	v	WAV LABOUR
Division 2. Rumjahn Cup			
3	MARGONNI	v	MARGONNI 'A'
3	ASIDE POLICE 'B'	v	LIVERPOOL YMCA 'B'
5	MESIDE POLICE 'A'	v	BOOTLE J.C. 'A'
4	CADWA 'A'	v	MANWEB 'A'
Division 3. Hawk Cup			
WOL	LIVERPOOL YMCA 'A'	v	HAROLD HOUSE 'A'
3	WAV LABOUR 'B'	v	CADWA 'B'
1	MANWEB 'B'	v	BATH STREET 'C'
2	BOOTLE YMCA	v	WAV LABOUR 'A'
Division 4. Forrest Cup			
5	WAV LABOUR 'C'	v	HAROLD HOUSE 'B'
4	AGHURTH	v	BATH STREET 'B'
5	WAV LABOUR 'C'	v	WAV LABOUR 'D'
5	MARGONNI 'B'	v	BOOTLE YMCA 'A'
Division 5. Stamp Cup			
	MAGHILL 'E'	v	BYE
2	BATH STREET 'G'	v	CADWA 'D'
WOL	WAV LABOUR 'E'	v	GREENBANK 'A'
5	BATH STREET 'F'	v	MAGHILL 'D'

Neil pulls one back in 4 against Alan, 3-2, next game to Graeme against Dave in 4. Cadwa pulling ahead 4-2, Neil getting the better of Mike 12-10 in the 4th. Cadwa call Alan on against Dave to get that last set, Dave goes into a 2-0 lead. Alan saves the 3rd, but no stopping Dave now, winning the 4th 11-9. So the match stands at 4-4 between Andy who's lost both his sets in 6 games, v Mike who's lost both his sets in 9 games, what a set this must have been. Andy the 1st, then Mike, Andy, Mike, the last one to Andy 11-9, so the only 100% (wins) to Graeme, on the losing side, but I'm sure all the players must have enjoyed a tension packed night.

Fords had another close 5-4 against Wav. Labour in the 1st Div. Readman Cup, the Fords team of Kevin Dolder, Terry Turner and Tim Wearden and Wav. Lab's Alice Howard, Gary Watson and Mick Tierney, first 6 games going to the call, with Kevin having played all his games, score now at 3-3. Wav. call on Alice v Terry, Terry wins in 4. Fords call Tim v Mick for what turned out to be the only 5 game set of the match, Tim going 2-0 in front, was it all over! No said Mick, winning the next 13-11, putting pressure on to Tim, then Mick takes the next 12-10, all the pressure now on Tim, but Mick's on song now, winning the next 11-5. So the crunch game, and it's Mick back at the table against Terry, in that vast arena which is Fords, is the 'heat' gonna prove too much for Mick so soon after the last epic. Terry takes the 1st, only just at 12-10, Mick grabs the next 11-7, Terry the 3rd 11-8, and what must have been some game Terry wins the game, set and match 15-13, so well done to all players.

Only 3 matches finished 5-4 and 4 matches 5-3, looking at the match cards, I would say the match of the round goes to Cadwa 'A' v Manweb 'A' in the 2nd Div. Rumjahn Cup. Cadwa's team of Graeme Black, Alan Davies and Mike Power, v Manweb's team of Neil Power, Dave Harse and Andy Lloyd. Manweb must have decided to go for Gold from the off, calling on the two 1's, Graeme and Neil, and what a game it must have been, Graeme winning in 5. Cadwa call Alan v Andy, Alan in 3, so it's 2-0 for Cadwa, next one, Dave v Mike, another 5 gamer, this one to Manweb, 2-1, Cadwa call Graeme v Andy, over in 3, 3-1 to Cadwa,

The last 5-4 match, the 4th. Div. Forrest Cup match between Aigburth and Bath St. 'E'. Aigburth's team of Graham Rollinson, Carl Anderson Eric Wood and Ian Laird, and Bath St's team of Ted Cramsie, Karen Gibson, Austin Hayden and Dave Cunningham. Bath St's 1st call, the two 4's, age and experience of Dave v youth, and learning fast, Ian, young Ian winning in 4, Carl next beating Austin in 4, 2-0 to Aigburth, third set was the turning point for Bath St. Ted beating Graham in 5, 3 of the games going to 12-10, then Karen beating Eric in 3 straight, but you could say Eric was a wee bit unlucky, going down 14-16, 14-16, 10-12, then Ted beating Carl in 4, and Karen putting on more pressure by beating Graham in 4, another 3 games of 12-10, so from being 2-0 down Bath St. are now 4-2 up. Not

over yet though, Eric beats Dave in 3 and Ian beats Austin in 4, so it's all down to the doubles, Bath St. settling for the age and experience of Ted and Dave, and Aigburth for the youth and experience of Graham and Carl, Aigburth battled to win the first game 13-11, but ran out of steam, or luck, going down 7,9,& 5, but again, it must have been a good night.

Only disappointment of the round were the two W/O's given, especially that by Harold House 'A' who received a W/O from the first round when Greenbank conceded their match for not giving H.H. 7 days notice of the tie arrangements.

The draw for the next round, the Semi's, will take place shortly
Roly Wright, Cup Secretary

Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy

First round Report

handicap	score	score	handicap
175 LINACRE	551	v 476 AIGBURTH 2	256
33 WATERLOO	342	v 294 MANWEB 3	142
47 FORDS	418	v 399 WAV LABOUR	112
2 MSIDE POLICE 1	349	v 335 BATH STREET 2	67
MANWEB 1	W/O	v XXXXX MANWEB 2	
208 BOOTLE YMCA 2	317	v 332 AIGBURTH 1	210
131 BATH STREET 5	371	v 372 BATH STREET 1	5
14 MARCONI	379	v 327 BOOTLE J C	62
170 CADWA 4	469	v 505 CADWA 3	159
89 BATH STREET 3	419	v 429 CADWA 2	180
LIVERPOOL YMCA			BYE
MANWEB 4			BYE
BATH STREET 4			BYE
MSIDE POLICE 2			BYE
BOOTLE YMCA 1			BYE
CADWA 1			BYE

Trevor Barraclough, Robin Barker and Arthur Harrison determined to try and play a holding game, maintained the lead up to the 9th set, the 8th set ended with the score Waterloo 258, Manweb 261. So with Waterloo getting maximum points from the last 2 sets, and Manweb 33, Waterloo ran out winners by 48 points, Is the Frank Murphy Trophy going "home" this season!

FORDS v WAVERTREE LABOUR

2nd. Div. Fords v 3rd Div. Wav. Lab. Wavertree started 65 in front with Wav's Mike Ashton adding another 4 in the first set, beating Ford's Grahame Reid both games, but in the 2nd set, Ford's evergreen Alf Perry pulled back 26 points from Bill Stanley. After that it was neck and neck with the points up to the 5th game, when Wav's Tony Connor took a game off Grahame for a 1 point set advantage 40 to 39. After that Ford's won every game with Wavertree pegging away at the points, and finally going into the last set with Fords in the lead by 8 points, not a lot!, must have been a nail biter, Ford's Robbie Goldson winning both games, but Mike gaining 31, so Fords won by 19, did Ford's Frank Murphy Trophy experience pull them through on this one!

Match Comment from Fords captain Grahame "The dream lives (3rd consecutive final) thanks to Robbie and Alf.

MSIDE POLICE 1 v BATH STREET 2

Both teams had a mixture of top players (- handicap) and good players with plus handicaps, the Police line up of John Rankin, Steve Gittins and Tony Harris, with Bath Street's. Fred Bainbridge, Brenda Buoy, and Alan Willis, so match started with a 68 point advantage to Bath St. First set was even, 36 to Steve 35 to Fred, 2nd set, Brenda Added 10, 42 to Tony's 32, 3rd set John pulled 23 back 42 to John 19 to Alan, 19

LINACRE v AIGBURTH 2

Linacre's line up was Harry Reeve, Harry Nelson and Jack Davidson, and for Aigburth, Ray Jones, Paul Crugel and John Mitchell. Two 4th div. teams, with Aigburth starting with an 81 point advantage, 1st. set Linacre's Harry Nelson pulling 19 points back from Ray Jones, but then in the second set Paul Crugel wins the first game 21-19 against Jack Davidson, but Jack settled down to win the 2nd game 21-10. Third set Harry Reeve set his mark on the match, pulling 34 points back off John Mitchell, by the end of the 5th set, Linacre were in front, not losing any further games and winning the match by 75 points.

WATERLOO v MANWEB 3

Waterloo started minus 36, giving Manweb a 178 point advantage, but with the Waterloo team of Keith Williams, Mike Mahoney and Alan Chase, (currently top of Div.1) was that enough! With the Manweb team of