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OF THE

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Table Tennis

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Vol. V

November, 1954.

No. 1

COMMENT

DESPITE several important changes in the running of the League, we would say that this has been the quietest, even the dullest opening to the campaign in recent years.

There has been some excitement over the dropping of the Lancashire League matches for the time being; quite a lot of inquiries about the new Nomads side, a few spots of bother about correct interpretation of the new rules re ranking, and that is about all.

The old axiom that no news is good news probably still holds good, though it is not very helpful to your editors endeavouring to find points on which to direct their spotlight.

Possibly, however, it would not be without interest to direct your attention on the state of the game in the women's divisions where, to put it frankly, there seems to be a degree of stagnation which is by no means satisfying.

In recent years there has been evidence of declining interest in this section, and we are not alone in thinking that it has reached a dangerously low level. Certainly it does seem tragic that a league of the size of Liverpool can no longer support two women's divisions, shown by the fact that the lower section is two teams short.

This would not be so bad if it was not for the additional fact that the standard of play has also apparently taken a very big plunge indeed. It seems obvious that only two clubs are to be concerned in the fight for the premier division title, and the rest vary from average to very weak indeed.

We know that in all probability we shall be taken up on this point but it is our belief that the standard in these two divisions is lower than it has been for some considerable time.

One important explanation is that the better players have been steadily drifting away from the section, and it is worthy of note that of the four semi-finalists in the Closed last February, only one is playing in the women's divisions this season.

This cannot be said to help by any means, but it does seem that there are fewer new faces than ever this season, and this is probably the really disappointing and most important fact of all.

In recent years there have been a reasonable number of women players coming along and making good, but the supply appears to be drying up by degrees and standards of play must inevitably fall if the present trend continues, which would be a very sad thing indeed.

MERSEYSIDE OPEN WILL LACK NONE OF ITS LUSTRE

By W. STAMP.



WE commence our 29th season by extending a welcome to four new clubs, Earle, Government Laboratory Social Club, Liverpool Parcels and Sefton General Hospital, and we hope their Association with us will be long and happy.

There have been several changes, and your attention is drawn to these alterations in the handbook, which are on another page of this issue.

The 18th Merseyside Open commences next Wednesday evening and continues until Saturday at the Drill Hall in Mather Avenue (86 or 87 bus to the door), this being the third year we have had this excellent venue, and for the first time since 1946 we are staging the finals in the same hall as the preliminaries.

We are reluctant to do this, but the lack of support last year at Picton Hall, and at the Philharmonic Hall the year before, has made this necessary. We cannot continue to lose money, and if we do not receive the support of our own members, we have to bow to the inevitable.

Limited Seating

The finalists will no doubt prefer to stay at Mather Avenue, where the playing conditions are much better than at any hall in town, but the accommodation for spectators will be limited. Early application for tickets to the finals is therefore requested, and should be made to me, either by letter, or personal application at the Drill Hall during the preliminary rounds. Front row, 3/6; 2nd row, 2/6.

Play commences each evening at 6.0 p.m. and at 10.0 a.m. on Saturday morning. Admission 1/- per session. The finals commence at 7.30 p.m.

The entries include the Welsh inter-

national women's team, who are playing England at Bolton on the 26th and travelling over to Liverpool the following morning; Aubrey Simons, Brian Kennedy, Benny Casofsky, and the present Lancashire team, which includes Ken Stanley, Cliff Booth, Geoff Pullar and Derek Ellison.

Helen Elliot, the Scottish champion and holder of the singles, is coming to defend her title, and in addition to Kath Best, there is Ann Haydon, who made history last year by winning the "Boys" singles. She reached the finals of the doubles with Kath Best in the World's Championships at Wembley last April, when they were only narrowly defeated by the Rowe twins.

During the summer Ann excelled in another sport, by winning the Junior Lawn Tennis Championship, at Wimbledon. I think I can promise you that the standard of play at this year's "Merseyside" will lack none of its former lustre.

Chance for All

You will have noticed in your handbook that week commencing January 24 is free from league matches and given over to the playing of the Maxwell Fyfe (men) and D. M. Foulis (women) Handicap cup competitions. Previously we arranged them during the Christmas and New Year holiday period, which has been very inconvenient for many of our members.

Every player has a handicap and sets are the best of three games, 31 (thirty-one) up. The poorer player, with the aid of the handicap, has a fair chance of success against stronger opponents.

The preliminary rounds will be played off on one night at centres which are arranged geographically to avoid undue

Continued on page 16.

1934 Memory Recalled

THE effect of reorganisation has shown three main changes in the division—generally the overall strength has been weakened, especially where there are A teams; three teams now seem to hold the reins, Crosby, Balfour and Rafter; and a migration of players has started, although the club most expected to be split has remained firm and not lost players.

Anfield, losing four or five players, is the club which has been most affected, but the multiple team clubs are finding reserves hard to come by for their first team, the replacement having to come from the B teams. This does not sound difficult until we find the three teams playing on the same night. The reserve finds himself in the unenviable position of playing in a division a few above normal. Perhaps this position will be reviewed after a season's working.

New Faces

The above situation could well rob the three strongest teams of the championship. Were it not for Bernard Hand being only available for home matches on a Wednesday, I would nominate Crosby as this year's champions, as they can draw on the next player in strength and not dip lower for reserves.

The addition of Lucem, Linnets and Nomads to the division provides a welcome change to see new faces, although for me it is a link between past, present and future.

The return of Lucem reminds me of the first time I visited their Cornwallis Street headquarters to play Don Foulis. That was a cup match in 1934 when I was playing in an East Region team, later to gain first division status. Don had won the Closed for the fifth time, the North of England and represented England in the Swaythling Cup the previous season, a truly magnificent feat.

What has happened to our turn-out. There is only one well-dressed 'Barna' in our division—Alan Lawson (Anfield). Let's all whiten our shoes and improve our appearance at the table while the iron is hot.

Good luck, Vic Chesham, in studying to be a youth leader—a noble occupation.

ONLY TWO ARE UNBEATEN

CAN we do it? Do what? Finish top or next to top. Yes, almost any one of the majority of the teams in our division could gain promotion this season, so well matched are most of them. As witness in some measure, after the four initial league matches, only two players remain unbeaten, one each from Victoria Park and A.O.M., and neither of these two clubs leads the division.

Anyway, here is my forecast for the top four at the end of the season, despite protests—I can almost hear them already—from other teams, none of whom could be called weak by ordinary standards—Bootle Y.M.C.A., Bohemians (a strong tail here), Victoria Park and Bath Street, if Alec Gould, of this last club, can rejoin the fray soon after his severe hand injury.

But I give Cadwa, youth tempered with experience, and even my own club, with another first-teamer yet to sign, outside chances to climb high in the table.

Likely Lads

I continue to support strongly the idea which prompted the revision of the league this season, and I dare suggest that our division is the one first to reap something approaching full benefit as we have only one team from each club and include but two reserve sides in our complement.

From my observations, covering only as yet a fraction of the division's strength, I single out Cyril Jones (Cadwa) and possibly I. Rogerson (Bootle) as likely lads who could hit the headlines. I'm not forgetting A. C. Taylor, but he is more than half-way there already.

But, oh players, why must you play so well to a point and make such good strokes, yet lose your sets by lack of discrimination of which ball to try and put away and by your failure to appreciate that your opponent may have his own ideas of the way the set is going to be played. Craft frequently defeats stroke play, but this latter attribute allied to good table-sense can take a player to the heights.

Challenge of Newcomers

AS usual in our division we have many new teams to welcome this season, six have been promoted to join six of last season's participants, and as always newcomers are very much to the fore in challenging for honours.

Bootle Y.M.C.A. and P.A.N.T.O. are the promoted sides carrying all before them, with Bohemians' reconstituted side maintaining the challenge of the old division.

Visiting the Y.M.C.A. we find unbounding enthusiasm for the game. The large room houses three tables, a curtain draped across gives limited privacy to the match table. The club's A team has a great belief in itself. The players, no doubt having to hold off stiff challenges from those youngsters on the other side of the curtain, must of necessity keep on their toes. Their promotion chances must be high.

At home, acclimatised to their own conditions, they are unlikely to drop many points.

Slow Starters

So far the three pacemakers have not met each other. The next few week's fixtures rectify this and we should then see the top positions sort themselves out.

At the bottom of the table as I write, I.C.I. are without a point. Always slow starters, they will no doubt start their collection soon. Despite their losses, they have gained at least three sets per match and started off the season by playing each of the top three teams. Their position is not as bad as it looks.

Waterloo Park, English Electric and C.L.C. all look more likely relegation candidates. Their total points have all come from each other, but the season is young yet and many surprises are no doubt in store.

Bouquet of the month goes to Linacre. This team has played the same five players for years. Always they have been good fighters, but always they have been struggling members of the division. This time they have fought themselves into the top half of the table and instead of fighting for their existence they are enjoying a comfortable few games without anxiety.

STRENGTHENED BEAUCLAIR

THIS division, constructed as it was from last season's regional teams, is by way of being a mixed bag, but each week the picture becomes more clear, with one or two pulling away from the field and others falling away.

Up to now the strong teams appear to be Beauclair, Linnets A and Maghull, with the first-named seemingly slightly superior. They have met, and beaten, both their close rivals by the same 6-4 margin, and in both cases Beauclair were the away team.

The signing of Ken Harold from Balfour and Ken Wright from Y.M.C.A., has strengthened them enormously, pushing Porter, Weston and Carter down the team and giving them a tail which will not lose many sets this season. Yet they cannot afford to take anything easy if they want to win the division, because in both of those two narrow wins there were sets which could have gone the other way.

Surprise Packet

To me, the greatest surprise was the failure of B. Pardy (Linnets), who, in the league match lost to both Wright and Weston, and a week later, convincingly beat Harold, Wright and Porter in a Stamp Cup game. Which just goes to show that one off night can sway any match.

The perennial 'nark' about late arrivals cropped up in the very early days this year. Why on earth captains are so weak-kneed as to allow this to go on baffles me. I am told that it isn't sporting to claim sets. Well, neither is it sporting to keep players waiting until after 9 o'clock, as has happened this year.

It is not unsporting to apply the rules of the league, so for goodness sake clamp down on these people (usually notorious) by claiming all sets at 8 o'clock. If you don't do it yourselves, don't moan to me about being kept waiting, because I've got no sympathy to waste on people who won't help themselves.

If a man cannot arrive before time, it can be arranged for him to arrive late, but it should be done beforehand, not just left for his opponents to learn the hard way.

ALL FRIENDS TOGETHER

ONCE again we start the annual battle for league points, but this season we find ourselves among many new faces and friends.

To those who have risen in status we extend a hearty welcome and to those who feel they may have fallen a little we say: "Now is the time to put in lots of practice and make the fellows above you play for their places in your senior teams."

There is one thing at which Division V cannot be excelled and that is the friendliness and pleasant atmosphere in which the matches are played. I haven't seen all the matches but those I have been to have all been played in this friendly and sporting way. After all, a table tennis match is another way of passing a pleasant evening, so let us strive to make each and every match one to remember in every way.

Two Struggles

There have been no real upsets to the form book yet, but I sincerely hope to be able to report that one or two of the teams, as yet pointless, have broken their "duck" by the time my next report goes into print. We have three teams with 100 per cent. so far, so two struggles are already developing at the extremes of the division.

Individually we have several old friends with us, such as Gerry Gill, Joe Ellison and the Dickensons, of Balfour; Danny Poser, of A.O.M.; Vic Jenkinson, of Bohemians, and D. Cameron, L. Hunter and C. Manning, helping to make up a strong Victoria Park B team.

We must also extend a welcome to the women members of the various clubs and wish them a successful season.

I would like to point out that I do not intend to go into too much detail (during the season) of match results. These are all gathered together most ably and league tables given for your information on the centre pages. Therefore, I would greatly appreciate any bits of news and criticism that would be of interest to us all in the division and would ask you to write to me personally on Division V matters only at 62 Aigburth Hall Road, Liverpool 19.

SIGNINGS WHICH IMPRESS

WITH the Wirral League severing their connections with this side of the river I lost my job as fifth division correspondent; now with our own league adopting the new rules I have regained my job, and welcome you all to our new division.

Three signings which impress me are Kevin Fenerty by Brenka, Les Donnelly by Everton Y.M., and Kilshaw by Warbreck Moor. All will considerably strengthen their teams.

The outstanding performance to date was Warbreck Moor's draw with the strong Brenka side, who may need this point before the season ends to keep them a shade ahead of—shall I say Cadwa A?

Waterloo Park A, who are without a win, had hard luck losing 6-4 to Everton Y.M., Hearle losing 21-23, 21-12, 20-22 to Redmond to clinch the game.

Strong Teams

The Brenka team, which is ably captained, secretaried and mothered by my old friend Johnny Todhunter, looks a strong combination to me with the brothers Fenerty—Kevin back from English Electric and Brian making a welcome return after two years with the Forces and improving with every game.

Cantwell, with his nice all-round style; Harper, who learned his table tennis in London; and Eaton, who is perhaps more at home playing badminton for Liverpool, form a good all-round team.

English Electric A are another of the ex-North Region contingent. Their record to date gives a good indication of their strength. They are ably led by Harold Darlington. Fane carries the mantle of 100 per cent. and, together with happy Harry Kitchen, is playing very well. Fane, when he stops falling off motor bikes, should be an asset to the side.

While appreciating that we are now a division, I feel that the cause of our table tennis would have been much better served had we remained regional teams, as our interest in cups is practically non-existent and travelling has increased considerably. And have you thought of your fate if promotion comes your way?

LEAGUE TABLES

to 13th November, 1954

First Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Rafters	7	5	1	1	53	17	11
15 Crosby	6	5	0	1	42	18	11
Anfield	7	4	1	2	47	23	10
Balfour	6	4	0	2	41	19	10
Balfour A	7	4	2	1	40	30	9
Linnets	7	3	2	2	34	36	8
Oakhill	7	1	2	4	33	37	6
L'pool Y.M.	7	1	3	3	32	38	5
Lucem	6	1	2	3	27	33	5
Rafters A	6	1	3	2	26	34	4
Nomads	6	0	4	2	22	38	2
Anfield A	6	0	4	2	13	47	2
Livex	6	0	5	1	10	50	1

Fifth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Balfour B	6	6	0	0	48	12	12
Rafters B	6	6	0	0	41	19	12
Victoria Park B ..	6	6	0	0	39	21	12
Bootle Y.M. B	6	3	0	3	37	23	9
Oakhill B	6	2	3	1	35	25	5
Balfour C	6	2	3	1	33	27	5
African Oil A	6	2	3	1	27	33	5
Bohemians B	6	2	4	0	32	28	4
Victoria Park C ..	6	2	4	0	24	36	4
Anfield B	6	1	4	1	24	36	3
Balfour D	6	0	5	1	13	47	1
Anfield C	6	0	6	0	7	53	0

Second Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bootle Y.M.	6	5	0	1	44	16	11
Bohemians	6	5	1	0	44	16	10
Cadwa	6	4	1	1	41	19	9
Victoria Park	6	4	1	1	41	19	9
Bath Street	6	4	1	1	39	21	9
Cheshire Lines ..	6	3	3	0	33	27	6
African Oil	6	1	2	3	27	33	5
L'pool Y.M. A	6	2	4	0	21	39	4
Waterloo Dock ..	6	2	4	0	20	40	4
Litherland	6	0	4	2	20	40	2
Oakhill A	6	1	5	0	19	41	2
Wavertree C.C. ..	6	0	5	1	11	49	1

Sixth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Cadwa A	6	6	0	0	47	13	12
Everton Y.M.	6	6	0	0	47	13	12
Brenka	6	5	0	1	51	9	11
Aigburth	6	5	1	0	46	14	10
Linnets B	6	4	1	1	37	23	9
Warbreck Moor ..	6	3	2	1	31	29	7
English Elec. A ..	6	3	3	0	29	31	6
Anfield D	6	1	5	0	18	42	2
Cadwa B	6	1	5	0	16	44	2
W'loo Park A	6	0	5	1	17	43	1
Osterley A	6	0	6	0	11	49	0
Bootle Y.M. C	6	0	6	0	10	50	0

Third Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bohemians A	6	5	0	1	45	15	11
Bootle Y.M. A	6	5	0	1	44	16	11
Panto	6	5	1	0	37	23	10
Victoria Park A ..	6	3	2	1	32	28	7
Lofters	6	3	2	1	31	29	7
Linacre	6	3	3	0	29	31	6
L.P.A.S.	6	2	3	1	29	31	5
Osterley	6	2	3	1	25	35	5
Chesh. Lines A ..	6	0	3	3	25	35	3
English Electric ..	6	1	4	1	23	37	3
Waterloo Park ..	6	1	4	1	18	42	3
I.C.I.	6	0	5	1	22	38	1

Fourth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Beauclair	6	6	0	0	44	16	12
Maghull	6	5	1	0	47	13	10
Linnets A	6	5	1	0	44	16	10
Littlewoods	6	3	2	1	31	29	7
Tech. Students ..	6	3	3	0	32	28	6
Litherland A	6	3	3	0	30	30	6
L.P.A.S. A	6	2	2	2	30	30	6
Panto A	6	3	3	0	29	31	6
R.A.F.A.	6	2	3	1	31	29	5
Domestic Miss. ..	6	1	5	0	19	41	2
W'tree C.C. A	6	1	5	0	16	44	2
Livex A	6	0	6	0	7	53	0

Women's First Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Rafters	6	6	0	0	47	13	12
Bohemians	6	5	1	0	49	11	10
Cheshire Lines...	6	5	1	0	32	28	10
Balfour	6	4	1	1	41	19	9
Oakhill	6	4	2	0	34	26	8
Linnets	6	3	2	1	30	30	7
Waterloo Park...	6	2	4	0	28	32	4
Littlewoods	6	2	4	0	23	37	4
Osterley	6	1	4	1	23	37	3
Anfield	6	1	4	1	22	38	3
Bibbys	6	1	5	0	19	41	2
Beauclair	6	0	6	0	12	48	0

Women's Second Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Cadwa	6	6	0	0	47	13	12
Bohemians A	6	5	0	1	43	17	11
Aigburth	4	2	1	1	28	12	5
Dunlop	6	2	3	1	31	29	5
Leyfield	4	2	2	0	24	16	4
Brenka	4	2	2	0	18	22	4
Wavertree C.C.	4	1	2	1	21	19	3
Oakhill A	6	1	5	0	17	43	2
Beauclair A	4	1	3	0	8	32	2
Linnets A	4	0	4	0	3	37	0

LEAGUE TABLES

North Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bath Street A ...	5	5	0	0	39	11	10
Co-op	6	4	1	1	39	21	9
Lofters A	6	4	2	0	39	21	8
15 Crosby A ...	5	4	1	0	34	16	8
English Elec. C	6	3	3	0	27	33	6
W'loo Park B ...	5	2	3	0	23	27	4
Bath Street B ...	5	2	3	0	20	30	4
Maghull A	5	1	3	1	22	28	3
W'loo Park C ...	6	1	4	1	14	46	3
Litherland B ...	5	1	4	0	22	28	2
Bootle Police ...	4	0	3	1	11	29	1

South Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Dunlop	5	5	0	0	36	14	10
Lucem	6	3	1	2	37	23	8
Earle	4	3	0	1	30	10	7
Cadwa C	5	3	1	1	28	22	7
Florence Oxton	4	3	1	0	24	16	6
Peel Hall	5	2	3	0	28	22	4
W'tree C.C. B ...	6	2	4	0	26	34	4
L'pool Y.M. B	4	2	2	0	20	20	4
Rankin O.B. ...	1	1	0	0	8	2	2
Chesh. Lines B ..	6	1	5	0	20	40	2
Sefton General	5	1	4	0	16	34	2
Linnets C	5	0	5	0	7	43	0

Central Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Oakhill C	6	5	0	1	48	12	11
Fairlawn	6	5	0	1	46	14	11
Beauclair A	6	4	0	2	46	14	10
G.L.S.C.	6	3	2	1	33	27	7
L.P.A.S. B	5	3	2	0	32	18	6
Leyfield	5	3	2	0	23	27	6
R.A.F. M'ments	6	2	3	1	25	35	5
W'tree Labour	6	2	4	0	26	34	4
Stanley House ...	6	2	4	0	23	37	4
R.A.F. A	6	2	4	0	20	40	4
Parcels	6	0	5	1	15	45	1
Tech. Students A	6	0	5	1	13	47	1

and Kensington. Secretary, Mr. N. Jones (Warden) address as above. Phone (pte. and business) ANF 3034. Match night THURSDAY.

AFRICAN OIL: Alter match nights as follows: Diviston 2, to THURSDAY, 'A' team in Division 5, to WEDNESDAY.

LITHERLAND, Page 26: 'B' team, North Region: Match night THURSDAY.

Will ALL members make these alterations, whether or not it concerns your League team, as you may be drawn against one of them in a CUP competition and find yourselves arriving on the wrong night or at the wrong venue.

MANAGEMENT NOTES

Will all registered players please make the following alterations in their handbooks:—

Page 14, Rule 22(b) 3rd line: Delete "the first" "On merit" and insert "a" to read:—"MUST be taken by a player in the next lower group."

FAIRLAWN, Page 25: New secretary, B. A. Leeson, 29 Muirhead Avenue East, Liverpool 11, Pte. Phone STA 2913.

LUCEM, Page 27: Mr. McDonnell, phone ext. now 39.

ENGLISH ELECTRIC, Page 25: Delete 'B' team Division 6. Delete Bus 63.

ANFIELD, Page 22: Alter match nights as follows:—1st & 'B' teams MONDAY, 'A' & 'C' teams TUESDAY, 'D' team Division 6 THURSDAY.

LEYFIELD, Page 26: New secretary, H. Hight, 12 Cambridge Road, Liverpool 9, pte. phone, AIN 1925. Alter women's team match night to MONDAY.

BEAUCLAIR, Page 23, Div. 4: Alter match night to THURSDAY.

LINNETS, Page 26: Alter 'B' & 'C' team match nights to WEDNESDAY.

LITHERLAND, Page 26: New headquarters:—Norwood Community Centre, Sefton Road, Liverpool 21. Directions: 52, 55 bus to Bradley Road.

R.A.F. MOVEMENTS: New secretary, Sgt. Courtney (same address).

VICTORIA PARK, Page 29; 1st team, Div. 2: Alter match night to WEDNESDAY.

I.C.I. (KIRKBY) have withdrawn from the League. Page 46 N.R.: Delete I.C.I. (K) in all fixtures.

Page 42, Div. 6: Delete English Electric 'B' and insert 'ANFIELD 'D'' in all fixtures.

CHESHIRE LINES, Page 24, have withdrawn their 'C' team and the fixtures have been taken over by L'POOL CENTRAL Y.M.C.A., page 26. Match night WEDNESDAY.

SOUTH REGION, Page 47: Delete C.L.C. 'C' and insert L'POOL Y.M.C.A. 'B'.

SOUTH REGION, Page 47: Stanley House 'A' have withdrawn and their place has been taken by Rankin Old Boys, Shiel Road, Liverpool 6. Buses 26 or 27, 10 to corner of Shiel Road

Continued in preceding column.

SKIPPER ON THE SIDELINES

By BILL BENT

A MATCH between a newly promoted side and one which narrowly escaped relegation normally acts as a fairly good pointer to the tempo of the division in question, and it was in anticipation of a good struggle that I went along to Waterloo Dock to their match with Bath Street.

That Bath Street's winning margin was 8-2 is immaterial; had tight third games gone in the home team's favour a 5-5 draw would have come about. But that, perhaps, was the keynote of the evening, for Bath Street, in almost all departments, showed the final touches—the polish and finesse—which the Dock lacked.

The pipe-opener—Byrne v Aspinall—was an interesting study in two opposing and peculiarly unorthodox styles. Byrne, with a penholder grip and an enormously thick grooved sponge bat, employed half-volley defence against the continuous attack of his long-armed opponent, who uses forehand topspin to absolutely everything.

Byrne and his 'snapjap' bat looked as if they would have been happier dictating the game, and this Aspinall's remarkable reach denied, so that the Bath Street player won by the comfortable margin of 21-14, 21-19.

Blame Only Himself

Burrows, a good player, lost both his sets, and I felt that in both cases the fault was his own. Against Cooke he played a lethargic first game, employing little footwork and showing a disposition to wild shots, particularly a cross between a backhand drive and flick which seldom looked likely to succeed because it was played too far away from the table and ball.

Against Taylor he showed a desire to end what he obviously considered a forlorn hope as quickly as possible, and Taylor concurred. These games, lost 21-10 in each case, cost Burrows two sets in all probability, for he twice took the second game comfortably only to lose the third, first to a grimly defensive Cooke and then to an extremely lethargic Taylor.

Alex Gould, one of the pillars of Bath Street in their last two seasons, sat on the sidelines with his wrist in plaster, but his worth to the Waterloo club had not been altogether lost, for he has the remarkably cool head and

thorough knowledge of the game necessary to the complete captain.

I thought it was a first-rate piece of captaincy to call on Seddon, Waterloo Dock's No. 1, to meet Arthur Taylor when Bath Street led 2-0. The two-straight defeat of their skipper and easily best player, took a great deal of the fight out of the home side.

The strength of the Bath Street tail decided the match, for Handley and reserve Lightburn, appearing for a dentally-distracted Charlie Dunn, failed to take any sets. Cooke, staying back content to let his opponent make the mistakes and now and then coming up to kill the loose ball, easily beat Handley and Dean, an all-round sportsman whose game has improved immensely, was not extended by Lightburn.

Weakness Noted

One of the most entertaining of the evening's sets was the meeting of Handley and Dean. The Dock player played good aggressive table tennis to take the first game 23-21, but the astute Dean, a player with an extremely steady forehand, had noted his opponent's inclination to hit wildly with his backhand, and, playing on this weakness, sailed to a comfortable second game win by 21-9.

The third game tended to follow the pattern of the second until the end. Then Handley steadied and Dean's nerve appeared to deteriorate. Handley made a game rally from 15-19 to 19-20, then lost his concentration and finished the set with a wild forehand drive.

Waterloo Dock's sets came from Seddon and Byrne. The former, a steady purist, used Aspinall's limitations to good effect; withstood a bombardment of forehand hitting and steadfastly refused to be forced away from the table.

Particular commendation is due for the way he angled his returns to wrong-foot Aspinall and expose the weakness of his extreme far forehand, but the latter deserves a big bouquet for the determination which kept him in the fight as far as 21-19, 21-18.

Byrne's combination of sponge and grip were too much for Hurst, who eventually decided to increase the tempo of his attacking shots—this to good effect—though Byrne's extra experience and determination told by 21-15, 22-20.

Promoted Teams' Close Battle

ONCE again we are in the throes of another season and I feel I cannot begin this article without first welcoming the two new teams to our divisions—Oakhill A and Cadwa. I have not yet managed to visit either of these clubs but I hope to do so in the very near future.

In the first division we have three promoted teams—Beauclair, Osterley and Waterloo Park—and with this in mind I went along to Beauclair and saw a very interesting match against Osterley, the latter emerging victorious by seven sets to three.

In actual fact, however, that match could have gone either way, Joyce Tippetts, Margaret Pattison and Rene Sturgeon all taking their opponents to three games before losing. In addition, Rene only lost 20-22, 19-21, in her second set, so that actually the match was much closer than the score suggests.

Placid Fighter

Rita Trampnow, Osterley's No. 1 and captain, played extremely well to win both her sets. Her heavy forehand chop had Doreen Alcock completely beaten. I was very impressed by Osterley's No. 2, M. Harris, who has improved tremendously, I am told, since last season.

In Beauclair's side Betty Cubley is surely their steadiest player, fighting on, calm and placid, irrespective of the score.

The other newly-promoted side, Waterloo Park, must be feeling very pleased with their new signing, Billie Finnetty, who played her first eight sets without defeat, beating such players as Muriel Bannister, Ita Howley and Reg Royle, all well-known in first division play.

You can imagine my interest therefore, when I knew that Billie's next opponents would be Moya Jones and Muriel Wilcox, when the Park met Bohemians. Although Moya beat Billie, I am sure she will agree that Billie proved tough opposition as the scores, 21-15, 18-21, 18-21, against the Park player, will suggest. Muriel also beat Billie, but once again the set went to three games.

Watching Waterloo Park I could not help but feel that if J. Pedley, I. Bray and D. Campbell would fight as well as

Billie and S. Olsen, who against Bohemians won her team's only set, they would do much better in the senior division.

Anfield has made a poor start this season, which I find surprising considering that they have really quite a strong team. But maybe they are still feeling the loss of D. Greensmith, who has moved to London, and will gradually settle in with their two new players, P. Harland and S. Dinwoodie, who last season played for Littlewoods.

In the second division Cadwa and Bohemians A seem to be settled comfortably at the top of the table, Cadwa having as their No. 1, Ivy Crafter, who has been well-known in the league for many years.

Brenka, who played in the first division last season, are not doing as well as I expected and are only about halfway, but apparently they have lost a couple of players and are finding it a struggle to raise a good team.

Secretarial Hopes

Linnets A are not as yet doing too well, but they have, I believe, one or two new players and their secretary hopes that with experience and practice they will improve as time goes on.

Oakhill A are also struggling but the season is still young and some of these lower teams have still plenty of time to surprise us.

And now, although I hate to do it, I must close with a complaint.

At a recent match I saw one of the players reading a book. To me it was just about the height of bad manners. If we are not interested in our opponents' play, which is, of course, regrettable, we should at least show some interest in the welfare of our own team.

Please do not allow this sort of thing to happen. If we lose our interest to the extent of reading books at matches, we may as well abandon the game altogether.

Sad news of D. Millington, the Littlewoods women's No. 1 of last season. After ill-health she reached the stage of signing for Oakhill recently, but unfortunately further indisposition has again delayed her return to the game.

Many Meet for First Time

LET me begin by welcoming the new clubs to the Region, namely Earle, Sefton General Hospital and Rankin Old Boys.

This South Region as a whole is newly composed of a mixed bag, and, with Cheshire Lines C and Stanley House A dropping out and Liverpool Y.M.C.A. B and Rankin O.B. coming in, fixtures are all haywire. But it's early and things will sort themselves out soon.

As for me, I am a little bewildered at present but give me time and I'll see you all get a true picture of what's happening.

Earle and Lucem A seem the best, so far, of what appears to be a rather even league, with one or two exceptions. W. Shepherd (Lucem), with 100 per cent. to date, appears to be Lucem's great strength, whereas Earle (who incidentally drew with Lucem) have A. Grey and T. Byrne, in that order playing 4 and 5, also boasting 100 per cent.

Team to Watch

Florence Oxtan have to thank G. Lisner, who plays No. 2, for their position, as he has only lost one set, and Dunlop, who, on paper, have a good side, have to thank J. Cashin and R. Routledge for their wins to date.

Cadwa C, in my estimation, look a team who could upset anyone's apple cart, with a steady line-up from 1 to 5 and K. Malcolm and R. Brown (4 and 5 respectively) winning all their sets but one so far.

There is nothing to choose between Sefton General, Wavertree B, Linnets C, Liverpool Y.M.C.A. B and Peel Hall. Cheshire Lines have the honour (taking into account games played) of holding everyone up, but, quite honestly, the above mentioned six teams are not strong.

One thing I would like to say about Linnets. A. R. Green, if it's the lad I am thinking of, has 100 per cent. record and must be the youngest boy playing at present in our league.

Dual Entries Not Good

I AM very grateful to be given the opportunity to write on my region although still in hospital.

First, I am anxious to thank all clubs for once again unanimously electing me their secretary despite my unfortunate circumstances. Don't please get the impression I am out of touch with the league or North Region affairs. Thanks to the visits and letters from Mr. Stamp, Mr. Hughes, Dr. Loughrey and Miss Nan Lamb, I have a complete up-to-date picture of the league.

When the new constitution of the divisions was posted to me, I was naturally shocked on realising our Region had been reduced to one division, and a none too impressive one either. Gone were the grand old timers in Littlewoods, Brenka and Waterloo Dock, the first two to new divisions and the last-named, to my great regret, from our sphere altogether.

Lack of Foresight

Our present region soon received a blow by the resignation of I.C.I. (Kirkby) when the season was only in its third week. This depleting of the establishment was naturally disheartening and there can be little excuse for a club whose lack of foresight caused them to quit so soon.

Actually we have only nine clubs. Bath Street, who have always been progressive, have provided an extra team while Waterloo Park also contribute two teams.

Personally I don't think having two teams from the same club in one division is competitively beneficial as it usually results at the end of the season in a big disparity in points between the rival representatives.

It is good to know that 15th Crosby A, English Electric and Lofters still provide opposition, but what a change to see a Litherland team at the foot of a table.

Co-op, whom I have yet the pleasure to meet although they were in the region last season, are to be congratulated on an extremely good start. Fourth from bottom in N.R. Division 2 last season, they now head the table.

Three Fight for Leadership

THIS season we have to welcome Liverpool Parcels and Government Laboratory Social Club to the league.

The whole set up is very much changed from last season and while some teams have played in the league before, they are new to our region.

Last season R.A.F. Movements and Stanley House did very well in the then second division of the region, but they are finding it much harder going this term. Beauclair A did not fare too well in the second division, but with a much strengthened team are not finding it very hard going and are a team to be considered this season.

Oakhill C and Fairlawn, at the top of the table at the time of writing, meet in mid-December and it is then that Beauclair may take the lead. These three teams are having a close fight for the top positions, how close may be judged from the fact that Oakhill and

Fairlawn have each conceded only one point, in both cases to Beauclair.

At the other end of the table we have Technical Students A and Liverpool Parcels, who shared the points when they met, thus both breaking their 'duck.'

R.A.F.A. A, returning to the league this season, are finding difficulty in fielding a regular team. So too, are R.A.F. Movements, but they are used to this by now. The loss of Wildblood and Annand, and Anderson only available on odd occasions, has proved a blow to them.

Teams around the middle of the table can often upset the top sides. G.L.S.C. did just that to Leyfield, who had won their first three matches and were heading the table until that point. They lost four points in two weeks and slipped four places down the ladder. Their present team does not appear strong enough to take them back to the top again.

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NOMADS A LONG-TERM POLICY

By J. D. LOUGHREY

POSSIBLY one of the more interesting events of the new season, has been the appearance of a side devoted to the younger members of the league.

Designed at first to cater for the under 18's, further consideration led to a decision to raise the age limit to under 21. The main reason was to give opportunity to those players of ability who were returning from the Forces, to get back into form as quickly as possible.

Nominations in pleasing numbers were handed in by the clubs, if very tardily, and after the original selections had been made, a further trial had to be held at Bootle Y.M. as a result of which one further player has joined the select band of ten.

Under Observation

It would not be out of place at this stage to point out that this is not of necessity the final word on selection of players, for the list has already been revised in the light of events.

The Committee concerned are looking especially to the Merseyside Open for information, and as far as possible every youngster will be watched closely at the championships, in particular in the junior singles. Four youngsters of promise have actually received free entries for the Merseyside, and it is up to them, and others to force themselves to the attention of the selectors by their performances.

The main problem at present is to find a reasonable number of players who could justify a placing of 1 and 2 in the side, and because of the shortage A. C. Taylor (Bath Street) and M. Truman (Victoria Park) have played in nearly every match. The Committee nevertheless are not without hope that before the end of the season, one at least of the less experienced players will have improved sufficiently to justify so high a placing in some of the less strenuous matches.

The record to date is by no means bad—two draws and three defeats, the one disappointment being the failure to beat Oakhill after holding a 5-2 lead.

On results it seems obvious that the side is too dependent on Taylor and Truman, though Rogerson and Fenerty at least have shown signs of promise.

As will be obvious, however, the long-term policy is the only one which

matters, and the acquiring of experience against the better players stands in much greater importance than a succession of defeats at this early stage.

The feeling of the committee is that fighting spirit and will to win is of greater importance than mere perfection of stroke production, and it is the first two attributes which we are particularly interested in at the present time. It is hoped that before the end of the season, a number of the players will be given the opportunity of travelling to tournaments as guests of the League. So, in truth, given the interest, there is a great deal for the Nomad player to strive for.

The most successful feature so far has been the short coaching and critical comment which has been held by the Coach in charge after each match, and this has probably been the most helpful innovation of all.

We have a first class team of instructors. Peter Rumjahn, Fred Bamford, and Don Foulis make up an international trio which demands respect, and we feel they have been very successful in getting their views across.

Not Forgotten

While no great successes are expected in the First Division, the aim of the side will be to avoid the bottom places, and thereby avoid the necessity of invoking the special dispensation which the Nomads have, that of not being relegated regardless of their final placing. This, however, is a minor consideration compared with the importance of providing experience to the youth of the League, and giving them the opportunity of reaching the top of the tree.

Even after the trial further nominations have been received and to those concerned, may I say they have not been forgotten but will receive their chance in due course.

As has been indicated above, however, the Merseyside is an important event for both Nomads and also prospective members of the side, and you will all be under close observation at the Drill Hall during the week.

Finally, inquiries have been made as to whether visitors are welcome at these games, the reply to that one being a very definite yes!

Rafters' Complaint and Reply

THE *Digest* has been asked to publish the following letter which was sent to the Management Committee. Appended to it is the Committee's reply.

Sirs:—I was asked at our club general meeting to write to you and register a protest at the treatment afforded to our representative at the last League General Meeting.

It was felt that the Chairman's attitude towards him was very off-hand and, at times, most rude.

I would here like to say that no complaint has been made by Eric Caird himself, and that the matter was brought forward by a general member of the club whom I would regard as being very fair-minded and unbiased. Eric admits that there are times when he is inclined to ask for trouble, but on this occasion he was on his best behaviour and gave no cause whatsoever for complaint.

We, as a club, always show a great interest in League affairs—I doubt if many clubs are quite as keen. On receipt of letters from the League Secretary introducing controversial topics, committee meetings are immediately held and matters are then thoroughly discussed at a general meeting,—there were, in fact, seventy per cent. of our members at the League meeting in question.

It is felt, therefore that our views did deserve a fair hearing, and while appreciating the fact that a lot of business had to be completed, and therefore time allotted to each subject was limited, it was thought that our ideas, and, indeed, ideas of many other clubs,

could have been afforded a little more respect. After all, League General Meetings are primarily held in order to give the ordinary man a chance to voice his opinion.

I would mention that I have been asked to send a copy of this letter to the *Digest* in order that other clubs may note our complaint and that you may make a reply.—Kathleen Casselman (chairman, Rafters T.T.C.).

The Secretary replies:—Messrs. A. Montgomery and P. U. Rumjahn (Rafters and Management Committee) disassociate themselves with the letter. The Management are unanimously of the opinion that everyone received a fair hearing at the A.G.M. on May 25, and that there was neither rudeness nor off-handedness displayed at any time.

They are prepared to leave the whole matter to the judgment of the club representatives who were present at the meeting.

There have been varying comments in the past, both good and bad, on Litherland's clubroom, but there can be no cause for any criticism with regard to their new home where conditions approach the ideal.

I.C.I. (Kirkby) must have established a new record for the League archives: Newly joined, they played their first match in the North Region v 15th Crosby A, lost 0-10 and promptly resigned! This surely must be the shortest membership of all time.

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The Rule on Replacement

By G. WILLIAMS

I HAVE been asked by a club secretary to clarify the ruling in regard to reserves and replacement of players who miss two consecutive league matches.

The normal playing of a reserve in place of a regular player of any team is, I think, quite clearly stated in Rule 15, but the question of the replacement of a player who has missed two consecutive league matches, is an entirely different matter and is covered by Rule 22(b). Rules 15 and 22(b) do not refer to the same matter at all, except insofar as the reserve or replacement must be clearly indicated on the score card.

Under Rule 22(b), when a player (A) misses two consecutive league matches for the team for which he is grouped, the third match is the all-important one. For this match the player (A) may play, in which case no changes are necessary and the two absences are nullified, but in the event of him not playing, one of the *next lower group* (irrespective of whether it is in the same division) MUST be promoted to take his place, and this latter player (B) then becomes a regular member of that group in addition to (A).

Correspondingly, a member from each of the following lower groups must be promoted to fill the vacancies created.

A danger arises where the player (A) indicates his intention of returning on the third, or any subsequent week, and where the lower team is due to play *earlier in the week than the higher team*.

Everything is all right if the player (A) does return, but in the event of this not happening and the player (B), who has or would have been promoted, having played for his original team on the assumption of (A) returning, then Rule 22(b) has not been complied with and an ineligible player (B) has played for the lower team.

Where this position arises, the club should safeguard themselves by leaving player (B) out of his original team, so that in the event of (A) not returning later in the week, (B) is available to play, and Rule 22(b) is complied with.

When player (A) returns to his team, the players promoted as a result of his previous absence are automatically returned to their original groups.

If in any doubt, consult me before the teams play.

Out of Cup and Rose Bowl

OUR men's and women's teams passed out of the Wilmott Cup and Rose Bowl over the week-end. Both were beaten in second round ties by Manchester, the men by 9-0 at Linnets on Monday and the women by 8-1 at Lucem on the previous Friday.

There was no gainsaying that in each case Manchester were worthy of victory, but that does not eliminate the fact that in each match the score might have been much closer.

This was particularly true of the Rose Bowl tie in which lack of the will to win cost us many points and possibly two or three sets. Two of the three doubles, for instance, were only lost by 19 in the third. Our only winner was Mrs. M. Jones who beat Miss J. Braddock in a three-game set.

In the Cup match, Ron Rumjahn was twice very narrowly beaten—by Benny Casofsky 19-21 in the third and by 22-24, in the third by Ron Alcock, who was the outstanding player of the match.

Secretary's Note—contd from page 3.

travelling for any competitor. The last eight in each competition will play off at a venue and on a date to be arranged, after which the cups and prizes will be presented.

Entry forms have been sent to your club secretary with this issue of the *Digest*, and further supplies can be obtained on application accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Both these competitions provide a lot of good fun and will give you an opportunity of meeting players you would not normally encounter—and on reasonably level terms. There are many of you (perhaps through being a bit nervous) who have never entered. Why not start 1955 in the right spirit. Come on, have a go. The closing date for entries is Monday, December 6, 1954.