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TABLE TENNIS DIGEST

Web Site. http://www.ldttl.co.uk

EDITORIAL

We will probably have played 21 matches by the time you get this Digest, and it will be the last this season, I've tried to spread them out evenly, the one before Christmas, reporting 8 weeks into the season, this one, reporting on a further 10 weeks, then the next one, reporting on the last 8 weeks. The trouble with the next one is that you won't receive it until the start of next season, It would be impossible to get the last one of the season to you, with all the facts and reports, within a few weeks after the season has finished, by then most players have turned themselves off for the summer, so this way, I feel as if it brings together the last season and the start of the next, "landing on your feet running" so to speak. As end of season tables are available on the web site, there's no need not to know league positions at the end of the season., so if any disagree with this assumption, let me know

Congratulations to Harold House's Eddie Clein for coming back from the World Firefighter Games in Hong Kong with a Bronze medal in the O/50's table tennis, (considering he's 68, 'he done well'). We are always going on about the lack of publicity for table tennis in Liverpool, and here we see Eddie getting quite a few column inches in the Liverpool Echo on his return; before he went away to the games, he had nearly half a page in the Echo, I'm sure being a high profile Liverpool Councillor had nothing to do with it, but what a chance for a bit of free publicity for our sport, sadly, a chance missed, as Eddie didn't mention the fact that he was a quality player and plays in the excellent Liverpool & District League every week, but the article did mention that he plays in the Halton League!, maybe there will be more opportunity in the future for us.

Quote from Eddie "I really should have won the Gold, but I was so nervous in the semi." -: can't imagine Eddie being nervous at the other end of the table. Having said all that, well done Eddie for 'doing it', it's a long way to go for a match.

We do actually get some regular publicity in the Liverpool Echo, thanks to Don Davies, who does a regular column usually on a Wednesday, in the Sports pages, the Echo doesn't always print his full report, but the full report is always on the L&DTTL web site, so thanks go to Don for his perseverance, and John Langton for the web site input.

Congratulations also to Ken Armson MBE, Wavertree Labour, who, with 12 other candidates, sat a most testing exam in Paris, to become an "International Referee", only 5 passed, Ken, and Steve Welch, (well known on the tournament circuit), being two, no easy life for Ken it seems, Tom Purcell, M/Side Police, also passed the "International Umpires" exam last year, so congratulations to all, looks like a bit of globe trotting ahead.

Due to the perseverance of members of the organising committee, our Closed tournament did take place this season, it was known in advance that a lot of regular competitors would be missing due to a clash of dates with a popular Vets tournament, but it was still decided to go ahead, the committee managing to get enough competitors, we often think that it's the star players who don't do enough to support local T.T., but in the case of the Closed, I find that it's the rank and file players who don't do enough to support local T.T., rather than the attitude of " I won't win much there" why not look at it as "a full day of playing and maybe beat someone you don't normally beat". It is every players competition, and Finals Night is still a good sociable get together.

Ken's article on the Closed finishes with the good news that he has already booked the day for next years Closed, so make a note now!!.

One of the 'Closed' regulars who went to the Western Masters Vets. Tournament, came away with the 'gold', Waterloo's Keith Williams beat the England ranked No's 1, Ritchie Venner and No. 6, Joe Kennedy, on the way to the final, completing the job by beating No. 2 ranked Abdul Wuraola, well done to Keith, seems like he's over that broken wrist, and getting back to normal.

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So their may be a shortage of young talent in the future, hopefully Connor and Joshua Dolder will, with a bit of encouragement from dad Kevin, take the sport up and mirror the 'Evans' family. I believe serious coaching can start when nose is above the table, but as most parents find out, steering offsprings doesn't always work out as planned,
congratulations to mum Stacey, and Kevin

SECRETARY'S REPORT 2006 *Mike Power*

The Management Committee had some difficult decisions to make last summer regarding the formation of the divisions. After some long and hard deliberations we were able to form 4 divisions of 14 teams. This gives everyone 4 extra matches to play and also ensures the 4th division players get a fairer crack of the whip, however I note that Greenbank have already had their 4th division team expunged following their 3rd walkover of the season. It is sad to note that in the 5 seasons that Greenbank have been represented in the Liverpool League this is the 3rd time they have had a team expunged! The question has already been asked – what will happen next season if we receive too many registered teams to form 4 divisions of 14 teams? I have written to all club secretaries advising them the current format of 14 teams per division may only apply for the current season as we cannot control how many team entries we receive next season and we cannot turn anyone away, therefore next season, and for that matter all future seasons, it may be necessary to change the existing format or whichever format is in existence at the time. The Management Committee must be allowed to manage the League in which ever way serves the best interest of table tennis locally. The future of table tennis in Liverpool has to come before the future of any individual or club.

I also have to make mention that the disciplinary committee has so far this season had to hear two cases of alleged improper conduct that has taken place at 2 venues this season. Both instances have caused unnecessary upset for those involved and for those innocent bystanders who where present. As far as I am concerned a game of table tennis is a night out with my friends and a chance to meet and beat my opponents who I would also like to consider to be my friends. The thing is, we all have to respect each other and cut out any nonsense. We all want to play table tennis and we all want to win but one thing is for sure, in every single game there will be a winner and a loser and there is nothing you can do about that. Whilst we are winning or losing we have to keep our emotions in check and be nice people and be nice to people. One thing is for sure, if the Management Committee receives a complaint about someone's behaviour they will act to ascertain the facts and then impose any punishment or penalty to the guilty party that they feel merits the offence. The M.C. will not shirk their duties in this respect.

On a different theme it is rather sad to note that Liverpool YMCA has had to change their name to Liverpool Cricket Club. This is not meant in any way to be disrespectful to Liverpool Cricket Club but only to note the demise of a 'club name' that has been synonymous with the game of table tennis in Liverpool for many, many years.

I hope you all enjoy the rest of the season and would ask you to support the teams who reach the divisional finals, together with the Frank Murphy final, by making your presence felt.

Mike Power

EDITORIAL contd.

"Enhanced the Women's British League by any combination of fairness, character, endeavour, skill and profile", these are the requirements for the winner of the Solihull Trophy, awarded by the WBL each season, all clubs taking part in the weekends competitions can nominate one person, but not from their own club. Guess who got the nod from all those women, none other than Aigburth's Graham Rollinson, Graham's normally the NPC. for the Liverpool Ladies team, but they don't compete in the British League, so he must have got this award in his capacity of Umpire there, I've always thought he was a "nice fella" now this proves it, all those ladies can't be wrong.

Div. 1 reporter, Ian McElwee has a bit to say about the number of W/O's and playing short in that division; including week 20, there were 5 W/O's in the 1st. Div, two in week 20 were from mid table teams, giving W/O's to teams at either end of the table, when teams who give w/o's find themselves in trouble, it's 'poetic justice' when it affects teams who don't, it's sad!

The first of the re-modeled Table Tennis News magazines under new Editorial staff, had a good interview between Brian Halliday and Ken Hyde, anyone who has followed the history of the Liverpool and District TT League will know of Ken Hyde, he first won our closed men's singles in 1933, at the age of 17, playing for England the same year, in the Swaythling Cup in Paris. Another classic player of the past is Peter Rumjahn, who won our closed in 1939, the last before WW2., Peter still lives in Liverpool and still attends the Rumjahn final and presents the Dr. J. Rumjahn Cup to the 2nd Div. K.O. winners.

City Match Secretary *Don Davies*

Veterans Premier Division

31/01/06

Liverpool, with an almost full strength team, entertained Halton in the veteran premier division of the Lancashire and Cheshire League and recorded only their second win of the season. Keith Williams and Chris Ford, title winners' in different competitions just a few days earlier, both won their sets against Ray Jackson and Eddie Clein, while combining to beat the latter pair in the doubles. With Halton arriving without top player Malcolm McEvoy, who sustained an injury the previous weekend, Jackson saved the white wash, beating Ahmed Thabet, who, in the only set requiring more than a third game, beat Clein, 3-1.

20/02/06 Liverpool, as expected, won all three second round Lancashire and Cheshire League Premier division matches on Sunday, to add victories over Ellesmere Port and Preston, plus a draw with 2004 champions Bolton in October. Unable to call on Michael Marsden and Keith Williams due to work commitments, the champions relied on eight times Liverpool champion Kevin Dolder, Chris Ford, Keith Bird and Tom Bray, the latter making his debut in this competition.

Bird was then replaced by Bray, who, like Dolder, won his two sets in a 5-1 victory over Blackpool, which left Bolton, the 5-1 victors over Preston, realistically, requiring a 6-0 final match victory over Manchester in the final encounter, while hoping that Bury could take two or more points from the champions. In their final trip to the table, Dolder- who finished the season unbeaten- and Bray, won two each against Bury, Ford losing only to Lancashire first team man Paul Cichelli. Ironically, Liverpool were polishing off Bury 5-1, and the Trophy, while Manchester were still playing out a 3-3 draw with Bolton, Liverpool finishing victorious for the tenth time in 11 years.

7/3/06 Liverpool travelled to Nottingham for the penultimate group stage of the J.M. Rose Bowl, Alice Howard together with Sylvia and Cherith Graham beating Leicester 5-3, while suffering a defeat to the hosts by the same score. However, they have qualified for the national finals in May, by virtue of a superior sets ratio, Leicester having beaten Nottingham 5-4

The Liverpool men's veteran team met the Liverpool Business Houses in the quarter-finals of the Dennis Smith Memorial Trophy, they took a 3-1 lead but couldn't force home their advantage, the tie eventually going all the way to the ninth set. LBH had taken an opening set lead, Ian McElwee beating Alan Timewell, but Chris Ford, Graeme Black and Ford again, seemed to have matters in hand at 3-1. But, Trevor Owens and Peter Taylor then beat Timewell and Black respectively, to level matters, Ford though restoring the lead, beating Owens, to stand within one set of victory. In see saw fashion, McElwee kept his side in the match with a 15 in the third win over Black, Timewell, with a straight games win over Taylor to make the match -:

Liverpool 5, Liverpool Business Houses 4.

Scores: A Timewell lost to I McElwee ; C Ford bt P Taylor ; G Black bt T Owens; Ford bt McElwee ; Timewell lost to Owens; Black lost to Taylor; Ford bt Owens ; Black lost to McElwee ; Timewell bt Taylor.

13/3/06 Without Chris Ford and the injuredJohnRankin, Liverpool took on East Lancs., their penultimate Lancashire and Cheshire League veteran premier division match, with only one regular in the side, Waterloo's Keith Williams was joined by Ahmed Thabet (LCC) and Rob Davies (Cadwa), the latter being called into action just two hours before the match. The Cadwa second division player, made a dream start on his unexpected first team debut, winning the opening two games against the visitors' top player Dave Newton, 11-8, 11-3, the next two went the way of the England No.115, 11-4, 11-4, but, the more pressure he was put under, the better Davies responded, winning the decider 12-10, for the best win of his career. Williams made it 2-0 against Keith Jackson, but East Lancashire gained parity through Keith Ward and Jackson against Thabet and Davies respectively. Williams and Thabet restored the advantage at 4-2 but again were pegged back, Williams, who was in sparkling form, overcame Newton, after dropping the first game. East Lancs had put up a spirited show and probably deserved a draw when they took the doubles in straight games.

2006 Closed

CADWA's Chris Ford and Wavertree Labour's Gary Watson, met in the final of the Open Vets Tournament. Chris started slowly against Gary, who edged it 12-10, Chris drawing level in the next 11-8. The next game the Cadwa man squeezed home 16-14. Again, in the fourth, the ascendancy swung one way then the other, the Labour man at times unable to keep Ford's heavy top spin drives on the table, before a relieved and frustrated Ford, captured the game 15-13, the set and the title for the first time.

Top seed in the junior singles was Mark Roscaleer who plays for Harold House in division one, met dark horse' Mark Ambrose from Maghull. In a rip roaring encounter, Roscaleer took a 2 game to1 lead, and held match points on two occasions in the fourth, but couldn't clinch the vital points before Ambrose, who earlier had won the third division singles title, levelled matters, to the delight of the crowd who were hoping for more. The lead changed hands a number of times and it developed into an exciting nip and tuck affair. Hot favourite Roscaleer appeared to tighten up towards the end and at 10-10, Ambrose seemed the calmer of the two, the top seed looked totally bemused when Ambrose sensationally took the points, and the title at 12-10, the first ever junior from his Maghull club to do so.

Holders and top seeds' Dolder and Wearden, met Peter Lee and Keith Bird in the doubles final. The holders while not at their best, did enough to defeat Peter Lee, a winner with Paul Tsang in 1976, and his CC partner Keith Bird, after a tight 11-9 opening game, the Ford pair winning the next two 8 & 7, to become the first couple to retain the title since 1999, when Paul Hutchings and John Rankin managed it.

The Women's final, for the third year in succession, was between Bath Street's Clare Peers and Alice Howard, who plays for Wavertree Labour. Clare kicked off with a stunning 11-2 win but was pegged back when Alice levelled matters, winning 11-8. Alice edged home 12-10 in the third, it seemed that Clare's lack of top class play in recent weeks, would work against her. Clare, who had to pull out all the stops to retain her title, won the fourth, 11-7. No one could be sure who would be the victor even when Alice was 10-9 up in the fifth, but she held her nerve to snatch the next point and the title for the fourth time since 2000. She now stands level with Clare on four each. Tremendous theatre and thrilling entertainment for the large crowd watching.

The opening game in the Men's singles final between Chris Ford and Kevin Dolder was a tightly fought affair and one that Chris badly needed if he was to unsettle the seven times champion. Chris was in it at 12 all but couldn't make the break through, losing the next two points. The second was also tight, but one could sense that Kevin had it under control, and took it 11-8. Chris lost the first two points in the third and although he took two out of the next three, Kevin rattled off the next 8 points to deservedly claim the title for the eighth time in the past thirteen years.

League President Bill Fawley and his wife Vivienne together with League Vice President Leo Crone and his wife Carol, presented a number of awards, as did another Vice President GHE 'Ted' Birch, who handed the Over 55's Trophy to Bootle YMCA's John Higham. Ted is a current playing member and was part of the Waterloo team who won the division one title last season for the first time in their history.

Men's Singles Semi Finals	1. Chris Ford bt. Ahmed Thabet	12-10 / 11-7 / 5-11 / 11-5
	2. Kevin Dolder bt. Keith Bird	6-11 / 11-3 / 11-8 / 11-9
Junior Final	Mark Ambrose bt. Mark Roscaleer	5-11 / 11-8 / 4-11 / 13-11 / 12-10
Veterans Final	Chris Ford bt. Gary Watson	10-12 / 11-8 / 16-14 ' 15-13
Open Doubles Final	K. Dolder - Tim Wearden bt. Peter Lee - K.Bird	11-9 / 11-8 / 11-7
Women's Singles	Alice Howard bt. Clare Peers	2-11 / 11-8 / 12-10 / 7-11 / 11-9
Men's Singles Final	Kevin Dolder bt Chris Ford	14-12 / 11-8 / 11-2

Division 2
Final C. Rourke bt. G. Lennon

Division 3
Final M. Ambrose bt. J. Rowan

Division 4
Final H. Reeve bt. E. Wood

O/ 55's Singles
Final J. Higham bt. A. Jones

The following were played Sunday, completed Finals Night

Junior Singles
S.Final M. Roscaleer bt. J. Hewitt
M. Ambrose bt. M.Kwan

Veteran Singles
S.Final G.Watson bt. K.Connor
C.Ford bt A.Thabet

Women's Singles
R/Robin A.Howard bt. S.Howard
C.Peers bt. S.Howard

Open Doubles
Semi Final
Dolder / Wearden bt Peers / McEl-wee
Lee & Bird bt. Watson & Beech

2006 Closed Finals Night

League President Bill Fawley, with Kevin Dolder and Chris Ford after the presentation of the Montague Burton Cup and prizes

The opening game in the Mens Singles final was a tightly fought affair and one that Chris badly needed if he was to unsettle the seven times champion. Chris was in it at 12 all but couldn't make the break through, losing the next two points. The second was also tight, but one could sense that Kevin had it under control despite some great shots from Chris down both flanks, and took it 11-8. Chris lost the first two points in the third and although he took two out of the next three, Kevin rattled off the next 8 points to deservedly claim the title for the eighth time in the past thirteen years.

The final for the third year in succession, between Clare and Alice, kicked off with a stunning 11-2 win for Clare, but was pegged back when Alice leveled matters, winning 11-8. As in the junior final, it could have gone either way and when Alice edged home 12-10 in the third, it seemed that Clare's lack of top class play in recent weeks, would work against her. When they met last May in the final, Clare led 2-1 and was within two points of a 3-1 win, only to be taken to a fifth game decider when Alice won 23-21. This time, though, it was Clare who had to pull out all the stops to retain her title, which she did, winning the fourth, 11-7. No one could be sure who would be the victor even when Alice was 10-9 up in the fifth, but she held her nerve to snatch the next point and the title for the fourth time since 2000. She now stands level with Clare on four each.

Cup and prizes were presented to Alice Howard and Clare Peers by Mrs. Carol Crone

Keith Williams, fresh from his win at the Vets. Western Masters, presents prizes to Junior Champion Mark Ambrose, Maghull, and runner up Mark Roscaleer, Harold House

In a rip roaring encounter, Roscaleer took a 2-1 lead and held match points on two occasions in the fourth, but couldn't clinch the vital points before Ambrose, who earlier had won the third division singles title, levelled matters, to the delight of the crowd, who were hoping for more. The lead changed hands a number of times and it developed into an exciting nip and tuck affair. Hot favourite Roscaleer appeared to tighten up towards the end and at 10-10, Ambrose seemed the calmer of the two. The top seed, looked totally bemused when Ambrose sensationally took the points and the title at 12-10, the first ever junior from his club, Maghull, to do so.

The Fords pair Kevin Dolder & Tim Wearden with L.C.C.'S Peter Lee & Keith Bird after the presentation by Mrs. Vivienne Fawley.

The holders while not at their best, did enough to defeat Peter Lee, a winner with Paul Tsang in 1976, and his CC partner Keith Bird, after a tight 11-9 opening game, the Ford pair winning the next two 8 & 7, to become the first couple to retain the title since 1999, when Paul Hutchings and John Rankin managed it.

Mr. Leo Crone presented the Vets. (O/40's) winners Cup to Chris Ford (CADWA) with Gary Watson receiving R./ up.

Gary edged the first game 12-10, Chris drawing level in the next 11-8. Gary probably regrets not capitalising on a couple of game points when he had Chris stretched but the Cadwa man squeezed home in the third 16-14. The fourth game swung one way then the other, the Labour man at times unable to keep Ford's heavy top spin drives on the table, he did though hang in, and battled his way to a couple of game points, before a relieved and frustrated Ford, captured the game 15-13, the set and the title for the first time.

League Vice President, Ted Birch, (who currently plays for Waterloo) presented the O/55's Cup to John Higham, and R./ up prize to Alan Jones.

Sundays results;

A Jones bt H Reeve; J Higham bt T Purcell; Byes P Taylor & R Jackson;

Semi-finals

Jones bt Taylor; Higham bt Jackson;

Final

Higham (Bootle YMCA) bt Jones (Maghull) 11-3, 11-6, 11-9;

Officials on the night were Tournament Referee, Ken Armson MBE, (now International Referee), Faith Moore, who keeps the paperwork in order, and Umpires Graham Rollinson and Ray Lavin, who umpired all the matches.

Thanks also to the Merseyside Police Federation for the use of the Club, the Bar and Buffet facilities always make the evening that little more enjoyable; also thanks to Police Table Tennis Club Secretary, Tom Purcell for his input.

Closed Championships 2005-06 Report by Tournament Referee Ken Armson MBE.

It never rains but it pours and I once more found myself under fire regarding the date selected. It will always be a no win situation for me as with a crowded national calendar whatever date chosen will clash with something. Guaranteed a date early in the New Year I plumped for this as rightly or wrongly I believe my duty is to the league as a whole and the guarantee of a mid season date was just too good to pass up. Had we not done so we may well have had to again settle for a date in May as last year that also put me under fire.

As always entries were slow coming in and as always I worried that entries would not be sufficient for us to have a Closed. As usual worries were un-necessary entries picking up strongly as the closing date approached the final total being 57. This was only slightly below last season and better than the two previous seasons. As good as it was, in real terms it represented less than 25% of registered players.

As is invariably the case, divisional entries were low and veteran high with the lowest support being the Women's event with only 3 entries. Juniors increased, six entries being received, but as a league we cannot claim any credit for this but we were able to stage a junior final on Finals Night, the first for some years.

Whatever the shortcomings or problems on the day we ran an excellent event and I believe everyone who entered had a full and enjoyable day of table tennis. If you doubt this ask the two young brothers from Aigburth, Paul and Neil Croxton, taking part in their first table tennis tournament enjoying it to the full and carrying out umpiring duties promptly and without complaint. I think their mother enjoyed it almost as much as they did. Another junior, Michael Kwan (Liv YM) also enjoyed the day taking part in every possible event. From Bootle YM we had yet another newcomer, Malik Shakil, who had been in this country for some time before deciding to take up table tennis again and he brought his family along with him.

We had a new layout using carpet to cover the floor outside the courts and this involved moving the platform forward and giving us an increased refreshment area, just as well as this facility was well frequented the free tea, coffee and biscuits going down well.

Our biggest problem remained unsolved; the older members of the Committee assisted by a few older league members on the Saturday having as usual to load and offload the equipment and set it up in readiness for our 0900 start on Sunday. On Sunday I put out repeated calls for assistance in stripping down, loading the equipment and off loading it again at our storage base but only one player volunteered and he probably had furthest to travel. We again had to fall back on our band of dedicated older volunteers and it is to their great credit that the Tennis Centre was cleared before 20:00hrs this being the time I had given for us to be out. The equipment was off loaded and stored and we were all on our way home at 2100 tired but knowing we had again done an excellent job for our league. We desperately need younger members to volunteer for this work, as we should not have to repeatedly rely on much older members volunteering their services. Many hands make light work; younger hands make for a longer life for older hands. Think about it and contact Arthur Garnett or myself if you would like to put your name forward.

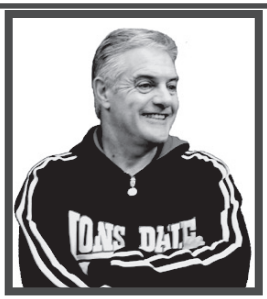
I ran the Over 55s event in groups although time did not lend itself to group play but it avoided the yearly problem of having enough players present at the start to umpire a knockout event. During the day we fell slightly behind and this was mainly due to a strong veteran event delaying the doubles event because this was also run in groups. This delay carrying over to the Open singles groups. We could avoid this by running the doubles as a straight knockout but I believe that the support given to this event by many lower players justifies playing it in group format followed by a knockout. Although we fell behind my timetable I had built in recovery time, not for nothing am I familiar with the need for recovery time. My finishing time was 1900 the final set to be played finishing at 1920hrs.

Finals Night was again a very successful night and the turnout was better than we had anticipated. Our sponsors were again present as always to show their support in a positive manner and whilst the overall standard of play may not have been as high as previous years the competitive edge was there, both the Junior and Women's Finals being close contests.

My sincere thanks to everyone who helped on the Saturday to move the equipment and set the venue up and again on the Sunday when the operation was reversed. Thanks also to John Langton who assisted me on the control table and our Mr Reliable, George Smith, who again kept the wall charts up to date.

Another successful Closed tournament under our belt and looking ahead to next season, why not support your league with an entry and give yourself an enjoyable day of table tennis in a competitive and social environment. You won't regret it and you can be assured that I will appreciate your entry even if no one else does.

I will close with some hot off the press news that I hope you will all note in your diary. I have just completed discussions with the Tennis Centre Manager and have successfully negotiated a firm date of Sunday 11 March 2007 for next season's Closed Championships. I have responded in a positive manner to concerns expressed in respect of this season's January date and obtained for us an excellent date. With twelve months advance notice I will be hoping for a similar positive response from league players by way of a big entry. Yes, there will be a clash of sorts but with such a crowded ETTA calendar this problem will not go away and this date will involve only minimal problems.



By week 18 league positions are beginning to show clear indications of how the season is panning out. Wavertree Labour with 131points from 18 matches are clear favourites to win the division. However, Waterloo 106 from 17, Fords 104 from 17, Bootle Jobcentre 104 from 18 and Liverpool CC 102 from 16 must all fancy their chances of closing the gap, it will clearly take a monumental late run from one of these teams to overhaul Wavertree. I believe that last years champion, Waterloo, who have recovered from a poor start and are now fielding Keith Williams and Wayne Percival on a regular basis, may provide Wavertree with the biggest threat.

If Fords get Kevin Dolder playing regularly again and consistently put out their strongest team they can also get close to winning the championship. Liverpool Cricket Club have signed Louis Rosenthal, a top 50 ranked player who has been registered to play for their A team. If he is used to strengthen the 1st team between now and the end of the season they will also be capable of closing the gap on Wavertree. Bootle Job Centre have had a wonderful, consistent season with the youngest squad of players in the division. I am sure they will continue to impress in their remaining matches but cannot see them challenging for top position in the current campaign, with youth on their side, they should continue to improve and are likely to be a formidable force in years to come.

The teams jostling for mid table positions Liverpool CC A 96-17, Manweb 90-17, Harold House 81-18, Bath St A 81-16, Merseyside Police 75-16 are all performing well with little to choose between their respective strengths and are well capable of competing with the higher placed teams, whilst picking up points on a regular basis.

The bottom 4 places from which the relegation candidates are likely to emerge are filled by CADWA 68-18, Bath St 53-16, Liverpool CC 49-17 and Maghull 47-17. CADWA are the most likely to keep their place in the division providing Chris Ford is available for a fair share of their remaining fixtures, Chris is guaranteed to win most of his matches at this level and with support from the ever reliable Peter Taylor and hardworking Alan Davies they should be safe. It therefore appears that the relegation fight will continue until late in the season between the 3 remaining teams. Bath St have been beset with problems all season because of injury to Brenda Buoey. Brenda has been troubled with a cartilage problem resulting in her unavailability and thus fielding a weakened team throughout, Jamie Hewitt, age 15, has now been re-ranked into the team, no doubt he will benefit from the experience of playing at this level but the question to be answered is whether he and that 'old lag' Fred Bainbridge can provide Ken Jackson with sufficient support. Liverpool CC B have found life hard following promotion but continue to battle week in week out, far from becoming despondent by their lowly position Steve Kee tells me that they are all enjoying the experience with Dave Tagg, Billy Cheung and Steve are all producing their share of wins. Maghull currently prop up the division, like Cricket Club B they have found it difficult after being promoted, neither Phil Thompson or Andy Clarke have been available as much as they hoped leaving Matt Wilson and Tony Kendall plus a reserve to soldier on in the first half of the season. However, the return of Nick Miller from abroad has provided the opportunity to field a consistent team in recent weeks and has brought about an improvement in results, Tony is one of the few captains to provide notes on the score cards, these clearly indicate that they have not given up and are enjoying the challenge of attempting to remain in the division.

Before going on to report on individual matches I hope you will bear with me making a few personal comments / observations, having taken on the task of producing these notes, looking at all the cards etc I think I have benefited in obtaining a wider view of events. There is little doubt that our first division is one of the strongest in the North West, with players prepared to travel into Liverpool for the high degree of competition available, I find it regrettable that so many teams have failed to play with a full quota of players, certain teams often turn up with only two players, not only giving points to their opponents that could effectively decide who wins the division or is relegated, but also detracting from the nights competition. When this occurs the general match atmosphere is invariably affected with the enjoyment factor substantially reduced, an example of this crazy situation is that by week 18 one of the top teams had received 32 points from 'walk-overs', other teams have obviously also benefited, but it cannot be good for the game, or the esteem of the eventual winners, to effectively win the division by default, equally it is not fair to those teams fighting relegation to find that teams around them have been given points. All first division clubs have teams in the lower divisions and it seems to me that there is little excuse not to turn up with a full quota of players each week, I believe that many players in the lower divisions hold the standards of the first in a certain amount of awe, many would relish the

opportunity to play occasionally in the top division and would probably benefit from the experience, perhaps clubs and teams could bear this in mind, provide such players with the opportunity to play at the higher level, whilst at the same time ensuring that all points are earned by playing rather than by default.

Wavertree have continuously played well with Gary Watson having a tremendous first half to the season. Gary won his 3 against Bootle JC with Aaron Beech and Dave Roberts taking 2 each in a 7-3 victory. They lost their first match of the season at week 15 going down 6-4 to LCC with Gary surprisingly losing his 3. This was followed by a 7-3 loss to Waterloo before losing a third consecutive match when beaten by Fords, with Kevin Dolder and Mal McEvoy combining to take all the points, is the pressure getting to them or is this just a blip?

Waterloo are making a great effort to catch the leaders. Keith Williams has now fully recovered from injury and is back to normal, winning virtually all his games. They have been the form team of the division since before Christmas winning their last 10 matches, most of them very convincingly. Keith, as usual, has led from the front during this period only losing once to an inspired Paul Gittins (6-11in the 5th), Ted Birch, also back after injury, is playing better than ever beating Paul and Steve Gittins to assist in a 7-3 victory against the Police.

Fords results do tend to vary, dependant upon who is playing. Kevin is not playing regularly which severely weakens the team but they have sufficient strength to continue to produce good results. Looking through the cards it appears that they have had a larger variety of players than any other team. Amazingly 8 year old Daniel Wearden made his debut against Maghull and in doing so became the youngest to turn out in this division since Ron Rumjahn 60 years ago! Although Dan failed to win he was far from disgraced and his team won 6-4. Mal McEvoy was at his best in winning his 3 against Bootle JC with Tom Bray and Andrew Mudie both replying with 2 each and combining to win the doubles in a drawn match. Undoubtedly their best win was the victory over Waterloo, but unless Kevin starts to play regularly it seems doubtful that they will challenge at the top.

Bootle JC under the captaincy of Dave Evans continue to do well, Dave now seems to be playing less and using his experience to encourage his 3 young team mates. In recent weeks they have had 8-2 wins against LCC 'B' and Bath St. both Cherith Graham and Andrew Mudie winning trebles against LCC which Andrew repeated against Bath St, coming back from 2 games down against both Fred Bainbridge and Ken Jackson. Tom Bray also gave a good account of himself with his only loss being 11-7 in the 5th against Ken.

LCC are proving to be one of the most reliable teams in the division producing good results week in and week out and never giving their opponents an easy ride, John Lau has replaced Omid Kyhat and is proving himself more than a match for many players, against HH he beat both Ken Connor and Ray Jackson. Mark Roscaleer beat both Ahmed and John with Ken victorious against Keith Bird in a closely fought contest that finished all square. A little piece of history was achieved when they faced their 'A' team, no surprise in the 7-3 victory in their favour, but Ahmed must have been ecstatic when beating Peter for the first time in 10 years.

Ahmed is having possibly his best season, he won his 3 against the club 'B' team in a 5-5 draw, he was joined by Tony Whelan and debutant, Louis Rosenthal, in another draw against Manweb, Louis displayed his class, remaining unbeaten, although Neil Powell pushed him all the way before going down 11-7 in the deciding set.

Neil was also at the top of his form when winning all of his games against Bootle JC. he was ably supported by Les Molyneux who beat both Cherith and Dave before losing to Andy in another drawn encounter. Manweb's best result of the season resulted in a 10- 0 victory against CADWA. on this occasion Neil was pushed all the way by Alan Davies before coming through in the 5th, and Paul Evans managed to outlast Graeme Black with a 5th set 11-8 win. Paul's dad Alan came in as a reserve against Wavertree, beating Dave Roberts in a great personal victory, although it failed to stop his club going down 7-3.

After a poor start, HH have been in impressive form, Ken Connor is in good form as proved in a victory over Keith Bird when they drew with LCC 'A', Mark Roscaleer beat Ahmed and John in this match confirming his development at this level. Steve Whalley and Alec Bryce make up the squad and prove their worth when joining Ken in each winning 2 against Bath St. Ken Jackson, however, replied by winning his 3. When beating Fords 6-4, Ken was brilliant in winning his 3, although he had to keep his nerve to beat Terry Turner 11-9 and Andrew Davies 16-14 in the 5 sets, Mark beat Andrew, and Steve had a good victory over Mal, before Fords surprisingly conceded the doubles to leave HH 6-4 winners.

My mates in Bath St 'A' are performing well when all of them manage to turn up on the same night, this was beyond them when they were due to play Wavertree, Eddie was injured and Ian and Clare were not aware that Wavertree had changed their match night from Thursday to Wednesday, that was until 9.00 pm on the Wednesday when Clare received a text asking 'where are you?' They have also produced the strangest card of the season when playing Fords. Ian withdrew late, due to injury, leaving only Clare and Eddie available, Fords then turned up with only Mal and Bob Hughes, somehow on this shortened evening no-one thought to play the doubles! As their league position indicates when they get it right they

are a strong side as proved by recent 7-3 win against HH and 6-4 against Manweb, Clare won her 3 against HH with Ian winning 2 and Eddie 1, before going down 11-9 in the 5th to Alec Bryce. In the Manweb match they each won 2. Eddie surpassed himself in winning the 4th set 20-18 and saving numerous match points against Les Molyneux before going on to win the deciding set, one of his best wins of the season.

Mike Marsden has remained unbeaten to date, he is not always available, but Paul and Steve Gittins both pick up points on a regular basis. Steve has played on throughout the season despite injuries to both his feet! This squad had their best result when beating Maghull 10-0. Young prospect Jon Taylor replaced Mike when they faced Waterloo and was exceptional in beating Wayne and Ted. There is a rumour that John Rankin will be making yet another comeback in the near future, when this happens, the Police will become a formidable team and probably climb up the division.

CADWA's results vary from week to week, invariably doing well when Chris is available but struggling to find an adequate replacement in his absence. Kevin made one of his rare appearances when they faced Fords and inflicted a rare defeat on Chris, Chris beat Mal and Tim but their only other win on the night was Peter against Tim leaving them 7-3 losers. The following week they bounced back to beat LCC 'B' 7-3 with Alan Davies recording fine wins against Billy Cheung and Steve Kee.

Bath St's first team are surprising strugglers, particularly bearing in mind that Ken is once again having a fine season, he won all his games against Manweb and HH but failed to save team from respective 6-4, 7-3 defeats. Jamie was unfortunate to lose 14-12 in the deciding set against Paul Evans in the Manweb, match and reserve, Ricky Brown, produced all his usual fighting qualities before losing in the deciding sets against both Neil and Paul. They did well to beat the club's 'A' team 6-4 with Clare coming in as a reserve for the first team and winning 2, Ian Campbell was man of the match in winning on all 3 visits to the table for the 'A' team.

LCC 'B' had a fine win against Fords with John Lau and Dave Tagg each beating Tim Wearden and Bob Hughes and Steve Kee victorious over Bob. When Bath St fielded a weakened team LCC 'B' took full advantage to record a fine 8-2 victory. They also did well in the drawn match with their 'A' team taking 3 off first division debutant Ben Chen, Billy beating Mikael and taking the doubles.

It's been a long hard season for Maghull but they continue to fight for every point. Andy Clarke played against Waterloo, providing an indication of what a difference he could have made if available more often, when he beat both Alan and Ted. Matt Wilson had a good night against CADWA in beating Peter and Alan whilst supported by Tony in also beating Alan. They did have a tremendous 8-2 victory against fellow strugglers LCC 'B' with Matt and Tony both winning their 3 singles and combining to take the doubles. Liverpool junior champion, Mark Ambrose did very well to defeat Billy Cheung in 4.

Cheers and good luck for the remainder of the season!!

Ian McElwee

The news from Bath Street appears to be 'Status Quo', with no sign of the developers wishing to move in just yet, so for the near future at least, TT at College Road is 'go go'.

The English Schools Table Tennis Association's, Merseyside representative is now Sylvia Graham (Bootle J.C.), Sylvia has taken up this important post to add to the coaching she and Dave do in local schools, Merseyside includes Liverpool, Sefton, St. Helens and Wirral, **good luck Sylvia*!***

In Ken's 'Nets & Edges on page 21, he touches on how out of step our approach to TT is in this country, a couple of seasons ago we (Bootle YMCA) were fortunate to have Matt Poerschke playing for us, Matt was an accomplished player who normally played in the German National leagues, and was quite surprised at our system of clubs playing in individual venues, in Germany, they play in sports centres, or similar large venues, still maintaining individual club status, but with lots of clubs sharing, costs can be kept down, but he did point out, that you don't get "out for nout", maybe that's the problem here, reluctance to cough up!

The City of Liverpool Open to be held 19th.- 20th August (w.e. before Bank Holiday) Is the next major tournament to be hosted by the L&DTTLeague, the first of the new seasons Butterfly Grand Prix circuit, only a couple of weeks before our season is due to start, so well worth a visit, watch our web site. Any volunteers to help setting up will be appreciated, contact Arthur Garnett, Ken Armson, or members of the ManCom, (all details in handbook)

Division 2

Sylvia Graham

This time last year the season was nearly over however this year we are only three-quarters way through but even so the promotion and relegation stakes are almost sorted. Promotion I feel sure will be two from the three of CADWA 'A', Marconi and Bath St. 'B' and relegation will be two from the three of Bootle YMCA, CADWA 'B' and Police 'B'. Either way these are going to be the most interesting battles; for the other eight teams it's going to be an anti-climax as they are all pretty safe and only a series of bad defeats will provide an upset.

If you check the latest league tables you'll find Marconi are currently in top spot but I reckon that they are in a false position. CADWA 'A' are only a few points behind but with a couple of games in hand so I reckon in the near future Cadwa 'A' will take over the leadership and at the end of the season they will be the champions. If I am proved correct will we see the rise of Graeme Black to the 1st division as his standard demands/ warrants or will he chose to remain in the 2nd for a more social type of table tennis with its' different sort of competitiveness. I still think Marconi will finish in second place although Bath St. 'B' are within striking distance and theoretically it is possible that they could overtake Marconi. Over the last few matches Bath St. 'A' appear to be the better team and they have been accumulating mega points. If I were a member of the Bath St. team and did finish in 3rd place I would be a little peeved if you consider Marconi received 10 points gratis from their walkover with Police 'A'. From the last three matches Bath St 'B' have accrued 23 points as opposed to Marconi's 13. Ian McElwee has now lost his 100% record that was ruthlessly taken from him by Robbie Goldson of Fords 'A'. Sorry Ian but the gauntlet had to be thrown down and obviously someone had to take it up. I still think you can take some satisfaction in having one of the best divisional averages this season and you have been playing really well. One problem I can envisage is that should Bath St. 'B achieve promotion can Bath St. as a club support three teams in the first division, especially when you think of the problems there have been this year with fielding full teams every week.

I still see Bootle YMCA propping up the division but they are certainly trying to go out with a bang as their latest results are a draw with Fords 'A' and an 8:2 victory over Greenbank (…and no… Michael was not playing!!!). Cadwa 'B' and Police 'B' are both on 69 points after the same number of games and only seven points ahead of Bootle YMCA. Whatever happens and whoever gets relegated I hope that they have enjoyed their turn in the second division and will take our best wishes back to the third.

Someone I feel bound to mention and who has impressed me this season is Sharon Norman of Manweb 'B'. Please note that Manweb 'B' are currently above their 'A' team and I think a lot of this is due to Sharon's performances. She picked up her three against Marconi, Manweb 'A' and Marconi 'B' and rarely ever loses all three of her sets in a match. From the card it also looked like she could/should have beaten Graeme Black (CADWA 'A'). After winning the first two games at 9 and 9 she lost the third, -10, and went on to lose the fourth and fifth sets.

Comments on cards are still appearing (thankfully!!!!) and I think it important that they are all printed as these are comments made at the time of the match. Jon Dyson expressed relief when Police 'A' beat Greenbank 8:2. He was ecstatic with points on the board at last and with fielding a full team after 2 walkovers. He thought Mark Palmer played well to beat him as well as losing narrowly to Gemma Lloyd 11:8 in the fifth. The Marconi derby, Marconi v Marconi 'A' was apparently wonderful which could easily have been a 5-5. The doubles of Wass & Wensley were 2 games up and 8-4 up in the third against Owens and Edwards only to lose that game and the next two. Ian Wensley again beat Trevor Owens in the 5th and Wass also nearly beat Owens in the 5th in another cliffhanger. Trevor comments that it was a night of gamesmanship from the 'A' team but concedes that Ian did play well. In another card from Marconi 'A' I am reprimanded for not mentioning the team often enough and I apologize as the same comment is made from my own team members about them not being mentioned either. The Marconi 'A' team were in fact playing the potential champions and Peter Wass insists that he had two close games with Mike Power and George Lennon and the loss to Mike was his first since 1955 (when Mike was only 10 years of age). He feels that on the night his team certainly did not get the rub of the green. Obviously, the problem his team have is deciding whether it's table tennis or crown green bowls they are playing. The win of the night was young Ted Gilmour and his fantastic games with George Lennon.. That same week Police 'B' had a good draw with Bath St 'B'. It was a good match in which Police nearly pulled off a shock 6:4 victory. The crunch game was Teri-Ann Nolan versus Ricky Brown. Tom Purcell had a very good win against Ricky, his backhand was in fine form and he hit Ricky off the table.

Contd. Page 20

Division 3 Stan Clarke

So, after a re-ranking by the Editor, you are stuck with me to write this set of notes, thanks to Steve Kee for the last set of notes, I only hope I can match his efforts.

As you might expect, given how the division was formed, we seem to be split down the middle, with the established third division teams from last year forming the top half and the newly promoted teams forming the bottom half, it is almost like two separate competitions.

There are a couple of new faces in the division since the Christmas break, both signed by Wavertree Labour, and quite useful they are, Peter Mortier is a player from the Belgium national league who is studying at the University for a short period and is unbeaten in his first three matches. Sam Owuso-Ansah has lived in the city for some years and is originally from Ghana, where his elder brother is the coach to the national team.

Have you noticed the number of "Funny" rubbers in this division, it seems that every week you are faced with at least one bat with s**!!y rubbers, it is almost a relief to be beaten by normal rubbers. My own team has four players who play with combination bats out of a squad of six.

I have heard a couple of unsavoury rumours about players refusing to shake hands at the end of a game when they have lost and some bad behaviour during matches which appalls me, you don't have to like your opponent to shake hands at the end of a match, it is a simple matter of courtesy. The one thing I have always admired about this sport is the high level of honesty and sportsmanship exhibited by most players; I sincerely hope that the "Win at all costs" syndrome does not raise its ugly head in this league.

I was asked recently for an interpretation of when and how the expedite system is introduced in matches, basically it can be introduced at any time if both players / pairs ask for it, or by the Umpire / timekeeper after 10 minutes play in any game, provided the score is less than 9/9, once introduced it remains in force for the remainder of that set, one player cannot unilaterally ask for the introduction of expedite, hope that helps for those in doubt.

WEEK 9.

Wavertree Labour 'A' beat Marconi 'B' 7/3, two good wins for Tom Creevy in this match, and John McCann took a game off Dave Roberts. Wav. Lab. 'C' lost 3/7 against Manweb 'C', Stan Clarke beating Rob Barker and Ken Armson and Eric Spencer beating Alan Cameron.

Bootle Y.M.C.A. 'A' beat Wav. Lab. 'B' 7/3, Tony Connor beating Len Dyson and Bert Rivers. Maghull 'B' beat Liverpool YMCA 'C' 9/1, Andy Chung beating George Frost to save the whitewash. Harold House played Maghull 'A', Eddie Clein beating Fred Pheysey for their single point.

Cadwa 'C' lost 8/2 against Bath St. 'D', George Higham beating Neil Pritchett and Ian Lunt beating Peter Ross. Wavertree Lab. 'D' beat Bath St. 'E' 7/3, Karen Gibson beating Dave Foulis and Chris Foley and Keith Wright beating Gordon Langshaw, and one result from week 8, Wav. Lab ' B' beat Wav. Lab 'C' 6/4.

WEEK 10.

Wav.Lab. 'B' battered Cadwa 'C' 9/1, reserve John O'Sullivan beating Dave Williams to save the whitewash. The top two Maghull 'A' and Wav. Lab. 'A' fought out a draw on the Maghull carpet, Dave Roberts losing his 100% record against Steve Woods, who then lost to Paul Banks who also beat Peter Holmes and partnered Dave to beat Alan Jones and Peter in the doubles.

Bath St. 'E' beat Wav. Lab. 'C' 7/3, Ken Armson beating Ted Cramsie and Chris Foley and pairing with Stan Clarke to beat Ted and Keith Wright in the doubles. Good to see Ken getting back to something like his old form after a period of ill health.

Bath St. 'D' inflicted a 10/0 whitewash on Liverpool YMCA.

Harold House lost 7/3 against Maghull 'B' their successes coming from a pair for Eddie Clein and one from Rod McPherson. Marconi 'B' thrashed Wav. Lab. 'D' 8/2, Andy Bird over Tony Mullaly and Dave Foulis over Bobby Bell the only successes for W.L.D.

Bootle Y.M. 'A' visited Manweb leaving with an eight two win, Alan Biggs and Arthur Harrison with wins over Mike Hughes gaining the two points for Manweb. Liverpool YM. entertained Wav. Lab. 'B' and found them less than charitable as Wavertree ran out winners by 9/1, only Andy Chung beating Bill Stanley stopping the whitewash.

WEEK 11.

Wav. Lab. 'A' beat Harold House 'A' 8/2 and Cadwa 'C' went down 2/8 against Manweb 'C', John Ashley's win over Arthur Harrison the only singles success for the home team. Wav. Lab. 'C' lost 4/6 against Marconi, Stephanie Howard and Eric Spencer beating Dave McMahon in the singles and pairing to beat Bobby Bell and Dave McMahon in the doubles.

Maghull ‘B’ lost 3/7 against Bath St. ‘D’ a pair from Phil Christie and one from Mark Ambrose their consolation. Wav. Lab. ‘D’ were battered 9/1 by Maghull ‘A’ their only success a good win for Tony Mitchell over Fred Pheysey. Bootle YM. ‘A’ beat Bath St. ‘E’ 8/2, five sets going to five games, Ted Cramsie over Peter Williams and Graham Oates over Mike Hughes saving the whitewash.

WEEK 12.

Bath St. ‘E’. v Cadwa ‘C’, 6/4 to Bath St. but two good wins for George Higham over Ted Cramsie and Karen Gibson, for Bath St. Billy Clayton easily disposed of Peter Roberts and John Ashley. Wav. Lab. ‘B’ were tanked 9/1 by Bath St. ‘D’ only Colin Fyles defeat of Peter Ross saving the whitewash.

Wav.Lab. ‘A’ beat Maghull ‘B’ 8/2, the only success for Maghull coming from the bat of reserve Kevin Lewis who beat Ken Armson, in a set that needed all five games, but then beat Paul Banks, in straight games, to take Paul’s 100% record. Wav.Lab. ‘C’ were hammered 9/1 by Maghull ‘A’ only one set needing more than three games, Ken Armson beating Alan Jones for the consolation point. Manweb ‘C’ entertained Liverpool YM., but were far from hospitable to their guests beating them 8/2, Arthur Harrison loosing to Ben Chan and Michael Kwan. Marconi ‘B’ and Bootle Y.M. fought out a draw, the top four singles going to the home team and the bottom four to the visitors, with the doubles shared.

WEEK 13.

Wav.Lab. ‘D’ entertained their ‘A’ team and forgot their place by taking three sets from the match, Tony Mitchell over John Rowan and Dave Foulis over Ken Armson, plus a doubles. Bootle Y.M. were beaten 9/1 by Maghull ‘A’, Len Dyson despite a leg injury beating Alan Jones before retiring injured.

Bath St. ‘D’ must have wondered what hit them as they lost at home against Manweb ‘C’ 7/3, only Mark Patterson and Neil Pritchett winning in the singles.

Liverpool Cricket Club, nee Liverpool Y.M.C.A., had their best result for some time when they lost 4/6 against Bath St. ‘E’, Ben Chan beating Karen Gibson and Michael Kwan beating Mal Kent and Graham Oates in the singles. Cadwa ‘C’ entertained near neighbours Marconi ‘B’, and as good hosts, sent their visitors home happy with a 6/4 win. Wav.Lab. ‘C’ were even more generous towards Harold House loosing 7/3, good wins for Stan Clarke over Ian (Rod) McPherson, Ken Armson over John Hughes and Stephanie Howard over Rob Midgley. Maghull ‘B’ thrashed Wav. Lab.’B’ 7/3, Dave Williams will have been happy to beat Tom Downing, as he has had a dreadful season to this point, even more worthy of note, he partnered Bill Stanley in the doubles and they Won.

WEEK 14.

Dave Williams must really have taken heart from his win last week as he beat Alan Biggs and Arthur Harrison, as Wav. Lab. ‘B’ thumped Manweb ‘C’ 9/1, mind you they were assisted by three walk-overs when Paul Jennings failed to appear. Bootle Y.M. fought out a draw at home against Harold House, the set between Len Dyson and Eddie Clein going to expedite with Len running out the winner.

Cadwa were hammered 9/1 by Maghull ‘A’ with their solitary win coming when George Higham beat Fred Pheysey. It would appear that Maghull have incorporated Kevin Lewis into their squad in place of the injured Steve Woods.

Wav. Lab. ‘C’ laid down and died against their ‘A’ team loosing 10/0, the best part of the night was the refreshments. Bath St. ‘D’ v Bath St. ‘E’ resulted in the ‘E’ team loosing 8/2, Ted Cramsie beating Neil Pritchett and Karen Gibson beating Les Gee. Cricket Club found Marconi much too tough to handle and produced just one doubles win in a 9/1 defeat.

WEEK 15

Marconi were brought down to earth when they met Bath St. ‘D’. going down 3/7, their points coming from an excellent pair by Andrew Owens and one from John McCann. Harold House drew with Cadwa, two each for Eddie Clein and Rod McPherson for Harold House and two for John Ashley for Cadwa.

Bath St. ‘E’ lost 3/7 to Wav. Lab. ‘B’, Ted Cramsie over Mike Ashton and Graham Oates over Bill Stanley their only singles successes. Maghull ‘A’ disposed of Cricket Club 10/0, Steve Woods back from injury.

Manweb beat Maghull ‘B’ 6/4 in a night of differing fortunes for the Jennings brothers, Paul losing two and Neil winning two, seven sets in the match needing all five games. I do not have the remaining two score sheets from this week.

WEEK 16.

Wav. Lab. ‘B’. without Tony Connor lost 2/8 against Marconi, only Mike Ashton beating Tony Mullaly and Colin Fyles beating Derek Scotland were successful for Wavertree. Bootle Y.M. beat Wav. Lab. ‘D’ 7/3 with Len Dyson undefeated on the night. Cadwa were thrashed 9/1 by Wav. Lab. ‘A’, Ian Lunt beating Tom Creevy to avoid the whitewash. Cricket Club were soundly spanked by Harold House 1/9, but a good win for Francis Lay over Jeff Mehan avoided the whitewash. In a surprise result Bath St. ‘D’. and Maghull ‘A’. fought out a draw, with Mark Patterson and Peter Ross unbeaten in singles for the Crosby team. Wav.Lab. ‘C’. also drew with Maghull ‘B’, by virtue of winning both doubles. Manweb dumped Bath St. ‘E’ 8/2.

WEEK 17.

Harold House achieved the distinction of turning a 7/3 defeat into a 9/1 defeat when they played all but the number one out of order against Bath St. ‘D’., not clever.

Wav. Lab. 'D' and Cadwa fought out a tense draw, with George Higham beating Andy Bird in the final set of the match to level the match.

Maghull were somewhat profligate when they dropped three sets against Wav. Lab. 'B', Tony Connor and Mike Ashton both beating Fred Pheysey and Mike rounding off a good night by beating Alan Jones. Wav.Lab. 'C' beat Bootle Y.M. 6/4. in his debut match Peter Mortier easily disposed of Bert Rivers and Mike Hughes.

Marconi just edged home 6/4 against Manweb, when Ken Roberts beat Arthur Harrison in the final set. Maghull 'B' beat Bath St.'E' by the same score, two singles wins by Mark Ambrose and both doubles the deciding factor. Wav.Lab.'A' dropped an unexpected set against Cricket Club when Alvin Tso beat John Rowan, but a 9/1 win without Dave Roberts can't be bad.

WEEK 18.

Manweb suffered a whitewash against Maghull 'A'. although John Hardy was unlucky to loose 10/12 in the fifth against Steve Woods as was Rob Barker when he lost 9/11 in the fifth against Peter Holmes.

Wav. Lab. 'D' beat Cricket Club 9/1, Francis Lay beating Gordon Langshaw, 5 sets needing all five games and Cricket Club losing all of them. Bootle Y.M., without Len Dyson, still managed a 6/4 victory against Maghull 'B'., the difficult Peter Williams re cording two good wins against Mark Ambrose and Rod Bulmer. Bath St. 'E'. lost 3/7 against Marconi, Bill Clayton winning both singles over Tony Mullaly and Bobby Bell.

Wav. Lab.A., with Mick Tierney replacing Peter Howden, beat Bath St. 'D'. 9/1, John Rowan falling foul of Peter Ross their only defeat.

And finally Cadwa lost to Wav. Lab. 'C'. 4/6, two singles each, for Peter Mortier and Stephanie Howard, and an unexpected win for Stan Clarke against George Higham and a doubles for Peter and Stan over George and Ian Lunt.

Bits from the past

I've again been looking at Digests from the past, (only from the 70's) those heady days, of 8 divisions, 12-13 & 14 teams in a division, (in 1979 there was a 9th. Div. with 14 teams)

I picked out this little gem from Sue Hughes' report for Div. 3B in a 1981 Digest Quote " P.S. You've heard of floodlit cricket, well Linacre has introduced a variation of this - candlelit table tennis, the rule of the game is thus - at a given moment in the game the lights fuse, at which point a little man bearing a candle, who has been waiting outside for a signal, provides illuminati until play can resume, I know 'cos I was there! " (is this the same Sue Hughes who is now playing for Maghull 'E'?).

I remember another ruse Linacre used to get up to at home, if the away team was leading at the half way stage, they would be fed that lovely full bodied fruit cake, (to slow you down I thought) if Linacre were in front you'd get biscuits, what was that saying "killing by kindness !"

LEFT TO RIGHT ARE: CATHY BAXENDALE, SUE BURGESS, BRENDA BUOEY AND BARBARA KIRKMAN

This article and picture has been produced from an article by Jim Beckley in the TTNews No. 315, bet the girls thought they were getting away with it!

GLAMOUR GIRLS

Cathy Baxendale, Sue Burgess, Brenda Buoey and Barbara Kirkman. In the early 1970s these four glamour girls were the talk of Lancashire, for all the best reasons, of course.They each played in the Liverpool and District League and each at some time made appearances for Lancashire in the County Championships. Since then the girls have gone their separate ways but not entirely, for they kept in touch and vowed to meet up again. So when Cathy Baxendale (Haydon) reached her 51st birthday, they decided to put on their best togs and celebrate. Now all veterans (that's over 40), they gathered together at Childwall Golf Club in Liverpool to chat about all those earlier days - and how things had changed.

Division 4

DOUGIE BAKER

Welcome to the bowels of the Liverpool league and my first report for this season in division 4. Thanks to Stan Clarke for the first report, who knows more about TT than I ever will, however I have the insider knowledge of the 4th division, seen as I play for and captain (when Don & John let me) CADWA 'D'.

Harold House 'B' are a team designed and maybe even destined to win this division. Captain Morgan has a rum side (!). John Hughes, Paul, Mike Poole and Rob Midgley are the mainstays of the team, with guest appearances from Martin Roberts, they will be near the top at the end. They had a 6-4 win over rivals **Linacre**, John Hughes missing out in 3 against Harry Reeve /9, /8 & /8. Rob Midgely also thankful for small mercies, in 3 over Jack Davidson by the narrowest margin /9, /9 & /9. also amazingly close in both doubles. Rob hasn't lost many this season,

Their 'C' team led by Eric Young, are full of familiar faces, Dave Cohen, Gary Abrams, and making a return after a long absence Lewis Rosenbloom. Mr Cohen has passed the captaincy of the 'C' team to Eric Young. (I thought Captains of industry were supposed to pass on their crown to younger, eager upstarts.) Whoever was in charge at the debacle for the visit of MCA'C' has a lot to answer for. Expecting Lewis and Gary, then having to call on Erol Gaillard at the last moment, and playing one short;- if I interpret the scoring out of names on the match card correctly. It didn't affect Harry's lads who won all 7 on the night, including the only doubles when Steve & Brian teamed up to ensure themselves 2 games, coming from behind to beat Dave & Eric in 4.

Looks like Harold House have stretched things to far for the league's liking, and a re ranking has been imposed, although Harold House's protestations have prevented a full rout.

Aigburth have a similar set-up to Harold House, a strong 1st team and a promising 'A'. The ***'A's*** young lads (well 3 of them are – Neil & Paul Croxton and Sean Denny, along with Alan Staniland and Eric Wood), are finding the season tough going. Adversity builds character, as Sensi Eric Wood say (!). But defeat is harder to stomach when you feel you're not being out played, just out thought, stick at it, it will come. That's EW again. Eric rolls along, beating the likes of Alan Smethurst and Jeff Banks in straight sets, Jeff tried to get back in it in the 2nd, just missing out 18/20, before being run aground by pirate Eric the Red in the next.

There are youngsters in the first team too, Lee Proffit and Ian Laird, equally talented judging by the swap of 1&2 positions in a re ranking. Graham Rollinson is a strong supporting act. Derek Traynor is too, as proved by his win over Dave Batty. They lost out narrowly at **Harold House 'B'**, but as only John Hughes match with Ian went to 5 (John coming back from losing the first two from deuce), the 4-6 score was a fair result. John also beat Ian, as Paul Morgan did to Lee. However, Rollo had opened the night with a narrow, 13/11, 9 & 9 win over Paul. John Mitchell battled hard in both his games against Mike & Rob.

Maghull have C, D and E teams looking to find their own position in this division, as players flow between the teams, filling in as appropriate, it makes for a very fluid situation, which can water down team identity. At least the same cannot be said of the beer in the bar as this comment from Captain Andy McCourt elucidating on their 8-2 win over Aigburth 'A' shows, Highlight of this "nail-biting" 6 pointer was Eric & Jeff's determination to play 21's again, (Eric winning 20-18!). Guest appearance in the stands from Dave Cunningham – couldn't keep his eyes off this encounter or was it the "John Smiths"? the match was played with the usual great sense of humour you get at **Maghull 'E',** even Eric's strange decisions of calling Alan Smethurst & Andy to play 2 consecutive didn't detract from a good night, indeed Eric was seen staggering from the clubhouse after midnight well the worse from beer! Dave Cunningham to blame here. Good Fun." Sounds just like the kind of spirit we all need on a cold November's night, Andy – ever thought of writing for the digest? I'm sure we can come to some terms!

Maghull 'D' ran out 7-3 winners over **Harold House 'C'**, with HH 'C' getting all their points from 5 game sets. In the battle at the top of the card; Janette Hutchings against Gary Abrams, Janette after edging 2 close first games, had the chance to wrap it up in 3, only to see victory pulled away from her 11/13 in the last. Gary had previously lost to No.2 Jimmy Ambrose, Jimmy lost in a very similar fashion as Janette, to Eric Young, first 2 games to him from deuce, then Eric regrouped and won 13/11 in the 5th. Dave "Fancy Pants" Cohen, started the night with the 1st 5gamer against Alan Chan, to show age is no bar to ability, nor affability.

M.C.A. 'C' suffered a 3-7 score line, again understandably, against **Marconi 'C'**, yet Harry McGanity can claim a good win over Derek Scotland, whereas Steve McGanity can trump that by claiming a win over Frank Proffitt, even though Ken Roberts beat Steve in the last match, he will wonder what he did wrong to lose to Wilf Gibson, when Dave Bradley had no such trouble.

It's a dog eat dog world, especially if you want to get on. Hence in the derby, 'C' beat 'D' 10-0. Both teams fielded strong sides, but everything worked out to ranking order, although there's always more to intra club rivalry than you can tell from a score card. 'D' tried to do the same to 'E', but they are more evenly matched, judging by the 6-4 score. five games went to 5, three of them to the 'D',

Bath Street have two very capable teams in the F and G, although perhaps erratic, but don't let the key positions of 13 & 14 mislead you. Ciaran McAleese is another emerging young man at No.1 for big Ron's **'G'** team, they were put to the blade (should be "sword" I know,) 9-1 by that redoubtable **Maghull 'C'** team, Ron got the only point for the home team, in the last match, Wilf Gibson couldn't quite give the whitewash, as it went to Ron 11/9 in the 5th. Ron eclipsed Dave Batty's efforts in the previous set, Dave had almost pulled off a remarkable turn around against captain Bill Salter, after losing the 3rd game to 1, he won 12/10 in the 4th, but was out of steam against puffing Billy in the 5th 11/7.

The **'F'** team can live with anyone, as shown in their draw with **Linacre,** just don't ask Dave Cunningham and Norman Lindsay to explain how they managed to lose all their singles, yet team up to give Harry & Jack a drubbing in 1st doubles, George Crowley again bagged a brace as he so regularly does. The fact this team are the same four that stood them in good stead when beating the **Bootle YM 'B'** shuffled side 7-3, without Dave Oakes, BYM'B' are a different proposition (- yes I know this leads me open to the same charge at CADWA 'D' with Andy McNabb), you can say that Shakil with his "attacking play right from serve" as Alan Willis puts it, can be relied on to win his 2.

Bootle YM 'B', even though they are the lowest of the Bootle teams, have strength, Jim Geddes and Dave Oakes have played higher, impressive new signing Shakil Malik, is someone who, if I was captain of their A or even their 1st team, I'd be looking at poaching. A BYM'B' side with 2 changes at 3&4, suffered their worst defeat of the season yet at **Linacre,** no sanctuary was given as HHJK ran out comfortable 9-1 victors, only Shakil could manage a point from Jack, and that was by no means a given. Harry Reeve was able to put out the flames of the firebrand. What goes around comes around, and a week later BYM'B' dealt out a 9-1 to **Harold House 'C',** Shakil beat Lewis Rosenbloom, in their first singles of the evening in 3, after the break, Lewis went to 5 against Dave Oakes, but he wasn't the one to get the lone point, no, as ever, that face saver came from the not so, Eric Young.

Marconi 'C' have a strong team / squad. Paul Loftus, Frank Proffitt & Derek Scotland are too good for this division, so enjoy the challenge of playing them whilst you can, Kenny Roberts seems to be enjoying his TT again too, and Dave Bradley is capable at No 3 or 4. Winners 8-2 over **Bootle YM'B'**, where only another good showing by Shakil won points for the visitors, 7-3 winners over the top (in this division at least) **MCA 'C'** side, they dented **Aigburth 1st** hopes with the same scoreline, the visitors turned out a strong side, with Woodsy at 4, experience told in the Proffitt clan, as Frank beat Lee, Lee had shown youthful enthusiasm, racing away with the 1st game 11/4, the next 2 games were close but not close enough for Lee, as FP won both 11/9, by the 4th Lee had given his all, and Frank won it 11/3. Frank's only downer was in the doubles, where he and Dave saw a hard won 2 games lead, reclaimed by Ian and Eric.

Mine own **CADWA 'D'** would have been promoted on merit to the 4th from the 5th last year anyway, and want to prove that, ignore reports of a dip in form of Andy McNabb, as this was just due to a self inflicted injury, without him we are not the same potent force. John O'Sullivan is a match for anyone, (ask Harry Reeve, or better yet ask John about Harry), Don Davies, Jack Highton and myself are the unknown quantities – and I should know (!?), each with possibilities of magic, but never sure how to reproduce it on demand. Paul Lunan is new to the team, a regular on the Southport scene, he's an attack minded all rounder, in the 2-8 defeat by Harold House 'B' he was the only player to win a single, and then teamed up with John to win first doubles. Andy was back to his full self for his return, against **Marconi 'C',** again, the Pauls were exemplary, Loftus for the visitors, and Lunan for the home team. CADWA were robbed of a draw, as Frank failed to spot that the card didn't have the sets totalled correctly, but eagle eyed Trevor did, 6-4 to Marconi, as another potential rival was put down. Just be careful what you sign in future Frank! You too Don!!

The **Linacre** 4, as I shall call them as they never seem to change, had a good mid term to report, 9-1 over Harold House 'C', causing Eric Young to cry out on the back of the card "we need, as you can see, a 5th or 6th division"! although he can be proud to have been the one this time to save the tin hat, different match, different table, different story, as Linacre were whupped 8-2 by Harry McGanity's **MCA** lads. After the first batch of singles, Linacre led Aigburth 1st. 3-1, but the doubles was a nightmare and Aigburth squared things 3-3. Graham then won his 2nd singles of the evening against Jack, 12/10 in 4th, to put them ahead, Ian Laird still had 2 singles to play, and was called on to play his first one against the imposing Mr Reeve, Ian went 2-1 down, and Harry could have closed it in the 4th, but lost 10/12, in a nail biting 5th it was Ian who crossed the line first, 11/9. Ken Ainsworth pulled it back to 4-5, by beating John Mitchell 12/10 in 4th. However, Ian was no doubt pumped up after his battle with Harry, and beat the other Harry, Mr Nelson in 3 straight, to seal a rare away win for Aigburth. CADWA 'D's Andy McNabb had moved

along a lot on his recovery, but without his killer blows had to work more, he had the most amazing comeback against Harry Nelson, 2-0 down, he clawed his way out in both the 3rd and 4th games, then Harry was set with a good lead at the turn-around in the 5th, and moved to Match Point, at 10-9 Harry just missed a kill by a whisker, and the Andy cat was let out of the bag, 10/12. The Reeve v McNabb was not a close affair in the first 4 games, each establishing a healthy lead when on top:- 11/4, 5/11, 5/11, 11/5, but deciders are called that for a reason, the 5th game was nip and tuck, too and fro, all the way to 11 apiece, Andy wasn't moving very well, no doubt weighed downed with Rabbits foots and lucky charms, by the narrowest of margins he took the next 2 points. Harry Nelson got justice beating Paul Lunan, and Harry got revenge over John O'Sullivan for a defeat 2 years previous! (Guy's, like an elephant, he never forgets a defeat, mind you there's not that many to remember in his case.)

And finally, commiserations to Eric Young, who with the demise of Greenbank 'A' has lost valuable points in his personal tally, which is exactly what happened to him last year.

Week 15

HH 'C's Rob Midgley went to 5 in both his singles with BS 'G', beat Albert Parker 12/10 in't last see-saw game with Chris Blackburn, who won, claiming BS 'G's only point on the night.
Clean sweep for Marconi 'C' at Aigburth 'A'.

Aigburth 1st 6, Bootle YM 4, Ian Laird beating Dave Oakes in 3, Shakil Malik beating Lee and Graham.
Good team effort from MCA'C' 8-2 over BS'F'.
Same score for CADWA 'D' v HH 'C', no 5 gamers here.

Week 16.

BS 'G' going down 3 – 7 to BS 'F', Kieran Mc involved in all their points, due to good wins over Dave C and Norman, teaming up with Ron to beat them in the doubles too. Hi flyers MCA'C' and Aigburth shared the honours. A. Braham pushed out by Marconi 'C' for their crunch match with HH'B', duly won versus Martin Roberts and John Hughes in singles to contribute to the 5 all draw.

BYMCA 'B' (6), kept to their rotation against CADWA 'D' (4) who had one fail to show, talking point of the night was a disputed call in the match of Daniels v O'Sullivan, in the 2nd game, at 4-3 up, the ball may/may not have clipped the table from an impossible shot by Steve Daniels, in the hot seat was Don, who awarded the point to Steve, John was rattled by this, lost the game 4/11 and then the set 1-3.
MCA'D' 10-0 Aigburth 'A', Neil Croxton took a game off both Naresh and Denise, but Sean came closest, 2-3 against Jimmy Ambrose.
HH 'C' 2 MCA 'E' 8, Alan Smethurst and Steve Banks had fine wins over Gary Abrams, Steve's right old tussle, 9/11, 12/10, 12/10, 9/11, 9/11, perhaps this tired him out, as against Dave Cohen he was completely bamboozled, and lost outright in 3.

Week 17.

CADWA 'D' 6 MCA 'C' 4, Andy and Don undefeated, great win for Don over Bill, not so good in the doubles losing in 5, Jack had fine win over Brian Gregory, but then lost to Wilf, who I just managed to beat in 5.
MCA'E' meanwhile had good 6-4 win over BYMCA'B'. Shakil again the star, aided by Jim Geodes, beating Alan Smethurst, new feature Sue Hughes was in a hurry but won her singles.
Aigburth 'A' 1 Linacre 9, lots of games going to 4, but only Eric's win over Jack counted for the home team. Peter Barton appearing for Linacre was a good reserve.
BS 'G' 4 – Marconi 'C' 6, not quite the usual crushment from the italian mob, Ciaran, (how many ways does this guy spell his name) had a good win in 3 over Derek, but found the steady experience of Frank too much. Dave Bradley was the only player on both teams to win his 2, taking both Ron and Chris in 4.

Week 18

Aigburth 1st 8 CADWA 'D' 2, without Andy & John, Paul Lunan filled in at 1, Ian, Lee and Graham making most of home advantage, #1 Ian v #1 Paul, 11/9 in 5th was the best match of the night, as CADWA struggled to get a foothold.

HH 'C' 7 Aigburth 'A' 3, Eric (Wood that is) started the night well beating Gary Abrams, Neil Croxton was no doubt delighted to beat Erol in the penultimate match.
Marconi 'C' filled in a 3-a-side card and filled in BS 'F' 6-4, it was largely old rocker Ken at No. 4, who Marconi had to thank for going 5-1 up, the silent assassin rolling over George and Albert. A stupendous comeback by Dave Cunningham, 2-0 down and deuce in the 3rd he took that 14-12, drew level with another close 4th game, 11-9. then the 5th. a stainless performance.

Linacre 1 – HH 'B' 9, Yes 1-9! regular 4 for Linacre, Woodyatt and Hughes in for HH, created a team that all but Harry couldn't handle - 8 games over in 3.
MCA 'D' 7 – BS 'G' 3. good win for MCA to their long time rivals, MCA raced to 4-0, as BS 'G' reserve Alan Baker was in a rush, playing in the first 3 matches! the visitors had to wait to the 5th game of the 5th match, to see Barbara get their 1st point. Naresh v Dave Batty was a good example of how 5 frustrating gamers can be.

The Player Registration Scheme has not yet hit the high spots the overall lack of response being on the low side. Much of this could possibly be due to the general uncertainty of the eventual cost to individual players causing everyone to adopt a wait and see approach but this has to be a must whatever the final cost as it is important we move forward.

The attempt to take the ETTA court over an alleged unlawful rule change has not unexpectedly collapsed but the league concerned and possibly also the ETTA will have incurred un-necessary legal costs over what is best described as much ado about nothing.

Unexpected drama at the last ETTA National Council meeting when having not been expected to attend the Deputy Chairman, Mike Johns, put in an appearance to announce his resignation. The election process for his successor has commenced and I am hopefully right in saying this has never previously occurred, it being akin to an American Vice President resigning in mid term. Perhaps not having any political impact but for any Chairman to lose a selected Deputy has to be seen as a major setback. Peter Bradley, unopposed in the election process, has now been formally elected as Deputy Chairman. It is an ill wind that blows no good and Peter has been able to offload his position as Competitions Vice Chairman and no doubt will be pleased to have done so.

The holding of a disciplinary inquiry has not been necessary for a number of years in our league but within months of my making reference to undisciplined behaviour two complaints were received resulting in disciplinary action. One involved the worst case of verbal abuse I can recall in our league. Whilst I don't put these down to my comments I do see it as being a step in the right direction, as no one should have to put up with unwanted abuse during what they expect to be a night of friendly competitive table tennis. Surprisingly the Disciplinary Committee have been criticised for not being more lenient the punishment of a mere six weeks suspension for such a serious offence being seen too harsh. Are we expected to wait until someone is physically assaulted before we take action?

The thorny problem of players not throwing the ball up is still with us and my nomination for Player of the season must go to Bobby Bell of Marconi who asked his own player to throw the ball up when serving during a match. I am frequently asked about this and always give the same answer, no one should shy away from asking a player to throw the ball up if they are clearly serving direct from the palm of the hand, but in doing so they should also ensure that the service of their own team mates also complies with the law. Everyone worries about a tit for tat approach but players know when they are in the wrong and tit for tat is childish and not the answer. A quiet word should receive a sensible response and not be accompanied by tit for tat. Or as the late Jimmy Clewett used to do, by throwing the ball up high as a form of protest.

Good news on the cup front the league having now updated all league cups and trophies most of these having several years missing. Roly Wright took on the onerous task of checking what was required, getting cups and trophies returned and seeking a reasonable estimate. Well done, Roly.

The ETTA's best asset has to be Chief Executive Richard Yule who could sell snow to Eskimos and enjoy a comfortable life on the profits. In all probability he has obtained for table tennis a greater share of lottery funding than any other sport based on a membership comparison. This season has been no exception as in addition he convinced Sport England that the ETTA would deliver the required cascade of medals in the current CWG to obtain a further massive injection of lottery cash for CWG preparation.

Being a person who tries to live in the world as we know it and not the fanciful one some live in I was somewhat surprised to see, and also took exception to, an article in this month's TTN carrying the headline "Our best prospects lie with the men, who will be defending gold medals". My memory may not be what it was but I recall that England was somewhat fortunate to reach the final of the team event and no able bodied player won a medal in the individual events. However, I clearly recall that our disabled wheelchair athletes were our real stars winning gold in the first ever CWG wheelchair table tennis event along with a bronze. They did not merit even a mention in the TTN article even though that same CWG champion will be defending her title in Melbourne and in my humble opinion having a much better chance of doing so than her able bodied colleagues.

The article went on to say that neither India nor Nigeria possessed the strength in depth to defeat England in the team event. Clearly the writer is out of touch with world table tennis and in addition managed to also overlook Wales who humbled England 3-2. Nigeria with no strength in depth and no massive injection of lottery cash knocked out our Men and Women's teams simply by just being better players. Nigeria followed this up by also beating Wales 3-0 in the semi final so what level, if any, does this put us at having lost 3-2 to Wales.

Believe this or believe it not but Eddie Clein lost a match because he went weak at the knees when competing in the Fire-fighter Games in Hong Kong, but he did not come home empty handed winning a bronze in the singles. We now know we have at least one player capable of medal winning in that part of the world. Perhaps Eddie should have stayed on to show our CWG squad how to win medals? Apparently the spectators for the final stages numbered several hundreds the pressure of such support for home based players resulting in Eddie bottling it and having to settle for a bronze. Eddie reckoned taking part in a dozen election recounts was less stressful.

Congratulations to Kevin Dolder and Sean Marples for taking Sycamore to the Div. 1 North title in the National League which should ensure their place in the Premier Division next season..

STOP PRESS
India won gold in the Men's team event in Melbourne, they beat Singapore 3-2 after being 2-0 down
See Ken's comments above

More and more good players are playing in the National leagues, probably because of the method of playing multiple games over weekends in large venues, and getting used to background noise and movement, only what goes on on the table matters, none of the Shhh-hh!, is this the future!

Division 2 Sylvia Graham
Contd. From page 12

Another good match was Bootle YMCA against Bath St. 'C' which Bath St took 7 sets to 3. The first half went all to Bath St; Rob Peat was just too fast, John Langton had all the shots and Dave Stoddern Lost to Ritchie Winkle and Roly Wright but beat John Higham. The worst set was Roly and Dave when there were so many missed shots and chances. The best set of the night was the doubles with John and Ritchie against Dave and Rob. There was lots of hard hitting mixed with some good angled pushing. The last game produced the shot of the night at 8 all John Higham produced a great shot with Dave Stoddern at the back of the court. John congratulated himself only to see Dave jump up 6 foot and smash the ball back to win the point, the next two points were edges to Bath St and the game was over but a good night was had by all.

Colin Rourke was given man of the match in the Cadwa derby. Mike said that Colin has close shaves against both him and Graeme. He beat Graeme Black deuce in the fifth and he could have lost here straight to Mike Power. Looking back Mike says that he only had himself to blame at two nil up he needed the courage and accuracy to lash a couple of backhands at 10 all in the third, he had an enjoyable match and got home at 1 o'clock. Yes Mike but didn't the match finish at 11.?????

And lastly the roles of honour:

Facesavers:- John Langton (Bath St 'C') beat Bob Edwards (Marconi) –9, -7, 8, 8, 9. Mark Palmer (Greenbank) beat Jon Dyson (Police 'A') 6, 8, 11. Rob Wylie (Bootle JC 'A') beat Gemma Lloyd (Police 'A') 11, -7, -9, 7, 8.Rob Davies (CADWA 'B') beat John Appleton (Greenbank) 6, 5, 8. Dave Harse (Manweb 'A') beat Mick Keane (Bath St 'A') 7, 8, 7. Trevor Barraclough (Manweb 'B') beat Brian Burrows (Police 'A') 6, 7, 3. Brian Burrows (Police 'B') beat John Langton (Bath St 'B') 6, -8, -7, 10, 1.

Close Wins:- Ian Wensley (Marconi 'A') beat Rob Davies (Cadwa 'B') –10, 6, 10, -10, 8. John Higham (Bootle YMCA) beat John Henshaw (Manweb 'A') –4, 6, 6, -14, 11. Frank McCann (Marconi) beat Rob Hughes (Fords 'A') 7, 9, -10, 13. Mike Power (CADWA 'A') beat Trevor Barraclough (Manweb 'B') 6, 11, 10. Jonathan Taylor (Police 'A') beat Frank McCann (Marconi) 10, 10, 9. Mick Keane (Bath St. 'B') beat Frank McCann (Marconi) 8, 14, -12, -10, 12.

Good Wins: Too many good wins this session so will have to start something different for the next issue. Any ideas please pass to me before the end of the season

LETTERS

The Editor

Mr. Editor, as a spectator at a division 3 match, I feel I just have to comment on the unsporting behaviour of the captain of the away team.

Len Dyson, Bootle YMCA, 'A' sustained a groin injury during his first game, the doubles (set 2), he continued the game in considerable pain with very little mobility, losing with his partner in the 4th game.

As the match progressed Len strapped and rested his injury, saying he would try and play out the match, Len played his first singles against the away captain (set 6), which went four games, Len winning a very tight set in the fourth game, Len played the match in considerable pain finishing the match bent double at the end of the table.

As his opponent was walking off the table, not even shaking hands with Len, who was still in pain and bent double at the end of the table, he called Len back on for his third set.

Len's next opponent at first refused, (expecting that Len would at least be given time to rest, and play later,) but his captain insisted, saying he was the captain and it was within the rules. Len declined to play and retired injured,

In my 35+ years of playing table tennis, business house and Liverpool league, I have never seen anyone look to gain an unfair advantage by immediately putting an injured player straight back onto the table , in fact it must only be a handful of occasions when I have seen any player immediately called back onto the table , except when the call is the only one left at the end of a match, or after a game of doubles, in these circumstances the player has, on most occasions been asked if he minds going back on. At the end of the night the other 3 players of the away team voiced their disapproval to the Bootle YMCA team, of what had happened, their captain was still supporting the argument that it was within the rules of the game, I hasten to add, "but not in the spirit".

I hope the away captain feels the additional 1 point was worth the bad feeling left at the end of the night.

Regards,

Mike Hughes Bootle YMCA. 15th January 2006

Mike was so incensed about the treatment of Len, he chose to indicate the player involved, but I thought that it was one of those cases which requires full mention, (but not to pillory), in the hope that it will never happen again, it's not the attitude we want at our matches for whatever reason, I'm sure the player concerned regretted his actions the next day. Soon after that match, the captaincy of the opposing team was changed!

Editor

Dear Editor,

I sometimes wonder how I ended up writing this letter from a secret location in the Highlands of Scotland .....!

It all started about two years ago when I was encouraged to write a letter to the Digest Editor highlighting what seemed to be the 'fiddling' of team grouping lists. I wasn't really that bothered but I was unprepared for the outcry that followed and despite my attempts at reconciliation the mutterings from certain quarters continued.

Everywhere I played I would be asked about 'that letter' and I would have to explain again for the thousandth time what it was all about. At other venues, opposing players would go silent when I entered the room and fingers would be pointed in my direction.

I started to develop a complex! I was constantly looking over my shoulder! I couldn't eat and would hide myself away watching the QVC channel for hours on end- anything to avoid having to put my kit on and face a TT match. And there was no relief in sleep as I started having nightmares! I would wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat with that face staring at me accusingly.

The pressure increased as each new Digest regurgitated the comments in my letter. Eventually it was all too much and I decided to sell up and head for the hills where no one would know me and I could start again.

And that's where I am now. It's cold and isolated here! It goes dark at two in the afternoon. My only company are sheep, cattle and wild haggis! I'm living off the land - it's like a continuous 'Bush Tucker Trial'.

There's no TT but I am happy as Sylvia can't get me here!! HA, HA, HA, HAAAAAAAA!!!

Best wishes to all my TT friends in Liverpool. I am missing my TT but keeping up to date with the news via the excellent Liverppol TT web site.

Must go now. Were having broth tonight and it's my turn to suck on the bone!

'Lang may yer lum reek!'

Tony Harris (ex Police TT Club)

While flitting through TT web sites for any little bits of info that I can use to fill up space in Digests, I first spotted this bit on the ITTF web site about the new team format to be used in the 2008 Olympics, teams to be 3 a-side, match to be best of 5, including a doubles, all players play two sets, one player plays two singles and two players play one singles and one doubles. It seems there can be variations used depending on the tournament, either first team to 3 wins, K.O. or play all 5 sets for a points system, as in a league The goal of the new format is to make the competition more fair where a single member of a team will not be able to dominate the team tie. All three players are important because a player is limited to two matches in the best three out of five team tie. This balances the team competition so that one strong player cannot force a win. It requires a team to be three deep strong to have a good chance at winning the team tie. ITTF entrusted USA Table Tennis with the inauguration of the 2008 Olympic Games Team Competition Format at the recent U.S. Open Team TT. Championships. More info. can be found on their web site (http://www.usatt.org/news1/2006_us_open_teams_writeup.shtml) for comments from those taking part.

The format of our National British League has changed a bit, in 2002-03, the Premier Division was 4 in a team, 14 sets, 12 singles + 2 doubles. Now the British League is 4 in a team (men) best of 8 sets (no doubles); and 3 in a team (women), playing best of 6 sets, (no doubles). I can't see this new format catching on at local level with our single venues, the night over in 6 sets would hardly be worth turning out, but at multiple match venues, two matches in a night may be possible, and possibly in schools competitions, where finishing early is usually a prime requirement.

Speed Glues

The increasing use of technology over the years has meant that sport has become faster; in sports where a ball is used the spherical object travels quicker, table tennis is no exception. Blades and racket coverings that enable a player to hit the ball faster, and impart more spin, have been constantly developed and, of course, for over two decades players have used `**speed glue**' to enhance the speed that can be imparted on a table tennis table.

Considering that we have a high position in table tennis, opinion is that we can't accept that players continue to be exposed even to the smallest danger when there is a solution to avoid it. ***Therefore the decision taken by the ITTF BOD in 2004 to totally ban the use of any glues containing volatile organic solvents as from 1 September 2007 is the right one.***

There is not a single good reason to imagine that the implementation of the decision of the ITTF BOD could be postponed. Technical and tactical aspects of table tennis can be modified and players can adapt. Health can't wait.

Liverpool hosted another International Wheelchair Table Tennis Tournament

Greenbank hosted the Liverpool 08 International Wheelchair Table Tennis Open from 17-19 March 2006. Greenbank's Sports Development Officer and a GB table tennis player Mark Palmer says, "We expect 3 days of first class competition. Players are all trying to gain points to contribute to the IPTTC (International Paralympic Table Tennis Committee) world ranking list and seeding for the World Championships in Switzerland in September 2006"

A busy Final day of all class singles,

Players competed from 15 different countries, including Denmark, Germany, Norway, Iceland, Italy and USA-to name but a few. Tony Edge, Ian Littlewood, Lynne Riding, Mark Palmer and Scott Robertson, locally recognised names competed for Great Britain alongside the World Number 1 (class 5) player Tommy Urhaug of Norway, who, as expected, won the men's class 5 singles event, beating, Germany's Selcuk Cetin in 5 tight games. Mark Palmer, and his Organising committee from Greenbank can be pleased with the way the whole event has gone.
A vote of thanks was given by the Organising Committee to all who helped over the length of the tournament.

Divisional Cup Semi Finals

With the results of the recent Semi-Final matches, we now have the Finalists for the 4 Finals, Venues will be arranged ASAP.

	Division 1. Readman Cup			
5	FORDS	v	MANWEB	4
5	LIVERPOOL C.C. 'A'	v	CADWA	3
	Division 2. Rumjahn Cup			
2	MANWEB 'A'	v	M/SIDE POLICE 'A'	5
5	CADWA 'A'	v	M/SIDE POLICE 'B'	1
	Division 3.Hyde Cup			
5	WAV. LABOUR 'A'	v	HAR. HOUSE 'A'	0
3	CADWA 'C'	v	BATH STREET 'D'	5
	Division 4. Forrest Cup			
5	LINACRE	v	MAGHULL 'C'	2
3	CADWA 'D'	v	MARCONI 'C'	5

Readman Cup

Match of the round, undoubtably, the match between Fords, Mal McEvoy, Terry Turner & Tim Wearden, and Manweb's Neil Powell, Les Molyneux & Paul Evans. Result, 5-4 to Fords, level at 2-2, Manweb go in front 4-2, Fords pull it back to 4 all, last set, the two No. 1's, Mal v Neil, 1-1, then Neil goes into 2-1 lead, Mal pulls in the next one 18-16, dissapointment must have got to Neil, going down 11-6 in the 5th. Seven games going past deuce, well played.

Readman again L.C.C. 'A' beat CADWA 5-3, Chris Ford getting Cadwa's 3

Rumjahn Cup.

Police 'A' too strong for Manweb 'A' Gavin Lloyd and Jon Dyson getting 2 each, with Terri-Anne getting the other.

Cadwa 'A' taking the other Police team out with two off Graeme Black and Colin Rourke and one off Mike Power, Terri-Anne winning Police's consolation.

Hyde Cup

Wav. Labour 'A' v Har. House 'A', our only whitewash of the round, and what appears a strange set of calls by H.H. match over and the skipper's still sitting on the bench, maybe I can't see the wood for the trees, well played Labour, 4 sets in 3 games.

Cadwa 'C' held their own against Bath St. 'D' up to 3-3 with the last two sets going to Bath St 'D' in 3 games each set

Forrest Cup

Linacre v Maghull 'C', Maghull took the lead with the call, but Linacre took the next 3 sets, Maghull pulled one back, but that was it, Harry N. and Jack making sure with the next two

Cadwa 'D' v Marconi 'C', first set to away team Marconi, Cadwa pull it back, then go in front against the call, Marconi level up against the call. Cadwa take the lead against the call, Marconi level against the call. Marconi then get the next call right, Ken in 3, Cadwa call the doubles and go into a 2 game lead, but Marconi pinch the 3rd 13-11, win the next 11-6 and run away with the 5th 11-1, a good Cup match.

The Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy

The four teams below have battled their way to the semi finals of this popular cup, to be played week beginning. 3rd April, the handicapping has again produced some very close matches in the earlier rounds, so good luck to all teams, and to the two eventual finalists.

AIGBURTH 1	v	BOOTLE YMCA 1
MAGHULL	v	CADWA 1

The Venues for the Divisional Finals will be announced as soon as they are known, the League season will have finished when the Finals take place, why not go and have a watch, it needn't be your own team, or even your own division, all are welcome.

This of course also applies to the ever popular Frank Murphy Handicap competition, watch the web site or ask club Secretary

The date for our own **2007** Liverpool Closed has been fixed already -:

SUNDAY 11th. MARCH 2007

At the Wavertree Tennis Centre.

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League Tables to 15 / 03 / 2006

Division One	P	W	D	L	Pts
Wav. Labour	19	15	1	3	139
Liverpool CC	19	14	2	3	121
Waterloo	18	12	2	4	112
Bootle JC	19	11	3	5	111
Fords	19	11	4	4	107
Liverpool CC 'A'	18	7	4	7	99
Bath St 'A'	19	8	1	10	97
Manweb	17	6	3	8	90
Harold House	19	7	4	8	89
M/Side Police	18	8	1	9	89
Cadwa	19	6	3	10	73
Bath St	18	4	0	14	63
Liverpool CC 'B'	19	2	2	15	55
Maghull	19	3	0	16	51

Division Two	P	W	D	L	Pts
Marconi	20	13	4	3	127
Cadwa 'A'	18	16	1	1	123
Bath St 'B'	18	11	4	3	109
Manweb 'B'	19	9	4	6	106
Manweb 'A'	18	10	4	4	103
Fords 'A'	19	7	5	7	101
M/Side Police 'A'	19	9	2	8	97
Bath St 'C'	20	9	1	10	97
Bootle JC 'A'	18	10	1	7	88
Marconi 'A'	19	8	1	10	87
Greenbank	19	5	3	11	82
M/Side Police 'B'	19	3	2	14	69
Cadwa 'B'	19	3	1	15	69
Bootle YMCA	19	1	3	15	62

Division Three	P	W	D	L	Pts
Maghull 'A'	20	16	3	1	160
Wav.Labour 'A'	19	18	1	0	154
Bath St 'D'	19	15	1	3	131
Maghull 'B'	19	12	2	5	116
Bootle YMCA 'A'	19	10	4	5	106
Marconi 'B'	20	10	1	9	96
Manweb 'C'	19	9	2	8	91
Harold House 'A'	18	6	4	8	84
Wav. Labour 'D'	19	5	2	12	80
Wav. Labour 'B'	18	7	2	9	79
Wav. Labour 'C'	19	6	2	11	79
Cadwa 'C'	19	2	3	14	64
Bath St 'E'	19	3	0	16	60
Liverpool CC 'C'	19	0	1	18	30

Division Four	P	W	D	L	Pts
Harold House 'B'	18	16	1	1	144
Marconi 'C'	17	15	1	1	126
Aigburth	18	13	2	3	124
Maghull 'C'	17	11	3	3	121
Linacre	17	9	1	7	107
Cadwa 'D'	18	10	2	6	106
Bath St 'F'	18	9	2	7	96
Bath St 'G'	18	7	0	11	79
Bootle YMCA 'B'	17	5	1	11	65
Maghull 'D'	17	4	2	11	61
Maghull 'E'	18	4	2	12	50
Aigburth 'A'	18	0	1	17	31
Harold House 'C'	17	2	0	15	30
Greenbank 'A'	Records Expunged				

to date	
Player Short	49
Walk Over League	11
Walk Over Cup	8
Played Out of Order	6
Late Score Card	24

For all who follow the League Tables on the L&DTTL web site, updated each week, you will have noticed the large number of teams playing short, or giving walkovers.

Whereas, the week after the initial disappointment of missed games, the realisation of 10 gifted points, changes to "thank you very much"; but it becomes a sad fact, if promotion or relegation is decided on "gifted points". Not much the receiving team can do about it, it's down to every player to "be there".

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