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Editorial

Another season coming up, where does the summer break go to!, this Digest is intended to give the new season a bit of a kick start as well as the ending of last season, we finished last season with 56 teams, two having gone after giving 3 walkovers. At this season's AGM, the 3rd div. was voted to be 3-a-side, the starting proposed resolution was for all div.'s to be 3 a side, maybe Div. 4 will follow in the near future. We have 59 teams registered for the new season, at the time of going to press, hopefully we'll manage to finish with 59. Sadly, Greenbank have withdrawn from the league, not entering any teams, their Div.2 team dropped out near the end last season, after a third walkover, but most disappointing for the 5th Div. team, having completed a full season for the first time in the last few seasons, hopefully we'll see them back next season after a rethink, but it does require a certain commitment from the players.

At the AGM various Rule amendments were carried, most of a tidying up nature, but a few match / cup regulations require your attention, Rule 13d now allows players to play 6 matches up before compulsory re-ranking, (previously 5). Cup Regulation 7 has been added requiring all players to be present at the start of a Cup match at the starting time of 7-30pm, if not present when called upon, a player will forfeit the set unless an eligible reserve is available to play. Regards promotion and relegation, Rule 21 was amended to give the ManCom the authority to promote or relegate teams in the 'best interest of the League'. Please read these changes in their entirety, as ignorance of them is no excuse, every team captain has a complete Rule Book and most relevant Rules are in the Handbook which every player receives. More about these amendments in the League secretary's report on page 3

We start this new season having got through the devastating loss of stalwart Ken Armon MBE., luckily the first test was our own Closed Tournament, which in hindsight, passed very well, thanks mainly I think, to Referee Dave Cochrane, (Ken's pupil), and Faith Moore (Ken's Partner) for her expert help, she could understandingly have declined our request, but knew what Ken would have decided, plus of course the regular helpers who know who I mean, (a list may miss someone who has helped in some way), we didn't have a Final's Night as we thought it may be pushing our luck a bit, but hopefully next season will see the return of this sociable side of it due to the feed back we had. As so often happens, black clouds can sometimes have a silver lining, and Ken's sad passing has meant the return to the ManCom of ex. Committee member and Chairman Stan Clarke, who's



vast experience will once again help 'steady the ship', I'm sure my reference to the 'ship' must include Wavertree Labour Club itself, which could have found itself with the problem of finding a new Captain, their transition has been smooth, even down to keeping the Friday night coaching going, well done to Stan, but as Ken would have said many times himself, "no one is indispensable!". Stan does spread himself around, International Umpire, coach, he's also on the Committees of the Lanes & Cheshire League, and the ETTA, where he recently received the Ivor Montague award from ETTA Chairman Alex Murdoch for his contribution as Chairman of the Trade Committee. So we start a new season with two new ManCom members, Stan and Arthur Knowlson (ex. Business Houses Chairman), who joined last season, hopefully players will not be complacent and sit back thinking "there's no need for me", new blood is always welcome on the ManCom, take a few minutes to read the 'Committee' pages in your handbooks to see the work required to run a league.

Congratulations to Keith Williams, Wayne Percival, Kenny Jackson, Brenda Buoeoy and Sue Burgess who have been picked to represent England in the coming season's Veterans 6 Nations Tournament to be held in Perth, Scotland.

Kenny, Brenda and Sue were also picked last season, so good luck to all for a top class performance.

For all those who regularly visit John Langton's excellent L&DTTL web site, and see that lovely photo on the front page saying 'the League is taking its summer break' would be forgiven for thinking just that, (when I feel harassed, I go to that photo, and imagine I'm relaxing in a deck chair watching the sun go down, if only!), some of us have been putting a lot of extra time in researching the League History. Don Davies has been going back to early days to write a piece on the Liverpool Open Tournaments (now the Grand Prix's), I'm sure you'll find many more articles coming, Trevor Owens has been going through early day handbooks to try and bring the L&DTTL awards up to date, to as far back as possible, those early day handbooks were more like hard backed books, must have cost a fortune to print!, and I set myself the task of finding, scanning and loading onto the internet as PDF files, all the Digests that have been printed since they began in 1950, I estimate that we have had 226 issues, I've managed to locate 217, all of which can be read or downloaded from my web site (click on Digest on the L&DTTL site), I only need to find 9 more, the list of these are on page 9 in this Digest, if anyone has these issues, can I borrow them, they will be returned asap, my thanks go to Trevor Owens, Don Davies, Jack Davidson,

(Linacre), John Higham (BYMCA), Alaan Nolan (Southport T.F.C.), Mike Power, the League archives, John O'Sullivan (Cadwa) who had the very first issue, and Faith Moore, who passed on those left in Ken Armson's collection, I'm sure those remaining 9 are out there somewhere.

Another season to report another club having to find new premises, this time Aigburth P.H. who were asked to leave their longstanding room at the 'Vale', there will be a few who will miss that heating pipe at the back of the room! and the majority, who will miss the friendly bar, 'shh! while the bingo's on, but I'm glad to say, they've found new premises at their old Business Houses haunt at Sefton Park Cricket Club, so the pint and a chat after the match is still on, - if required.

Once again we start the season in the knowledge that the cost of printing the Digest will not impact on your pockets, our regular benefactor has donated in advance to cover all costs of our proposed 4 issues, I would like to thank him publicly, but he again asks to remain anonymous.

One of the many little articles I'll be highlighting from past Digests was this piece from

"Vol. XI No.1 Nov. 1960

A PLEASING little ceremony took place in the club room of Linacre immediately prior to the commencement of the season when Harry Reeve, their No. 1 player, was presented with a leather writing case on his leaving the club to take up an appointment as a Junior Engineer with the P.S.N.C. on the Saturday before the season opened"

Now that's how you get players loyalty, as well as the home made cake etc. must be one of our oldest surviving clubs with the original members, gleaned a little information from an article Frank Lacey sent in 1973, I reckon we are coming up to Linacre's 60th season, am I right boys? Frank finished with *"If more of us write letters to the Digest it will make it more interesting and might help to secure its future. Frank Lacey"*

I'll endorse that comment Frank

I also came across a letter dated 1973 from Barry Meyer, the then Secretary of the old established Linnets Club, which had to disband, but reformed as Aigburth P.H. /Linnets, with Barry still Secretary, as mentioned earlier, Aigburth have had to move again, but the players are sticking together, Barry included.

I must add an apology to Div. 2 reporter Paul Banks, as his report was in early, and before he knew the result of

the 3 a-side vote at the AGM, he has made some very interesting comments on the why's and why not's of 3 a-side for the lower divisions. I thought if he had known the outcome of the vote, he may have left his thoughts out of his report. One of his comments was that he liked playing 3 a-side because he plays everyone in the other team, I was talking to a young player over here on holiday who plays local league table tennis in France, he said they play 4 a-side as we play 3a-side, everyone plays everyone on the other side plus two doubles, 18 sets, 11 up best of 5, his club plays all league matches in the local community hall on a Friday night, starting between 8 & 9pm, he said finishing at 2am Saturday morning was not unusual, don't know how us 'oldies' would cope with that!

A little clip I spotted from the recent Blackpool Grand Prix.

DHS London Progress's resident Chinese Superstar Hong Ming Zhang never broke sweat on his way to collecting the Men's Open winner's cheque for £300 at the Tees Sport Butterfly Blackpool Grand Prix.

Zhang was never extended on his way to the title, and dropped only one set all day: that to Kevin Dolder in the semi final. Dolder enjoyed some superb wins against Italian Fabio Mantegazza and Paul McCreery, to reach the semi final. Zhang had earlier been much too strong for Matt Ware in the last eight stage, (Ware just had a great win over Mike Marsden). Zhang then awaited the tournament pre favourite Darius Knight in the final.

Kevin still turns out at times for Fords, usually saved for our other top players, he sharpens up playing for the Sycamore Club in Nottingham in the National League, he recently put on a coaching week end at the Halton T.T. Club, I hope it was well attended and may be the first of many.

When you read this we will have had our own Liverpool Butterfly Grand Prix, the first of the new ETTA season, hopefully Don will be able to report on the excellent help we had from our local players!!

I must take this chance to thank our 5 Divisional reporters for keeping us supplied with their thoughts on how you players are performing, a little extra thanks for Doug who does the 5th Div. report, although he doesn't play in the 5th he manages to get more than required from only the match cards. Next season both Stan and Doug are again playing in the 4th Div. and I'm sure Doug will carry on as before, but if there was someone who will be playing in the 5th who fancied his hand at 'reporting', I would imagine, either Stan or Doug wouldn't mind a 'rest'. Ian, Paul and Russell, are I think 'as you were' so hopefully you will be reading under their banners.

And also thanks to Don Davies who has taken over Ken's favourite Net's and Edges Column, a must to keep that going, and from my point, thanks to anyone who adds something to print.

Season 2008/09 is nearly upon us and whilst you have all been enjoying the fantastic English weather, behind the scenes the MC has been working steadfastly in order to ensure you all have a good season's table tennis in front of you. At the time of writing, all divisions bar one have a full compliment, the third being one short. Sadly Greenbank have not entered any teams this season; however Arriva, Manweb, Crosby High and Harold House have all been able to enter an extra team.



the remainder of the match. This was put to the AGM and was carried with only 4 votes (out of a possible 56) voting against the proposal. This now puts the onus on you, the players, to ensure you arrive on time for 'all' cup matches. Having said all that, what the MC do not want to see is a team 'claiming' a cup match when the entire opposition team arrive together at say 7.31pm, under these circumstances a bit of discretion is called for.

Last season we saw Merseyside Police 'B' dominate the fifth division, consisting of a team that would have been a force in the fourth or maybe even the third. They dropped only 12 points all season, and 5 of those occurred in one match. Had the MC known the strength of this team prior to the commencement of the season we may have able to place them into a higher division from the start. This season we have been made aware of the strength of a new team from Crosby High and we have been able to place this team directly into the third division thus avoiding the clash in standards that occurred in the fifth last season.

The Rules Committee were also very busy during the close season and with the full support of the MC brought a number of proposed rule changes to the table at the AGM held in May. Most proposals were simply made to tidy up existing rules and will have little or no impact on you. There are however a few that you should all be made fully aware of. **It is however up to each club secretary to inform their players of all rule changes but I have noted just a few for your attention in the following paragraphs.**

In recent years, once you had played 6 games for a higher team/s you were immediately re-ranked to the next lowest team that you were eligible for. This has now been increased by one. You now have to play more than 6 games before this rule becomes effective. This will obviously give club secretaries and players more space.

The timekeeping for Cup matches, in particular Cup Finals has often been a talking point. It has always been possible for a team to manipulate the playing order of a cup match by ensuring one or more of their players have not arrived by the official starting time of 7.30pm, knowing they had until 8.00pm to arrive. The Rules Committee felt this situation had, on occasion, been abused and with the full backing of the MC proposed the following amendment. ***All players taking part in a cup match must be present and available to play at 7.30pm. Any player not available at the stipulated time when called upon to play shall forfeit such set unless a reserve is available, who once introduced shall play for***

Over recent years, mainly due to chopping and changing from 12 teams per division to 14 and vice versa it has proved difficult for the MC to effectively promote and relegate 2 teams per division. We felt this should be looked at and came up with the following proposed rule amendment, ***'The Management Committee shall promote and relegate teams in a way that best serves the interest of the League with a minimum of one promotion and one relegation.'*** On the face of it, it looks as though only one team will be promoted and only one relegated. Well let me assure you that it is the intention of the MC to leave things as they have been since time immemorial and will aim to promote and relegate two teams per division. This amendment was carried unanimously; no votes were recorded against the proposal.

We have also made some changes to the timetable of the registration process for the Frank Murphy Cup Competition in order to be less stringent.

Those playing in the third division next season will see a slight change; there will be only 3 of you. The option was given to change all remaining divisions to 3-a-side but the options for the fourth and fifth were flatly rejected. This change has been on the cards for quite some time and I do believe that one day we will see all divisions playing on a 3-a-side basis. Obviously at present the majority prefer a 4-a-side basis in the lower divisions and I appreciate and understand the reasons why. The MC has no preference in this as we are purely here to serve and administer the League and the members that play in it.

Finally, on another note, I am glad to say that after something like a 9 or 10 year absence we have been able to re-enlist the services of Stan Clarke back onto the MC. He has immediately filled the role of Tournament Secretary and will in future Chair the Rules Committee and the Disciplinary Committee. Also, following the demise of the Liverpool Business House League, we have enlisted the services of Arthur Knowlson who was a servant of the LBH for many, many years, welcome to both of you.

I hope you all enjoy another season's table tennis and make sure you all play with integrity and good sportsmanship.

Mike Power

The 2008 City of Liverpool Butterfly Grand Prix Open, returned to Wavertree Park, Tennis Centre, over the weekend 16/17th August. The inaugural Merseyside Open in 1929, the first Open to be staged in Lancashire and one of the first of its kind in the country. In those early years it attracted a host of famous players the men's singles event being dominated by Victor Barna, who won the World singles title on five occasions and left the city with a nap hand of singles and four men's doubles titles to his credit.



feat. That same season, Ann reached the World ladies' singles final while in 1969, she won the Wimbledon ladies' singles title as Mrs P.F. Jones. Miss Pollitt, who also played for England, retained her crown but remains the last local woman to lift the trophy.

Four times world singles champion and England international, Austrian born Richard Bergmann, claimed the Merseyside title three times while 1949 and 1951 world singles champion Johnny Leach, won the first of his Merseyside titles in 1945 and registered his fourth and last in 1953, the same year as helping England win the Swaythling Cup, for the only time in history.

The only local man to be crowned Merseyside Open singles champion is St. Helen's born Ken Hyde, now 93, who lifted the "W.T". Lancashire Cup, in 1934 and 1936. Ken, a Life Member of the League, now living in Hertfordshire, played for England in the Swaythling Cup, his international career from 1933-1939 though being ended by the war. In that period he remained unbeaten in the Liverpool League and was the first Englishman to beat Victor Barna.

Another four times Merseyside Open winner is former world ranked 17 Denis Neale, who triumphed in 1968, 69, 73 and 74 and now aged 64, is a respected coach on the circuit today. The last time the singles title was won by an Englishman, was in 2004 when current England number 3 Alex Perry took it for the second time.

Scotland's Euan Walker the victor over Liverpool's Mikael Rogala in the 2005 final, Colum Slevin (Ireland) the winner a year later and Scotland's Gavin Rungay, the champion for the past two years, helped cement the Celtic nations' hold on the famous trophy. Rungay, entered this year and if he retained the crown, will create history by becoming the only man ever to complete a hatrick of wins.

One has to dust off the cobwebs from the record books to find a local ladies' singles champion, Annie Pollitt getting the better of England international Marjory Haydon in the 1929 final. The runner-up on that occasion, is the mother of Ann Haydon the 1957 Merseyside ladies' singles champion Ann Haydon, who four years earlier, as the only girl entry, beat off the boy's to win the junior 'Boy's' title, the only female ever to achieve the

This year's tournament had something for every standard of player. In addition to men's and ladies' singles, there were six Banded singles events for men and three for women plus men's and women's doubles, veteran singles and men's and women's Under 21 singles.

A big boost for the event was the inclusion of the Evans brothers from Buckinghamshire. Recently, Gavin, the number one Under 14 in the England, won the European Cadet singles title in Italy, beating Hampus Soderlund (Sweden) 13, -7, -6, 7, 8, 10, in final. He is also listed at three at Under 17 and five in the England senior men's rankings, he was joined by Bradley ranked 19 in the men's list, and Myles, the youngest of the trio, 23 junior and 106 in the men's standings.

Kevin Dolder, the eight times Liverpool Closed champion, ranked at 16 senior in England, reached the last four a year ago before being ousted by former England champion Carl Prean.

This year's City of Liverpool Butterfly GP Open Championships, attracted a very healthy entry of 205 players. In addition to the four home nations, players from Hungary, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, China, Lithuania, Ireland, Guernsey and Isle of Man also competed. The tournament, according to many present, was an unqualified success and was completed to the satisfaction of most players and spectators by 8pm. on the Sunday.

The tournament, the first in eighteen years to have been staged without Secretary/Referee, Ken Armson, who sadly passed away in December 2007. Dave Cochrane, who took charge of the Fawley Construction 'Closed' in March this year, took on the mantle of Referee for the 08 City of Liverpool Butterfly GP Open, assisted by National Referee and Tournament Organiser, Eileen Allison from Lincolnshire, who has also appeared in the Open many times together with her husband Brian, and of course, the welcome faces of Faith and Rachael on the "signing in table"

With Arthur Garnett as Tournament Organiser and Stan Clarke taking the position of Tournament Secretary, the 2008 Open, was set to take place. Of course, this would
Continued page 17

As expected Fords (156 points) carried off the title by a comfortable 18 points over 2nd placed Bath St Marine. They led the division from start to finish and without doubt are worthy champions. It looked at one point that they were going to remain unbeaten but at week 20 they went to Wavertree Labour with only 2 players, Kevin Dolder and Andy Taylor and were defeated 6/4. Kevin remained unbeaten on the night but Andy had a rare off night in losing his 3 singles. However, to finish winning 18 and drawing 1 match (against Bootle YMCA) out of 20 matches is a tremendous record and if they have the same group of players next season they will take some stopping.



CTK (100) were missing both Keith Bird and Peter Lee towards the end of the season but benefited from a walk over when they should have met Merseyside Police in their penultimate match. They then went down 10/0 in their final match against Crosby High. The scorecard showed that Ahmed Thabet and Cherrith Graham were tied at one game each when "Ahmed felt unable to continue and conceded" to Cherrith and subsequently to Tom Bray. It would be interesting to hear the full story behind this situation.

It is disappointing to report that Merseyside Police (77) gave away another walk over to Bootle YMCA before going down 9/1 to Bath St Marine, when they saved the whitewash in taking the doubles. An interesting aspect of this match was the debut of Paul Gittens son Sam. Perhaps at some future date Paul's brother Steve will join the father and son partnership to form a family team. Would this be a first in the Liverpool and District table tennis league?

CTK A (71) did well to keep away from the relegation spot although they did falter in the final 3 weeks. They went down to a two man Fords team of Terry Turner and Phil Luxon by 6/4 and lost 8/2 at Bootle YMCA besides the aforementioned loss at Crosby High. Ahmed Thabet and Peter Taylor were the point winners at Bootle YMCA when they both beat Ted Birch. Peter was 2 sets down before battling back to pip Ted 11/8 in the 5th. Sounds like a tremendous match between the two oldest players in the division.

Harold House (68) were another team who had an inauspicious end to the season losing 8/2 at Fords before playing a player short in their final matches at Bath St A (6/4 loss) and CADWA A (8/2 loss). A blast from the past in the form of Rob McPherson secured the 2 points in beating George Lennon and Mike Power in the CADWA match. At the other end of the age scale Yeng Kho playing only his 2nd match at this level, remained unbeaten against Bath St Marine A. He is a young man of potential and should do well if given the opportunity to play regularly at this level next season.

With the withdrawal of the CADWA first team from the division it has been a long, hard season for the Bath St Marine A and CADWA A teams as to who was going to finish in the probable only relegation spot. Strangely they both played the same 3 teams during the final weeks of the season. As per the previous paragraph CADWA A achieved the better result when both teams faced Harold House. However, Bath St A gained a valuable draw when faced by CTK with Ricky Brown and I both beat-

The Bath St Marine team of Ken Jackson, Dave Roberts and Clare Peers surpassed all expectations to finish as runners up and achieve the best ever placing in the club's long history. They won their last 3 matches 10/0 (CADWA A), 9/1 (Merseyside Police) and 8/2 (Bath St Marine A) to ensure that they stayed ahead of 3rd placed Bootle YMCA. In the derby match with their A team Mick Keane came out of semi retirement to baffle Clare and beat her 3 straight whilst I took the other point in getting the better of Ken.

Bootle YMCA (132) had Ted Birch back in the fold for the last 3 matches after missing most of the season due to injuries and illness. He showed that he had lost none of his defensive skills in beating George Lennon and Mike Power when they defeated CADWA A (8/2), Cherrith Graham, versus Crosby High, and Andy Cheung of CTK A. Ted is one of the few defenders playing at this level as over the years the equipment has gone more and more in favour of the attacker, perhaps with the banning of speed glue the defender might have a new lease of life.

Crosby High (126) had a fine 6/4 win over Bootle YMCA with Andrew Mudie and Tom Bray both beating James Eaton and Ted Birch and then combining to win the doubles. Cherrith clinched victory in beating James 11/8 in the 5th set. When they defeated CTK A by a margin of 7/3 they fielded 3 of their 2nd division championship winning team in Rob Wylie, and Gemma and Gavin Lloyd, with each winning a couple of singles. However they lost narrowly, 6/4, at Merseyside Police with Cherrith playing particularly well to beat John Rankin 11/9 in the 5th set.

Wavertree Labour (122) had a nice steady season highlighted by their defeat of champions Fords. In the latter weeks they hammered Bath St Marine A 10/0 and beat a two man CTK A team 7/3.

ing Peter Taylor and Deli Oluyombo and combining to win the doubles, whilst CADWA lost 6/4 to CTK. In this match George Lennon was their star man in beating Ahmed Thabet and Peter Taylor, Graeme Black beating Ahmed and Mike Power hanging on to beat Peter 11/9 in the 5th. At week 20 we went down 8/2 to our first team

but when they played CADWA A the following week they pulled out all the stops in obtaining their 10/0 victory, thus ensuring CADWA A finished bottom of the table by a margin of 4 points.

Division 2

Paul Banks

Well of course I got it right, Crosby High with such a strong squad of players could only finish as winners! Well done to everyone involved at Crosby High for a super season, 25 points clear of their nearest rivals demonstrates clearly their superiority.

Maghull have also had a good season and maybe with a squad of similarly talented players they may have pushed Crosby a little closer.

Merseyside Police finished bottom of the division, (as I predicted) just not able to make up ground on their fellow stragglers.

So well done and commiserations in equal measures to the winners and losers from the season.

Talking Point.

I have heard on the grapevine that there has been a motion put forward to make all divisions a three player system. Not knowing the outcome of this at the time of writing, anything I say can only be speculation.

1. Who is against? I suppose the only reason for opposing this motion is that some players do not relish the thought of playing three singles matches and possibly a doubles in one night due to the physical exertion of such a feat.

2. Who is for? I suppose the only reason for supporting this motion is that there will be less disruption to teams when they are promoted or relegated from the three player division to the four player division.

3. What are my thoughts? Ambivalent really, I don't mind playing either system, however I do prefer playing three a side as it means that I get to play every one in the opposing team and my record or average is a true reflection of how I have performed for my club. The naysayers are I suppose the more mature players in the league who are unable to perform in three matches on a league night but (maybe somewhat cynically) can enter two to three more sections in tournaments (over 40's etc) than someone in their twenties.

4. Is it possible that a four player system could stifle promising talent by limiting the type of players that they face?

5. What has this got to do with us Paul? Nothing really except disruption to whoever is relegated if the four



player system is maintained. Also, as a sport with seemingly dwindling numbers we need to make sure that any decisions made do allow for growth and are not going to have a direct effect on the number of players in the league.

Week 19.

A good win for Wavertree Labour this week as they play Fords 'A' at home and manage to win 6-4, man of the match however is Grahame Reid who takes all

three of his singles, what is interesting here is that only two of the matches did not go to five games. Marconi visited Manweb with only two players but Bob Edwards and Paul Clarke still managed to pull off a 6-4 win.

Fellow lower division stragglers Maghull (A) and BSM (B) played out a predictable draw, John Langton as strong as ever winning his three for BSM. Top of the table clash this week saw leaders Crosby High in effect secure the title with an emphatic 7-3 win over Maghull. Matt Wilson and Kevin Lewis taking one singles each.

Merseyside Police are helped out somewhat with Manweb (A) being a player down somehow and go on to finish 6-4 victors.

Week 20.

Dave Harse once again proves to be a big obstacle and takes his three singles in a 7-3 loss to Maghull for Manweb. CTK (B) manage to only drop one singles in their match against the Police (Steve Gittins overcoming Dave Tagg) but only win 6-4 due to them only fielding two players. Alan Jones and Peter Holmes team up for Maghull (A) to save face in a 9-1 drubbing away at Fords (A) by taking the doubles - usually a Fords 'gimme'. Manweb (A) continue with their winning ways with an 8-2 win at home to Wavertree Labour (A), Alice Howard and Paul Evans taking all three singles here, Ouch! Crosby High (A) tin hat BSM (B) 10-0, Dave Evans, Gemma Lloyd and Gavin Lloyd unstoppable in their push for the title.

Week 21.

Alan Jones and Alan Cowley both take a singles and team up for the doubles for Maghull (A) against Crosby High (A). This was all they managed however as Crosby

won the match 7-3, Alan Cowley unfortunate, losing to Gemina 11-9 in the fifth. A strong Police (A) side was unable to take a win at home to Marconi this week and narrowly lost 4-6. Bob Edwards took his three singles and was ably assisted by Frank McCann and Adrian Branham, two super fellows who should be playing in this division regularly.

A real ding dong match took place between Fords (A) and Manweb (A) this week ending in a draw, Robbie Goldson, Alf Perry, Paul Evans and Aslan Evans all taking two singles, Fords again losing out in the doubles (in the fifth) when a win here would have given them a win overall. Paul Banks stops the rot for Wavertree Labour as they are beaten 8-2 by CTK (B) with two singles wins.

Week 22.

Maghull beat Merseyside Police (A) 9-1 this week, Tom Purcell taking the only point for the Police. A lot of games conceded here and I can't quite put my finger on why, no written explanation either, hmm, strange.

CTK (B) tin hat Fords (A) 10-0. well done to Billy Cheung, Dave Tagg and Mikael Bellec. John Rowan

pulls off a magnificent win over Bob Edwards as Wavertree Labour (A) lose 7-3 to Marconi. Bob, Frank McCann, Paul Loftus and Paul Banks all win two singles on the night. Manweb go down 9-1 to an all conquering Crosby High (A) Dave Harse taking the one point over Gavin Lloyd. Alan Jones proves that he too can be quite an obstacle this week as he pips Alice Howard 11-9 in the fifth for Maghull (A)'s 6-4 loss to Manweb (A).

So the end of another enjoyable season, and a new one to look forward to.

Good luck to those promoted and in the best possible way, 'lets not see you again next season'. Good luck as well to those relegated and lets see you back again as soon as possible.

Lastly, they may have finished at the wrong end of the division but the refreshments award for the season goes to Merseyside Police, their reward is of course the thanks and respect of all the players in the division. Well done and lets see who can take up the baton / biscuit, next season.

Thank you for listening

Division 3

Russell Thornton

Now that the season has ended and the AGM has taken place perhaps the most important decision made at that meeting was to make this division 3 a side as from September 2008.

Whilst there are some of us who wonder why all the divisions were not made 3 a side some years ago, when divisions 1 and 2 were subjected to that change the league management committee and club secretaries who give their free time to meet and make these decisions obviously have a more informed knowledge for not making the same decision for divisions 4 and 5 at this time.

Roly and Trevor have done a fine job in managing to get virtually all of the digests that have ever been printed onto the league website, there are now only a few missing. It was interesting to read in the very first digest under the heading 'Manners Maketh Man' an article criticising the behaviour of some young male players, it certainly gave me an insight of how self frustration was perceived 58 years ago and as I'm possibly one of the worst offenders of this it did make me realise how unnecessary it is and to try and improve this behaviour next season, I can only try.



Now to the news from the business end of last season.

By week 19 an under strength Harold House 'A' who were within touching distance of becoming the divisional league and cup winners for the 2nd successive season were held 5-5 at home by relegation certainties Cadwa 'B'. 2nd placed Wavertree Lab 'B' without Bjorn Meyer were beaten 7-3 by Harold House 'B' - a notable result was Rob Midgeley's win over Tony Connor 3-1. Bootle YM

'A' capitalised on Wavertree's loss and moved into 2nd place with an 8-2 victory over Bath StM 'D'. Marconi 'A' did their promotion aspirations serious harm by failing to beat Maghull 'B' at home, a 5-5 draw is all they could manage after losing both doubles. Bath StM 'C' beat Bootle YM 'B' 6-4 and struggling Marconi 'B' managed to pick up 5 points at Manweb 'B' mainly due to a treble to Ray Hibbs.

In week 20 fresh from their divisional cup win, Harold House 'A' albeit a man short were held to a draw for the 2nd consecutive league fixture this time by Maghull 'B' with Rod Bulmer beating both Martin Roberts 13-11 in the 5th and John Hughes 3 straight, the result however was to suit both teams as it turned out to be enough to secure Harold House the divisional championship and

Maghull 'B' survival from relegation.

Bootle YM 'A' in 2nd place continued their fine run with a 7-3 victory over 3rd placed Wavertree Lab 'B', the match being decided by Bootle taking both doubles. 4th placed Marconi 'A' gained ground in their derby match with the B team, 9-1 the initial result which was changed to 10-0 when it was discovered that the B teams 3 & 4 played out of order. Harold House 'B' went down 8-2 at Bootle YM 'B' but 2 points was also enough to keep them in the division thus condemning Marconi 'B' and Cadwa 'B' to 4th division table tennis next term.

At the start of week 21, 3 teams were battling for the runners up spot Bootle YM 'A' 130 points, Marconi 'A' 127 and Wavertree Lab 'B' 125. Bootle YM slipped up failing to win for the 1st time in 7 outings, a 5-5 draw with Harold House 'B', enabling Marconi 'A' to jump above them as they beat Bath St. M 'D' 10-0. Wavertree Lab 'B' were also turning on the heat with an 8-2 win over Manweb 'B'

The final fixtures of the season saw an exciting match in Marconi 'A' in 2nd place with 137 points against Wavertree Labour 'B' in 4th place with 133 points. Marconi needed no more than 2 points less than 3rd placed Bootle Y M 'B' on 135. Wavertree Lab rained on their parade by beating them 7-3 which left both teams on 140 and by virtue of head to heads Wavertree were going to go forward if Bootle YM 'A' failed to win their match at home to Manweb 'B'. In the 7th rubber of their match

with the score at 5-1 to Bootle. Roly Wright and Danny Every were playing Arthur Harrison and Francis Lay. Roly and Danny managed to beat them 3 straight to secure their team's promotion to division 2, the match score ending up 8-2 and Bootle finishing on 143 points.

So congratulations go to Harold House 'A' and Bootle YM 'A'. Harold House for overcoming the disappointment of not taking their place in division 2 last season due to the restructure of the league and Bootle YM 'A' who finished 3rd last term for going one better this time.

Recent league history places the 2 relegated teams in both division 3 and division 4 so there is potentially the possibility that both teams will return next season - good luck to them.

5 players finished the season unbeaten in the division, well done to Yeng Kho, Sylvia Rozek, Alan Chase, Ray Hibbs and Adrian Bramham, however the player with the highest averages having played more than 50% of matches is Bjoern Meyer of Wavertree B, with 35 wins out of 40, well done Bjoern.

I hope you have enjoyed reading these notes this year, I'm unsure whether or not I will be doing them for next season as it depends on a few scenarios. I did initially agree just to do them for last season so we shall see.

Good Luck for next season.

Division 4

Stan Clarke

So another season bites the dust, not without some controversy here and there, but by and large very enjoyable. On behalf of the management may I take this opportunity to thank all of the clubs for their magnificent contributions to League funds, between us we have managed to contribute an extra £339.00 to the treasurer during the season, in fines largely by playing short of one or more players, walk-overs and late cards. Some clubs are guiltier than others, my own being one, but it is a problem we need to sort out, 22 matches were awarded as walk-overs during the season, that's 44 teams deprived of matches at one time or another. I must say that this division has not suffered as much as some from the dreaded walk over curse, but there is still room for improvement.

There has been quite a lot of comment during the season about teams arriving for matches long after the official starting time, bad enough if you are the home team, but even worse if you are the away team and you are standing around waiting for your hosts to appear. One team in



particular are well known for being late arriving for matches and comments have appeared on several cards making this fact apparent. I don't pretend to know the answer to this problem, well yes I do, the league rules are quite clear that if a person is not available when called upon to play, after 8pm the opponents may claim the set, perhaps we all need to start implementing this rule, but we all fall into the easy way out by saying "We are here to play, not claim games" o.k. but don't then complain about finishing late.

So after all that, lets concentrate on the matches, the positions of the top three, since last I wrote, have changed rather dramatically, with Cadwa C dropping out of the frame completely, mainly I would suggest because the lost the services of their No 1 George Higham and struggled there after, a victim of playing up too many times.

Champions of the division are Aigburth, who finished just two points ahead of Marconi C, with Wavertree

Labour C in a distant third place. So congratulations to Aigburth and Marconi C and good luck next season in the third division.

At the other end of the division Maghull D were unable to escape the bottom place they have held all season and are joined by Cadwa D as the other relegated team.

WEEK 19.

Marconi C were rather miffed to find that visitors Maghull D had included Mark Ambrose as No 4 in their team, Mark is currently at University and is ranked as a reserve for Maghull, however he beat Frank Proffitt and Ken Roberts then teamed up with Dad Jimmy in the doubles to beat Derek Scotland and Frank, those three points he won may well have been the reason Aigburth won the title.

Cadwa D lost 3/7 against Linaere, a bad night for Jack Davidson when he lost to Doug Baker and Josef Koudelik, a win for John O'Sullivan over Harry Nelson the other success for Cadwa. Wav. Lab. C beat an under strength Cadwa C, who were also a player short 10/0, though Josef Koudelik took Dave Goulden to 5 games as did John Ashley against Mario Giove. Maghull C lost 3/7 against Manweb C, but Eddie Preston beat Jason Ao 3/1 and Harry McGanity beat Francis Lay by the same margin.

Wav. Lab. D lost 3/7 against Aigburth A, Andy Bird beating Dave Cunningham and Eric Wood and combining with Colin Fyles in the doubles to heat Dave and Norman Lindsay.

WEEK 20.

Linaere dealt another blow to Marconi C in a close fought draw, Harry Reeve and Harry Nelson the heroes for Linaere on the night. Aigburth strengthened their grip on the title by beating Wav.Lab. C 8/2, Mario Giove achieving a fine win over Lee Proffitt. Wav. Lab.D held a strong Manweb C to a draw, as did Maghull D against

their stronger senior C team, mind you they did have Mark Ambrose playing at No 4. A good week for draws as Cadwa C were held by their D team, the D team were a player short however, but a good double in the singles by John O'Sullivan against Paul Lunan and Ian Lunt.. WEEK 21.

Unbelievable, with only one week of the season left Marconi were gifted a 10/0 walkover when Cadwa C conceded the match, how angry would Aigburth be if this walk-over had ruined their chance of the title? Aigburth A comprehensively beat Manweb C 8/2, Ben Chan beating Norman Lindsay and Robert Wong beating Ray Jones saving the whitewash, this match did not start until 8.30pm, Aigburth must have been tempted to claim the match, it says much for their sportsmanship that they decided to play.

Wav. Lab. D lost 3/7 to Maghull D but were a player short, Andy Bird winning both singles and Steve Perry beating Denise Chorley. Cadwa D really reaped the whirlwind against Aigburth as they went down 1/9. Maghull C had a good win against Linaere Eddie Preston beating Harry Reeve in five but losing to Harry Nelson in four.

WEEK 22.

The final week of the season, Wav.Lab.D a player short, still held on to force a draw against Linaere, Dave Williams returning to winning ways by beating Jack Davidson and Ken Ainsworth. Funny result when Cadwa C beat Maghull C 7/3, in that two of Eddie Preston's games were claimed by Cadwa, no reason given on the score card, so I can only assume Eddie was not present when called upon to play. Wav. Lab. C beat Cadwa D 6/4, no thanks to yours truly who lost all three, and finally Maghull D were thumped 7/3 by Aigburth A, Dave Cunningham and Norman Lindsay unbeaten on the night.

Rubbers

Last season we mentioned about the banning of certain rubbers by the ITTF, the last list that was published on the ITTF web site (list 29) now lists rubbers which "are not authorised from 1 / 07 / 2008", these include :-

7 by Dr. Neubaur, 2 Andro, 3 Donic, 3 Hallmark, 2 Friendship, 3 Joola, 2 Tibhar and 3 T.S.P.

The withdrawal of 'authorisation' by the ITTF implies that the make up of the rubber has changed since it was first introduced, I've looked on the FITA web site, but cannot find any recommendations or directions, other than to think that if they are not authorised, they are not legal, so sit tight!!

Missing Digests

As mentioned in the Editorial, I think I only need to find 9 Digests listed below to complete the full set of those issued.

No's 2 - 3 - 4 & 5	1950 - 1951 (first printed)
Vol. 14 No. 2	1963 - 1964
Vol. 24 No's 4 & 5	1970 - 1971
Vol. 37 No. 2	1983 - 1984
Vol. 38 No. 1	1984 - 1985

If anyone has these or knows someone who may, please contact me, details in handbook, and I will arrange for collection. Editor

I hope you all enjoyed your summer and are fit and ready for the season ahead.

This obviously is a recap of how things finished in last year's 5th division. It takes in the last 4 (1/5th) matches and lays out where teams finished.

1st Merseyside Police 'B' 188 points
Champion 'es



1st. Hearty congratulations to **Merseyside Police 'B'** for winning the division with a high perfect record (only a draw to blemish their record). 40 points ahead of rivals shows what a 'pace' (cop joke anyone?) they set. You can tell the quality in depth in the "Police Squad" (cop comic series anyone?) by looking at the averages. Special operations man John Moore shot 100% to finish 1st, level with Aigburth's Liam Tyldesley. Obviously these guys didn't meet across the table this season. Both normally play at No.2 which explains that. John gets No.1 spot on account having played more games and having stepped in at No.1 on slightly more occasions than Liam. In 3rd place on the list, and the official top No.1 is Len Dyson, just one game lost. Just behind him, also with just one game lost is Tommy Lynch. 31 wins out of 32 and having played more games at No.2 than his regular No.3 slot. No surprises to see Alan Cameron and Dave Oakes from the winning team in the top 10 either. Interesting though to see 5 Police players in there, all having played at least 12 matches. QED - strength in depth in the squad and the team prepared to mix things even though Alan Cameron only missed one league game.

The destination for the cup had already been decided by the time of the last digest, but the team give little let up, closing off with 38 points out of 40. They finished the season home to Aigburth 'C' and underlined their superiority in this division with another 10 nil-er, making an amazing 12 for the season!

Good luck to the Police in the higher divisions. We'll need it :-).

2nd Aigburth PH 'B' 148 pts Runners Up

Highlight for the team wasn't in any of the 16 wins but in the draw with Police 'B' at the cop shop. This all the more remarkable when you consider that they had been beaten 9-1 at APH in match 2! so quite a turn around. The only other dark cloud in their season, was being beaten by BYMCA 'C', again at home, and in the 1st half of the season.

Best match for them of this period was the 7-3 away win at their Ar-rivals (ha ha!). carded comment: "What a match, best of spirit, all round fun and frolics. Man of

the match Alan Jones. Best entertainer Brian H., backward summersault and reverse roll, no damage to the floor". Harry & Danny claimed pts for the home time. Danny almost got both singles as he was also ahead of Neil (playing his 2nd match of the week), but Neil clawed the set back 11/8, 11/9. Harry and Brian proved what a good understanding they have picking off the 1st doubles from deuce in the 2nd, then closing 11/5 in games 4&5. Unfortunately Danny and Alan could not emulate

them, also running to 5 sets, each one squeezed to the narrowest margin, but Derek & Arthur getting the all important last game.

Three players from the team appear in the top ten of the averages. As mentioned above Liam Tildsley is to be congratulated on never being beaten. He will (again) cause quite a stir next year, if he is, to play in the 4th division. Arthur Pierce showed what a rock he has been with his 5th position - the last man in the top 5, a top 5 who all had commendable averages of over 90%. Derek Traynor was 7th, a fitting tribute as he took on the dual responsibility of organising captain (for 2 teams?!) and the No.1 here.

3rd Maghull 'E' 126pts

I wouldn't have predicted Maghull 'E' finishing so high up. In a regular season they would on this evidence, have been promoted. (Who knows, with the way teams in higher divisions dropped out they may be.) But the team have gelled well despite not being sure what their best 4 is. Lung suffered against Len & John in their 1-9 defeat by Police. Similarly for Loon against Len, but more evenly matched against Tommy. Michael managed to get the 3rd & 4th sets /9 from Dave to get a 3-1 game victory.

Janette was back to captain the ship against BathSt 'E' and they duly ran out 8-2 winners. Lung Sing Yu lost to the oppo's No.1 Mal Kent in 5 after Mal had already beaten Loon in 3 straight. All else to Maghull.

Result of the season was a top deck away win at Arriva; 8-2. Andy Mc had the Captaincy and gave a likewise performance, with Lung and Michael Russell also winning all. Loon however suffered at the hands of big H and Dan Bellard.

4th Bootle YMCA 'C' 112pts

Good win for Steve Daniels over Alan French besting him over 5. Winning from deuce was the key, as Steve won the 2nd game 14/12. Alan fought back in games 3 & 4 taking both to /4, but Steve rediscovered his mojo in the decider. Ok. A 9-1 lesson from Police 'B' didn't leave much for the team to shout about. From a team