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TABLE
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OF THE

LIVERPOOL SOCIETY OF TABLE TENNIS PLAYERS

COMMENT

TURNING over the other day, the pages of a scrapbook which had been made by the legendary Les Forrest in the very early days of the League, one was struck by the costume of most of the leading players of those days. They were to be seen in coats, spats on their feet, and altogether more fitted for a billiard match than the sport as we know it to-day.

With the passing years, steady evolution has taken place, and now it is possible to see pale blue satin shorts adorning the lower extremities of some of our younger players. They would certainly have made Mr. Bather, the League's first champion, wonder what the game is coming to!

Bearing these things in mind, it strikes us as interesting that a measure of controversy has been aroused recently by a comment by one of our regional correspondents on the subject of a player's dress. There can be no question that in recent seasons there has been an ever-increasing tendency for our players to treat matches as an occasion demanding special attire, and apart from any league rule covering the matter, there is no doubt that it must be all to the good of the game.

So far as the higher grade of play is concerned, there can surely be no argument that a player attired in the manner of our earlier champions is considerably handicapped, and unable to give of his best. In the less-exalted heights, however, it should not be forgotten that ambition does not run so strongly and there are a number who prefer to take their evenings more on a social basis, with no great exertion either indulged in or desired.

In a league of such a size, it is inevitable that it must cater for all levels, although correct dress for all must always be the desirable goal.

Any discussion of this topic cannot be allowed to close without mention of the women, who, for a long time, have nearly always turned out dressed in the most admirable manner, and indeed most probably have had more influence in bringing about the revolution in men's attire than anything else.

It is delightful to see an entire side turned out in identical costume, a common sight at women's matches, and, in this respect, there is something remaining for our men's sides to accomplish, even if we may be pardoned for hoping that the day is long distant when we shall see five of them performing in a cup final attired in satin shorts!

Women Regain Premier Status

WITH our Lancashire and Cheshire League season finished, the main news is that our women's team have won their way back into the first division and the men's team only just missed promotion to the second division.

The women's team continued their triumphant run through the second division to finish with a 100 per cent. record. Now they can look forward to meeting considerably stiffer opposition next term.

The details of their 9-1 victory at Macclesfield, mentioned in the January *Digest*, were that Mesdames Jones and Casselman each took their three singles and Miss Willcox won two, and the all-Bohemians doubles combination of Jones and Willcox secured their other set.

Moya Jones has improved her game by leaps and bounds during the season and she kept up her personal undefeated record with three sets when Barrow were entertained at Balfour. Beryl Waterson, happily back to her known form, won two of her sets, as did Muriel Willcox, while the Bohemians pair again took the doubles, though not without a struggle.

The strength of the Barrow opposition may be gauged from the fact that on the same day they took nine sets from Wirral in their match played at Victoria Park.

Our final league fixture necessitated a visit to Wirral and at Birkenhead Y.M.C.A. our representatives overcame a side whose main reliance was on attack. It was interesting to note three varied styles of dealing with the Wirral hitters. Moya Jones out-hit them; Muriel Willcox played a skilfully varied game, and Beryl Waterson relied mainly on an extremely steady defence. All three methods proved extremely successful, as the score of 10-0 proves!

Arthur Taylor was out outstanding player. Like Les Mulholland he won his three singles sets and took the doubles with Davie Rigby, who scored our other victories.

For the visit of Ellesmere Port, Mike Truman replaced Mulholland. The change probably cost us the game, for Mike, unable to practice as regularly as was his custom, was passing through a period of complete loss of form.

The Ellesmere Port side, an extremely experienced combination, proved opposition not to be trifled with, and although Arthur Taylor, again in superlative form, won all his sets, a solitary success for Rigby was our only other win in a 4-6 defeat.

Mulholland was recalled for the visit of Mid-Cheshire and, at African Oil Mills, Liverpool gained a 10-0 success for the first time this season. The Northwich side, though a useful and aggressive combination, showed defensive weaknesses which Taylor, Rigby and Mulholland were quick to exploit, and only two of the sets were extended to the third game.

For the visit to Widnes, the selectors departed slightly from the policy of youth preference in order to give a game to Basil Townsend, Dave Rigby dropping out.

Despite their tournament play together, Taylor-Townsend did not prove such a successful doubles combination as Taylor-Rigby and the Widnes pair gained that sometimes important set. Fortunately, Taylor continued his great run of success in these representative matches, his three wins including a 21-2, 21-2, overwhelming of the Widnes captain, F. Smith.

Les Mulholland, whose steady play has also been a feature of the season, also took three, and our 7-3 success was completed by Townsend's victory over Smith.

Men's Division 3B

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
St. Helens	6	6	0	0	45	15	12
Ellesmere Port	6	3	1	2	36	24	8
Wigan	6	3	2	1	37	23	7
Mid-Cheshire	7	3	3	1	33	37	7
Liverpool	6	3	3	0	34	26	6
Southport A ...	7	3	4	0	28	42	6
Widnes	6	2	4	0	21	39	4
Warrington ...	6	0	6	0	16	44	0

Women's Division 2

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Liverpool	4	4	0	0	34	6	8
Barrow	4	2	2	0	22	18	4
Stockport	2	1	1	0	9	11	2
Wirral	3	1	2	0	8	22	2
Macclesfield ...	3	0	3	0	7	23	0

From the Secretary's Desk

SATURDAY, APRIL, 21, IS A MUST DATE FOR YOU

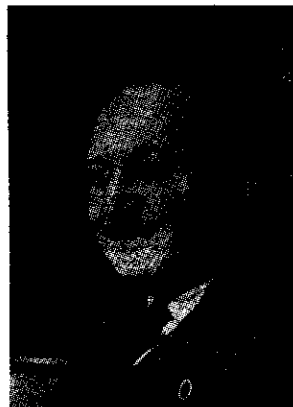
By W. STAMP.

THE Colsed Championships forms are now in your hands and as this is the only tournament to be held in Liverpool this season, we are expecting a large entry. Once again I would appeal to competitors to **POST EARLY** and not leave it until next Monday, the closing date, as there is a limit to the number we can accommodate and late entrants may be disappointed.

The admission to the finals at Liverpool Y.M.C.A. on Monday, April 9, is 2/-, and tickets will be sent to your secretary in due course, at a ratio of three per team. We rely on your support to make this tournament a success, whether as a competitor or spectator.

The *Daily Mirror* tournament, which this year has had an entry of 12,000, is now down to the last 16 in each of the four events, and they are to be played in Liverpool on Saturday, April 21, commencing at 9.30 a.m. down to the finals.

In previous years these have taken place at the Albert Hall, London, when well-known players have been invited to play matches and exhibitions, but this year the finals are taking place at



the Liverpool Stadium, which makes it *the* event of the season as far as Liverpool is concerned.

Seven rows of seats are being taken out, making the arena the same size as at the circus (the first row will be H) and a special raised platform is being erected with a playing area of 42 ft. by 34 ft., providing a good view from anywhere in the Stadium.

The following stars have already accepted invitations to be present:—

VICTOR BARN and **ALEC BROOK**.

Barna has not appeared in Liverpool for over ten years and older players will once again want to renew acquaintance with the greatest player of them all. I feel sure the younger members will want to see in action the player they have heard so much about—Mr. Table Tennis himself.

He will present his stage show with Alec Brook, in which all the shots in the game will be exploited, including the famous Barna backhand flick—many times imitated but never equalled.

Continued on next page

Something you can't miss

ANN HAYDON, the most promising youngster in England to-day—we might even be able to acclaim her as world champion. She will be arriving back in England from Tokio with Barna on April 19.

HARRY VENNER, 31-year-old Surrey player, who hit the headlines at the English Open a fortnight ago where he reached the final of the men's singles. His "scalps" on the way included K. Szepesi, of Hungary, the No. 1 seed; R. Griffin (Gloucester) and J. Lowe (Middlesex). He beat Johnny Leach 3-1 in the semi-final in a whirlwind game, and although winning the first game in the final against the Hungarian Gyetvai, he seemed to lose his touch and lost 3-1. A bonny fighter and always looking for an opportunity to attack.

LOU LAZA, of Australia, was one of the sensations at the English, where his light-hearted manner (he reminds me of Bellak) and the excellence of his play, endeared him to the crowd all week. He has the most freakish grip in the game. Plays with a sponge bat, but holds the blade of the bat itself and makes no use at all of the handle.

He claims he is 100 per cent. better with sponge, and plays backhand and forehand with the same face of the bat. He reached the quarter-finals being beaten by Leach, having previously beaten Michel Haguenuer (France) and Joseph Koczian, world famous Hungarian. He is a cricket professional with a Lancashire League club, for whom he has scored a few centuries.

We are awaiting confirmation from LINDE WERTLE, the turbulent red-headed fireball from Austria, with her blistering forehand drives across the table. Should she be able to make the journey, a match with her and Ann would be a high spot of the evening.

Further news will be published in the local Press and towards the end of the month every club will receive final details from the *Daily Mirror*, together with an application form for the supply of tickets. The prices will be 5/-, 4/- and 3/- (tax included). It is also hoped to televise one of the matches.

The foregoing should be enough to whet the appetite of every enthusiast. So get out your diary and make a note that Saturday, April 21, is *Daily Mirror* night at the Stadium.

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SPONGE NOT SO MENACING

THE effects of the new grouping system has shown how difficult it is to maintain two teams in one division. Under the present rules there is no danger of any club hogging a division with multiple teams.

The positions of Rafter's A and Balfour A in this division make that apparent. Rule 22(a), linked with the group system, is perhaps the greatest safeguard against any monopoly.

The general standard has improved at Nos. 4 and 5 in the teams, but the practice of putting reserves high up in the order is no benefit to the opponents or the individual concerned.

Now let me turn to the adherents of sponge rubber. They are not so menacing as we thought they might be, and gradually as we play against them we become more familiar with them.

There are about six in this division using sponge. Les Davies, with five defeats this season, has an average comparable with his use of the orthodox bat. So have John Coveney and John Dancaster, but Frank Thomas and Eric Wall have better records. The former, using thick sponge, has lost 13 sets out of 34, and the latter, using thin sponge, a similar average.

D. Bruce, although Wirral champion with sponge, has lost eight sets out of 28, while Don Hobbs tried it out but eventually threw his away after some adverse results.

The three leading teams in the division have remained in their respective positions for some time, and it looks as if the final order will be Balfour, Bohemians and Rafter's, each in the 30-odd points mark, with Victoria Park about six points below.

Anfield, Oakhill and Linnets who follow, vary little in strength between 1 and 5. Solidity at Nos. 3, 4 and 5 is the reason for their comfortable positions in the table.

The six best individual league averages are all over 80 per cent, namely R. Hetherington and P. Rumjahn 88.2, B. Hand and E. Rumjahn 87.5, and L. Davies and N. Jones 84.3.

The final of the Readman Cup is a repeat of last year's Balfour v Rafter's. Please lend your support by being present.

Varty Loses to Taylor

THE main theme of my notes this month is the starting time of matches.

In an earlier article I suggested starting at, say 6.30. I have played in a few matches this season, at the A.O.M., and the visiting team have begun to arrive at 7.45 and by 7.55 three members are present. The matches eventually began at about 8 p.m.

Under the present rules a visiting team can turn up with just one player at 8 p.m. He then goes on and if the set goes to three games it could be 8.20 before the home captain has his first call. What is the solution? I'm afraid I don't know.

An unusual incident occurred during the Victoria Park A and Cadwa match. D. O'Reilly, of Cadwa, had a violent attack of toothache during his set with J. Houghton. He could not carry on after losing the first game. He was whipped out to a nearby dentist and ten minutes later, returned to complete his set with Houghton, taking the second game 22-20 but losing the third.

Had he managed to win the set he would have earned his side a point—they only went down 4-6.

I don't think I am really being a fortune teller if I say it is odds on Bootle Y.M. and Bath Street for Division 1 and Waterloo Dock and my own team for the big drop. I have just heard that A.O.M. lost 6-4 to Bath Street and that A. C. Taylor beat F. Varty. It was Varty's second defeat this season.

Cadwa did well to force a draw at Litherland. This was due to W. Crafter beating Anderson 23-21 in the third and C. Brackley beating reserve J. Dunne 22-20, also in the third. Those two sets made the difference between a 7-3 defeat and a 5-5 draw.

LEAGUE TABLES

up to and including 10th March, 1956

First Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Balfour	20	18	0	2	164	36	38
Bohemians	20	16	1	3	142	58	35
Rafters	20	16	3	1	135	65	33
Victoria Park	20	12	5	3	122	78	27
Anfield	20	8	6	6	102	98	22
Oakhill	19	7	8	4	95	95	18
Linnets	19	6	8	5	93	97	17
Liverpool Y.M.	20	6	10	4	88	112	16
Balfour A	20	5	11	4	71	129	14
Nomads	19	2	15	2	61	129	6
Lucem	20	2	16	2	54	146	6
Rafters A	19	2	17	0	52	138	4

Fifth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Dunlop	20	17	1	2	126	74	36
Balfour B	20	14	4	2	127	73	30
Rafters B	20	11	5	4	127	73	26
Oakhill B	20	9	5	6	114	86	24
Victoria Park B	20	11	7	2	108	92	24
Bohemians B	20	8	8	4	100	100	20
Bootle Y.M. B	20	7	8	5	100	100	19
Anfield B	20	6	8	6	94	106	18
Victoria Park C	20	7	9	4	90	110	18
W'breck Moor	20	5	12	3	88	112	13
W'loo Park A	20	3	12	5	86	114	11
Balfour C	20	0	19	1	40	160	1

Second Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bootle Y.M.	20	15	0	5	141	59	35
Bath Street	20	14	2	4	137	63	32
Litherland	19	12	5	2	103	87	26
Anfield A	20	10	7	3	104	96	23
L'pool Y.M. A	20	9	7	4	98	102	22
Oakhill A	20	9	9	2	98	102	20
Bohemians A	20	7	9	4	99	101	18
Victoria Park A	20	7	9	4	96	104	18
Bootle Y.M. A	20	4	7	9	93	107	17
Cadwa	20	3	10	7	79	121	13
African Oil	20	2	14	4	81	119	8
Waterloo Dock	19	1	14	4	61	129	6

Sixth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
L'pool Y.M. B	18	17	0	1	154	26	35
Bath Street A	18	15	3	0	130	50	30
Oakhill C	18	10	5	3	106	74	23
Fairlawn	18	11	6	1	101	79	23
Cadwa B	18	7	7	4	85	95	18
Domestic Mis.	19	5	8	6	85	105	16
Anfield C	18	6	9	3	75	105	15
Rankin O.B.	18	6	10	2	78	102	14
Eng. Electric A	18	4	11	3	69	111	11
Lofters A	18	2	12	3	59	111	7
Linnets B	18	2	14	2	48	132	6

Third Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Panto	20	13	2	5	127	73	31
L.P.A.S.	20	13	5	2	111	89	28
Maghull	19	10	6	3	102	88	23
I.C.I.	20	9	6	5	111	89	23
Waterloo Park	20	9	7	4	110	90	22
Eng. Electric	20	9	7	4	106	94	22
Linacre	19	8	5	6	97	93	22
Osterley	20	8	7	5	97	103	21
Lofters	18	8	8	2	91	89	18
Linnets A	20	4	13	3	82	118	11
Beauclair	20	4	14	2	80	120	10
Wavertree C.C.	20	1	16	3	66	134	5

North Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Litherland B	19	16	1	2	143	47	34
Bootle Y.M. C	20	16	4	0	134	66	32
W'loo Park B	20	12	4	4	137	63	28
Bath Street B	18	11	3	4	118	62	26
Brenka A	19	12	5	2	122	68	26
Co-op	20	12	6	2	118	82	26
Litherland C	19	11	7	1	117	73	23
Maghull A	20	5	13	2	79	121	12
R.Aux.A.F.	20	4	15	1	58	142	9
Co-op A	19	3	16	0	39	151	6
Orrell	19	2	16	1	49	141	5
Douglas Y.C.	19	1	15	3	46	144	5

Fourth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Cadwa A	18	15	1	2	129	51	32
Litherland A	19	13	4	2	122	68	28
Brenka	18	11	4	3	108	72	25
Everton Y.M.	18	11	4	3	107	73	25
R.A.F.A.	18	10	6	2	98	82	22
Aigburth	18	8	6	4	96	84	20
Panto A	18	6	7	5	95	85	19
L.P.A.S. A	18	5	11	2	81	99	12
African Oil A	18	4	12	2	73	107	10
Tech. Students	18	3	14	1	66	114	7
Wav. C.C. A	19	0	19	0	25	165	0

South Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Harold House	20	16	2	2	144	56	34
Rafters C	20	14	1	5	132	68	33
Sefton General	20	14	5	1	135	65	29
L'pool Y.M. C	19	12	5	2	115	75	26
Bedford	20	10	5	5	105	95	25
Florence Oxtou	20	10	10	0	103	97	20
Dunlop A	20	9	9	2	101	99	20
Lucem A	20	8	10	2	98	102	18
Aigburth A	19	4	11	4	78	112	12
Lussac	20	4	12	4	83	117	12
W'tree Labour	20	3	14	3	67	133	9
African Oil B	20	0	20	0	29	171	0

LEAGUE TABLES

Central Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
G.L.S.C.	20	20	0	0	168	32	40
Rankin A	19	11	4	4	112	78	26
Bohemians C ..	20	9	4	7	109	91	25
L.P.A.S. B	19	11	7	1	101	89	23
Cadwa C	20	9	7	4	112	88	22
Ebani	19	9	6	4	102	88	22
R.A.F. Mov.	20	7	7	6	102	98	20
Leyfield	19	7	7	5	101	89	19
Osterley A	20	5	10	5	84	116	15
Lofters B	20	6	13	1	86	114	13
Tech. Stud. A ..	20	2	14	4	65	135	8
Anfield D	20	1	18	1	38	162	3

Women's Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Anfield	20	18	0	2	159	41	38
Bohemians	20	16	1	3	148	52	35
Rafters	20	15	2	3	141	59	33
Balfour	20	13	7	0	123	77	26
Waterloo Park ..	20	10	8	2	110	90	22
Littlewoods	20	10	8	2	103	97	22
Bibbys	19	8	10	1	88	102	17
Oakhill	19	7	10	2	82	108	16
Cadwa.....	19	4	12	3	74	116	11
Osterley	20	5	14	1	72	128	11
Aigburth	19	3	16	0	54	136	6
Linnets	20	0	20	0	26	174	0

Personalia

Geoff Elliott, of Victoria Park, who has been called up for his National Service, has been assigned to the Household Cavalry. His first reporting centre was at Windsor Castle.

Vic Jenkinson, of Bohemians, was married during February, and is now living "over the water."

MANAGEMENT NOTES

Sir.—It appears that we have a fashion critic in our South Region. I think it is laughable. What do you go to a match for—to watch the table tennis or look at the clothes? As for the remark about my attire, I might have just come from the office. You don't know; some of us do work you know!

We also have women playing in this League, and I remember quite definitely that there was no changing room for them at Sefton General.

Really Mr. Kettle, is this the only way you can get your own back for a defeat of 8-2 by Dunlops. P. J. CONNOLLY (Dunlop).

Mr. Kettle replies:—I'm surprised at Mr. Connolly, taking offence at my remark and in reply would simply refer him to Rule 19 and point out that anyone breaking rules should expect criticism.

I think his excuses are very feeble. He says some of us have to go to work; don't we all. He says also, there are no facilities for changing at Sefton General. I would remind him that the game I was reporting on was on his own ground against Lucem.

As regards it being revenge for defeating us, well they were not the first or the last either. Finally, he was chosen to represent the Region to play the Central on Monday, March 5, and he managed to change for that game.

A STRUGGLE TO THE END

BY the time these notes are published there will be only one more match to be played, but at the time of writing the doors are wide open, with Panto and the Police battling it out.

Both teams have played consistently throughout the season. Despite the fact that they commenced with a defeat, they quickly got into their stride and have been near the top for most of the season. The leadership changed hands frequently, with Maghull making the early running but quickly dropping down the division table.

At the other end of the table a much greater struggle is going on. A month ago it looked a safe bet that Linnets would accompany Wavertree down into the fourth division, but Linnets are not going down without a fight. Taking two points each from Maghull and Beauclair, they have drawn up to within a point of Beauclair.

Fourth Division

Cadwa Regain Winning Way

LAST month's article, which was based on a full month of interest, was scrapped because the *Digest* could not be printed. Unfortunately, what was news last month is history this, so I have to rely on this last four weeks, during which little of note occurred.

Our division team decisively beat the pick of the third at Panto, and it was a team win, rather than due to any individuals. Now I would like to match the boys against a second division side. What about it, Mr. Power?

My thanks to Jim Robinson, who has taken a great deal of the work off my shoulders in these games, as well as proving a more than competent captain.

After a short lapse, during which they lost three points in two successive weeks, Cadwa are back in their winning vein, and I cannot see further than them for the championship. Who will go up with them is still a matter for conjecture.

Everton Y.M.C.A., Brenka, Aigburth and Litherland A are all there as I write, and I would be a brave man to name the winners.

I have just returned from watching Brenka deal out a 7-3 walloping to R.A.F.A. John Smith was in a devastating mood, and won his two sets in

Unfortunately for them, their final three matches were hard ones and Beauclair had to lose all their remaining matches for Linnets' final fling to save them. I fancy that Linnets may have left it too late, although it could be decided on set average and as Linnets and Beauclair, with three to play, are almost identical, it all adds up to an interesting finale to a season which has been closely contested throughout.

In cup matters, Panto have reached the final of the Rumjahn Cup by virtue of a 7-3 victory over the Police. Despite losing the first two sets, Panto took the next seven on a run to ensure their appearance in the final. It may well be that they caught the Police during a hangover following their surprising defeat by Wavertree.

Now Panto will meet in the final Balfour B, who spoiled an all-Division 3 final by beating Osterley by six sets to three, one set not being played.

by Jim Green

comparative comfort. Young Billy Miller also won his two, more by hard work and steadiness than anything else. His is a somewhat uninspired sort of game, but with a little more experience he may speed up a bit.

Burch (a most improved 16-year-old), Cantwell and Kevin Fenerty shared the other three sets. For the losers, Robinson, Small and Branes each scored once. Arthur Quiggin played as though he had a train to catch, and flicked himself to two defeats. Nerves I don't doubt, and I have seen his colleague, Roberts, play better.

At Aigburth, when I visited them, I watched a check on the net, which proved to be half an inch low at one end and half an inch high at the other. The battle began with only two Aigburth players in attendance.

I wonder if the Aigburth team realise that by this late attendance (which I understand is a common practice with them) they deprive their opponents of a reasonable choice of sets? Yet I would not accuse them of being unsporting—I have known them too many years—but I do say that they are not giving their rivals a fair deal. Let us see no more of it, Aigburth.

WELL EARNED PROMOTION

NOW that the season is drawing to a close I think we can congratulate Dunlop on being champions. Only a sudden collapse in their final matches can stop them and I cannot see that taking place.

There is no doubt that they have been a very consistent side. From what I have seen of their play, they are worthy of the championship. In addition, their sporting attitude is a credit to the division.

I was pleased to read in the Management Committee's circular that they had noted the remarks of Bert Ariss published a couple of months ago, regarding the somewhat unsatisfactory arrangements (in the opinion of several people) which exist in our division. It will be interesting to see whether anything will come of it.

The meeting of Anfield and Warbreck Moor produced an enjoyable match in which Les Lewis proved to be too strong for his opponents and so gained revenge for his defeat at the hands of Len Kilshaw earlier in the season. Kilshaw in my opinion, is one of the most heart-breaking players in the division to hit against. On this occasion he seemed to find the Anfield headquarters a little too small. Anfield played well enough to win 7-3.

I still notice instances of umpires not giving due consideration to rules and players still getting away with foul services. I have mentioned this before and do so again at the risk of becoming tiresome, but let us remember that rules are made in the interests of the game. If players used the correct service in practice, they would not so easily make foul services.

While Balfour B have slipped badly from grace in league affairs, they have once again carried the fifth division banner to the final of the Rumjahn Cup at the expense of Osterley, whom they defeated 6-3 in an interesting match which featured some easy two-straight wins as well as some very close three-game sets.

The last set was not played because an Osterley player was taken ill, but I would like to thank Osterley for the fine sporting match.

Y.M. WORTHY CHAMPIONS

MAIN items of interest from last month's missing magazine, were Y.M.'s consolidation of the championship beating Bath 7-3. George Every was the man of the match, winning two of his side's three sets.

The Y.M. team have proved themselves more than worthy champions; ably led by Des Loughrey, with Bill Bent in support, and Cain, Owens and Christie all proving that they have the ability to become really good.

Second item was Norman Cooke's challenge to the upper fourth or fifth for an inter-divisional match. He will be interested to hear from any acceptors.

The leading set winners with still a few match cards missing to date, are: Loughrey (Y.M. 28, Every (Bath St.) and Owen (Y.M.) 27, Carter (Fairlawn) and Edwards (Bath St.) 25, Cain (Y.M.) 22.

The relegation struggle takes the interest now that the championship is decided and most of the teams are fighting hard for points. The two outstanding performances were Rankin's defeat of Fairlawn, Jones and Towndrow winning 2 sets for Rankin and Carter gaining his usual 2 for Fairlawn; quickly followed by a Lofters (Wardle 2) win over Fairlawn.

Lofters (Bennison 2) also took a point from Oakhill (Glover 2). This was bettered, however, by Anfield (Nash and Pennington 2), who came away from Oakhill with two points. Rankin, in their turn, thrashed fellow-relegationists Linnets 8-2 and beat Lofters 6-4, new boy Rigby winning four sets in these games, a good start.

English Electric's solitary point in this period came from Rankin, while Linnets show a blank. The league table will give you the latest gen on their positions which I cannot do at time of writing.

Late news flash and surely the outstanding result of the season was Domestic Missions breaking of Y.M.'s 100 per cent. record with a brilliant 5-5 draw. Details, not yet to hand, will be given next month.

ANFIELD-RAFTERS CUP FINAL

IT seems quite a long time since our last magazine, so obviously many things must have happened in the meantime. One wonders, however, just how much is still news and what is now past history.

With the season almost over Anfield are now at the top of the league table with a clear points lead over Bohemians, with whom they had been bracketted for practically the whole of the season.

The two teams are due to meet in the final match of the season and that promised to be extremely interesting until last week when Bohemians went to Rafters and were defeated by six sets to four. That, of course, does not mean that the final clash will be without its interest, but naturally it will lack some of the bite it could have had if Bohemians had not suffered that defeat.

The Rafters-Bohemians league match was almost a repeat of the Bartholomew Cup semi-final between the two teams, in which Rafters had a fairly convincing win over their opponents.

As in the league match which was to follow, Bohemian's only set winners were M. Jones and M. Willcox. How well those two have pulled their team through this season! Their club must be very proud of them.

Cup Nerves

In the second cup semi-final Anfield beat Waterloo Park 8-2 to reach the final for the second season in succession. D. Campbell beat P. Harben and L. Olsen beat yours truly, to give the Park their two sets. Although Anfield were without doubt the stronger team, I do think that in this match Waterloo Park were obviously suffering from nerves.

Earlier in the season I referred in these notes to Bibby's and to how much weaker they are these days. Certainly

they have nothing like the strength they had when their team included Gladys Brown, Lil Rimmer and Margaret Perry. Now only two of their old stalwarts remain, namely Muriel Bannister and Joan Brown, who, in those former days, we knew as Joan Dinwoodie.

But watching Bibby's a few weeks ago I was much impressed by the play of M. Humphries. Although she lost both her sets against Anfield, she was, I thought, very steady, and will no doubt in time prove an asset to her team.

At the bottom of the table we still have Linnets, who, as I write, have yet to score their first win of the season. Obviously, this is due to the lack of experienced players.

Apart from B. Pealing, who, I think, has been with Linnets since the club was inaugurated, most of their players are comparatively new to the league, or at least to first division play. But who knows, maybe if not this season in one still to come, they will be as they used to be, a team with whom all the other sides will have to reckon.

NOMADS TRY 17

THE Nomads have this season tried seventeen players in an effort to overcome a situation which is very worrying—the ever-increasing average age of our best players and the absence of any real youthful ability to replace them, writes Peter Rumjahn.

Of the season's players only two or three could really hold a place in the first division, but there is a good nucleus for a couple of seasons ahead.

J. Cain, K. Park and B. Crolley have improved considerably, and we look to various Y.M.C.A.'s to produce something good out of the blue.

Litherland Consolidate Lead

LITHERLAND B, who have reached the final of the Hyde Cup, have virtually ensured their winning the region championship by beating Bootle Y.M.C.A. C, their nearest rivals, by 6-4 after a very close match. The Y.M.C.A. team knew that they had to beat Litherland if they were to have any chance of winning the League and they put up an excellent fight.

K. Hughes, for Bootle, was particularly outstanding beating D. Styles and A. Hoatson but K. Anderson and F. Stockdale each had double wins for Litherland to carry them home by the narrowest of margins. Stockdale has been off form recently but came back when most needed and it was his win over P. Davies by 22-20 in the third game of the last match that has probably won the League for his team.

Douglas Y.C., Co-op A and Orrell Wardens are having a very close struggle at the bottom of the Region and they are very evenly matched. Douglas Y.C. have considerably strengthened their side now that G. Cope is available. He won ten of the first 12 sets he played for them at No. 1.

Royal Auxiliary Air Force, who manage to keep a few points in front of the bottom teams, have also strengthened their side by signing J. Millin, who played in the North Region up to a few seasons ago and has now returned from the wilderness.

We have now played both the Central and South Regions and although being well beaten by the former we managed to pull back a 4-0 deficit against the latter to 5-4, but could not quite make the fifth game for a draw. However, return matches are being arranged when we should be more successful.

I shall give detailed averages in the next edition of the *Digest*, but I feel that two ladies playing in this Region deserve special mention. They are Mrs. J. Lloyd, of Bath Street B, and Mrs. E. Cantwell, of Brenka A, who have won 20 out of 24 and 19 out of 24 sets respectively.

Owing to lack of support in previous years the Management Committee have cancelled the regional tournament this year, but I hope that the North Region will give 100 per cent. support to the League's Closed Championships and thus help to get the Regional Championships restored for future years.

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Cup Defeat Disappoints

THERE being no *Digest* published last month I have enough scribbled notes of information to fill a book, but, of course, I will have to keep it brief to fit the small space allotted to me.

The semi-final of the Hyde Cup between Rafter's C and Litherland B, played at Sefton General, resulted in a win for Litherland 7-3. This was most disappointing. I really thought Rafter's would go on to win and bring the trophy to the South. I wasn't able to get to the match but I see that Butterworth (2) and Cauldwell (1) were the only winners for Rafter's.

I have accepted Rene Sturgeon's and B. MacDonald's challenge to play the North and Central Regions, and up to now two matches have been played, the first against the North on February 2 at Sefton General. The result was a win of 6-4 for South, and the team in the following order:—Butterworth (2), Elackman (1), Kettle (2), Linser (1), and Hambleton.

On Monday of last week we met the Central at Liver Buildings and lost to them 6-4, the team this time was Butterworth (2), Elackman (1), Kettle, Connolly (1), Douglas. We play the return on Friday, March 16. Perhaps we can even things up.

The positions at the top of the table are much the same, with Y.M.C.A. C in hot pursuit. Having beaten Sefton General and Rafter's C beating Harold House, it looks as though anything could happen, but I rather think Harold House is a little too far ahead now to be caught.

Just as I was writing these notes B. MacDonald rang me and we have arranged to play the return match with the North on Tuesday, March 20, at Waterloo Park. Let's hope we can complete the double.

BILL NEWTON'S IMPROVEMENT

THE North and South Regions took up our offer of inter-regional matches on a friendly basis and to date we have played the North away and the South at home.

In both matches we were successful, recording a 9-1 win over the North and a 6-4 win over the South. We just missed a 10-0 win against the North, losing the odd set 22-20 in the third game.

It is only fair to say that the North were without Anderson, their No. 1, who failed to turn up, so we expect a closer game in the return match.

South were much stronger opposition and although we held a 4-1 lead at the interval, there were some very keen sets before we got the other two for our win.

We played the same team in both matches, namely, T. Faneran and D. Grant (G.L.S.C.), K. Wright (Ebani), F. Hampson (R.A.F. Movements) and W. Newton (Rankin). We are now looking forward to the return game with the South on March 16 and the North on a date to be fixed.

The most improved player this season would appear to be young Bill Newton. He has moved from No. 5 to No. 1 in his own team and played extremely well for the regional team. He makes use of all the table, drawing his opponent to the table and then attacking hard, often at an angle. He has also a very useful drop shot which he uses to advantage.

G.L.S.C. are now certain to be our champions and they have also reached the final of the Hyde Cup, in which they meet Litherland B. Perhaps they, too, can claim the double as Panto did in the first season our region was formed.

We were sure of a finalist as G.L.S.C. played Leyfield in the semi-final, and although the result was 8-2 there were some very keenly fought sets.

Rankin had a near miss in the quarter-finals, forcing Litherland to a draw but unfortunately losing 7-3 in the replay.

R.A.F. moved rapidly up into third place, then lost three of their players and only managed to draw with Technical Students, who have picked a few useful points up recently, including two from a win over Leyfield.

Those Cup Semi-Finals

Sir.—My committee, through the medium of your columns, wish to draw the attention of registered players and the Management Committee to what they feel to be an unsatisfactory state of affairs in regard to the running of semi-final events in the various cup competitions.

This season our club has been involved on three such occasions, on none of which has a member of the Management Committee been in attendance in an official capacity. The matches, in accordance with procedure, have been staged on neutral tables, with arrangements as to the provision of balls, the posting of the score card and the determination as to the "home" and "away" designations, left in the hands of the captain willing to undertake such duties. Had each team arrived under the impression that a neutral venue indicated an "official" event, none of the foregoing necessities would have been provided.

Our club members feel strongly that semi-final matches warrant such consideration of the Management Committee as their importance as the penultimate stage of a tournament justifies. The club feels, too, that the lack of support given to functions of

this nature can hardly be complained of by the Management Committee, when two teams of the same club are compelled to play semi-final matches at different venues on the same night, thus precluding support of both by members who otherwise would have been in attendance.

It is felt that circumstances such as these can hardly be supported by the Management Committee, whose reply through the courtesy of the *Digest* would be appreciated.—E. CAIRD (hon. secretary), Rafters.

The Management Committee reply :

The Committee feel that the complaint in paragraph 3 of the above is justified and will take steps to rectify the position in future. They also appreciate the disappointment felt when keen supporters cannot see both of their teams, but as these matches have to be played off in one week there is great difficulty in finding suitable venues with the necessary qualifications and avoiding clashes with league matches. These difficulties, along with many others, would have been obviated years ago had the headquarters scheme as presented by the Management Committee been accepted by league members.

A Protest

Sir.—I have been instructed by my committee to reply to Mr. Ellison's comments concerning Linnets in the January *Digest*. I should like to point out to Mr. Ellison the following facts:—

- 1.—It was at his special request that the match was played at Linnets.
- 2.—We were given short notice.
- 3.—Mr. Ellison could not have been unaware of the conditions in the club, since he himself had played there in late October.

Notwithstanding the fact that our club is not represented in either the 4th or 5th Division, we granted the use of our clubroom, not without some inconvenience since Monday is a popular practice night. I have always regarded it as somewhat boorish and ill-bred to criticise a host who offers his hospitality, but in this particular case the criticism is even more ill-chosen, since, had Mr. Ellison not been in such exceptional haste to invite himself, he

Continued on next page

Protest

would have had the pleasure of experiencing the warmth of our new heating, the installation of which was completed on the Saturday following the match.

While we appreciate that owing to the roof being of corrugated iron we do get condensation, we should like to point out that we have consistently improved conditions as our finances have made it possible.

In spite of our strong resentment of Mr. Ellison's ill-timed criticism, we do sincerely regret any mishaps which occurred to the players.—E. JOAN LEE, (Chairman, Linnets).

Mr. Ellison replies : It was not at my special request that the match was played at Linnets. It was a mutual agreement between Mr. Green and myself, and he agreed to the date without any trouble. Surely Linnets are not above any criticism of their heating or the conditions under which the match was played, but I am glad to hear that they have now had a new system installed. I should also like to point out that there is a difference in playing on a warmish night in October, as it was when I previously visited the club, and a cold mid-December night, as it was for the match.