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Vol. VII

March, 1957

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## COMMENT

**W**HEN the present season is viewed in retrospect, it is unlikely there will be any special comment about the high standards of play, and it is pretty certain the less than average returns of the Closed will come in for unfavourable mention. But in one important respect this season will be remembered with great pleasure.

Never in the post-war years has there been such a general and frantic struggle in all divisions, either for honours and promotion or, at the other end of the scale, to avoid relegation. It is not necessary to go into details, but a glance at the league tables will show in some cases as many as four or five clubs involved in a vital struggle in one section, or the near certainty that in another a fierce dispute between two clubs will probably be decided on sets average.

There are those who are inclined to be resentful when accused of apathy, as applied to the support of league functions, complaining that there is no sign of it in league matches. At the present time that is certainly true, even if there is such a regrettably lukewarm attitude to other affairs.

Be that as it may, this is proving to be a most exciting season for league play, with the climax rapidly approaching. Not surprisingly in the circumstances, there have been just odd occasions when feeling has run a trifle too high, which is regrettable but possibly understandable.

Most of these disputes have centred on ranking lists, posing the age old problem which seems, as always, to defy solution. It seems worth while, in the circumstances, to recall the last A.G.M., when it was decided that the last date for ranking should be at the end of January instead of at the turn of the year. At the time it seemed a reasonable division of the season, but in view of the numerous close struggles now being waged, is it not possible that the old ruling might not have been the most satisfactory?

It is surely possible for clubs to assess their players accurately by Christmas, and in returning to that date a certain temptation might be avoided, and possibly also the accusation by other clubs, whether right or wrong, that a re-ranking to suit circumstances had been made. Some, at least, of the recent controversy would certainly have been avoided for certain if the rule had not been changed, and it is well worth considering seriously.

From the Secretary's Desk

## No Apathy? Then explain away all these Facts



by  
W. STAMP

THE prize winners of the January crossword competition were Mrs. Audrey Brown and Master Tony Green, who have each received a box of Villa xxx Balls. The number of solutions sent in was 17, which is not a very large percentage of our readers.

I have heard it suggested that it was too easy and not worth bothering to enter and I would like to congratulate Don Cameron, of Victoria Park, on devising an original competition, and it remains to be seen whether it will create more interest than the crosswords.

This lack of interest is reflected in everything that has happened during the past few years and is causing no little concern to the Management Committee, and it will perhaps, interest some of you to be reminded about what has been attempted to stimulate enthusiasm during the past few years, and *all* have had to be discontinued *through lack of support*.

Season 1946 saw us incorporate men's and women's regional singles in the Closed Championships and was meant to encourage the regional players who would not normally have entered the open singles. This was the most successful of the post-war schemes and lasted until 1952, when it had to be discontinued.

The Youth Division was started in 1947 with one division of 10 teams, and in 1948 it increased to two divisions for one year, and was abandoned in 1950. During those four years the whole of its membership was drawn from Wirral and not a *single* team from Liverpool ever competed.

The Stamp Cup Competition for youths also ceased and in an effort to provide something new, the cup was put up for a three-a-side competition—it lasted three years. We had less success with our Doubles Division, which began in 1948 with seven teams, had six teams in 1949 and then folded completely as there were only two entrants in 1950.

To stimulate interest, as we thought, for everyone, a handicap

singles was devised for which the Maxwell Pyfe and Foulis Cups were presented in 1951. The first of each pair out of the hat played on their own table, and after two years, in an effort to meet popular demand, play-offs were arranged in groups all over the city to save travelling for only one game. But after two more years we had to write finis, and we sadly came to the conclusion that to try to create interest was one thing, but to sustain it appeared well nigh impossible.

I have kept the worst until the last. We have often been told that it was a mistake to hold the Closed Championships at the end of the season as all interest had evaporated and players were returning to outdoor sports, and as we were unable to obtain a venue for the Merseyside last November, we decided to have the Closed the first week in January—and we avoided having any play on Saturday so as not to interfere with other sporting activities.

This is what happened. We have 57 clubs in the league, 30 of which did not have a *single entry*, four had only one entry, and four had two entries, the main entries coming from ten clubs. Add to this the fact that 70 fewer people attended the finals than in April, 1956.

A correspondent in the December issue objected to the frequent remarks in November about apathy and replied "Because we enjoy our game and leave the organisation to the organisers, do not dub us all as apathetic". What else can one say in view of the facts I have stated, and also having in mind the number of clubs that have been fined or warned for either turning up short or not arriving at all, as per Management notes, December, January and March.

What DO you want? Write and tell me, and if it is constructive it will be placed before the Management Committee.

# MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE NOTES

**R**EPRESENTATIVES of Technical Students and Liverpool Y.M.C.A. were asked to appear before the Committee on January 25, 1957, and subsequently the following decisions were made and communicated to every club *secretary*:

"That Technical Students be expelled from the League for playing ineligible and unregistered players, and also for sending in the names of players who did not take part in certain matches.

"That Liverpool Y.M.C.A. be fined the maximum of 10/- for their representative condoning the playing of one set by a player under an assumed name, the said result being deleted and amended to a W.O. on the arrival of a member of the Management Committee".

It should be pointed out that this matter was brought to the notice of a member of the Management Committee by a member of the Y.M.C.A.

Technical Students appealed against their expulsion, and whilst admitting the infringements, suggested the penalty was too harsh.

The Appeal Board met on February 21 and confirmed the decision of the Committee, but added this rider: "That this decision does not preclude Technical Students from applying for membership of the League again next season".

The following action was taken against clubs for rule breaches:—

Linnets (v Rafters A, Women's Div.) one short—fined 10/-.

Rafters (v Anfield) one short—warning.

Linnets A (v Osterley) two short—fined 10/-.

Oakhill B (v Balfour B) one short—fined 10/-.

Liverpool Y.M. D (v Panto B) one short—warning.

Waterloo Dock (v Bohemians A, Women's Div.) one short—fined 5/-.

R.A.F.A. (v Beauclair) one short—warning.

A report was received from the Rules Sub-Committee on February 15, and it was agreed to have a full discussion at a special committee convened for the purpose.

## OUR APOLOGIES

We would like to offer our apologies to our readers for not informing them in the January issue that the Digest would not be published in February. This, of course, was in line with the A.G.M. decision to publish five issues in the season.

The omission, however, had its compensation, for we learned better than in any other way, that many people look forward to the *Digest* with interest.

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# AN ALL-SOUTH FINAL

## READMAN CUP

Balfour 6, Linnets 4  
Rafters 8, Bath Street 2

## HYDE CUP

Linnets B 7, Sefton General 3  
Flo. Oxtou 6, Liverpool Y.M. C 4

## BARTHOLOMEW CUP

Bohemians 6, Rafters 4  
Balfour 8, Bibbys 2

## RUMJAHN CUP

University 8, Wavertree 2  
Linnets A 5, African Oil 5  
(Linnets won 12 games to 10)

Once again Balfour and Rafters are to contest the Readman Cup final, as has been the case so often in recent years.

Rafters victory in the semi-final was made the easier by Bath Street's difficulties with injuries, but against that the three Rumjahns had all been unwell just before the match. As it was, Arthur Taylor was the only one to win sets for Bath Street, beating both Ted and Ron.

Balfour had a much closer struggle against Linnets. In fact, if Linnets could have found the extra set they would have won on games. The failure of Bill Pierce to win a set was the deciding factor, for the other four members all took one each. Hetherington and N. Jones were in top form for Balfour, winning four sets between them.

Though I have been searching my memory, I cannot recall a previous occasion when the Hyde Cup final has been contested by two sides from the South Region. The last remaining outsider, Liverpool, Y.M. C were eliminated by Florence Oxtou after a tense struggle. The victory of McCarten over Yun Poon in the final set decided matters. Experience seemed to play a part in the result, judging by the occasional signs of panic which the Y.M. showed.

Linnets B and Sefton had been in recent conflict just before their semi-final tie, with the result that team orders were of considerable importance. This time Linnets came

off best and won comfortably. G. Kettle is one of Sefton's most successful players and his failure to record a victory was a deciding factor. Dick Burge had a heavy load to carry as a result. He won his two sets, but only W. Davies gave him substantial support.

Bohs and Rafters have had some tight battles this season, and for that reason the fact that Bohs were able to win on sets was almost a surprise. The secret appeared to be taking the calculated risk, which met with success, of splitting the all-powerful doubles pair, Jones and Willcox. Both sets were won in two straight.

Bibbys could not perhaps have expected much success against Balfour, who were not extended in winning 8-2. E. Trousdale made a brave effort against J. Roberts, only just losing in the third, but apart from J. Brown's win over Jones and a close victory by Clague and Brown over Randall and D'ckinson, Balfour had things almost their own way.

The University added to their triumphs in soundly beating their promotion rivals, Wavertree, 8-2. The success of Ellis against S'ddall and Travis was an important factor, but the whole side played well in an outstanding performance.

Frank Varty has popped in and out of African Oil's side this season, usually appearing at times of crisis, and he won his two sets in the match with Linnets A.

Harding was also similarly successful, but despite this African Oil could not win, for Hutchings was the only other player to succeed. Linnets had the punch in the tail, with Morris and Roach being especially powerful, and when it came to the adding up of games, the fact that this pair won two straight each time made the difference.

The final dates and venues are:—  
Readman Cup, Bootle Y.M., April 4.  
Hyde Cup, Dunlop, April 1.  
Bartholomew Cup, Linnets, April 3.  
Rumjahn Cup, L.P.A.S., April 5.

## PROMOTION WON, BUT . . .

THE season has ended with the two Liverpool sides at the head of their section, as always appeared certain, and the women in a safe position in their division. But the campaign ended on an unsatisfactory note with the first team being extremely hard-pressed to take a point from Mid-Cheshire. As the A team had beaten them 9-1 only a few weeks previously, this was a nasty shock, though there were extenuating circumstances.

Harold Wilcock was called on to play only an hour before the party left for Winsford, due to a late withdrawal, and could not in the circumstances be blamed for failing. But Les Mulholland who had also played in the first match and had won his three sets, this time could only record one success.

Things actually might have been even worse for Arthur Taylor only won his set against Brown 23-21 in the third, and if this set had gone against us, we would have been defeated.

Other matches have been won comfortably by both men's teams, with little of note to report. Ellesmere Port and Widnes were beaten 10-0 by the first, while the A team accounted for Mid-Cheshire, Ellesmere Port and Chester A by overwhelming margins.

The women gained an 8-2 win over Ashton at the end of January, which made certain first division status would be maintained, but Blackpool provided a severe reverse in the final match, when they won at Balfour by a similar score.

The brave showing in the Rose Bowl ended at Leeds when our side was not strong enough and were defeated 7-2. With Kathie Best in opposition, the side had virtually lost at least two singles before the match started, but there were hopes, which in the event were not realised, that veteran Marjorie Lightfoot would provide opportunity to even matters. Hopes of victory had never been high, but when it

became obvious that Lightfoot had the measure of our girls, then defeat was certain.

In passing it is worthy of note that for the first time in the memory of even the longest serving members of the Management, the side was insured for their hazardous rail trip, for the handsome sum of £3,000, which brought the suggestion from a member of the Committee that as it was becoming increasingly difficult to make profits from tournaments, this was a matter requiring further investigation!

With the representative match season ended, it seems a suitable moment to record a few comments on the present position, while making it clear that it is a personal viewpoint.

Firstly, it would be unfortunate if the overwhelming victories gained by our two men's sides were rated too highly. It is only necessary to recall the appalling evening when Manchester came for a Wilmott Cup tie and won the necessary number of sets in record time, to realise the state of the men's game in the league.

In the Lancashire and Cheshire Association, Liverpool and Manchester are the largest associations to an overwhelming degree, and yet we have this dreadful disparity in strength. What is the answer?

The failure of the younger players to reach the old standards must be one reason, for I'm afraid I cannot accept the viewpoint that they are at last achieving this. Ignoring for the moment that we have Ted Rumjahn as champion, in a general sense the youngsters are providing serious opposition in routine league matches, but only because the Rumjahns, Hetheringtons and others are at last losing some of their skill and are falling to the youngsters' level, with the result that, so far as representative matches are concerned, the disparity so far from decreasing is as great if not greater than ever.

# ... what lies ahead?

What is to be done? I would suggest that future Selection Committees work on a single basis, to produce a side capable of extending Manchester and never to be satisfied with any superficial successes that may be obtained in the low divisions of the Lancashire League, or even for that matter in the top section.

If that is accepted, then it follows there must be a rejection of certain players for these matches, who may well be the best available at any given time, but who, as has been shown in recent seasons, are no longer able to offer a challenge to the Mancunians, no matter what may have been possible in the past.

There is, in my opinion, a nucleus of young players who should be capable of representing Liverpool with credit in the immediate future, and who have the potential to reach much higher standards than at present. This is the group which must be encouraged at all costs. Arthur Taylor and Les Mulholland are two names which come to mind at once in this respect.

Critics of this suggestion will point to the abject failure of this scheme only last season, but at that time experiments had to be made and there were bound to be disappointments. There were players in the side then who, with the lapse of time, are now of a very different calibre.

In my view the future of table tennis in Liverpool must stand or fall on this or some similar scheme, for the present trend can have only one ending, lower representative standards that at any time in the history of the league.

So far as the A team is concerned, I would adopt the same policy, with more experiment, less importance attached to results, and, despite the difficulties certain to be encountered, I am optimist enough to believe there are sufficient youngsters available to adequately fill the side.

Despite the Rose Bowl performance by the women I am inclined to

be less enthusiastic. The triumphs in the competition were accomplished by Eileen Mansell, who the Selection Committee practically had to bully into playing because of her firm desire to give the younger players opportunity; Bluey Casselman, who had been out of the game for a long while; and Beryl Waterson, who has been in the game for many seasons.

Supporting these three are Moya Jones and Muriel Willcox, and if two or maybe three further names are added, I firmly believe that is the present limit of potential talent for representative play. The women's side has done well in the circumstances, but there is a virtual certainty their game will shortly plunge to a low level, with no possibility, as there is among the men, of any replacements, a truly frightening position.

Here is the season's record:—  
Liverpool 1st—

P 7, W 6, L 0, D 1, F 65, A 5.

	P	W	%
A. C. Taylor . . .	18	18	100.00
E. J. Rumjahn . .	12	12	100.00
R. M. Rumjahn . .	12	12	100.00
W. Pierce . . . . .	6	6	100.00
L. Mulholland . .	6	4	66.66

Also played:—P. U. Rumjahn, R. Hetherington (both w 3, 1 0), H. Wilcock (w 0, 1 3), and 7 doubles, all won.

Liverpool A—

P 7, W 6, L 1, D 0, F 57, A 13.

	P	W	%
D. Rigby . . . . .	9	8	88.88
W. Harris . . . . .	12	10	83.33
L. Mulholland . .	18	15	83.33
F. Thomas . . . . .	18	15	83.33
I. Rogerson . . . .	6	3	50.00

Also 7 doubles, w 6, 1 1.

Women—

P 5, W 2, L 3, D 0, F 25, A 25.

	P	W	%
M. Jones . . . . .	12	7	58.33
B. Waterson . . . .	15	8	53.33
M. Willcox . . . . .	12	5	41.66

Also played:—K. Casselman (w 0, 1 3), J. Randall (w 2, 1 1), and 5 doubles, w 3, 1 2.

# LEAGUE TABLES

(Including March 15th, 1957)

## Division 1

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Balfour . . . . .	19	15	1	3	140	50	33
Rafters . . . . .	20	13	4	3	139	61	29
Linnets . . . . .	19	12	4	4	127	73	28
Bohemians . . . . .	20	10	5	5	116	84	25
Victoria Park . . . . .	19	8	8	3	97	93	19
Bath Street . . . . .	19	7	7	5	90	100	19
Oakhill . . . . .	19	7	8	4	85	105	18
Liverpool Y.M. . . . .	19	7	10	2	86	104	16
Balfour A . . . . .	19	4	9	6	75	115	14
Bootle Y.M. . . . .	20	5	12	3	82	118	13
Anfield . . . . .	20	5	12	3	76	124	13
Litherland . . . . .	20	1	14	5	57	143	7

## Division 2

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
L'pool Y.M. A . . . . .	20	15	3	2	135	65	32
Bohemians A . . . . .	20	12	3	5	118	82	29
Cadwa . . . . .	20	12	5	3	122	78	27
Rafters A . . . . .	20	13	7	0	122	78	26
Bootle Y.M. A . . . . .	19	11	5	3	106	84	25
Panto . . . . .	20	8	7	5	100	100	21
Victoria Pk. A . . . . .	20	7	9	4	96	104	18
Lucem . . . . .	20	6	11	3	90	110	15
I.C.I. . . . .	20	4	11	5	87	113	13
Anfield A . . . . .	19	5	12	2	76	114	12
Oakhill A . . . . .	20	4	13	3	68	132	11
L.P.A.S. . . . .	18	2	13	3	60	120	7

## Division 3

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Waterloo Dock . . . . .	20	16	2	2	149	51	34
Linnets A . . . . .	20	16	4	0	146	54	32
Litherland A . . . . .	20	15	4	1	120	80	31
Linacre . . . . .	20	11	8	1	107	93	23
Maghull . . . . .	20	10	9	1	104	96	21
Waterloo Park . . . . .	20	10	7	3	99	101	21
Lofters . . . . .	20	9	9	2	106	94	20
African Oil . . . . .	20	7	12	1	73	127	15
Everton Y.M. . . . .	20	4	12	4	81	119	12
Cadwa A . . . . .	20	5	13	2	72	128	12
English Elec. . . . .	20	4	14	2	74	126	10
Osterley . . . . .	20	3	14	3	69	131	9

## Division 4

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
University . . . . .	21	18	2	1	155	55	37
Wavertree C.C. . . . .	20	17	2	1	151	49	35
Dunlop . . . . .	20	16	2	2	153	47	34
Bath St. A . . . . .	21	11	7	3	125	85	25
Brenka . . . . .	20	12	8	0	99	101	24
Warbreck . . . . .	20	11	8	1	105	95	23
Aigburth . . . . .	20	8	11	1	94	106	17
R.A.F.A. . . . .	20	6	12	2	82	118	14
Beauclair . . . . .	20	5	12	3	76	124	13
Panto A . . . . .	20	5	15	0	77	123	10
L.P.A.S. A . . . . .	20	4	14	2	64	136	10
Technical Stdts . . . . .	20	0	20	0	29	171	0

## Division 5

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Rafters B . . . . .	18	16	2	0	138	42	32
Bohemians B . . . . .	18	14	3	1	120	60	29
L'pool Y.M. B . . . . .	18	14	4	0	114	66	28
Bootle Y.M. B . . . . .	18	10	6	2	104	76	22
Victoria Pk B . . . . .	18	9	6	3	97	83	21
Fairlawn . . . . .	18	8	7	3	88	92	19
Balfour B . . . . .	18	8	8	2	97	83	18
Anfield B . . . . .	18	3	9	6	70	110	12
Victoria Pk C . . . . .	19	3	12	4	71	119	10
Wavertree A . . . . .	17	3	14	0	50	120	6
Oakhill B . . . . .	18	0	17	1	41	139	1

## Division 6

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
G.L.S. C . . . . .	20	18	0	2	161	39	38
Harold House . . . . .	20	17	1	2	162	38	36
Litherland B . . . . .	20	12	5	3	119	81	27
Rafters C . . . . .	19	11	4	4	117	73	26
Waterloo Pk A . . . . .	19	9	8	2	103	87	20
Cadwa B . . . . .	18	8	7	3	95	85	19
Bootle Y.M. C . . . . .	20	7	9	4	100	100	18
Balfour C . . . . .	20	6	11	3	88	112	17
Rankin A . . . . .	20	7	13	0	53	147	14
Domestic Mis. . . . .	19	2	14	3	66	124	7
Anfield C . . . . .	20	3	16	1	57	143	7
Rankin . . . . .	19	0	14	5	49	141	5

## Women's Division 1

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Bohemians . . . . .	19	14	1	4	132	58	32
Rafters . . . . .	20	15	3	2	139	61	32
Balfour . . . . .	20	13	7	0	121	79	26
Waterloo Park . . . . .	19	10	7	2	101	89	22
Bibbys . . . . .	19	4	10	5	75	115	13
Cadwa . . . . .	19	4	11	4	70	120	12
Oakhill . . . . .	19	3	11	5	75	115	11
Bath Street . . . . .	19	2	15	2	57	133	6

## Women's Division 2

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Linnets . . . . .	19	19	0	0	160	30	38
African Oil . . . . .	20	16	1	3	143	57	35
Domestic Mis. . . . .	19	13	5	1	114	76	32
Bibbys A . . . . .	20	11	9	1	104	96	21
Rafters A . . . . .	20	10	9	1	102	98	21
Cadwa A . . . . .	19	10	8	1	106	84	20
Bohemians A . . . . .	20	9	10	1	93	107	19
Linnets A . . . . .	19	7	8	4	97	93	18
Waterloo Dk. . . . .	20	4	12	4	78	122	12
Dunlop . . . . .	20	3	15	2	66	134	8
Oakhill A . . . . .	20	2	14	4	58	142	8
Waterloo Pk A . . . . .	18	1	13	4	49	131	6



# LEAGUE TABLES

FOR ALL WHO ARE  
INTERESTED

## North Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Litherland C.	16	13	3	0	119	41	26
Bath St. B.	16	11	3	2	104	56	24
Co-op.	15	9	3	3	86	64	21
Bath St. C.	16	8	6	2	77	83	18
Brenka A.	15	7	5	3	80	70	17
Lofters A.	16	8	7	1	84	76	17
Warbreck A.	16	5	9	2	80	80	12
Bootle Nalگو	17	5	10	2	69	101	12
Waterloo Pk B	17	5	12	0	75	95	10
Orrell	16	1	14	1	26	134	3

## South Region

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts
Linnets B.	16	13	0	3	120	40	29
Sefton	15	12	1	2	110	40	26
Flo. Oxton	16	8	3	5	99	61	21
Stanley House	17	8	5	2	102	68	20
Aigburth A.	15	8	7	0	78	72	16
Dunlop A.	15	7	6	2	78	72	16
Linnets C.	16	7	7	2	76	84	16
Wavertree Lbr	15	4	9	2	60	90	10
Bedford	16	2	14	0	41	119	4
St. Michaels	17	0	17	0	26	144	0

## Central Region

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Lucem A.	17	15	1	1	130	40	31
Lussac	18	13	3	2	120	60	28
RAF (Movs)	18	12	5	1	118	62	25
L'pool Y.M. C	17	12	4	1	120	50	25
Watloo Dk A	18	10	4	4	112	68	24
Ebani	17	8	8	1	86	84	17
Panto B.	18	6	10	2	85	95	14
Aigburth B.	18	5	13	0	65	115	10
Tech. Stds. A	18	4	13	1	50	130	9
L'pool Y.M. D	13	3	10	0	40	90	4
Tech. Stds. B	18	1	16	1	24	156	3

## East Region

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Bohemians C	20	19	1	0	158	42	38
L.P.A.S. B.	20	13	5	2	123	77	28
West Derby	20	13	5	2	121	79	28
Bohemians D	20	13	6	1	131	69	27
Nalگو	20	13	6	1	113	87	27
Cadwa C.	20	11	6	3	128	72	25
Huntley & P	20	11	6	3	125	75	25
Artistes	20	7	10	3	100	100	17
Stoneycroft	20	4	14	2	69	131	10
Beauclair A.	20	3	16	1	47	153	7
English Elec. A	19	3	16	0	52	138	6
Huntley & P A	19	0	19	0	23	167	0

Goon Villa,  
Rainhill

Sir, in reply to the advertisement in your November issue for a club secretary, I beg to apply for the position.

I am an experienced secretary, and fulfil all the requirements outlined in the advert. As a brusher-cum-washer up I am without equal, and am inured to members' insults should the results not be to their liking, as is always the case. My teams never play short (officially), and in the unlikely event that they should, I am such an accomplished liar that I can convince the Management Committee that by playing short my club has benefitted table tennis generally—the outcome being NOT a fine, but a donation to club funds by a grateful Management Committee.

Knowing the League rules as I do, I am able to pinpoint every legal loophole, fiddle legally (within the framework of the rules) and twist the wording of the same to the benefit of my club, the downfall of the opposition, and the utter damnation of the Management Committee, justifying all such actions with such ingenious lies that the M.C., although knowing me for a rogue, thief and vagabond, accept my statements for lack of evidence.

While not being prepared to pay League dues, this is not necessary. I can convince the M.C. that they should pay my club for the benefits of having us as members.

In addition to these (very essential) qualities, I can paint club-rooms, repair chairs, recondition tables, and, greatest of all, convince disgruntled players that their ranking by the selection committee is "only a fiddle" to put the strongest players in the lowest teams, to their entire satisfaction.

Should my application receive your favourable consideration, I can spare you ten minutes on the evening of April 1st for an interview, provided that a suite is engaged for three weeks at the Adelphi for myself and entourage, so that I may be rested for the interview. All expenses paid, of course.

Yours hopefully,  
I. B. A. Mugg

NOTE: All outstanding matches must be played on or before Friday, March 29.

## THE BIG LEVELLING UP

**T**HE one feature of recent First Division match cards which is striking, is the fact that to an increasing extent it is becoming impossible to pick out the usual small group of players and say "these are the top players of the division". Never has there been such a levelling up.

Rafters have been affected by this as much as anyone, and the Rumjahns have lost between them more sets than at any time since the war, even though Ted has had such a good season.

Balfour, with their better balanced side, have not made many mistakes, and seem unlikely to be displaced, but Linnets, with a strong side are, if some way behind, a combination always likely to cause upsets.

A week or two ago it was impossible to decide who was to be for relegation and the position even now is not much clearer, except that it now will be surprising if Litherland can escape from bottom place. Liverpool Y.M. were in desperate straights but have come along with three consecutive wins.

The performance by Victoria Park in defeating Balfour 9-1 at the end of last month, cannot pass unrecorded. It was the shock of the season, but the Park, while erratic, are just the side to produce such a surprise.

★ ★ ★

**F**ROM all angles the season now drawing to a close must rank as one of the most interesting in the annals of the Second Division. The promotion fight is still on, with five clubs contesting the two top places, while another five keep an anxious eye on the other side of affairs. Only Panto and the constantly-changed Victoria Park A side have complete middle-of-the-table positions.

To prophesy is dangerous, but the likelihood of Liverpool Y.M.C.A. A heading the table seems strong. Bohemians A have an easier looking fixture list than their rivals and may well accompany the Y.M.C.A. to higher spheres. At Bohs, the advent of Len Ross has more than neutralised Alan Rycroft's loss of form.

The Police seem booked (no pun intended) for relegation. Dick Hough is not the player he was, and there has never been sufficiently strong support for Gauld and Nelson.

Lucem, who called on ten players in the first half but who have fielded an unchanged five since, may well find that stability has saved the day for them, while Anfield, fortified by Joe Brierley, are pulling out the stops and may escape the fall at the expense of either Oakhill A or I.C.I.

★ ★ ★

**I**T looks as though English Electric and Osterley are two Clubs who are going to find it very difficult to remain in the Third Division, which is a pity for they have been in it for many seasons. For the Electric, Smitton has been a great strength for a long time and there has been no falling away by him, but the support just is not good enough. It will be noted with some surprise, that Longstaffe, who usually has been very successful, is having a poor season, which may be part of the answer.

In the relegation area the performances of African Oil has been the sensation; their improvement is indeed remarkable. After 12 matches there were just three points in the bag, but since then five matches out of seven have been won, which, if not quite, has nearly taken them out of the danger zone.

Cadwa A are a side who should have done better, particularly as they were strengthened for a spell by C. Bradshaw, but only two wins since Christmas tells its own tale and if there is any late revival by the relegation probabilities they may yet be in trouble.

While Bill Askew and Beryl Waterson have done a successful job at Nos. 1 and 2 for Lofters, T. Marsden has been building up one of the best records in the section, though he has dropped one or two sets unexpectedly just recently. Lofters might well be higher in the table than at present, but there have been many 4-6 defeats of late which does something to explain a modest record.

# Advance of University

**T**HE three-horse promotion race continues but the favourites must now surely be University, who have twice beaten and once drawn with Dunlop this season. With Cashin missing and Williamson not always available, lack of good reserves seems to have told on the Speke side, and it is not impossible that they will grace the Fourth Division for another season.

Wavertree are a good solid side who will contest promotion all the way. Reserve Roberts has done well on his occasional appearances.

At the other end of the table Technical Students have gone—bad luck for the keen Baroah—and the question of the other relegation position rests between Panto A, Beauclair and Police A. The last named suffered from an unsettled side and have some tough fixtures to come.

Panto have lost Phil Coulter but stiffening in the shape of Bill Shiel has improved results. Beauclair have also lost Fred Farrell, which leaves Weston and McKim to struggle with only mediocre support.

★ ★ ★

**N**OT least among the items of interest in the second half of the season has been the drafting of Eileen Mansell into the Balfour B side in the Fifth Division. Though she has not played in all the matches, hardly a set has been dropped and just recently, playing at No. 1, was successful in both sets against Rafter B.

Rafters, due to a certain extent to forced changes, have lost two matches in the past few weeks, but with so much in hand, together with failures by their immediate challengers, there is no great danger of their being deposed.

Bohemians B have never dropped below one of the top positions, and in recent weeks have developed into a successful combination. S. Draper has, in no small measure, been responsible for this, and they are now nearly the strongest side

in the division. In defeating Liverpool Y.M. B, they ended that side's hopes of overhauling Rafters. It is interesting to note the continuing success of M. Jones and M. Willcox, who have more than just held their own in open division matches.

Victoria Park B are another side who have benefitted by the addition of an experienced player, A. Miller, and though there are rather too many changes in this side to enable them to really settle down, the form of Rose, Capper and E. Cameron cannot pass without mention.

★ ★ ★

**I**T had to happen sooner or later. G.L.S.C. have dropped their first point, and for once the side who seemed the most likely to do it, did, in fact, provide the surprise—Harold House. There seems little question that these two are certain to gain promotion from the Sixth Division. Their results throughout the season have been outstanding, with Harold House showing definite signs of improvement as the season has progressed.

But the big surprise was the dropping of a second point by G.L.S.C. to Litherland B. Litherland, on paper, appear to be a more than average side, and they are fortunate in being able to call on L. Lott. He was a vital factor in obtaining the point from G.L.S.C., and as K. Anderson also played that night, the side might well have been in a position to challenge for the leaders if it could have kept a similar combination in being.

Regroupings has not helped Anfield C to anything like the same extent as the other sides attached to the Club, and they appear certain to finish in one of the bottom places. There is one player in the side who, as yet, has not recorded a success, but enthusiasm is the thing, and in case there are others also having a rough time, let it be remembered with experience the results will come, so keep on trying.

# Sets Count With Women

**WATERLOO PARK** are having a big say in the deciding of the championship of the Women's Division, for in the final weeks they play both Bohemians and Rafter's. With these two clubs level on points, everything depends not only on winning the match but winning by as big a margin as possible, for only three sets divide the two teams.

Cadwa's fortunes have taken a turn for the better recently. There is no doubt the return of Ivy Crafter has had a great deal to do with this. Although they suffered a bad defeat to Balfour, the improvement has been most marked, for in addition to beating Waterloo Park 8-2, they took a point off Bohemians, a most creditable performance.

At the foot of the table, Bibbys have made a brave effort to get out of trouble. The playing of J. Brown at No. 3 appeared to be an astute move, but with no outstanding records in the side they may find it impossible to avoid one of the bottom two places.

Oakhill's main problem has been to find adequate strength to fill the top two positions, for while most of the side can do well in the lower half, no one is winning sets higher up. In the circumstances the team has done well to gain as many points as they have, a win over Waterloo Park being especially praiseworthy.

★ ★ ★

**L**INNETS still show no sign of dropping any points in the second division, and only Domestic Mission, defeated 6-4 have gone anywhere near causing a surprise in recent weeks. L. Wynne and M. O'Donnell have lost only two sets each this season, but it is worth recording that in the match with Linnets A, P. Abbott, for the A team, beat both Harris and Pealing, suggesting there is plenty of reserve strength if the need should arise.

Rafter's May Evans and Rosemary McMullen have certainly provided as powerful an opening pair as there is in the division, and had it

not been for a lack of support further down, the side must have been in the running for honours. The splitting of the Nos. 1 and 2 in the doubles does not seem a good policy, for the returns in these matches has been disappointing and may well have meant the dropping of important points.

Bohemians A have been having a pretty good run recently until coming up against the full might of the leaders, when they went down to two heavy defeats. V. Gray has proved a consistently successful No. 1, and the arrival since Christmas of A. Gee, has done something to further strengthen the side.

With Bibbys first team in such trouble, it is surprising to find that M. Baron has not been called to the senior side. Her record has been consistently good all season, and she might have been a most useful addition at the present time.

★ ★ ★

**T**HINGS have changed in the North Region since the last issue, the main feature being that Bath Street B have begun to fulfil their potential promise and are now running neck and neck with Litherland in the title race. Wilson's improved form has gone a long way to bringing this about.

Co-op, with three successive defeats, seem to have lost their promotion chance, first double losses for Shaw and Raymond having had an adverse effect all round.

Bath Street C, despite losing Ted Halsall early in the season through regrouping, have shown a pleasing solidity, which suggests soundness through the club's ranks. Bootle Nalgo, sticking to a somewhat more settled line-up, have improved and may escape the last two positions at the expense of Waterloo Park, for whom Dolan has shone recently.

Orrell Wardens are a poor side. Perhaps a more serious attitude to the game might gain them a few more points next season. But all credit to their regulars for the almost 100 per cent turn-out during the season.

## BOHEMIANS CLEAR WINNERS

**E**VERYTHING in the South Region has turned around the struggle between Sefton General and Linnets B for the title.

These two sides met a few weeks ago, Linnets winning with the result that their records were absolutely identical, and it seemed clear each, certain of winning their remaining matches, would have to win by as big a margin as possible to try and win on sets. The following week came a tremendous shock, when Linnets C held Sefton General to a draw, thus enabling their B team to take a valuable point lead.

Congratulations to F. Crowther (Linnets) in beating Dick Burge, the victory which meant a division of the points, it is hard not to describe it as the turn-up of the season.

Linnets rubbed salt into the wound by also winning the Hyde Cup semi-final against Sefton in a match in which the playing orders suggested a considerable amount of pre-match thought, but which, in the event, largely resulted in the same players meeting each other.

With Florence Oxton, beating Liverpool Y.M. C in the other semi-final, the South are in the happy position of monopolising the final, something which has not happened, if ever, for a long time.

★ ★ ★

**T**HE title race is over, with Bohemians C worthy and clear winners. They are strong enough to do well in the divisions. Huntley and Palmers, who promised stiff opposition, seem to have cracked. Loss of form and irregular appearances by Naomi Sibley may have been part cause.

West Derby have done well for a new side and have had a particularly good run since New Year.

Police, too, have had a satisfactory time since the Christmas break, as have Nalgo who, with Mellor more frequently in the side, might have done even better.

English Electric generally disappointed, perhaps because of first team calls. Loss of Sturgess to their first team weakened Beauclair, who, however, made a useful signing in Gee, ex-Cadwa. Crossley has strengthened the Stopeycroft side, who should do better next season.

★ ★ ★

**T**HE big news in the Central Region since the last notes is, of course, the expelling of the Technical Students club, which raises the query of whether regional sides fully realise that the rules of the League must be followed just as closely by the lower divisions as the more exalted? The unfortunate result is that the section is once again well under full strength.

Although Lussac have maintained very useful form, the performances by Lucem A brooks no argument, for they have not dropped a point since the last issue. Lussac have hung on grimly and could possibly catch up at the last fence but the chances appear small.

Lucem may not have a young side, but in experience stand head and shoulders above any team in the region.

There have been no great sensations in League matches, but one of the reasons why Lussac are those vital few points behind Lucem, is because of the point they dropped when visiting middle-of-the-table Ebani. With more strength in the tail, Ebani would have won for Rannard and Sutton won two sets each, though the latter was successful by the narrowest of margins.

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# BEGAN IN A CHURCH HALL

**M**ENTION of the Anfield club is synonymous with the names of two people who have been connected with it throughout its existence. Reg Wivell and Reg Gray have been, in turn, the driving force and guiding hand of the club.

Anfield is the child of the club which Reg Wivell founded in the hall of Ss. Simon's and Jude's Church in the mid-1930's, although it moved to Priory Road in order to play every night in the week. There the club flourished up to and indeed through the war years until the unfortunate death of Mr. Wivell in 1944.

This led to Ss. Simon's and Jude's closing down but on his return from the Services the following year, Reg Gray, who had for years been connected first with the North Liverpool Y.M.C.A. and then with the Bootle club, of which he had been both secretary and treasurer, was induced by Mr. W. Stamp and Mr. Sid Jackson to reform the club.

It was no easy task for the club had lost all its members. That, however, did not deter Mr. Gray and within a short time Ss. Simon's and Jude's was again functioning, but as there were no former Saints among the members it was decided to change the name to Anfield.

The next ten years saw the club twice move its headquarters, first from Priory Road to Everton Road and thence to the present clubroom on Beech Road, Walton Village.

Throughout its existence it has been a happy club and there is little doubt that that fact has contributed greatly to its success, from a playing as well as a social point of view.

Twice in post-war years their C

team has won a regional championship; in 1952-3 their A team topped the second division and in the following season the B team did likewise in the third division.

In 1949-50 the women's team won the second division and in 1954-55 reached the final of the Bartholomew Cup only to lose narrowly to Bohemians. But last season they made up for all previous disappointments by achieving the double success of winning the cup and the women's championship.

Individual successes have also been gained by the club's members. Fred Cuff and John Stoddart, for instance, have in turn each won the Merseyside Junior Singles and Stoddart also carried off the Central Region singles. Reg Royle put her name on the North Region women's singles and with Olga Eagle the region's women's doubles, and last season, as Anfield's No. 1, Beryl Waterson won the women's singles championship of the league.

Few people remember that it was with Anfield that Bill Pierce and Bernard Hand began their league career. Indeed, so well did Hand play when he joined the club as a junior that he won immediate promotion to the first team. Another well-known player who was at one time "on the books" was Bob Roberts and it was from Anfield that he and Hand went to 15th Crosby.

All in all the Club can claim to have had its fair share of honours, and although it has never been noted for its stars, it has nevertheless been the fortunate possessor of players who could command respect in the league.

# NEW-STYLE COMPETITION

We include this month a new competition compiled by Don Cameron which is essentially for table tennis players. The Management Committee will again award a prize of six Dunlop-Barna 3 crown balls to each of the first two all-correct solutions opened. The decision of the Editors must, of course, be final. Entries to be sent to Mr. W. Stamp, 3 Farndale Close, Liverpool 18. A dozen Barna 3 crown balls have been sent to Mr. Cameron for submitting this somewhat original competition. Solution next month.

## FIGURE THIS OUT

A re-arranged fixture between A and B (Liverpool League rules) originally fixed for the first Monday in November, 1956, but played exactly six weeks later. Teams are played in order of strength. No game went over 21 points.

Armed with the above information and the following clues, you are asked to fill in the score card of the match, complete in all details.

## CLUES

- Hughes lost a set 9 and 14.
- Williams beat John Green by the same scores in two straight, the scores being the same as their ages.
- One of the captains lost his first set. The scores being the same (only reversed) as in his second set against Miss Brown.
- Smith (B's best player) lost to his opposite number after winning the first game but scored a total of 59 points in the set. He won his second set against Williams, Williams' scores being the same as the date and month of the match respectively.
- White in the B team lost to Gray 15 and 19, but Gray won his other set in two straight, the first game being 21-10.
- A's captain, playing No. 3, beat his opposing captain, Jones.
- The only lady playing in the match was the weakest player in the team. She lost both her games in straight sets but in each game doubled her score over her previous game and finally got into double figures against her opposite number.
- Harry Green (John's twin brother) was B's second best player. He lost to Roberts after winning the first game 21-15, he scored 18 in the second game which was one more than his age.
- The total of A's points in column 1 is 150.
- The total of B's points in column 2 is 170.
- The total of B's points in column 3 is 34.

A	B	GAMES			SETS	
		1	2	3		
1	1					
1	2					
2	1					
2	3					
3	2					
3	4					
4	3					
4	5					
5	4					
5	5					