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Editorial

We don't have an 11Up this Digest, instead we have the 5 Div. Cup Finals and the Final of the Frank Murphy Memorial Handicap Cup, the F.M. Final pages 16-18

Once again thanks go to the Club Secretaries who allowed the use of their Premises to stage this season's Divisional Finals, and making the tea! Paul and Steve of The Merseyside Police Club who staged the Readman Cup, Christ the King who staged the Rumjahn Cup, Marconi, who held the Hyde Cup, with Ken Roberts handling the tea, Harold House and Eddie Clein who hosted the Forrest Cup and supplied the refreshments and tea, Bootle YMCA for hosting the Stamp Cup, Jim Geddes in action with the tea.

Always an issue when Finals come around, where to play them, thanks to all the Secretaries who 'put their hands up'.

Not forgetting Cup Secretary Keith Bird for another season of K.O. T.T. and collecting and supplying the 'butties' to each venue. Please remember that the Trophies all have to be engraved at some stage with the new winners, please assist Keith by returning trophies when requested, as chasing them up can be so time consuming, I know!!

This season is practically over now, for most players it has been another enjoyable weekly contest, but for the custodians of the League there has been a few contentious issues which have been reported in the Digests, it isn't a pleasant job to sort out these 'who said what' and 'who did what' issues with so many sides to the story, but someone has to do it, most issues are a tap on the wrist, try not to do it again, others need more serious actions taken, the Disciplinary Committee has the most unenviable job in the ManCom, but must be there for the well being of the League

An article, 'Police Academy', has been sent in by Merseyside Police Club's Paul Gittens, it's all about his Clubs involvement in coaching in a Junior school, St. Johns, their home venue, the backing and encouragement they get from school staff and parents is amazing, the same could be done in any area of Liverpool, so connect to a local school. The article highlights a problem which needs to be addressed in the age old mentality of playing late night TT, article on page 14

An article on the Greenhouse Project, East London on Page 15.

Thanks to my reporters who sit and report on what happens in the weekly league matches, without them the Digest would be just another Table Tennis magazine, we have reporters who play in the Div.'s they write for, Div. 5 compiled by Jimmy Williams from East Wavertree, Div. 4 by Ken Roberts of Marconi, Div. 3 by Ian McElwee from Bath St. Marine, Div. 2 by

Ray Jackson from Marconi, Div. 1 is being done by Don Davies, Don doesn't play in the first, but knows the players, Don also writes the Nets & Edges page, maybe an actual Div.1 player could step forward to take up the Div.1 pen, Don also writes the Table Tennis column which has restarted in the Liverpool Echo, (usually the Tuesday edition), anyway thanks to all

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We have a terrific crop of young blood coming through the ranks, which is really good for the League, hope all will be active in the top divisions soon, young ones want games, old players want to hang on and play, that's the nature of TT, more teams, more divisions, do you think we'll ever get back to the eight divisions of the 60's!, there's a lot more money being made available to encourage TT, just needs the enthusiasm of the existing players to get involved more.

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This years Closed tournament is much later, having had problems of finding a suitable venue, Don explains the problems in his Nets & Edges column, it will be in June, a lot later than usual, but after a short rest from the season, the closed can be looked on as a friendly get together.

Forms will be available soon, a number of hard copies will be posted to each Club Secretary, and it will also be on our web sites to be downloaded and printed off for return to Tournament Secretary.

Have a good Summer rest.

Nets & Edges

The Fawley Construction Liverpool Closed will be staged on Sunday 8th June 2014 at the Ian Robinson Sport Hall, Merchant Taylors' School, Liverpool Road, Crosby, L23 commencing at 9am. With the tennis centre not able to accommodate us on any of the dates requested we approached another suitable sport centre. Setting up on Saturday afternoon would have incurred a charge of £65 per hour and although we could do it from 8pm on Saturday free of charge, we thought this was also undesirable. The next port of call was the new £5m Ian Robinson Sport Hall at Merchant Taylors' which is on a par with the Fire Fit Hub. They were keen to put on a big event so when Mike and myself met centre manager Joe Coombes, we decided in minutes that this was the place for us. With no restriction on setting up the courts on Saturday afternoon, we booked it on the spot. With Brian Jackson, who with Russell Thornton did such a good job last May being unavailable, we turned to Warrington League General Secretary Dave Goulden who is a member of Wavertree Labour. Dave has taken charge of the Warrington Closed for the past twenty years in addition to taking the Lancashire junior and cadet trials, kindly agreed to take charge as Referee on June 8th. This is later than usual but only seven days after last season's event at Toxteth's F.F.H.

Mike Power, Trevor Owens and I, spent an afternoon with tea and home-made cakes at Chestnut Avenue where we met Bath Street's secretary Graham Turner and club member Colin Mitchell to discuss the possibility of them taking over vacant premises owned by Sefton Council and move from Blundellsands to set up their club in the now defunct Litherland library. This bold move is as a result of Marine FC having to demolish their club room to make way for a supermarket. Of course there'll be a lot of internal stripping out work to be tackled at the library which will require significant financial outlay. Ambitious projects such as this, usually relies on attracting grant aid and if successful will provide playing members and their many social associates with seven days a week TT and would be the first club in the city to do so while owning the premises. I'm sure that everyone in the league will wish them well.

Although at the time the following series of events were subject to Embargo, I feel a 'potted' account is of



Don Davies

interest of what went on in a two days spell in early April involving an event being staged in a secret location in the city centre. At 6-30 pm on Monday 7th April, I received a text asking if I could provide a 'high Quality' table on Wednesday 9th April which would also be required on Wednesday 16th and used by a number of England international players who were expected to be in the Brazil World Cup squad for a 'Table Tennis Challenge'. Having cleared it with Mike Power, I telephoned the firm we use to transport out equipment for the

Closed and stored at Park Road, sport centre. He agreed to deliver a table on Wednesday at noon and I was given a costing which would be paid by the etta. Being inquisitive as to what they'd be doing I rang the etta asking for more information and a contact number for the organiser. I was given the name of a young lady from a well respected company (MaceSport) who were handling the event for Vauxhall, one of the England sponsors' who would record the challenge which would be shown on You Tube in the run up the world cup. I'd emailed two my etta contacts confirming I'd arranged for a table to be delivered. I was unable to reach the lady by phone which left me having to email the company's publicity and marketing manager who replied almost immediately saying he'd contact the lady and would ask her to ring me. When she did and in fairness to her, it transpired that I'd been given a completely incorrect now defunct number. During our conversation I asked if they required barrier surrounds and an umpire (I'd already asked Graham Rollinson who agreed) and did they have bats and balls? This is where the true scenario emerged when the lady said they didn't need surrounds having already staged the challenge with the Ireland football squad prior to their match with Cyprus without surrounds and on a table which had an integral net. At this point I realised it was a 'fold-a-way' model they required and after explaining that the league didn't own that style of table she said I'll need to hire one - now, less than 24 hours before the event. I rang a firm in Preston but, they couldn't obtain one in time so I suggested she purchase a new table and contacted Bill Thornton but, it couldn't be delivered in time. I then arranged for Taskers to put aside a 9x5 fold a way for £220 which they could pick up in Aintree but, she declined this idea - saying they'd probably pick up one en-route. At this point she thanked for my efforts but, I thought I'd cover myself with the etta saying that MaceSport would be organising a table.

The following day I called at the large industrial unit off Jamaica Street with a supply of bats and balls when I realised the TT element was a 'side show' to the main event of filming six England 'lookalikes' in full kit plus referee's which will form a Vauxhall advert. At the time it was due to commence (12-30) only Steven Gerrard and Glen Johnson had arrived and the room was heaving with mums and their children plus a lot of 'hangers on'. The table, standing in a small room was a well worn chipped 8ft x 4ft effort complete with two bats, the sort you may see in a youth club or in a seaside toy shop plus coloured balls, smaller than 38mm. The TT Challenge involved players knocking the ball against the up-turned end - the winner being the one with the fewest errors, not that I saw the action. I'd noticed the lady with whom I'd spoken at least six times over the past 24 hours and after introducing myself she said they'd hired a table at a cost of £400 before asking me to leave the unit saying it was a private event. The removal firm weren't too pleased when I cancelled the job of delivering and returning our table on Wednesday afternoon since they'd turned down another job after I'd tied up the vehicle for the afternoon.

I've just received a document from the ITTF consisting of sixty pages relating to the forthcoming 52nd World Team Championships to be staged from 28th April to 5th May in Tokyo. They claim this will be the

most viewed world championships in the history of the event and will be seen on TV in more than 100 countries, It may also be watched on ittf.com/itTV and on [You Tube.com/ITTFchannel](http://YouTube.com/ITTFchannel)

On page 2 of February's Digest, Roly included a piece in his Editorial headed **ManCom** which took almost half a page in setting out just what the management committee does throughout the season and during some of the summer months. The league has had to deal with a number of important and tricky issues this season and they were all dealt with in the time honoured manner for which the Liverpool League has been known and respected over the past seventy years or so. League Secretary Mike Power and DSC and Rules Committee Chair Tom Purcell, have been at the sharp end of these problems, on behalf of all members who play by league rules week in week out, have, together with the whole committee, carried out upholding of the Rules for the benefit of all members'. Those issues - were dealt with in keeping with the League's Rules and Regulations as agreed at the 2013 Annual General Meeting. Those same Rules and Regulations don't belong to MANCOM they are yours and I'm certain that the vast majority of members, are confident in the manner in which they've been handled.

DWD

Div. 1

Don Davies

With the season nearing completion, the destination of the title has still to be settled which is most unusual. This being the first season I've compiled these notes, I can't recall where the challengers' stood in previous years towards the end of the campaign. I am, though, fairly sure that apart from last season when Ford secured the crown in the final week of fixtures, they'd usually had it sewn up with a few matches to spare in most of the previous six years. This time, Police A and Crosby High have been clinging to their coat tails for months but, as yet, neither team has been able to overhaul the champions.

The Crosby High club, still to deliver the division one crown, have a determined group of players' eager to rectify this omission, none more so than captain Steve Green who has fought hard to turn out the strongest possible trio each week. Vital sets though, were dropped when maximum points against weaker opposition would have been expected, may prove expensive



come the end of the month. This was evident in March when facing the club's A team when, with only two regular first team members' available, the vacant spot was filled by Sylvia Graham who completed the senior team line-up against a two man second team of Rob Barker and Craig Lowe. Barker, aged 14, wiped the floor with Steve Green, John Goodall and Sylvia which resulted in the match ending all square. One must give credit to the club for playing it straight when at least a 9-1 victory was likely had Barker stepped up. They still have a slim chance of the title should they register a healthy victory when Ford visit them in week 25 this, presuming they do the business in their previous fixtures.

Having won the title seven years on the trot, one could be forgiven for assuming that Ford may not be quite as focused on making it eight as most of us expected they would when the season kicked off last September. They could have wrapped it up by now had they been

able to turn out Kevin and Keith more frequently but, then that would have meant fewer matches for long standing club members Mal McEvoy, Andy Taylor and Terry Turner. If I had to bet on the outcome, I'd plump for them gathering enough points to see off Police A and Crosby High for another year, at least. As previously mentioned, the Police A group, potentially, a title winning trio could still come up with the goods but it will take a healthy haul of points against Crosby High A and CTK before ending the season at CADWA. As I was compiling this item, I received a call from a division one player advising that Police A had beaten Crosby High A 6-4 and minutes later, I received the latest batch of score cards from Trevor, two of which involved Ford matches. From holding an advantage of just three points over Police A in week 22, the champions added a 7-3 success over Crosby High B plus a 9-1 demolition of Bath Street and had accrued 192 points, giving them a lead of thirteen over Police A. With a trip to Crosby High on Easter Tuesday and a home match in their final fixture against Harold House, the title will be retained should they collect another eight points.

With copy being submitted by Saturday 19th April for printing on April 26 and distributed, the clash at Crosby will have been played. Should more points be required they will have the HH match in which to ensure the trophy remains in WA8. As they say in football circles, if you win it, generally, you deserve to have done so. As a foot note to the above, I've purposely retained comments which I had down a few weeks ago but, which have been overtaken by subsequent results.

Almost as important to the players involved, is the scrap at the other end of the division - the relegation candidates coming from two of the bottom three sides of the table. Christ the King A look doomed, but at the beginning of April, they took two sets from Crosby High A through Ahmed Thabet who beat Craig Lowe 3-1 plus a Tony Whelan victory over Gavin Lloyd. They came close to increasing their return when two games to love up, Peter Walsh Jnr. was beaten 12-10 in the fifth by Craig. Similarly, Ahmed started in promising fashion against Gavin but, despite leading 2-1 and standing level at 14 all in the fifth game was unable to see out the game and lost the next couple of points. Harold House, one place above them with just one victory from twenty three outings will join them although I'm sure the team members' will almost certainly enjoy life in division two even if for just one season. I mentioned in the last issue, the competition in this division is very stiff and those teams who aren't quite strong enough to challenge for honours, nevertheless, take vital points from those who are. This is evident in the records of Crosby High A, CTK, Labour, CADWA and Bath Street which shows Rob Barker, Jack Dempsey, Ken Jackson, Neil Pickard and Joel Webb, all chalked up impressive victories over higher ranked foe.

The pick of those in my view was Dempsey's defeat of Keith Williams while his team mate Barker, chalked up two league wins over club mate Steve Green, the latter also falling to Joel who in turn got the verdict over Omid Khaiyat. Andy Taylor scored an important brace for Ford beating Paul Cicchelli and Green while in the same match but, not in the shock victory category, the tricky Chiccelli beat Keith Williams. Cherith Graham got the better of Neil Pickard 11-9 in the fifth - the comment on the score card highlighting the fact that she'd recorded a first ever victory over Roy Smith, 12-10 in the decider. Although Bath Street A lost 6-4 to CTK, Clare Peers chipped in with a great win over Omid while the evergreen 'reserve' Ricky Brown was able to hang another notable scalp on his belt after accounting for 2013 Closed men's singles semi-finalist Ryan Maynard in straight games, the England ranked 94 also losing to Dave Roberts, 11-9 in the fifth.

Ford suffered a 6-4 home defeat to Police A but, can thank ten times Liverpool men's singles champion for preventing an even heavier defeat when Keith weighed in with wins over Jonathan Taylor, Aaron Beech and Joe Mullin - their other point coming via a surprise Mal McEvoy victory over Jonathan.

When Crosby High walloped Bath Street A, Dermot Tierney saved the whitewash with a convincing 11-4, 11-1, 11-9 defeat of John Goodall. A depleted Waver-tree Labour side consisting of just Neil Pickard and Roy Smith turned up at Bath Street and amazingly, left with an unexpected victory. Neil remained unbeaten against Ken Jackson, Ricky Brown and Fred Bainbridge, his treble being supplemented by Smith victories over the latter pair. The Liverpool men's singles finalist in 1963 and 77 and a Closed veteran and O/55 champion, combined with Pickard in the tenth set to take the doubles and leave with a remarkable 6-4 victory.

With match cards available on Roly's web site to view at your leisure, this column is just a thumbnail sketch of what actually happened over the season in more than three hundred matches and if I've overlooked any outstanding feats in that time, I apologise most sincerely.

DWD

April 2014

**The 2013-14 Fawley Construction
Liverpool Closed
will be staged on Sunday June 8th 2014
at the Ian Robinson Sport Centre,
Merchant Taylors' Boys' School,
Liverpool Road, Crosby, L23 0QP.
Entry Forms
will be made available shortly**

Division 2

Ray Jackson

The season continues with the same four teams still in contention, and it's looking like that's the way it will be till the end with Merseyside Police B and Marconi the two favourites, but with both having Marconi A to play.

WEEK 17

Christ the King B had a Billy Cheung treble in their defeat of Harold House A, Peter Findlater picking up a couple for the visitors. Marconi must have thought they'd blown their title chances after only managing a draw with Bootle YMCA, despite a fine hat trick from Chris Spedding amazingly Adrian Bramham lost all three and even managed to be nilled against Ted Birch.

Joe Howard, Dominic Greene and Paul Gittins whitewashed Crosby High C, and Dave Harse took the honours in Wavertree Labour A's close win at Bath Street B. Lee Farley remained unbeaten in Wavertree Labour B's win over Marconi B, Neil Colville scoring a couple for Marconi. Cadwa A kept up their title challenge with another Graeme Black treble in their defeat of Marconi A, Marconi's Ian Wensley defeating Paul Evans and Mike Power.

WEEK 18

Marconi got back on track with a comprehensive win at Harold House A, Howard Flint saving the whitewash for Harold House. Christ the King B had hat tricks from Dave Tagg and John Lau in their win at Marconi A, and Joe Howard and Dominic Greene did likewise in Merseyside Police B's win at Bootle YMCA. Tony Mullally remained unbeaten in Marconi B's draw with Bath Street B, and Tom Miller was unbeaten, but in a losing cause as Crosby High C lost to Wavertree Labour B, Dong Xia and Flora Yang picking up a couple each, plus one from Lee Farley and the doubles.

WEEK 19

Cadwa A had trebles from Graeme Black and Paul Evans in their win over Wavertree Labour A, Paul Banks taking Graeme to a fifth set. Merseyside Police B's Joe Howard again remained unbeaten in their win over Harold House A, who's Mike Denmade scored a couple, including a fourth set 11/0 win over Dominic Greene.

Chris Spedding again came to Marconi's rescue with a treble against title rivals Christ the King B, John Lau scoring twice for Christ the King. Tom Miller again remained unbeaten in Crosby High C's win at Bath Street B, Rob Peat and Barry Davis scoring a couple



apiece for Bath Street. Ted Birch was the star of Bootle YMCA's win at Wavertree Labour B, with John Higham scoring twice, and Flora Yang doing the same for Wavertree.

WEEK 20

Joe Howard was again unbeaten in the clash of the top two, Marconi and Merseyside Police B, with the Police coming out on top to edge nearer the title, Chris Spedding picked up a brace for Marconi. Graeme Black won his usual three in Cadwa A's win at Marconi B, with Marconi's Tony Mullally scoring a couple.

Flora Yang took the honours in a losing game as Wavertree Labour B lost at Harold House A, Peter Findlater and Rod McPherson scoring twice for Harold House. Bath Street B's Rob Peat proved a handful, but was unable to stop his team losing at Bootle YMCA. Wavertree A's trio of Paul Banks, Roy Adams and Dave Harse whitewashed Marconi A, with only Frank McCann managing to go to a fifth set for Marconi.

WEEK 21

The big clash of the week saw Merseyside Police B underline their title credentials with a win at Christ the King B, the young pair of Joe Howard and Dominic Greene again picking up trebles with Tom Purcell helping the cause with a win over Ray Tagg. Cadwa A won a close encounter with Crosby High C, Graeme Black again unbeaten, and inflicting a first defeat for a long while on Tom Miller. Harold House A had a Peter Findlater treble in their win at Bath Street B, Rob Peat picking up a couple for Bath Street, just losing out to Peter in the fifth. The clash between Marconi A and B saw the A team come out on top with Frank McCann taking the unbeaten honours, Ian Wensley getting two for the A team and Neil Colville for the B.

WEEK 22

Merseyside Police B again had trebles from Joe Howard and Dominic Greene in their win over Wavertree Labour B, with Flora Yang saving the whitewash for Wavertree, and taking both Joe and Dominic to a fifth set. Roy Adams won his three and the doubles with Paul Banks in Wavertree Labour A's win over Christ the King B, which effectively rules them out of the title race.

Marconi are still right in the challenge after their trio of Adrian Bramham, Chris Spedding, and myself whitewashed Bath Street B with only Bath Street's Rob Peat managing a fifth set against Adrian. Tom

Miller got back to winning his usual three in Crosby High Cs win over Marconi A, Sylvia Graham with two and Roger Neal one picking up the other points. Graeme Black got his usual three in Cadwa A's draw at Bootle YMCA, with Alan Chase and Ted Birch scoring two apiece, and Bootle's John Higham winning the duel with Cadwa's George Higham.

WEEK 23

Merseyside Police B had a treble from Dominic Greene in their win at Bath Street B, to keep up their title hopes, with Bath Street's Rob Peat picking up wins over Joe Howard and Geoff Pye. Wavertree Labour A's trio of Paul Banks, Roy Adams and Dave Harse overwhelmed Marconi B. Harold House's Rod Mcpherson remained unbeaten in their win over Cadwa A, with Michael Sui and Andy Town scoring two each, Greame Black scoring two plus the doubles for Cadwa.

John Lau scored a treble in Christ the King's draw with Wavertree Labour B, Flora Yang and Lee Farley scoring two apiece for Wavertree. The Marconi A versus Bootle YMCA clash was so close that nobody remained unbeaten with Frank McCann and Ian Wensley for Marconi, and Ted Birch for Bootle winning two each.

The divisional cup final was played between Marconi and Christ the King B with a close encounter anticipated. John Lau duly got CTK off to a winning start over Adrian Bramham but after that it was Marconi all the way, with two wins each for Bob Edwards and Chris Spedding and one for Adrian to win 5-1.

Well that's it for this digest with just three weeks to go and the division still up for grabs, but probably now between Merseyside Police B and Marconi.

Division 3

As we get to the tail end of the season the promotion and relegation places are already clear.

Linacre have battled on throughout the season fighting against the odds but, in the main, to no avail. However, at week 17 the champagne must have been out after achieving their solitary victory of the season. Alex Charcenko, Harry Reeve and Charlie Bradshaw all contributed in a 6/4 win over CADWA C. Even then all was not that straight forward with 4 matches ending 11/9 in the 5th set and all being won by the Linacre lads. It is great to be able to report in a positive vein on Linacre although once again it will be to no avail. They are tailed off at the bottom of the division on 52 points from 22 matches.

Sefton Park A are 13th (64 from 23) and unlikely to catch 12th placed Arriva NW who have 76 point and a game in hand. There must have been something special in the water at week 17. Sefton Park A upstaged Linacre in securing their 2nd win of the season in beating Arriva NW 7/3. Derek Traynor went home with the MOM award after 3 singles wins.

The Arriva team have plugged away all season and had some fine wins. Victories of 6/4 over Huntsmans Wood and 7/3 over Wavertree Labour D were particularly impressive. In the Huntsmans Wood match

Ian McElwee



Wacek Bondek was in top form winning 3, ably supported by Larry Stone who won 2 and Kristof Lenyk winning 1. It was Kristof's turn to star when he won his 3 against Wavertree Labour with Pavel Tomczyk and Derek Scotland winning 2 each.

CADWA C (82 from 23) have steadily picked up points to steer themselves away from the relegation positions. They had a bit of luck in obtaining a 6/4 win over Bootle YMCA, Shakil Malik had to cry off at the last moment for Bootle leaving them a man short.

CAWDA's best performance of the season was when they drew with high flying BSM D, George Higham had good wins over Ricky Brown and Colin Mitchell, Steve Graham and Ian Lunt also beat Colin whilst Steve and George combined to inflict a rare doubles defeat upon BSM D.

At the top Maghull have continued to win their matches with ease and have a massive 194 points from 23, with the undefeated Paul Hutchings supported by Rick Beattie (1 loss) and the ever improving Amy Hutchings, no one has really been able to challenge them.

Even when facing 2nd placed BSM D with the inclusion of the reserve John Langton, in for Amy, they still ran out comfortable 8/2 winners. BSM D have continued to go at a good pace but are 17 points behind Maghull, their only losses have been when facing Maghull, emphasising the strength in

depth, in relation to the remainder of the division, in their 4 man squad of Ricky Brown, Barry Davies, f and Colin Mitchell, their best wins during the myself-reporting period were 10/0 over Arriva and 9/1 over Huntsmans Wood.

In a different season, without the strength of Maghull and BSM D, 3rd placed Sefton Park would probably be contending for the championship with a points haul of 143 from 22. Alan Davies, their number 1 ranked player, has not always been available in recent weeks but they have continued to do well, Ian Laird was in top form remaining unbeaten when they beat BSM C 7/3. Peter Tod, who's having a great season and proving very difficult to beat, got the better of Andy Cheung and Ted Cramsey with Mike Perry contributing with a 5 set victory over Brian Crolley.

The battle for 4th place remains a close run affair, only 5 points separate Maghull A (128), BSM C (125) and Merseyside Police C (123). When the Maghull A side visited the Police they went down 7/3. Brenda Buoy and Harry Watson both remained unbeaten in the singles, with Jack Gittins losing out 12/10 in the 5th to Sue Hughes before beating Phil Christie. Sue and Phil teamed up with John McLoughlin Senior when they ran out 9/1 victors over CADWA C with John going down in 5 sets to George Higham. BSM C have had a good season and win or lose always play with a smile on their face. Andy Cheung, Brian Crolley and Mal

Kent each won 2 singles and Brian and Mal combined to achieve a 15/13 5th set win over Arriva NW to secure a 7/3 victory.

Marconi C stand in 7th place with 116 from 22. Mat Evans has been the mainstay of the side and boasts a high percentage of wins. He maintained his impressive form to remain unbeaten in his singles when his side drew at BSM C and Bootle YMCA. Paul Loftus provided excellent support to win 2 at Bootle, 1 against BSM C with the other win in this match coming via Bobby Bell over Graham Turner.

8th placed Bootle YMCA (103) lie 2 points ahead of Wavertree Labour D with Huntsmans Wood a further 5 points adrift. However, Bootle have played an extra match and could be caught by either of their rivals. When Bootle met a depleted Wavertree team they took full advantage to win 8/2. Wavertree also lost 7/3 against Huntsmans Wood, Lee Madden and Paul Rees both won their 3 singles for Huntsmans Wood with Paul Jennings and Colin Fyles both managing to hit through the defensive skills of Steve Rees. Huntsmans Wood's best win of the season came at week 22 when they defeated 3rd placed Sefton Park 6/4, Lee and Paul both had good wins over Ian Laird and Mike Perry and combined to take the doubles, Steve chipped in with a win over Mike Perry, and Alan Davies replied by winning his 3 singles for Sefton Park.

Division 4

Before I start my report for the final part of this season, congratulations are in order to East Wavertree who were victorious in the Divisional Cup over Arriva, another strong performance from a team who are at the time of writing, currently 21 points clear at the top of Division 4.

Week 17 saw another strong team, Bath Street Marine E beat Bootle YMCA C 9-1. Jim Geddes saving the whitewash with a win over Keith Wright. All things even between Bath Street F and Cadwa D. Maghull C beating Bootle YMCA B 7-3, George and Steve picking up a brace each. QVC beat my own team Marconi D 8-2, John and I saving the whitewash with hard earn wins over Ian and Shaun respectively. Maghull B continuing their strong performance with a win over Marconi E 8-2. Richie and Sean winning 1 each over Loon W Yu. A closely fought game between East Wavertree and Arriva, East Wavertree coming out win-



Ken Roberts

ners 6-4, Carl winning his two against John and Joseph.

Week 18 produced some good wins for Cadwa D, Arriva, Maghull B and East Wavertree. Cadwa won 9-1 against Bootle YMCA C, a doubles win saving face for Bootle, and Arriva won 8-2 against QVC albeit without Dean, Mick O'Malley picking up a double for QVC against Brian and Joseph. Maghull B also won 8-2 against Wavertree Labour E, Alf beating Lung and a doubles win for the 2 games. East Wavertree whitewashed Maghull C 10-0, although George and Steve gave Thomas and Tony a run for their money. Marconi D beat Bath Street Marine F 6-4 in a very close game. James winning both of his for Marconi against Billy and Mickey. Bath Street Marine E beat Police D 7-3. A tough match this, with 6 games going to 5 sets! Another close game was Bootle YMCA B victors over Marconi

E 6-4. Dan losing out to Saul in 5 and Sean losing a very tight match, 10-12, 12-10, 12-14, 12-10, 5-11 to Tom.

On to week 19 now, Bootle YMCA B beat Wavertree Labour 8-2, Alvin and Bill Stanley winning their 2 games over Saul and Tom respectively. Maghull B had a good win over Bath Street E 7-3, even with Tony Kendall playing for Bath Street. Tony winning his 2 and Ted beating Alan Chan. Arriva beat Marconi D 8-2, John beating Larry and then teaming up with myself to win the doubles. Adam was unlucky losing to Graham in 5 sets. Bath Street Marine F beat Bootle YMCA C 9-1, Steve saving the whitewash with a good win over Darren. A closer game between Police D and Cadwa D, Police running out victors 6-4, Grahame winning both of his again against Len and John respectively. All square between QVC and Maghull C. East Wavertree producing another full house result, this time against Marconi E.

With the exception of one match, week 20 produced a much closer set of overall results. That one exception was Bath Street E beating Bootle YMCA B 9-1, John Taylor beating Keith Wright in 5 sets to save the whitewash. Police D beat Bootle YMCA C 7-3, Colin winning both of his against Tom and Len respectively, with Steve supporting with a win over John Moore. QVC beat Marconi E 6-4, some very close games here with Danny losing his 2 both in 5 sets, against Ian and Shaun respectively. Frank also losing his 2 also in 5 sets against Tommy and Bob respectively. Marconi D beat Maghull C 6-4. John picking up a brace against George and Steve. Another 6-4 result was Bath Street F beating Arriva, some hard fought games here also, Derek winning his 2 games against Billy and Mickey, and Darren winning his 2 for Bath Street against Larry and Brian. East Wavertree beat Wavertree Labour 7-3, Wavertree bringing in Rob Barker who won his 2 games, Joey Williams winning both against Alf and Francis. Cadwa D beat Maghull B 6-4, Grahame winning a brace again against John and Alan, a hard fought match this with 5 sets each going to 5 games.

A top end of the league clash to kick off week 21, with Bath Street Marine E beating East Wavertree 6-4, only East Wavertree's second defeat of the season, Ted won his 2 against Tom and Carl, as did Graham T against Tom and Tony. Maghull B produced a full house against Bootle YMCA C, Jason was unlucky, just losing out to Loon in 5 sets. All things equal against Arriva and Maghull C, as was the derby match Marconi D against Marconi E, Danny winning both of his against John and myself, Andy also winning both against James and Adam for the E team. QVC beat Wavertree Labour E 8-2, Alf winning both to save the whitewash, Cadwa D beat Bootle YMCA B 7-3, albeit Bootle played with a man short, good to see Don

playing for Cadwa, and also for Cadwa working the doubles in order to give the players as many games as possible. Bath Street Marine F beat Police D 8-2. Tom and John winning one each against Dave and Billy respectively for the two points.

In week 22, Maghull B beat Police D 7-3. Mike Russell winning both for Police against Alan and Loon. All square in the game between Maghull C and Bath Street Marine F, Janette winning both for Maghull against Jules and Billy, Dave also winning both for Bath Street against Steve and Denise. Arriva beat Marconi E 7-3, a good win for Danny against John R in 5, but just lost out to Brian also in 5. Frank also produced a good win against Graham. A good win for Marconi D against Wavertree Labour E 8-2, Alf beating myself, and Mike beating Adam for their 2 points. An honourable draw in the derby at Bootle YMCA. Another draw between Cadwa D and East Wavertree, Grahame picked up a fine brace, beating Tom and Tony, Joey also picked up both of his against Xianmin and Shantanu. Bath Street Marine E beat QVC 8-2, Graham T was unlucky to lose to Dean in 5 sets, but a very good win for Sam against Dean in 4, Mick picked up the other win for QVC against Dave.

Week 23 saw Bath Street Marine E dish out a heavy defeat on my own team, Marconi D, 9-1, I managed to beat Keith to save the whitewash. A good win for Bootle YMCA B against Police D 7-3, both Saul and Tom picking up both of their games, Police managed to get Brian Burrows to play who picked up both for them against Liam and Kieron. A close fought game between Bath Street Marine F and Maghull B. Maghull winning 6-4. Mick winning both of his for Maghull against Loon and Naresh respectively. Arriva were too strong for Wavertree Labour winning 8-2, Alf and Allan saving Wavertree from a full house. Maghull C produced a strong performance to beat Marconi E 9-1, Danny picking up their solo game against George, although Sean and Frank were unlucky losing to Jimmy in 5 sets. Another strong performance from the league leaders East Wavertree over Bootle YMCA C 9-1. Jim producing an excellent win over Chris Browne to save the whitewash, Steve D was unlucky losing out to Thomas 8-11 in the 5th.

Only 3 more matches to the end of the season and East Wavertree at the time of writing this report are 15 points clear at the top, they are favourites to produce another league and cup double this year, and as this division is very strong with some good teams and excellent individual players, that achievement would be sensational. Maghull B are currently second with Bath Street Marine E hot on their tails only 2 points behind. Arriva remain a steady fourth.

As we approach the conclusion of an exciting (and closely contested) season, St Annes have deservedly opened up a significant gap at the top of the league. With just three weeks left to play, they look like being crowned worthy champions. However, the battle for runners up spot is being contested between a number of teams with either Sefton Park B or Maghull D looking the most likely. A contest for a promotion place that looks likely to be decided in the final week. Best of luck to all...



double for Jeff Hornby over Gavin Minett (in three sets) and Paul Mainey, Graham Chellew (Waterloo) coming back from 2 sets down to beat Phil O'Mullane 11-8 in the fifth in a very exciting match, great comeback. Impressive 7-3 win for Sefton Park B at Wavertree Labour F, Carl Anderson winning his three on the night including a very good victory over Gordon Langshaw (sealing it with a 12-10 win in the fourth game), an important victory that keeps the side in the hunt for

promotion Hughes (also in the fifth) and Alan Jones' 13-11 win (again in the fifth) over Chris Halliday, hugely impressive determination, and hitting, on display in all of the matches.

Week 17 saw St Annes assume top spot following a strong 9-1 victory over QVC A. Tommy Lewis illustrating determination to come back from 1-2 down against Hassib Nuree to register his side's sole win on the night. Bob Finnigan going close in the battle of the number 1's, being edged out 12-10 by Israel Isaac, in the fifth game of a fine set. Very impressive 8-2 win for Waterloo A at Maghull D, on close inspection it was a tighter match than it appears, with only one of the games being decided in 3 sets. Nevertheless, very good wins for Jeff Hornby on the night over Michael Stewart (11-3 in the fifth set) and coming back from a set down against Harry McGanity to win in four games. Waterloo A, a strong side throughout, are in a good run of form and getting the results their early season play promised. A hard earned draw for both sides at Marconi F when Arriva B visited, the closeness of Harry Hughes two singles victories (both in five games against Tony Low and Gary Stanton) reflecting the tightness of the match, Oliver Connor, for Marconi F, winning both of his singles in his signature attacking style.

Week 19 saw St Annes extend their lead at the top to 6 points (courtesy of a 10-0 walkover against Marconi F who were unable to field a team) and ominously begin to pull away from the chasing pack. Maghull D, in second place, winning a close match with Arriva by 6 sets to 4 and keeping themselves in touching distance of the table toppers, Maghull D's number 1 and 2, Michael Stewart and Luke Courtney, both leading from the front and winning their singles matches. A good victory for Gary Mavris (11-9 in the fifth game) against Daniel Hall and the final two doubles games contributing to a close, and competitive evening's table tennis. Close individual matches this week include Maghull E's Andy McCourt beating Sam Hughes of Merseyside Police E 15-13 in the fifth, Mike Dugdale (Wavertree Labour F) edging out Bath Street Marine G's Keith Dudley 12-10 in the fifth, Phil O' Mullane (Waterloo A) defeating Jamie Whitty (Sefton Park B) 12-10 in the fifth and Jimmy Williams' (East Wavertree) 14-12 victory in the fifth against Gavin Minett (Waterloo).

Week 18 produced an excellent 8-2 victory for Bath Street Marine G at Merseyside Police E, Mickey White adding to his list of impressive wins with a 3 straight victory over Brian Burrows on a great night for the team. Brian returning to the table later in the evening to beat Keith Dudley in four sets, followed by Mike Flannery's win over the steady Tom Bell to get two points on the board for the Police side. With just a point separating the sides in the table, honours were shared in the Waterloo derby, the 'A' team having the best of the singles (winning 5 of the 8 games), with the away side winning both doubles, illustrating, once again, the significance of the doubles matches in the overall score. Another excellent

Week 20 brought a close encounter between Merseyside Police E and St Annes, with the league leaders emerging victoriously 6-4. Stefan Shober-Thomson (Merseyside Police E) winning all of his matches in 3 straight, and Brian Burrows defeating Dave Bradley in the fifth 13-11. Hasib Nuree, St Annes, also enjoying a good night and winning three vital points in the pursuit of the title. Excellent night at QVC A with the home side recording an impressive 6-4 victory over promotional hopefuls Maghull D. Bob Finnigan and Tommy Lewis both making a significant contribution to victory, winning all of

their matches. Luke Courtney emerging victoriously (3-1) against left hander/attacker Ron Houghton. Other notable wins in the hunt for promotion this week include Sefton Park B's 8-2 victory at East Wavertree A and Waterloo A's 7-3 home win against Bath Street Marine G.

Week 21 produced a close match between St Annes and Cadwa E with the hosts edging a close match 6-4. Excellent notes by Dave Bradley who commented on the 'very good atmosphere, amazing rallies...and plenty of nets!' Dave unlucky to lose both of his singles in the fifth game against Ged Howard and Mark Slater (both of whom are playing extremely well). Excellent win for Jack Highton (3-1) over St Annes' number one Israel Issac, superb performance. Francis Dako and Hasib Nuree, both winning their two singles to help consolidate their clubs position at the top of the table. Good victory for Bath Street Marine G over East Wavertree A (6-4) with Des Logan noting a 'great game being contested in good spirit'. Mickey White having a good night and winning his three and Lee Williams recording an excellent 3 straight victory over Tom Bell for the visitors. Other notable victories this week include Waterloo A's 10 - 0 away win to an under strength Maghull E, Maghull D's 7-3 win over Marconi F and Merseyside Police E's 8-2 victory over Wavertree Labour F.

Week 22 saw a significant 9-1 victory for St Annes at Wavertree Labour F in their pursuit of the title, the visitors winning all of the singles matches, in a game sportingly described by Dave Bradley as 'a lot closer than it looks', Terry Jones and Sharon Mahon registering their side's sole point in their doubles match against Francis Dako and Hassib Nuree. An enjoyable evening, and close match, at East Wavertree A with honours being shared at the end of the night. Keith Whitaker, Maghull E, having a productive evening and winning his three, including a very good victory over the recently returned (from injury) Connor Creevy (3-0) and combining with Alan Smethurst to win his doubles (11-9 in the fifth set). Jimmy Williams winning his two for East Wavertree and Connor Creevy and Lee Williams combining effectively to win their doubles game (as well as chipping in with a singles victory each). A strong win for Arriva B over Bath Street Marine G (10-0) with many close matches on the night including Tom Bell going close against Harry Hughes (losing in the fifth game 11-7) and Barbara Alcock losing to Paul Murray 11-8 in the fifth, Arriva B, without Ray Guy, showing the considerable strength of their squad on the night. Also this week, was a strong victory for

Sefton Park B at QVC A (8-2) which keeps them in the mix at the top of the table, Paul Morgan impressively leading from the front and winning his three, Bob Finnigan registering a hard earned win over Ray Jones for the hosts (3 games to 1).

Week 23 saw St Annes produce a potentially title winning display over their closest rivals Maghull D, winning 9-1 and opening up an almost irretrievable point's gap, seven of the matches on the night were decided over 3 games with Maghull D taking their sole point via a hard fought doubles match (Luke and Harry combining well to come from behind and save four match points to register the victory and take the point). A strong CADWA E side turned up at Waterloo and won the match 7-3, with Sam Walsh and Ged Howard both winning their three matches – including a 17-15 victory in the fifth for Sam against Gavin Minett. Stuart McGhee beating Chris Halliday in three and combining with Paul Mainey to win his doubles and chalk two points on the board for the home side (adding to Graham Chellew's earlier singles victory). Other notable individual wins this week included Connor Creevy beating Brian Burrows in a close five setter, Oliver O'Connor (Marconi F) defeating Jamie Whitty (Sefton Park B) 11-9 in the fifth and Ged Hanley beating the very steady Gary Mavris 11 -7 in the deciding game.

Final Thoughts

With just three matches remaining, St Anne's have obtained an almost unassailable lead at the top and look like being crowned worthy champions. Consistent with the evenly contested division this year, the battle for the second promotion place looks like it will go to the final week – the contenders being Sefton Park B, Maghull D, Merseyside Police E and Waterloo A. This makes for a fascinating finale to a great season with a promotional place potentially being decided in the final week. On another note, congratulations to Merseyside Police E on their closely contested cup final victory against an excellent Wavertree Labour F side.

**The 2013-14 Fawley Construction
Liverpool Closed
will be staged on Sunday June 8th 2014
at the Ian Robinson Sport Centre,
Merchant Taylors' Boys' School,
Liverpool Road, Crosby, L23 0QP.
Entry Forms
will be made available shortly**

Disciplinary Issues for inclusion in the Digest

16/04/2014

Since the issue of the last digest there have been 2 more occasions where the Disciplinary Sub-Committee has had to act.

- 1) The captains from two teams were found to be in breach of Rule 1(d), Match Regulation 7 and Cup Regulation 2. Three other players were found to be in breach of Rule 1(d) and Cup Regulation 2. The offence being that a false score card was completed and submitted to the Fixture Secretary for a cup match that was not in fact played. The captains from both teams were fined the maximum amount allowed, that being £25 each and banned from all cup competitions until the start of season 2015/16. The other three players were banned from the first two rounds of all cup competitions for season 2014/15. The cup match was declared void and neither team progressed to the next round.
- 2) A player was found to be in breach of Rule 1(d) and Match Regulation 2. The offence being that he entered the field of play and confronted a player in an unacceptable manner. The player was given a written warning about his future conduct.

Notes to the above

Rule 1(d) reads: - That all activities of the League and its members should reflect a high standard of integrity and sportsmanship.

Match Regulation 2 partly reads: - All members shall uphold the aims of the League as outlined in Rule 1(d).

Match Regulation 7 reads: - No club shall play an ineligible player or send in as having taken part in a match, the name of a player who did not do so.

Cup Regulation 2 partly reads: - All cup matches shall be played in the week allocated in the Handbook, except with the express permission of the Management Committee.

TABLE *Digest* TENNIS

All correspondence must be addressed to the Editor "Table Tennis Digest", "Polwarth", 21 Chatsworth Rd., Ainsdale, Southport

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Editor: **Eric Caird**

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No. 1

EDITORIAL

IT is not our intention to dilate upon the offences of the ██████████ T.T.C. in playing persons under assumed names, nor to comment on the penalty inflicted upon them of forfeiting home matches 0-10 and being excluded from the Cup competitions, but rather to commend the Management Committee on the stand which they have taken.

Liverpool table tennis last season was bedevilled by offences of one sort and another to the detriment of the game in general, and to the dismay of those players who sought to fulfil their commitments within both the letter and the spirit of the laws. Perhaps the stern attitude of the Management Committee towards ██████████ will have a salutary affect on others who would seek to ██████████ above the regulations.

On the other hand, there are matters which are beyond the bounds of legislation and rely solely on moral and social responsibility for their enforcement.

We all know, to our irritation, of the player who arrives late with hardly a word of apology or explanation, and his counterpart who leaves the scene immediately his two sets are played.

Then there is the Club secretary who accepts office, but not the responsibility, and fails to notify members of changes in opponents' match nights, venue, etc.

At club level we have instances of more teams being registered than can possibly be maintained resulting in teams either perpetually "playing short" or, alternatively, failing to play fixtures—Division 8 being a case in point where 5 teams have already folded their tents and departed.

Just how these sort of things can be catered for in rules and regulations is difficult to conceive—the problem, in our opinion, will not be resolved until players themselves adopt the attitude of treating others as they themselves would wish to be treated.

The unfortunate part of all this is the fact that it is only a comparatively small number of players who spoil the enjoyment of the many—perhaps Monty's "Without Comment—or Apology" and Reg Gray's "A Letter to the Editor" which appear on succeeding pages, will inspire offenders to realise that, in the long run, "The Glory is not in Winning but in having taken part".

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This Digest has a lot of content to do with Rules and Regulations, most players have probably never read them, or needed to, as most just play to enjoy. But disputes between players and those entrusted to maintain a level 'playing field' for all do happen, the above article is the front page of a Digest 53 years ago, note the similarity of problems, and the then Editors Editorial on those issues. The following page is this Editors comment on a current issue, hopefully a few 'Letters to the Editor will follow!'

To save the majority

I was at the Final of the Frank Murphy Vets Handicap Cup the other night, as the 'Honorary' Match Official, I would have been there anyway, but as the Official, I got a better 'ringside seat', a fantastic match, as would be expected from two teams from the same club, but the details of this match are reported on page 19.

During the evening I was approached by a few players and entered into dialogue over the disciplinary issue reported on page 12. When I received the report from League Secretary Mike Power for entry in the Digest, I read it and felt a little disappointed that I couldn't really relate to the issue mentioned because there weren't any names mentioned; was the offence committed, by relatively new players from the lower divisions who weren't conversant with the Rules, or were they experienced players from the top tiers who should know the Rules trying to work a fast one, then I thought maybe the League can't publicise names in fear of litigation, you know, human rights and all that, so I had no idea what it was all about.

I soon found out in the general conversation during the night, one of the spectators said he had recently been to a National tournament and players were coming up to him and asking if what they had heard about the disciplinary 'thing' was true, his question to me was 'who had told them!!'. I couldn't help him as I was non the wiser myself, but I felt that his thoughts were in the direction of the ManCom.

Since then and now, my mind has been working overtime, and little bricks have been falling into place, (for bricks I should say 'clangers'), sometime round middle of February, I had a phone call one evening from a player I've spoken to many times, and who has rang me at home before asking me questions about my web site, "do I upload Cup match cards onto my site as well as League match cards, and if so, where can I find them", yes I do, I said, and directed him to them, no second thoughts from me, and that was that, just another interested party I thought. But now that I have heard little bits of 'tittle tattle', (not from the Mancom I must add, more from players!) that phone call has now assumed a lot more relevance to this issue, the issue being started by the playing of a 'double header', where two teams are drawn together in a Cup match, let's say teams 'A' and 'B', who are also due to play a league match together, and agree to use the one result to apply to both matches, this saves a double journey, but is very illegal and in contravention of Match Regulation 7, this match was played in the first round, both captains agreed and the resultant Cup card was duly filled in with fictitious scores and posted at the correct time, received and authorised as correct, why not, and who's to know!!, honesty is left to the players discretion!!.

The next round was played as normal, with 'A' team duly winning and progressing to the semi final, this is where the problems start, (proverb "'be sure your sins will find you out!'), team 'A' was drawn away, the opposing home team 'C's secretary somehow forgot to give the required 7 days notice of the proposed match night, so team 'A's secretary claims the game, this is where that phone call to me comes in, that caller is a member of club 'C' that has had the match claimed off, and points out to his secretary what 'tittle tattle' he had heard on the TT circuits about the 'double header', are you still with me? from now on I'm guessing, and this whole page could be assumed to be a fairy story, anyway press on, secretary of club 'C' writes a letter of complaint to the ManCom pointing out the misdemeanours', this then started a long and drawn out contest of wills between the Management trying to administer the L&DTTL Rules and players who think bending a few Rules here and there doesn't matter.

So after many evenings prime time of Members of the Disciplinary Committee being taken up by the events of this issue, including, fines being set to maximum allowed in the Rules, are you still with me?

Players were saying to me that the penalties were a bit harsh, banned from the first two rounds of next season's Cup competitions for three players, and for the two captains, banned from all Cup competitions until the start of season 2015-16, if that only refers to L&DTTL competitions, it may only mean one match if team gets KO'd in first round.

Moral of this fairy tale, is that except for a loose tongue this may 'never' have happened!

If a Complaint that Rules are being circumvented is presented to the ManCom, the ManCom has no alternative than to come down heavy within the Rules.

If you, the general rank and file players wish to maintain an orderly and functional Competitive League structure, get behind your ManCom before they pack it in.

And now back to that original question, who spread the resultant gossip around the TT circuits?, not the ManCom I would suggest, nothing to gain for them, and I wouldn't have to think up this little article, but I can think of other directions with something to gain!, 'blame the ManCom'!!!

Editor's Comment

Letters to the Editor will appear in Next Digest, if any!

GREENHOUSES are generally for plants, but the Greenhouse charity aims to "grow" children through engagement with sports, founder and CEO Michael de Giorgio, a former accountant and financial consultant who set up the organisation in 2002, says. "This is my passion. I'm a great believer in sports. I've had a successful and comfortable life and sports have definitely been part of that. The name reflects the 'hothousing' process we put children through, asking them to commit to something and learn through that."

In the gymnasium of Morpeth Secondary School in Bethnal Green, east London, his theory is being put in to practice. The air echoes with the pop and click of ping pong balls hitting table tennis tables. There is laughter and excited chatter but an air of concentration too.

"This isn't a play scheme," says de Giorgio. "We run proper training sessions with proper coaching and we demand commitment from the children."

Eleven years on from its inception, Greenhouse now runs 48 programmes across some of London's most disadvantaged boroughs, working with around 7,000 young people. It combines sports coaching with mentoring. "The schools pay for half the cost and we let them pick which sport they think will have the most impact, but the sport is just a hook to engage the young people. There is more going on here than just learning an effective backhand spin."

Morpeth's head table tennis coach Simon Hoang grew up in the area and was a pupil at the school himself. Now 24 he says: "I know the area, I know what life is like for these kids."

A shy child he would build up his self-esteem in the hope it would build up his self-esteem.

Ping pong isn't just about fun and keeping fit, it can also keep troubled youngsters on the straight and narrow. CLARE HEAL visits a charity determined to turn the tables on poverty

"That's how I met a lot of my close friends that I still know today," he says. Simon soon discovered he was good at table tennis. "I built up my confidence and I started coaching the younger kids, then managing and running the sessions."

He now works full time for Greenhouse, running coaching sessions before school, at lunchtimes and after school four days a week at Morpeth and one day at feeder primary schools. More than 100 children are registered on the scheme and they spend an average of 4.5 hours with him each week. When not actually coaching he can be found in his office where many children drop in on him. "They just like to come and tell me how their day has gone or do a bit of banter. It all strengthens my relationship with them."

"I base my success on the impact I have on their lives, their schoolwork, their social life, maybe their mental health. I ask how I strengthened those things, not just their table tennis abilities." Table tennis at Greenhouse is about more than just sport.

Morpeth does

PRACTICE: Simon hopes to improve pupils' confidence



have an impressive trophy cabinet and Rio Paralympic hopeful Ashley Facey. Thompson is a product of the school's Greenhouse scheme but the key point is that sport is a tool through which participants learn a variety of lessons from the importance of discipline and time keeping to self confidence and perseverance. The effects can be seen in their improved attendance records, better GCSE grades and a drop in disruptive behaviour.

SIMON has been working with Askor, 12, who was asked to attend the Greenhouse sessions after being disruptive in class. "I like playing table tennis," he says. "If I misbehave Simon says five or 10 or whatever minutes off my time playing. I don't like that so I try and be good."

For Murhad, 13, it has been about health. "I started playing table tennis and was really good at it but I was a bit chubby. I used to eat lots of fast food and Simon helped me work out how to cut down. For six months I didn't eat any at all but now I have one a week. It's important to be fit for table tennis because it's all about endurance."

The sessions are open to everyone but through discussion with teachers certain children who it is thought could particularly

beneath are invited. "If they're misbehaving, or lacking in confidence or have physical disabilities," says Simon. "It's inclusive."

He works hard to build trust with the children, what he describes as "an older brother relationship," distinct from family

at home or the authority of teachers. "There's a big rapport that's developed over time," he says. Both Askor and Murhad agree that they like Simon and that he's a good teacher but it's clear that all the children respect him too. When he calls for silence to demonstrate a particular move he gets it immediately.

Of Facey Thompson he says: "He was quite a naughty little kid but because his table tennis shot up so quickly his attitude changed."

The game works as "a carrot and stick" says de Giorgio. Denying access to coaching sessions can be a punishment, but the process of learning and improving is perhaps the most psychologically important for children, some of whom may not have the most stable home lives.

"Because it's an individual sport we can give them mentoring that the school can't necessarily do on its own," says Simon. Of Askor he says: "We never had any issues with him and I think it's because he really enjoys the fact that there's someone pushing him."

Greenhouse currently has schemes in nine of London's 11 most deprived boroughs and de Giorgio wants to expand further. "I'm not interested in doing anything in wealthy areas. They don't need us. We're only in more deprived areas because that's where we can make the most difference. There's a lot more to be done."

For more information about Greenhouse, to get involved or to donate visit: greenhousecharity.org

Police Academy

'Hightower' and 'Tackleberry' may have been the original stars of the early 'Police Academy's' but there are plenty of future stars attending 'Merseyside Police TT Academy' every Friday evening. Sensibly avoiding the obvious ridicule by donning the 'Police Academy' title, we opted for the safer version of 'St Johns TT Academy.'

To date we have 37 children, aged between 6 and 11 years old attending every Friday evening. 65% of the children are girls. We are averaging two new recruits virtually every week. Our initial session ran from 6pm to 8pm but due to the clubs popularity, we now run two sessions 5pm - 7pm and 7pm - 9pm, splitting the group in half. We also run an after School Club (3.30pm - 4.30pm) every Friday for the 7 year olds. Within four weeks each child attending the academy will be wearing a full Stiga kit sponsored by McDonalds.

I have recently been asked, what is the secret of our success, and how do we manage to attract so many children? Simple. Every child who attends the academy is a pupil at St Johns Catholic Primary School. We have simply brought the game to the kids rather than the kids having to seek out table tennis elsewhere. Another very important factor is that all Merseyside TT club members are fully committed in fulfilling an attendance rota to act as feeders for the children which is absolutely essential. Bath St's Ian McElwee also deserves a special mention as a regular coach to the sessions.

We are also blessed with having a Head Mistress and Deputy Head who have, quite simply, swallowed the table tennis pill and have fully embraced the unique benefits of our sport. It's amazing how many 'boxes' table tennis ticks. All schools, particularly Inner City Schools, are constantly under the microscope with regard to tackling child obesity, child physical fitness and health, child confidence, sport participation for girls, the list is endless. When I presented my 'pitch' to the school, it became quite obvious that table tennis provided the remedy to all those issues.

Table Tennis can either be an individual or team sport so can cater for the introvert or extrovert child alike. It requires no physical strength. Played indoors and relatively cheap compared to most sports. It is the only sport that children can competitively compete with adults, allowing the child to develop confidence and social skills. Most Head teachers would be eating out of your hand by now.

The link between 'Merseyside Police TT Club' and 'St Johns Catholic Primary School' is now a well established partnership with both parties reaping the benefits. On one hand the school and its pupils have access to a fantastic club and sport. Whilst on the other hand MPTTC have the use of great playing facilities and venue but more importantly it has the potential to generate its very own recruitment of future players and members.

Is it possible that this school/club partnership could be the way forward for other TT clubs? As a young kid playing table tennis in the 80's I recall that there were certain clubs which were the pillars of the L&DTTL and it seemed that these clubs would last forever; English Electric, YMCA, Bath St, Wavertree, Police Club to name a few. Unfortunately, time, together with financial pressures has, not only slowly eroded these stalwarts but still continually threatens the existence of present clubs.

Most modern schools boast state of the art gymnasiums and sporting facilities with secure parking. Primary schools are screaming out for after School activities and I would confidentially guarantee they would gladly negotiate hall fees in exchange for a commitment to provide table tennis as an after School activity. How fantastic would it be if every table tennis club in the L&DTTL adopted a youth policy or were linked to a school table tennis program.

Part of the academy's long term vision is to place a team of youngsters, all under the age of 11, in the L&DTTL 5th division at the start of the 2015 season. This is on the proviso that all matches are played at St John's school and played on two tables. Transporting youngsters half way around Liverpool for away matches and getting them home for 1130pm is a sure way of losing them and their parents to the sport. Our club would obviously require the support of the league and its members at the appropriate AGM and would probably be a test to member's commitment towards progressing youth table tennis within Merseyside. I'm confident that the proposal would be supported but I think for back up I'd bring 'Hightower' and 'Tackleberry' along to that one just in case!

Paul Gittins.
Merseyside Police T.T. Club

Division 1 Readman Cup Final

between Christ the King and Crosby High ' B' played at the Merseyside Police Club. The photo is 1 to r - Gemma Grant, Cherith Graham and Gavin Lloyd for Crosby, Stan Clarke (match official) Tom Purcell (match umpire), Omid Khaiyat, Ryan Maynard and Keith Bird for CtK.

A rather one sided match, CtK winning in straight five sets,

only the match between Gavin and Keith went to 5 games, Gavin winning the first 16-14 and the next 11-7, but Keith changed his approach to the game and settled to win remaining 3 games 4,5,& 9, a possible 'what if' Crosby had have levelled then, would it it have changed the match, don't think so, CtK were just too strong,

Final score 5-0 to CtK, with 2 wins for Keith and Ryan and 1 for Omid, the first ever Readman Cup Final which had two Lady players in the same team.



Division 2 The Rumjahn Cup

between Marconi and Christ the King 'B' was played at CtK home to both teams, a great match played open and fast, first on was probably the most entertaining between Adrian Bramham (Marc.) and John Lau (CtK), John's hard attacking shots making

Adrian defend from all areas of the court, but the returns did keep going back, then with a surprise change of pace, Adrian would turn defence into attack, John producing a 3-2 win, a great contest to set the standard for the night, every match had the attack- defence mode which had the spectators entertained, sadly from the spectators point of view, what looked like a promising 5-4 match ended 5-1 to Marconi.

Thanks again to Janet Davies (Rumjahn) for keeping the family tradition of presenting the Division 2 Rumjahn Cup and trophies at the Final,

photo 1-r Chris Spedding, Bob Edwards, Adrian Bramham (Marconi) Janet Rumjahn, Tony Dixon, (match official) Peter Taylor, Billy Cheung, John Lau (CtK) Tom Purcell (match Umpire)

Division 3 The Hyde Cup



had runaway Division Leaders Maghull against 3rd placed Sefton Park. This Maghull side will make their way to the first Div if young Amy Hutchings can keep her level of improvement up, only Alan Davies of the Sefton

Park team found his true form, both his matches going to five, beating Amy, but losing to Rick, a match Alan could have won in four when Rick came from behind to win 13-11. The honour of clinching the match was given to Amy with the match at 4-1, Maghull called Mike on to play her, the first game was a close 12-10 to Amy, which if had gone the other way, may have tried Amy's 'bottle', but that win just added to her confidence, settling down to win in 3, and the title, 5-1 to Maghull.

Photo l-r- Tony Dixon (match official) Mike Perry, Peter Tod, Alan Davies (Sefton Park); Amy Hutchings, Paul Hutchings, Rick Beatie (Maghull) and Graham Rollinson (match Umpire)

Division 4 The Forrest Cup



was won by high flyers East Wavertree, (with a possible consecutive League and Cup double on the cards) beating Arriva 'A' 5-1. The 'away' team Arriva started the match by putting the two skippers head to head John Rowan for Arriva v Tony Dixon for East, as if to decide the match, a greatly contested five games which went to East Wavertree,

Joey Williams then beat Josef Klimala in straight three. Arriva called the doubles, we don't normally see the doubles so early, East took that in 3. East called Arriva's Josef Klimala on against Chris Browne, Chris only needing 3 to put East 4-0 up. Captains game now to stay in the match, John Rowan calling Tom Creevy to the table, John's hitting not allowing Tom to settle, an fairly even match, Tom not finding his normal form, John saving the match with a 3-1 win, That saving grace was short lived as Tony called Graham Rollinson on for his first visit to the table, Graham put Tony under pressure taking a 2-1 games lead, but after a comfortable 11-3 win in the 4th settled to add the 5th 11-9, and the match at 5-1.

Photo L-r Josef Klimala, Graham Rollinson, Brian Hornby, Tom Creevy, John Rowan, Joey Williams, Chris Browne, Tony Dixon Dave Gouldon (match Umpire), the match official was Keith Bird

Division 5 The Stamp Cup

was the most closely contested match between two teams not in for any other league honours, Merseyside Police 'E' and Wavertree Labour 'F', with every set going to the call, Wavertree being the away team put Terry Jones on against Neil Thomas, Terry winning in straight 3, Police put Stefan Schober-Thomson on to beat Mike Dugdale, then Eric Spencer beat Neil, Brian Burrows then beat Gordon Langshaw. Eric then beat Sam Hughes, but Sam pushed Eric to five games, then Stefan beat Terry in 3, match 3 all!, Gordon beats Sam in 3, then Brian beats Mike in three, so match only leaves the doubles to decide it, both 1&2's, Brian and Stefan v Mike and Gordon, and what a nail biting contest, the games battled out went, 12-10 to Police, 11-8 to Wavertree, 12-10 to Police, 12-10 to Wavertree, and then it had to end, 11-7 to Police, a great final to end the Divisional Finals. Photo L-r Mike Dugdale, Terry Jones, Eric Spencer, Gordon Langshaw (Wavertree), Graham Rollinson (Umpire) Neil Thomas, Stefan Schober-Thomson, Sam Hughes, Brian Burrows, Keith Bird (match official)



The Frank Murphy Memorial Vets. Handicap Cup

This season's Final was the first in which two finalists were from the same Club, Bath St. Marine 1 & 4, so there was no need for a neutral venue, the atmosphere was really charged with the 36 spectators expecting a great contest. BsM 1 had Ken Jackson, Ricky Brown and Darren Taylor total H/cap 7, BsM 4 had Tony Kendal, Ted Cramsie and Barry Davies H/cap 50, Every set played was open, no one holding back to 'save' the points, just going all out to win. After 6 hectic sets, BsM 1 had reduced 4's lead to 6. Final 3 sets started with Barry increasing 4's lead to 18 v Darren, then Ricky took 10 off Ted, so into final set between Tony and Ken, 4 are still holding an 8 point lead, two top players served up a fantastic two games, Ken won both, but when Tony got his 18th point in the second game, the crowd erupted, BsM 4 had won, Final score BsM 4 - 347. BsM 1 - 345.



Presentation of the Cup and Trophies was done in the Marine F.C. Bar by Frank's widow Marjorie Also attending were Myra Lovelady and son Kevin, Sue and Dave Berry and Marjorie's daughter. Photo L-r Ricky Brown (1) Ted Cramsie (4) Darren Taylor (1) Barry Davies (4) Ken Jackson (1) Marjorie Murphy, Tony Kendal, Graham Rollinson Umpire, Roly Wright was Match Official on the other side of the camera. A great match and club atmosphere

League tables as at 16th April 2014

Division One		P	W	D	L	Pts
1	Fords	24	21	0	3	192
2	M/Side Police A	23	20	2	1	173
3	Crosby High	23	17	4	2	167
4	Crosby High A	23	15	4	4	143
5	Christ The King	23	13	3	7	138
6	Wavertree Lab	23	9	6	8	113
7	Cadwa	24	10	1	13	107
8	Bath St Marine	24	8	3	13	106
9	**Bath St Marine A	22	9	2	11	91
10	Fords A	22	6	3	13	90
11	Crosby High B	21	8	3	10	90
12	**Christ The King A	24	3	3	18	61
13	M/Side Police	22	3	0	19	60
14	Harold House	24	1	2	21	58

Division Two		P	W	D	L	Pts
1	Marconi	21	15	2	4	151
2	M/Side Police B	21	19	1	1	150
3	Cadwa A	20	13	1	6	118
4	Christ The King B	20	10	3	7	118
5	Wavertree Lab A	19	12	2	5	109
6	Bootle YMCA	20	10	4	6	102
7	**Harold House A	20	8	1	11	82
8	Bath St Marine B	20	4	2	14	77
9	Wavertree Lab B	20	5	2	13	75
10	Marconi A	20	5	1	14	73
11	Crosby High C	19	4	4	11	72
12	Marconi B	20	3	1	16	63
13	Cadwa B	Withdrawn				
14	Wavertree Lab C	Withdrawn				

Division Three		P	W	D	L	Pts
1	Maghull	25	24	1	0	211
2	Bath St Marine D	23	19	2	2	177
3	Sefton Park	24	15	3	6	154
4	Maghull A	25	14	3	8	147
5	Bath St Marine C	24	14	3	7	131
6	M/Side Police C	23	12	5	6	123
7	Marconi C	23	8	7	8	120
8	Bootle YMCA A	23	8	4	11	103
9	Wavertree Lab D	23	7	3	13	102
10	Huntsman Wood	23	8	3	12	100
11	Cadwa C	24	2	6	16	86
12	Arriva Nth West	24	6	3	15	83
13	Sefton Park A	24	2	4	18	64
14	Linacre	24	2	3	19	59

Division Four		P	W	D	L	Pts
1	East Wavertree	23	19	2	2	179
2	Maghull B	24	19	1	4	171
3	Bath St Marine E	23	19	1	3	162
4	Arriva Nth West A	23	15	3	5	146
5	M/Side Police D	22	13	1	8	120
6	Cadwa D	23	10	2	11	114
7	Bootle YMCA B	24	11	3	10	114
8	Bath St Marine F	24	8	6	10	112
9	QVC	23	8	2	13	98
10	Maghull C	23	6	3	14	98
11	Marconi D	23	7	2	14	90
12	Wavertree Lab E	22	6	0	16	78
13	Marconi E	24	1	5	18	70
14	Bootle YMCA C	23	3	3	17	68

Division Five		P	W	D	L	Pts
1	St Annes	23	19	2	2	158
2	Sefton Park B	24	14	4	6	143
3	Maghull D	24	14	1	9	141
4	M/Side Police E	23	13	1	9	129
5	Waterloo A	23	11	6	6	128
6	Waterloo	24	11	6	7	123
7	Arriva Nth West B	23	10	3	10	121
8	East Wavertree A	24	8	5	11	118
9	Wavertree Lab F	24	8	3	13	116
10	Marconi F	24	10	4	10	110
11	QVC A	24	7	2	15	107
12	Cadwa E	24	8	2	14	99
13	Maghull E	24	6	4	14	86
14	Bath St Marine G	24	4	3	17	81

Match Regulation 7. No club shall play an ineligible or send in as having taken part in a match, the name of a player who did not do so. **Div 1 Bath St Marine A & C.T.King A. Both teams deducted 10 points

****Div 2 Harold House A. Playing an Ineligible player, not registered with the League. 10 Points deducted.**