

Table Tennis DIGEST

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Editorial

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Digest time again, apologies for being a bit later than I would have liked, but as it includes, The Liverpool Closed, all the seasons cup finals, and The League tables up to match 19, (depending on the cards being in), it's a full issue. Mind you I was a bit disappointed in the feed back from the 'general playing fraternity', only one letter to the Editor, a smack on the hand off Sylvia over an article I wrote, she was quite 'hot under the collar' but thanks anyway Sylvia, at least you read it.

You have probably noticed by now, the COLOUR on the front page, We have a "proper printer" printing the Digest in the shape of Ian Lunt of Waterloo T.T.Club, Ian has offered to print at the same cost that we were paying for photocopying before, which was good enough for printing text, but with my pictures not being so professional as we would like, they didn't lend themselves to photocopying, I'm typing this, tongue in cheek before the presses roll, but Ian says, "trust me", so hopefully the quality of the pictures will improve, Ian is giving me a bit of professional advice, so let me know if we are doing the right thing with YOUR Digest.



Final distribution seems to be a bit of a problem, as I rushed to get my first Digest out for the end of the first half of the season, (the last weeks matches before Christmas), and got them distributed to the club Secs. I was asked in the middle of February, when was the Digest coming out, this whole team hadn't had any, (no names). Any practical suggestions ?? May I point out to the many collectors of the Digest, I know there are many who have got Digests going back a long time, that I numbered the last Digest wrongly, I numbered it as Vol.55 No. 3, it should have been Vol. 56 No.1, you probably did notice but decided to save my blushes, if I do anything wrong, please tell me.

Thanks to all the writers who have sent in reports, a full complement of Divisional reports, (the last one arriving over the Easter weekend), the Cup finals reporters and the Committee secs. Tony Harris also sent me an article on the History of Table Tennis in Liverpool which I haven't been able to fit in, thanks Tony, most probably next Digest, which by the way needs to be out for the next AGM,

Anyway read on.

Secretary's Report.

It seems these days that whenever I put pen to paper to write my reports, I have to start with sad news. This report is no different but I make no apology for it. The tragic and sudden death of Billy Proffitt must be a reminder to us all that we are only on this planet for a short time and we must therefore make the most of our lives. Billy was one of the fittest men I knew for his age which was just 61. I doubt many of us can say we keep ourselves as fit as Billy did. My thoughts, and those of the Management Committee, go to his wife and family, friends and clubmates. Billy served Fords TTC for as long as I can remember and he will be a hard act to follow. At the time of writing, Graham Reid, brother of the late departed Alan Reid, has stepped into Billy's shoes to run Fords TTC.

On a more cheerful note, I am glad to report that Arthur Upton, who has spent five or six weeks in hospital, may be allowed home soon and may in fact be home by the time you read this report. As far as I am aware Alex Gould is also doing quite well and is settled in his Nursing Home and looking forward to getting his electric wheel chair.

On a TT issue, how many of you throw the ball up six inches? I know we all try to throw it up six inches but we don't always get it right, myself included. It's not that we are trying to gain an unfair advantage; it's simply a habit we get into. Well the most recent proposal on the table at the ITTF AGM on 5th April 2002 is that we must throw the ball up twelve inches. At the time of writing it is only a proposal and it is expected to fail as there has not been enough time for the likes of the ETTA to ballot its members. By the time you read this article the result will be known. Assuming it does fail it doesn't mean it won't be on the agenda for a future AGM or SGM. Why change the rules of the game yet again you may ask? We already have the larger ball. It seems inevitable that all TT competitions, including League level, will soon be 11-up. We are about to see a change in the service rule from next September which states the ball must be thrown up in front of the body and not shielded in any way i.e., by the free arm. It is said, the twelve inch proposal would help underline the principal agreed at last years ITTF AGM and being confirmed this year, that with effect from September 2002 the receiver is able to see the service at the point of contact between the bat and the ball, thus outlawing 'shielded' services whereby sight of the ball when struck is obscured by the server's non-playing arm, body or clothing. It would also help prevent players obtaining extra spin and deception by throwing the ball back on to the bat during service. Currently some players during service bring the non-playing arm up together with the ball (i.e. it is difficult to judge exactly when they have 'thrown up'/released the ball, and sight of the ball may be shielded), or drop the non-playing arm from the ball to give the impression/illusion that they have thrown the ball up, and a higher throw-up would make it much harder for the server to gain an advantage in

these ways. However, with the changes in recent years to a bigger ball, scoring to 11-up and then to the service rule to prevent shielded services, grass roots players may feel that increasing the height of the service throw-up is a change too far or too soon. The proposal requires 75% (majority) of votes cast, but it is uncertain which way the 186 member national associations will vote. Having had little time to consider the implications, the ETTA are likely to be voting against.

So, what is your opinion? The next time you are practising why not try to throw the ball up twelve inches. Some players already do, therefore it won't make any difference to them. But for those players who don't, (and for those players who **unconsciously** throw the ball backwards), you may find that you lose control of the serve and give your opponent an easy ball to return. One thing is for sure: with all these changes we are all going to have to adjust our game and practice a lot more. It will also put more pressure on the umpire to ensure a legal serve is made. The twelve-inch serve may not come in straight away but if it doesn't, I wouldn't be at all surprised if it is in the near future.

Finally, the League AGM will take place at the end of May and I have noted that only one club has proposed a Rule amendment. I must assume therefore that you are all happy with the rules as they are!

Mike Power

There is a need for new volunteer officers to the League Management Committee, to help in the Forming and Running of our Liverpool & District table tennis, interested parties should contact our League secretary, Mike, ASAP.



Who's this ?

Can you remember seeing this look of concentration from the other end of the table, the secret was, don't look into his eyes, but-watch the ball. He's softened his approach now, but is still a good player.

Don't be fooled by the hair, it's polished now.

2002 CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS

Reported by Ken Armson MBE

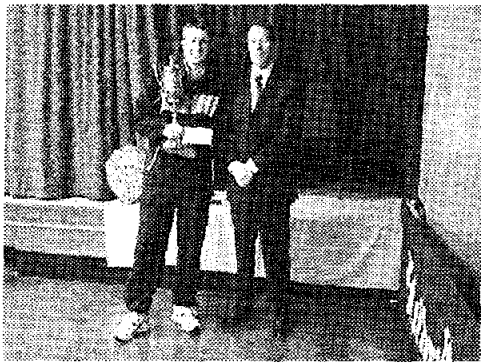
News of the untimely death of Bill Proffitt reached me as I was about to start this report and having worked with Bill at our coaching sessions and knowing what a staunch supporter he was of this event I felt I could not let his passing go without comment. Bill always played with zest but also enjoyment and was always ready and willing to help in any capacity. We will, I know, all miss him and I will also miss him at our coaching sessions as will Alan Biggs, Graham Rollinson and George Smith. Bill gave the coaching 100% support and his input will be sorely missed.

Our 2002 Championships were held on Bill's home ground as for some years he was a regular at Netherley SC with the 5-a-side football and for a short period Fords also played league matches at the Centre. For us it was a case of another first, and may well have been our last, as word is it is soon to be demolished to make way for Everton's new football academy. Those who played matches in the gym will possibly be pleased if it is because the lighting appeared to be inferior to that in the sports hall but this was an optical illusion due to the two different types of lighting. Some may be sceptical about this but Alan, Graham and George will confirm my view.

We strive always to improve our championships and this season was no exception in that everyone who entered last season received two entry forms by post, additional copies going to club secretaries. We also provided free hot drinks throughout the day, re-introduced a Plate competition for the Men's singles and provided a free buffet for all spectators on Finals Night. None of these proved to be very successful for entries were slow in coming the event taking place only because of the many late postal entries and numerous phone entries that found me still preparing paperwork on the eve of the event. Surprisingly the take up of hot drinks was quite low but we will persevere with this next year subject to this being allowed at the venue. Too many of our better players were missing on the day and our Finals Night lacked its usual sparkle and this was reflected in the poorest attendance for some years and we also had a high waste food factor. The Plate competition also fell victim to the general malaise with quite a few pulling out, some leaving without first advising me they did not wish to be entered. This may have been partly due to competitors not having read their letter and so being unaware that this would take place. Those who did enter enjoyed the additional matches, the aim of any tournament being to give players plenty of matches. **Your views on these points and other changes you would like us to consider will assist us in tailoring our championships to suit your needs.**

We started the day with the O55 event played this time as a straight knockout the experiment with group play not having proved successful due to the time factor. This event frequently produces unexpected results and tight matches and so it was on this occasion with Alf Perry taking a starring role and disposing of No.2 seed, Peter Taylor -19,19 & 20. I believe he was trailing in the 3rd and pulled back to 20-all. In the semi against Ted Birch he was clearly drained by his efforts against Peter and lost 2 straight, 9 & 13. In the other semi No.1 seed Ken Jackson had a much tougher time against newcomer Dave Harse but also took it in 2 straight, 16 & 16 going on to wrest the title from Ted with a very comfortable 2 straight win 10 & 10.

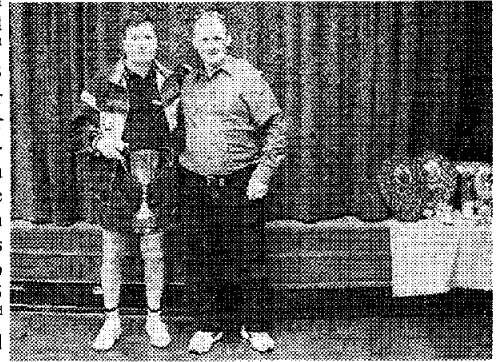
The Divisional event introduced a few years back to replace the mixed lower divisions event again failed to attract many entries the 2nd doing best with 20 entries with 11 for the 3rd and a combined 4/5th of 18 due to only three entries from D5. This was played in group format followed by a knockout, No.1 seed Colin Rourke, last years D3 champion beating last years D2 champion Ray Parkinson in the semis and newcomer Omid Khaiyat beating newcomer Dave Harse in the other semi and going on to beat Colin in a hard fought final 19 & 18. In the D3 event No.1 seed Les Molyneux was the winner of a hard fought semi against Matthias Poerschke 16, -17, 19 and in the other semi Les Gee defeated Alf Perry in yet another tremendous tussle 15, -19, 18 having previously knocked out No.2 seed John Higham. Les Gee, like Alf Perry earlier, was clearly tired from his two earlier 3-game tussles and the younger Les had an easy ride 11 & 10 to become 3rd division champion. We almost had a major upset in the 4/5 event No.1 seed Alan Davies narrowly surviving in the 1/4s against Clara Howard (who you will hear more of her later in this report) 14, -19, 19. From then Alan had a comfortable ride beating team-mate and captain Rob Peverall 11 & 18 in the final having beaten Martyn Roberts 18 & 16 in the semi. Rob had a very easy ride throughout taking his semi against Johnny Tsang 17 & 14. The divisional event is a great leveller and is deserving of more support so why not



**Kevin Dolder, winner of the Mens singles Title
Receiving the Trophy from Mr. Leo Cronc**

give it serious consideration knowing as you will the ability of those you will meet and you will be in with a good chance and have some good matches. If you enter every event open to you then you will get plenty of games and have an enjoyable day along with a chance to mix more socially with other players.

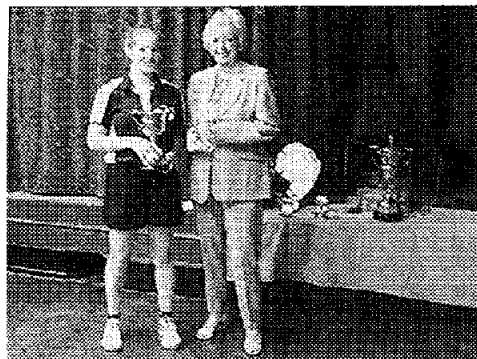
The Veteran singles that followed attracted an entry of 34 and played as a straight knockout saw the seeded players having a fairly smooth passage, Ted Birch getting involved in a marathon with Dave Harse and emerging tired but victorious 23, -19, 16 from his 1st round battle only to lose to John Rankin 8 & 16. No.2 & 3 seeds Ken Jackson and Peter Lee romped easily to their semi where Peter appeared to run out of steam, holder Ken going through to the final -15, 17, 8. The big surprise came in the other semi when No.1 seed John Rankin met unseeded Dave Roberts who had had a hard passage beating on the way Alan Chase -19, 21 & 14 and then disposing of No.4 seed Peter Taylor 19, -19, 14. This was a great semi and virtually brought the tournament to a halt in its final stages. John taking the first game 15 and Dave the second 17, Dave leading 19/16 in the 3rd with John serving. John narrowed the gap and looked likely to level the score when Dave won a vital point to take him to 20. John was in full flow but suddenly it was all over and with it John's bid to become our veteran champion. We all like to think we can take defeat on the chin but often we don't and I have to pay credit to John who although he must have been bitterly disappointed took it well and was full of praise for Dave in what was the match of the day.



Ken Jackson, holding the Vets Trophy, with runner up Dave Roberts

There were to be no surprises in the doubles event but plenty of close shaves, scratch pairing Mike Power/John Langton almost produced one losing -15, 18 & 19 to Ken Jackson/Fred Bainbridge just when it looked like they had it all sewn up. John Dyson/Steve Gittins also gave No.2 seeds Peter Lee/Peter Taylor a fright when having themselves survived a 3-gamer against Rob Peverall/Alan Davies lost narrowly to Lee/Taylor -17, 14 & 20 in what would have been a major upset. No.1 seeds Kevin Dolder/John Rankin also had a scare against Ted Birch/Alan Chase in the semis winning the first 20 and losing the second at same score but running away with the 3rd game 4. In the other semi Lee/Taylor cruised to an easy victory over No.3 seeds Jackson/Bainbridge 10 & 17. The junior event was again a disappointment with only 3 entries and was won comfortably by Paul O'Donnell who defeated Clara Howard and Lee Proffitt both in two straight with Clara taking runner up place with a 2 straight win against Lee. The lack of junior players in our league should be of concern to everyone and we should be concentrating our attention on the need to attract young players to our sport and then hang on to them to ensure we have a future.

We also have a shortage of women players with only six of the few we do have entering the Women's singles but although few in number the event brought about a most surprising victory, one that turned the event on its head and resulted in the No. 1 and 2 seeds meeting each other in a semi and not the final. One of the new ideas for introduction next year is that of a Best Performance Award and had it been introduced this season



Alice Howard receiving the Ladies Singles Trophy from Mrs. Carol Crone

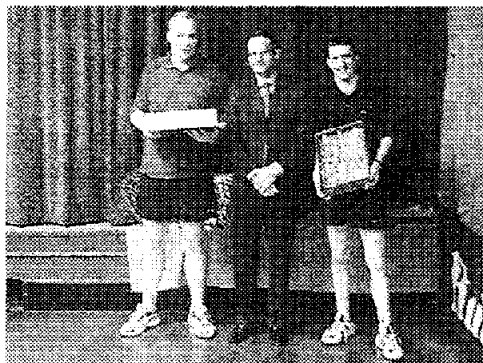
Clara Howard would have been awarded that accolade, young she may be but she plays with the assurance of a seasoned player and followed up her near upset of Alan Davies in the divisional event to record the best win of the day when she defeated elder sister and current Ladies champion Alice in her group to push Alice into 2nd place in the group and almost 3rd as she narrowly survived a 3-gamer against our Fixture Secretary and a former champion, Paula French. Ironically, Clara, having soundly defeated Alice, had already lost to Paula 2 straight and with Paula losing to Alice in 3 Clara was the loser in the count back that followed. Clearly rattled by her defeat at the hands of her younger sister Alice struggled to regain her composure taking the first against Paula game 12 only to see Paula fight back and take the next game 20. It was nip and tuck in the 3rd until Alice gradually took control to run out a very relieved winner 15 in the 3rd and so keep alive her hopes of retaining her title. You can't keep those Howard's down and in the other group mother

Stephanie Howard almost got on the surprise win list losing narrowly to Cherith Graham 16 in the 3rd. In the semis Paula took on Cherith, her greater experience taking her through to the final 16, -19, 17. The other semi saw the clash of the No.1 and 2 seeds courtesy of Clara and Alice going through to the final with a 15, -18, 15, win over Gemma Lloyd.

Surprise wins continued in the final event, the MS, Mikhael Bollac knocking out 4th seed Peter Lee 17 & 17 and then losing to Tom Murray 14 & 19, Tom having had a surprise win against Ahmed Thabet 13 & 13 who in turn had beaten Peter Taylor in 3. In the bottom half Alan Davies recorded two good wins against Ritchie Cragg and Jon Dyson to reach the 1/4s, Omid Khaiyat knocking out No.3 seed Ken Jackson in a 3 game thriller -20, 15 & 17 to give us two new faces on Finals night in the Men's semis. On his way to the semis Omid also beat Mick Allen and had another win over Colin Rourke. Neither Kevin Dolder nor John Rankin raising a sweat as they cruised to the semi final stage.

Due to scratchings and w/o's only five matches were played in the Men's Plate Mike Ashton being the winner with a surprise win over Steve Kcc in a hard fought final 18, -9, 19 that was also the final match of the day. Biggest surprise for me on the day being the response to a request for assistance in clearing away the equipment with more volunteers than ever before and the work being completed in record time. My sincere thanks to all who assisted with this for all too often it is left to the few rather than the many. Setting up was done on Saturday and I must again thank the small party of volunteers who carried out this work during my enforced absence. This was the first time for more years than I care to remember that I have not been present to assist with and oversee the setting up and it is pleasing to be able to report that I had not even been missed an excellent job having been done.

Finals Night came and went, just like that, with no surprises, both MS semis being comfortably won, Kevin against Tom Murray 12 & 14 and John bursting Omid's bubble 6 & 15 but Omid is to be with us for some time and we have not seen the last of this talented and likeable player. In the final Kevin took the first game 20 stepping up a gear in the second to win 21/10 and comfortably retain his title. He and John teamed up in the doubles for another comfortable win 16 & 16 against the two Peters, Lee & Taylor. The VS was also all over in two straight, Ken Jackson comfortably retaining his title 17 & 16 against Dave Roberts. A slight hiccup in the WS when Paula fought back to take the second 19 after losing the first game 17, Alice making certain she was not to be on the receiving end of another surprise defeat by taking the 3rd comfortably game 7. Leo and Carol Crone along with David Fawley son of Bill Fawley made presentations, as did Brian Leeson and Eddie Cameron. Ted Birch did the honours for the divisional presentations and



John Rankin & Kevin Dolder receiving their prizes for winning the Mens Doubles Final, from Mr. David Fawley

made a nice speech in which he thanked our sponsors for their continued support and their very regular attendance on Finals Night.

We want to make our Closed championships of interest to all members and we really do need your views but more importantly we need your support by way of an entry so give it some thought and enter next year, you won't regret it and can look forward to an enjoyable day of competitive table tennis

In conclusion, I omitted to thank all those who made a donation along with their entry when sending out competitor letters and will correct my omission by extending to all who did so my sincere thanks for their many generous gestures. I would also thank the many willing volunteer umpires without whose help we could not keep the event moving. Special thanks also to George Smith who does an exceptional job keeping the wall charts up to date.



" Well, Kid, ya beat me, and now every punk packin' a paddle and trying to make a name for himself will come lookin' for you!!
**WELCOME TO HELL,
 KID !"**

1st. Division

Paul Gittins



If your wife and a lawyer were drowning and you had to choose what to do, would you go to lunch or to a movie?. A difficult decision perhaps, but not as difficult as that faced at the start of the season by our League Committee who deemed it right that YM. 'A' should be relegated from the 1st. division notwithstanding the fact that the division was one short. Who knows whether they were right or wrong. I know Peter Lee will take a pot at that question and he may have a point. It just seems ironic that the division remained short once the Police 1st team conceded their first three matches. It may be little consolation, but I'm sure that YM. 'A' will be with us next season once they have won promotion from the 2nd.

Before I crack on with my report, I'd like to apologise for missing the Christmas Digest. A 2 year old baby, three shifts and working 6 days a week (me- not the baby) is not compatible for creating spare time for sitting at the computer. I hope you don't mind, but it seems a shame to miss out on the earlier games, so what I intend to do is write about the Pre-Christmas matches and then catch up with everything in the last Digest.

Back to the 1st division and we see the Championship favorites CADWA started the season with 10-nil win, this being against Waterloo, and CADWA would have repeated the score against Fords if it wasn't for a James Eaton win over Pete Taylor. I can't see where the Title challenge will come. Certainly not the Police team who have lost influential players and I think the Wavertree 1st team will agree that they have long been unable to boast the calibre of players needed to win or challenge the likes of CADWA. It is because of this that CADWA have the luxury of not relying on the continuous turn out of Keith Williams and Kevin Dolder. This in turn leads to reserves playing and some points dropped. Thus limiting 10-nil wins.

Perhaps the real battle is between who will finish in 2nd Spot. Wavertree 1st are there at the moment but the likes of Police, Y.M. and Harold House are snapping at their heels. You could also forgive Wavertree for thinking that their first game Harold House would be points in the bag, particularly when the Harold House team consisted of Eddie Clein. However Harold House hadn't read the script, or 'prescription' in Eddie's case, and duly ended the night as 7-3 winners. Eddie won all his three which consisted of a great win over Dave Roberts. Dave also lost out to Alec Bryce. Wavertree made amends by beating CADWA 'A' 6-4 but yet again Dave dropped a point against Pete Taylor. Roy Smith had mixed fortunes against Bath St. 'A' to earn a draw but lost the only two sets of the Waterloo match to Alan Chase and Ted Birch.

The collective decision of John Rankin and Paul Hutchins (I'm sure they share a bunk bed - I

wonder who 'sleeps' on top) to reduce their availability to play regularly split the end of the first team in its previous form and it was inevitable that we could not sustain two 1st division teams. The choice to disband the 'A' team was necessary but very regrettable. So you're left with Steve and I and 'A another'. Police got off to a good 9-1 win over CADWA 'A'. Colin Rourke beating Ste. For CADWA's consolation point. We then went on to lose 6-4 against Bath St.'A' with Ian McElwee 'doing me' once again. Steve made amends by getting a hat trick against Marconi which also saw Gemma Lloyd having a great win over Bob Edwards.

Eddie Clein's stint in the lower divisions has had little effect upon his ability to step back into the first division and grab a few scalps. Actually, up to a few weeks ago he hasn't lost any. 'Fords' Tim Weardon, who had previously beaten Ray Jackson and Ken Connor couldn't get the better of Eddie, resulting in a 6-4 H. H. win. Bath St. 'A' went down 8-2, and again Eddie did not drop a set. Harold House bettered this with great 9-1 win over CADWA 'A', this not only saw Eddie losing his 100% to Billy Hargreaves, but saw the rarity of Ken Hartley losing all his three.

Liverpool YMCA's Peter Lee has taken up the No. 1 spot in the absence of my field correspondent Pat McLoughlin (Pat actually wrote comments of the match card unlike others who use it to test whether their pen is working). Y.M. started the season well with a 8-2 win over Bath St. 'A', Ian Grant having a good win over the talented Paul O'Donnell, beating him 28-26 in the third. Ahmed Thabet kept his 1st division eye in when a guest appearance saw him win all his three against Fords.

The reshuffling of the Bath St. teams, whether intentionally or not, has lead to both the 1st and 'A' team having an overall balance of strength throughout. The 1st team began with a 9-1 win against Marconi with Brenda Bouey losing out to Trevor Owen. They didn't have it all their own way against Waterloo with Alan Chase and Riki Brown beating Fred Bainbridge and Alan continuing his good form against Brenda. Kenny Jackson and Fred had mixed fortunes against Fords, Kenny won his three whilst Fred did not, final result 6-4 in Bath St's. favour.

The fact that only 5 points separate the Bath St. teams is good evidence of their consolidation working. Ian Grant and Mike Kean got the only points when they both had a great win over Y.M.'s Deli Olyumbo. Ian has adapted well into the 1st division, I played him recently and I considered myself lucky to beat him.

Marconi's first game back in the 1st against Bath St. had a harsh touch of reality when they went down 9-1 with Trevor Owen saving the whitewash by beating Brenda. Marconi fared better against Y.M. getting beat 3-7 and saw Bob Edwards beat Paul O'Donnell and Ahmed Thabet, whilst Trevor had a tremendous win over Deli. Police came out 7-3 against Marconi. Gemma Lloyd having a good win over Bob, but losing out to Tim Tennett.

CADWA 'A' have adopted the Alex Ferguson approach by fielding different teams for their first 5 matches. This is subsequently reflected in their results, 9-1 defeat against Police, 4-6 defeat against Wav. 1st team, but a solid performance against potential relegation opponents Marconi, gaining a draw. Mike Power on this occasion had a great win over Bob Edwards.

CADWA's Mike Mahoney told us a great story about the hard of hearing Peter Taylor. Apparently Peter told Mike and the other lads that their days of taking the mickey out of him were numbered as he had recently purchased, and was in fact wearing, the most electronically advanced hearing aid on the market. Mike then asked Peter how much the hearing aid had cost, to which Peter replied, "Wednesday".

Now where was I?, oh yes, A warm welcome back to the division for the Waterloo chaps. Not such a warm welcome by the 10-0 beating by CADWA, but I know that the likes of Alan, Ted and Riki will take it in their stride and they'll know that it's the pinching of other games which is the key to survival. Alan has started the season in good form. Wins over Fred Bainbridge, Brenda Bouey, and a great win by both Alan and Ted over Y.M.'s Deli Olyumbo has put vital points in the bag. A 4-6 defeat by Police nevertheless saw Alan beat Ste Gittins. Both Alan and Ted did the double over Wav's. Roy Smith.

Breathing down Waterloo's neck are the Fords lads who are just as keen to maintain their 1st division status as anyone. Tim Weardon must have produced a steady performance to beat Ray Jackson and Ken Connor from Harold House. Tom Murray also beat Ken and helped to gain 4 important points. James Eaton, a very natural player but perhaps not as consistent as he would like, is also playing his part. Good wins over Peter Taylor and Paul O'Donnell notched up vital points.

Well that's the lot for now. I hope you all had a good Christmas and I hope you remembered that old Korean proverb..... "A dogs not just for Christmas..... save some for Boxing Day as well."

I was also going to leave you fellas some sound advice when shopping for presents for the missus. If you're buying her clothes take my advice. Buy clothes marked 'Petite', but keep the receipt. You can't go wrong.

2nd DIVISION NOTES SYLVIA GRAHAM

Well it's now mid-Feb and the season looks to be well and truly sewn up.... that's if three teams are being promoted. If three teams are not being promoted then it could become very interesting. I don't



mean that it's not worth fielding your best side every match because it iseven if it's only to cause an upset ...and get mentioned in the digest but ultimately I think that Manweb, YMCA 'A' and Maghull will go up and Wavertree Labour 'A' and Bootle JC will go down. To give them their due Labour have tried to strengthen their side with Roy Adams and Mark Miles (whom I believe cannot come to grips with the 11-up system on the Wirral) but I think it's just a little too late. Bootle JC has not been able to field the settled side of last season and has, through no fault of their own, paid the penalty.

Liverpool YMCA have again introduced new players to the division adding to their cosmopolitan flavour and are now fielding the second division champion, Omid Alizadeh (Iran) and Torstein Bondel (Norway).....where do they get them from? Is Peter Lee on the books of an International TT Placement Agency or is Steve Kee out their talent spotting.....if so perhaps England could do with his services!!! Omid made his debut against Cadwa 'B' and met my player of the season to date, Colin Rourke. Colin's short game and backhand topspin are particularly impressive. Apparently the match was a classic looper v chopper battle worthy of a representative match. Colin won the first comfortably game 8, lost the next game 10 and eventually went down 18 in the third. Needless to say YMCA are very pleased to have acquired Omid and have realised that their S.O.S. was so desperate it was heard in the Middle East and then relayed by satellite to Torstein in Scandanavia. Torstein is a complete contrast to Omid. He has the modern attacking game of good serves followed by a powerful forehand and backhand attack and has obviously been coached to a high standard. The only problem I can see for YMCA is where to play all these players next season ...and what to do when they all finish their courses **OR** the University closes down!!! Oh! And I heard a rumour that Mikael Belloc is really upset. He has always been known as 'THE Frenchman' in the league but now that a team in Division 1 has signed one of his countrymen he feels that his fame has diminished and he has become just another Frenchman'. (Aside: "Never mind Mikael.....I'm sure you will always be number one to us!!!! Go out and thrash him next season!")

Now I've never found our sport to be particularly dangerous. An occasional loose ball might cause a little pain such as when Brian Crolley hit Eddie Crowley in the eye.... with the ball that is!! And Roger Neal (always the man with compassion) said "Nothing too trivial, I hope" and went on to beat Eddie later in the same match. Then sometimes a muscle gets tweaked when a player goes onto the table without the recommended warm ups and then there's Andy (Tetley) Lloyd of Manweb. Now I thought it funny when Manweb turned up with four players at our venue but then I thought 'Well they're after promotion aren't they!' then I saw Andy grit his teeth and grimace in pain (especially I noticed when Ray Parkinson played!!) and the rest of his team, in the interest of public health, were desperate for his tale to be told.

It seems that Andy had a fight with a wet teabag but the teabag fought back, dropped Andy and left him in excruciating pain. Dave Harse stated that a criminal case against the bag has been ruled out. He sensed that Andy definitely had, had something brewing and might be considering civil action. Ray Parkinson concluded that it was all a storm in a teacup and was best forgotten but suggested that each box of teabags should carry a Government Health Warning "PLEASE DISPOSE OF CAREFULLY - THESE BAGS CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH". On behalf of the division I would like to wish Andy a speedy recovery.

The Police v YMCA 'B' was a very close match with seven sets going to three, but Police winning only one. Len Dyson, returning from the horrific personal injury sustained in his own home and inflicted on him by what can only be described as an inhuman animal, could have won all his three singles having Steve Kce and Mikael Belloc under continued pressure with some strong defensive play. However, it was Steve and Mikael who ran out the eventual winners and both won their three singles (including wins over Gemma Lloyd whom I rate as one of the division's top players). Police will finish just behind the leaders and would have been mid-table except for the twenty welcome points received from walkovers. YMCA 'B' are also safe and deservedly sothey haven't lost for about five matches.

The two Bath Street teams are always forces to be reckoned with because they fight for every point but are always fair with it. I'm told that even though the two teams have been scheduled to meet the last week of the season (something which I thought was changed about 10 years ago to avoid temptation!) the teams have brought the match forward which I think is a very sporting gesture. I'd like to see that match because the teams are so evenly matched. Eddie Crowley of the 'B' team is confident that his side will win. He told me (in confidence!) that in a tight match his side had the advantage because Ian Grant was playing and there was no one he would rather have, on his side, in a tight situation than Ian. Ian (again in confidence!) confirmed that on 'big occasions' the rest of his team looked to him for inspiration and he feels he is the only team member who could confidently hold his own in the higher division ...and he certainly deserves a chance. The 'C' team refused to comment on the 'derby' but hinted that a draw is always on the cards. Well I won't bore you anymore this issue. Please feel free to write comments on the cards...any little tidbits will be tastefully relayed in print. All that remains is to tell you about the facesavers, close wins and good wins.

Three whitewashes with Manweb beating both Wavertree Labour 'A' and Bootle JC and Maghull beating Liverpool YMCA 'B'. Yet again just four facesavers George Higham (Cadwa 'B') beat Sue Burgess (Bath St. 'C') 18, 20. Dave Graham (Bootle JC)

beat Alan Jones (Maghull) 20, 13. Ian Black (Wavertree Labour 'A') beat Sue Burgess (Bath St. 'C') 18, -16, 14. Sylvia Graham (Bootle JC 'A') beat Fred Pheysey (Maghull) 20, -10, 8.

Close Wins: Terri-Anne Nolan (Police 'B') beat Ray Parkinson (Manweb) 21, 22 and in the same match Gemma Lloyd (Police 'B') beat Andy Lloyd (Manweb) 20, 20. Sylvia Graham (Bootle JC 'A') beat George Higham (Cadwa 'B') 20, 22. John Langton (Bath St. 'C') beat Matt Wilson (Maghull) -18, 23, 21. Mikael Belloc (YMCA 'A') beat Dave Harse (Manweb) 21, 21. George Higham (Cadwa 'B') beat Roger Neal (Bootle JC) 20, 19.

Good Wins: Ken Strahan(Bootle JC) beat Ahmed Thabet (YMCA 'A') 19, -17, 18 and in the same match he also beat Mikael Belloc -13, 19, 20. Roger Neal (Bootle JC) beat Paul Bramham (Waterloo 'A') -15, 20, 19.



Division 3

Peter Ross



Sadly the season has been put into perspective by the untimely passing of Billy Proffitt which was a tremendous shock to us all. The last time I saw Billy was at the Closed Championships, where typically, Billy had shown up the day before to help erect the tables etc. and sure enough he was there at the close helping with their removal. I understand that Billy was closely involved in football and golf as well as table-tennis, and gave these sports just as much enthusiasm and commitment. The attendance at Billy's funeral was testament to the regard in which he was held by so many. **He will be missed by us all and I speak for our division in conveying our sympathies to his family and team-mates at Fords.**

Reflecting back to the championships, there was an average turn-out by division three players and they certainly produced a competitive and quality divisional tournament. The predictions of my earlier notes were given some credence, when Les Molyneux came out as winner after a particularly hard battle against Matt Poerschke in the semi-final, and a final win over wily and tireless old stager, Les Gee. Congratulations to all.

At the time of writing, there is approximately one third of the season left to play and the indications are that it is going down to the wire with every likelihood of a play-off which could involve three teams which are currently separated by four points only.

The division has actually settled down, and now consists, more or less, of three separate leagues. The aforesaid top three are still led by Fords by a single point and they will obviously feel the loss of Billy in the run-in. However if they can turn out their strongest four of Grahame Reid, Frank James, Robbie Goldson and evergreen Alf Perry, they can still go all the way.

They are being pushed, as predicted in the last notes, by Manweb 'B' who have rightly re-ranked Les up to No. 1 and he is still ably assisted by Rob and Mike Barker, and probably the best number four in the division in Neil Jennings. (can you get me one of those hips Neil?).

The battle of the number fours saw Neil beat the 'Big L' in a significant match with Police who have turned out to be the final team in the triumvirate challenging for the top. Police have a game in hand over the top two and are just a few points behind, and that 7-3 win over Manweb could have a huge bearing. Man of the match was Tony Harris with three successful visits to the table. If Police can maintain the same turn-out for the remaining games, the title could be theirs. I certainly could not speculate which of these three will triumph.

There is a chasing pack of five teams on the heels of the top three, however it is unlikely that enough ground could be made up. Leading this pack we have Marconi and Manweb 'A' who I think have both under performed, particularly when you see a 6-4 Manweb win over Fords with a treble from Paul Evans.

Incidentally, I wonder what the situation would have been if slightly different combinations had emerged from the Manweb squads at the beginning of the season?, who knows?.

Peter Wass has continued in good form for Marconi and he too has been promoted to number one for the run-in, however as I have said, it is probably a little too late.

Bootle YMCA have proved to be as consistent as ever, mainly, I think, due to their ability to turn out the same four week after week. Perhaps if one or two of the teams above them had been able to show the same consistency, we could well have had a different outcome. Matt Poeschke has turned out to be a tremendous acquisition for the Y.M. and has not lost too many, including a good double over the Jennings brothers at Manweb 'A'.

Waterloo also have a habit of turning out the same four, although I think Ro. Craddock has missed a couple of late. **I hope you are O.K. Ro.** At the time of writing, Waterloo have a couple of games in hand and the right results may push them fourth. As ever their strength lies up at the top of the order, and to date have not seen a card showing a defeat for number one Graeme Black. No doubt someone will put me right.

Clinging on to the coat tails of this second group, are Bath Street with some shuffling in the

team to include Neil Pritchett at number one who probably had his best night at Bootle YMCA with wins over John H. and Matt. Bath Street also had a good night against Waterloo, winning 6-4 after being 4-1 down. Hopefully we are now in the safety zone.

The foot of the table is as interesting and competitive as the top with nothing conclusive at present, other than the bottom four consists of the two Wavertree Labour teams and both of the Maghull teams. Labour 'C' look to be almost safe, but will be disappointed because the first half of the season saw them placed quite respectably. A run of poor results since Christmas produced a downward slide, but they too, are a side that puts out the same four consistently, and I think they will survive.

Labour 'B' have also produced a better second half and have crept above Maghull 'A' and whilst they only have one win to their credit, they have picked up some useful points, mainly at the expense of the Maghull teams, but I do not think they are safe yet.

Perhaps it is no coincidence to find the Wavertree and Maghull teams in these precarious positions because I think that both clubs have lost some of their stronger players recently, and I sympathise with those players who are currently trying to keep their clubs afloat.

Maghull 'A' have been sucked down to next to bottom, however with a game in hand and vast experience in their midst, they will battle it out until the very end. Eddie Preston, Tommy Downing, George Frost and Harry McGanity; show me a team that will battle more than that line-up.

Unfortunately I do not think there is any escape for Maghull 'B'. Sadly they have been unable to produce a win all season, yet perusing the cards, I find that Phil Christie, Steve McGanity, Brian Gregory and Wilf Gibson have all produced good individual performances at different times. I suspect that if they go down, they will return soon.

Talking of individual performances, to date the face-savers include John Higham at Fords, Colin Fyles against Waterloo, Eddie Preston against Police, Kevin Lewis for Maghull 'A' against Marconi, George Frost against Bootle Y.M., and a particularly good result for Peter Howden (Labour 'B') playing at number one, at Fords.

There are not too many games left to the end of the season, however there is still a lot to play for and there may be some surprises in store. I hope that the division continues to produce a high standard of play in the friendliest of atmospheres.

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DIVISION 4 DOUG BAKER



CADWA 'C' have continued their push for promotion with a pace that has not seen the gap 'twixt them and the chasing pack diminish, this despite a few problems with player availability. They visited **Maghull 'C'** with a reserve and then had to concede walkovers with a no show. Alan Davies was the only man to lose, against Bill Salter. Losing the first to 19, he then looked down and out in the second but had a tremendous run of points to level. But the effort seemed to have taken a lot out of him, as he failed to dominate in the final game. Bob Peverall performed better, beating Bill in 3 and catching up with Alan in the percentages stakes in the process. Home to **Wav Lab 'D'**, two reserves came off the 'D' team subs bench which allowed Ken & Stan to get a singles win, and they then doubled up to maintain their 100% record whilst taking Alan & Robs unbeaten record. Again with two (different) reserves from the 'D' team at **Linacre**, it wasn't the reserves who lost in the 8-2 victory, as Alan & Rob felt the harsh wrath of Harry Reeve as he failed to buckle from deuce in both matches.

When 'C' met 'D', it was 'D' who were one short, so the 7-3 result could be better interpreted as a 4-3. Alan had very similar games, getting his monies worth after losing the first game to both Steve Critchley & Trevor Dolder 20/22, but gaining composure in the final games. Whereas Bob Peverall lost to Steve, as did Peter Roberts to Trevor Dolder (who was in a strong purple patch) and Doug beating Ian Burrows. Peter & Ian have picked up their games since then, although Peter would not like to be reminded how Stephanie Howard beat him to save a white wash for Wav Lab 'E', so I won't. And it was precisely 10-0s meted out to **Aighurth** and **Manweb 'C'**. Carl Anderson couldn't thwart Alan (20/22 in 3rd), Eric Wood had Peter on the ropes in the 2nd at deuce, eventually 23/25, and Pete Carney was piped to the post by Ian in 3, 23/25. **Bath St 'E'** fared slightly better, the notes on the card best describe the match: "Despite the 8-2 result CADWA 'C' appeared under pressure as 4 games were 3 setters with Bath St players Edwards and Willis resoundly winning in the third against Roberts & Critchley respectively. CADWA 'C' retain 100% record this season as the push for promotion enters it's third phase".

There was a telling meeting of relegation dodgers in November when **Wavertree Labour 'E'** played hosts to **Linacre**. Anthony Mitchell playing at number 1 in the absence of Dave Foulis got the evening off to a good start for the home side beating Jack Davidson in 2. Steve Perry, never one to resist a challenge, then sportingly called himself on

against the oppo's number one Harry Reeve. Steve gave as good as he got and narrowly lost the second game 24/26. Clara Howard then overturned the formbook as 4 beat 3 (in the guise of Ken Ainsworth) in the only 3 gamer of the night. Eric Spencer then beat Frank Lacey to give **WL'E'** a two point cushion that they maintained to the end of the night, winning out 6-4. Not a big margin of victory, but an important psychological advantage to the Perrites.

Another club with strength in depth, **Bath Street**, will be no doubt proud of the way the 'E' team have been acquitting themselves. Dashing aside challenges of **Bootle YM** and **Wav Lab 'D' & 'E'** to the tune of 7-3. **BS'E'** seem to be dancing to a 4/5 beat, alternating the number 4 spot between Dave Batty and Norman Lindsay. Reg is the main Orchestrator, Dave Stoddern the soloist, and Dave Cunningham the capable accompanist. Two of the best players in the division came head to head when **BS'E'** took on **Linacre** in the bleak mid-season of December. Dave Stoddern came back from a crushing first game defeat to overcome Harry 24/22 in the decider. Things started well for **Linacre** with Harry beating Reg, and at the tea break they were only 2-3 down. But a team pushing for promotion takes no prisoners and **BS'E'** won the second half 5-0, recording 8-2 on the card. **Aighurth's** top four took advantage of a weakened **BS'E'** who played a club ranked 35 at number 4, to win 6-4. Surprisingly Carl Anderson beat Reg Edwards in a hotly contested encounter (21/19 in't 3rd) but then succumbed to Norman. Reg had a similar taut battle with Graham "Rollo" Rollinson, but this time got the right side of the 19/21 third game. Alan Willis was brought in for the game against **CADWA 'C'**, and he beat opposing sub Steve Critchley to secure a point, as Reg beat Peter Roberts for the only highlights in the 2-8 defeat. Honours were more even when **BS'E'** visited **CADWA** to play the 'D' team. Dave & Reg were on top form to bag their singles brace, but **CADWA 'D'** came back to level the match as a draw.

Wav Labs teams have had conflicting fortunes and only a 3-7 defeat from **Bath Street** in common. Team 'D' have had a steady stream of victories, so the defeat by **BS'E'** was even more of a surprise. Dave & Reg were strong and all 4 of the 3 gamers went to the visitors. Ken in both his matches could have won but lost from deuce. Stan learnt the hard way how much **BS'E'** don't want to go up losing 20/22 to Reg in the 3rd. **Aighurth** put up a solid resistance to secure a draw, Carl Anderson being the man of the match for the home team beating Ken & Rez, and Stan m.o.t.m. for Wav Lab 'D' beating Graham and Ray Jones. These dips have been overcome with strong wins:- 8-2 over **Maghull 'C'** (praise Denise Chorley for beating Ken and Bill for beating Paul Banks), 7-3 over **Linacre**, 6-4 at the **Liv YM** (Ken overcoming Mr Clewett and Russell) and best of all to date 9-1 v **Bootle YM** (Berty preventing the whitewash, as Rez & sub Dave Goulden pulled

out all the stops to both beat Peter Williams over 3).

Wav Lab 'E' have different concerns. They've set themselves up with a chance of avoiding being thrown into the crack of doom by limiting the defeats and beating rivals. They put the **Maghull Nagul** to the sword 7-3, the main feat of wizardry being Dave Foulis (21/18 & 27/25) v Bill Salter. Dave in turn found **Aigburth** a tougher prospect losing to Rollo and then Carl (losing from deuce in the 3rd), which he tells me is a trait he has developed of late), at least Anthony Mitchell held his own as **Aigburth** won 6-4 with Cap'n Woodsy leading by example. Different venue, same team, same score at **Manweb**, as their top two; Conley & Ashley were undefeated. A draw v **CADWA 'D'** was very welcome as Dave returned to form winning against the St Helens lads in two straight. And as for the **BS'E'** game mentioned above at least Steve Perry will look back on his defeat of Reg Edwards with fondness, as will Anthony on his game v Dave Cunningham. This must have been a long nights labour as seven games went to a third, all of which were decided within a four point margin.

Chain Mail : To sum up the remaining cards, here's a nice little chain ...

Bootle YM 'A' took full advantage of back to back home games, firstly beating **Linacre** 8-2, where Berty played his game of the season in beating Harry for the first time in a league match, coming from a game down, narrowly pinching the second set 29/27 and storming the decider. Another season's first was both Jim & Peter winning both their singles. The following week similar score of 7-3 dished out to **Aigburth**, again Bert winning both, and Mike & Peter doing same with each of their 4 sets going to a third game. These results restored a good home record for BYM which had been dented by the visit of YM rivals **Liverpool YMCA 'C'**, 4-6, Russell & Johnny Tsang turning the tide for the visitors.

Playing at home **LYM 'C'** had a similar downfall, losing to **CADWA 'D'** 4-6, again thanks to two good performances, this time from Critchley and Dolder who were both pleased to beat the redoubtable Mr Clewett. I have to admit that Jonny had a good comeback in the third game against mesell, to win out 22/20. YM shared a draw at Linacre, Linacre's 3rd of the season and a good result for them. However they'd have preferred to have Harry available for the crucial match with Aigburth, especially as they too were without their number 1 - Graham Rollinson. You'd hardly call it a weakened team as Aigburth won through 8-2, with only Jack Davidson flying the flag of victory for on the Linacre pole. Aigburth, with Rollo, didn't travel as well to **CADWA 'D'**, losing 4-6 with Lee Proffitt standing in at short notice. Steve & John O'Sullivan were the key men for **CADWA** on this occasion. On the trip North to **Maghull John & Trevor** suffered at the hands of Bill Salter, but

John enjoyed playing old coachce Denise Chorley, who in turn enjoyed playing Jack Highton, as the evening again ended 6-4 to **CADWA 'D'**.

Maghull 'C's first game of the new year was a bitter experience with only the tactic of playing 1&2 as second doubles earning them a point at **Bath St 'E'**. Denise & John Gillibrand are making a good stab at first doubles, usually going down 1-2. **Bath St 'E'** then played hosts the following week as they beat **Manweb 'C'** 7-3. Not bad, 16 points out of 20, promotion form indeed. Pete Carney was involved in all 3 **Manweb** points, first narrowly beating Reg in game one, and comfortably in game 2. A fortnight later and the same **Manweb 4** were at home to **Liverpool YM 'C'**, enjoying a well earned 8-2 victory. John Ashley got the best of starts in the wars with Jimmy Clewett and Alvin Tso, whilst Arthur had close encounters with Jimmy (lost) and Russell (won). Johnny Tsang found P.Carney too strong, but was in turn too strong for A Radcliffe. In YMs 7-3 win over **Aigburth**, Jimmy lost to Rollo, but Alvin and Francis Lay held firm. Much the same performance a week later with **Maghull 'C'** visiting and Johnny replacing Francis at 4, result 8-2. Without Bill, Naresh Tagore led the team and came as close as anyone to beating Jimmy, 21/17, 20/22, 20/22, but not quite. However Denise did surprise young JC winning in two straight and almost made it a double losing narrowly to Russell who regained his cool after losing the second game from deuce. Naresh & Denise teamed up to steal the other point out of the pockets of Jimmy & Russell. The score was the same at their next game, home against the other YM team of the Bootle variety. Bill did for Bert and Naresh did for Jim Geddes for the 2 points. But that was their only highlights as Mike Hughes & Peter Williams proved unstoppable. With Arthur Garnett barking orders from the sidelines, Bootle YM turned in another impressive performance 8-2 over **Manweb 'C'**. Mike will definitely be off John Ashley's crimbo card list due to his 25/23, 22/22 parrot sickner. It was against **Manweb 'C'** that **CADWA 'D'** had one of their better nights winning 7-3, in the return to the fixture mentioned above. Rob Conley was available that night but Pete Carney wasn't. **CADWA 'D'** had Don Davies making a welcome return. Alan Biggs was back and showed signs of his old self beating Don & yours truly (20/22 in the 3rd). Not a good night for me as John Ashley's determination also won through. What a comforting note for me to end my resume of the cards on:- me losing both my singles. What do you mean again!

A quick word on the Forrest Cup where **CADWA 'C'**, to no ones surprise are in the final after beating a valiant **Aigburth** in the first semi. Club mates **CADWA 'D'** were unable to make it an all **CADWA** final, losing at **Wav Lab 'D'** who although without number 1 Paul Banks, were able to bolster the side with Dave Foulis at 4.

So, rather like a 1500 metres race CADWA 'C' are 200 metres ahead going into the last lap. But the chasing pack seems to be slowing down, encouraging each other to take the lead. This is most likely due to the prospect of 3 teams going up this year. There's a strong whiff of BS (and I'm not talking backspin here) coming from team captains. When Ken & even Reg try to make you believe that they don't want to go up, you have to ask them 'well, why are you still winning?' It's a strange situation when I get chastised by the fellow promotion contenders for my team not winning enough games! There's no such talk from Trevor Dolder, who will only accept a sick note from God as an excuse for missing a match.

Take care of yourself, and each other.

Doug Baker.

Stop Press:

Dateline: 12th March 2002.

Location: Liverpool YM

Strapline: Forrest Cup, Final Result : CADWA 'C'

5 - Wavertree Labour 'D' 2

Congratulations to the CADWA 'C' boys. Anyone want to bet against a double?



DIVISION 5

RON GEORGESON

Predicting the likely division winners was, at one stage, fairly clear. Only one team was in the frame, that being Waterloo. They made all the early running and the team of both Nelsons, Ken and Harry supported by Graham Oates set the pace. They may well prove to be the eventual champions, but now pushing them very hard are Marconi 'B'. Their team which started the season, and taking heavy defeats, has metamorphosed out of all recognition, and I now believe them to be stronger than Waterloo. They both met in the Div. cup and Marconi took it 5-4. As recently as Feb. Marconi entertained them and won 6-4. Wins for Andy Owen over Ted Cramsie and Harry Nelson, Tony Mullally chipping in with a two straight defeat of Eddie Rowbottom.

Walkovers! Why do they happen? I can only see two so far. But in both cases the two teams to benefit are the two teams who need them - the least, Yes! Marconi and Waterloo. One by Maghull and the other from Police..... My own team Bath St." F", I fear will most likely finish in 3rd. spot. Defeats by Waterloo early in the season and in the return match will cost us come the season end. Chris Blackburn,



who can only play a limited number of times due to his work pattern, came in against Waterloo, won his two beating Eddie Rowbottom and Ken Nelson. Very innocuous style Chris, but everything floats back and you have to win every point, nothing is given away. Dave Batty has also been under the weather health-wise this season, and is only now coming back to something like his own form.

Our "H" team, mostly the Ladies, are making an impact, and have been taking points off most teams. Led by Myra Lovelady at No. 1 and backed up by Barbara Alcock. Myra beat Dave Batty in the "F" and "H" team clash and the ever dependable Albert Parker chipped in with a straight sets win over George Crowley. Our "G" team, captained by Richard Woodley are making an impact also. Richard beating Bob Rawlinson from Police, in two straight. Wins also for Eugene Berger.... Get everything back! and reserve Barbara Alcock in the same match.

Aigburth, led by Eric Young, are holding mid table position, strengthened by the return of Derek Traynor and the ever improving Lee Proffitt. But he has to learn how to play against the old style Barna bats that he comes up against in the league. When Paul Grugel is playing they can take points off everyone.

Greenbank are also mid table and with Tony Edge playing, he is the platform they work from, I can only see one defeat for him so far, and this to Tony Mullally at Marconi. Good to see them turning up to play their away games at Bath St. They did suffer a 10-0 to Waterloo, but Tony and No. 1 John Sherratt both missing for this match.

The two Harold House teams swop around their players, but when Stephen Simpson is Playing for the "B" team they are quite useful. A 7-3 win over Bath St. "G" resulted for two wins for Stephen and two for Gary Abrams. The "A" side could be a force if they could field Eddie Clein every week together with Mike Poole and Dave Cohen. A very good win for Richard Beilan over Ian Woods in an 8-2 defeat by Marconi.

Not many games to go now! Our new Editor is after me for these notes, I have only received the cards at the last moment. If I have missed any notable performances, I will catch up in the final Digest edition.

Regards, and a Happy Easter to all.....



Editor

Rons comment on Eddie Clein makes sense, having read Paul Gittins report on the 1st. Division, Eddie is helping the H.H. 1st team out in the top Div. and taking quite a few 'scalps' in the process, so Eddie is definitely the one to beat if you come up against him, but don't hold your breath!



Match Secretary's Report

Don Davies

Two divisional Titles in the bag, the possibility of another one, and a cup final to come. It would have been difficult to repeat last seasons haul of six trophies, but with the Men and Women having retained the two major titles, one cannot complain. A couple of weeks before the Veterans first team were due to face Stockport we were advised by the Secretary of the Lancashire & Cheshire League that their record had been expunged. We subsequently beat Blackburn a month later which left us as champions. This was due to the fact that none of their players had appeared in the Stockport League, having opted to play in the Thameside League. The ex. Stockport players felt that Thameside, (who play in division one) should take over Stockport's position in the Premier Division, but the L & C. League Executive Committee decided that this could not be allowed.

Amazingly, a few weeks ago, Mike Power received a telephone call, advising that they had been reinstated into the league but now called Stockport / Thameside!! At the time of this going to press, I'm not sure if the two Liverpool v Stockport matches (the other being in the mens Premier Division) will be played. If the Veteran match is to be played, we would have to take both points if the title is to remain in Liverpool.

The Ladies squad of Brenda Buoey, Alice Howard, Sue Burgess and Julie Prince, entered the last match of the season against Southport requiring a 9-1 score-line to retain the title. Brenda took the opening set before Sue was beaten by Sylvia Graham, but after a number of close calls, Alice and Brenda (3 each and the doubles) plus two from Sue did the trick. I was unable to be there since I was playing on that night, but this success gave me great pleasure, and I am thrilled for the girls. Sue and Brenda first played for the League in 1969 and it's amazing that they should still be winning Titles. **Well done to all concerned.**

The Men retained their premier division title, although when they visited Bolton, they came up against John Hilton and Louis Rosenthal but emerged with a fine 8-2 victory. **More in the next issue.**

It has been a difficult season for the veteran 'A' and 'B' teams, due to a number of players being unavailable. Allan Chase and Ted Birch decided to give this season a miss, which meant a juggling act to turn out a full team of suitable players. At one stage five players were unavailable for a 'B' team match at Trafford, and I had to call on George Higham and Rob Davies at the last minute, along with regular Ahmed Thabet, the trio forcing a creditable draw.

The League agreed as an act of goodwill and in the interest of sport in general, to continue the infamous Oldham 'B' match with our 'B' leading 4-1. Both sides should have turned out the same three men but Dave Gill, the owner of the bat in question, had unfortunately suffered a heart attack, and may not play again. His place was taken by Oldham secretary Bob Johnson. While we expected to call on Ahmed, George Smith and Ricky Brown. George had recently undergone an operation and hadn't played a match since being hospitalised. Ron Georgeson kindly agreed to drive the team, but shortly before they left, Ricky telephoned to say he was stuck on the motorway, resulting in him missing the match leaving us one short! Ahmed won his two remaining sets however to secure the points in a match that should have been awarded to us by virtue of the rule book, since all sets must be played and any dispute addressed after the match. The home team refused to continue without good reason. How players reading this would walk out if someone said " In my opinion your bat is illegal ". Three local umpires that I have spoken to said they would have questioned the legality of the bat. Will this problem be addressed at the May AGM ? I hope so.

A full round up of results will appear in the final Digest.

The Norman Cook Memorial Trophy

The Final of this tournament will be between Liverpool and Blackpool.

The match will take place at Sutton Cricket Club, St. Helens on 18th April commencing at 7-30.
All are welcome

The coaching scene is still moving forward, expanding slowly, but it's the schools we need to move forward with, as Ken Armson keeps saying, the interest is in the schools, with requests for players of any ability to help with the basics first to get the interest going, and then to improve the coaching side, of course the problem with the schools is the usual time of the sessions are straight after school, 3-30 to 5, so the category of players to fit the bill are anyone who has retired, or works very flexible hours. As I am now one of those 'retirees', I have started giving a hand with the experts, first with Dave Oakes in Childwall Comprehensive and now at Fazakerly High. Dave has got a good level of interest going at Childwall, with 4 or 5 chinese lads, all sporting the 'penholder grip' (how do we coach them), with loads of interest, I can see a top school team of the future, and loads of interest from the other lads. The improvement in the boys, (no girls, yet) since we first started at Childwall just before Christmas, is so marked, it's that long ago, I've forgotten how difficult it was to hit the ball with the bat. Now I hope to get the same motivation going at Fazakerly. Ken and the others are still going strong at Lee Park, and Stan Clarke at Archbishop Beck. Bath St. and Dave & Sylvia Graham are going strong, but I'm sure it's the schools we need to get the interest started.

Interested ??

Give Ken Armson a ring



Dave Oakes taking one of the sessions at Childwall Comprehensive

Backhand Drive (it's never too late to learn)



- ◆ Feet and body facing the direction of play.
- ◆ Knees relaxed throughout the stroke.
- ◆ Head over the ball at point of contact.



- ◆ Elbow accelerates into the ball.
- ◆ Feet evenly balanced.

Brenda Buoey has kindly loaned me a few copies of the ETTA Table Tennis News, so that I may be able to glean any interesting topics for the Digest. Having had a quick look through them, I was impressed by the high number of local players who are well up the National rankings in the various levels they play at, and by the amount of T.T. played nationally, young and old.

Thanks Brenda

1st Div. READMAN CUP Final

venue -: Fords 15.3.02

CADWA v LIVERPOOL YMCA

First on the table were Cadwa's Kevin Dolder and YM's Peter Lee, Kevin dominating both games to win 21-11 / 21-8.

Next on was CADWA's Mike Mahoney to play Deli Olyumbo, Mike taking a close set 21-17 / 21-19.

CADWA 2 up

The next game brought YM's young Paul O'Donnell and CADWA's veteran, Keith Williams to the table with Keith controlling the games to win 21-12 / 21-17.

Fourth call was Mike Mahoney to play Peter Lee, another hard fought game with Peter taking the set 21-14 / 20-22 / 21-14.

3-1 to CADWA.

Next on, Kevin v Deli. Deli being unable to control Kevins' power playing . Kevin winning 21-11 / 21-13

CADWA coasting at 4-1.

Final game of the evening, as it turned out, was Mike v Paul, with mike clinching this one 21-15 / 21-12, and with it a 5-1 set win to take the Cup.

All CADWA's wins in 2, YM's win in 3, this the strength of this CADWA team, but good play from all players.

Reported by John Langton



Winning CADWA team L to R.

Mike Mahoney, Keith Williams and Kevin Dolder.

Runners up L/Pool YMCA were

Peter Lee

Paul O'Donnell and Deli Olyumbo

2nd Div. RUMJAHN Cup Final

venue -: CADWA

Manweb v Maghull

Maghull won the toss, elected to be the away team and called Matt Wilson against Manwebs' Andy Lloyd, with Matt winning the opening set 20-22 / 21-16 / 21-12.

Next, Manweb called Dave Harse against Alan Jones, Dave winning this one 21-11 / 21-16. Maghull then called Andy on again, against Fred Pheysey, but Andy took this set 21-5 / 19-21 / 21-11.

Set 4, and Manweb's superstar Ray Parkinson takes the table against Allan Jones (again), after a real cliff hanger, Ray takes this set 22-24 / 26-24 / 21-16.

3-1to Manweb.

Maghull captain Fred, calls himself on against Dave, at which point Dave produces his " tip" for total concentration, (see Sylvia's unabridged match report), after another close set, Dave wins through 21-17 / 19-21 / 21-17.

With Manweb leading by 4 sets to 1, it's the battle of the two No. 3's, Manwebs Andy and Maghull's Allan, Allan winning the first game, but Andy powering through the next two, to win the set 12-21 / 21-14 / 21-13, and give Manweb the final set to win the cup 5 sets to 1.

Reported by Sylvia Graham



Winning MANWEB team L.to R.

Dave Harse. Ray Parkinson and Andy Lloyd

Runner up Maghulls' team of

Fred Pheysey, Matt Wilson and Allan Jones

3rd.Div. HYDE Cup Final

Venue :- Bootle YMCA, 13/3/02

FORDS 'A' v POLICE 'C'

Police won the toss, and Tony Harris their captain elected to play "away". His first choice, the 2 'ones', Paula French v Frank James, Frank won this opener 21-19 / 21-14.

Fords captain Graham Reid then called himself on to play against Police No. 3, Len Dyson, Len won this one 21-18 / 21-10. 1-1, both against the call.

Police then called Captain Tony on against Fords No. 3 Robbie Goldson, Robbie won this one 21-12 / 21-10, another against the call.

Robbie decided to stay on the table and take on Police No. 4 Ritchie Winkle, Robbie again coming off winning in 2 straight, 21-16 / 21-13.

Fords pulling away 3-1.

Next, Police called on Paula to play Graham, after the closest match yet, Graham made it with a straight 2 games, 21-19 / 21-18.

Fords now leading 4-1, and needing only one more win for the trophy, and their call.

Graham went for the two 'fours', Arthur Pierce to play Ritchie Winkle, this was the only game going to 3, and it decided the match, Arthur battling through to win 18-21 / 21-17 / 21-19. to take the Hyde Cup for the Fords club.

Reported by Arthur Garnet



Winning Fords 'A' Team pictured L to R. Robbie Goldson, Arthur Pierce, Frank James & Graham Reid.

Runners up Police 'C' were

Paula French, Tony Harris, Len Dyson & Ritchie Winkle.

4th. Div. Forrest Cup

Venue:- Liverpool YMCA 12/3/02

Wavertree Labour 'D' v CADWA 'C'

Wavertree won first call, and called on Stan Clarke to play Ian Burrows, Stan winning 2-1.

Second game saw the two ones playing, Allan Davies and Paul Banks, Allan winning 21-14 / 17-21 / 21-9.

Third game on saw Ken Armson playing Peter Roberts, experience told, with Ken winning 21-9 / 21-9. The fourth game saw Rob Peverall playing Paul Banks, Rob winning this one 2-1. Level at 2 all

The 2 fours played next, Ian Burrows v Rez Miramadi, with Ian just managing to pip Rez in the 3rd. game 23-21, to win 2-1.

Allan played Ken in the next game, Allan winning 21-15 / 10-21 / 21-17, but Ken made him sweat a bit with 'that bat' 4-2 for CADWA.

Wavertree called on the doubles, Ken & Stan v Allan & Rob, this saw experience give youth something to think about. CADWA came out on top in the end winning this one 21-19 / 21-17.

Taking the match and the cup, 5-2 on the night. Congratulations CADWA.

Reported by Dave Oakes

Sorry I didn't have a cup final photo



Winning Cadwa team

L.to R. Peter Roberts , Rob Peverall , Allan Davies and Ian Burrows.

Runners up Wavertree Labour team of Paul Banks, Ken Armson, Stan Clarke and Rez Miramadi

5th Div. STAMP CUP

Venue:- Waterloo 11/3/02

Harold House 'A' v Marconi 'B'.

Marconi won the toss and elected to be the away team with their first call being Tony Mullally and David Cohen.

Tony winning 21-7 / 21-13

The second game saw Paul Morgan and John Rowan on the table, Paul winning this one 21-17 / 23-21

Third game on was David Cohen and Ian Woods, Ian won this one 21-19 / 21-6.

2-1 to Marconi.

Next on were the two No. 1's, Paul Morgan and Andy Owens, Andy winning this hard fought match 21-16 / 21-15.

Next dual was Mike Poole and John Rowan, John overcoming Mike with a 21-16 / 21-6 win.

In what turned out to be the last game of the evening, Martin Roberts and Tony Mullally contested a tense 3 games, Tony coming out tops with a 25-23 / 18-21 / 21-17 win which gave Marconi the 5-1 to win the Cup.

All in all, a very competitive final which was a credit to both teams in the sporting way the match was conducted. Well done to both teams.

Reported by John Langton.



The winning Marconi 'B' team

L to R was Andy Owens, Ian Woods, Tony Mullally & John Rowan.

Harold House 'A' team

Paul Morgan, Martin Roberts, Mike Poole & David Cohen

The management Committee, which is your chance to help to run the League is still in need of new officers, contact Mike Power.

Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy (Vets. Handicap Cup)

Venue :- Liverpool YMCA 21/3/02

Manweb 1 v Police

Police had trouble fielding a side as two regular players, Tony Harris and Gareth Jones, were away on holiday. Their "scratch" included John Rankin, Dave Crispin and regular Len Dyson.

The Manweb team was Andy Lloyd, Ray Parkinson and Dave Harse.

Police elected to be the away team and the first game on as per the set order was Dave Harse v John Rankin. Manweb started the Final with a 27 point lead. John won this one 21-19 / 21-10.

The second game was between Andy Lloyd and Len Dyson, Len won this one 21-16 / 21-11. Police were now ahead by 1 point.

Ray Parkinson and Dave Crispin came to the table next, Ray winning 21-10 / 21-8.

Next game, Andy Lloyd v John Rankin, John winning 21-12 / 21-15.

4 games gone, Manweb in front by 8 points.

Next game, Dave Harse v Dave Crispin, Dave Harse winning 21-12 / 21-8.

Ray v Len next, Ray winning a close match 21-17 / 21-19.

Manweb now ahead by 36 points, the two threes next, Andy Lloyd v Dave Crispin, Andy winning 21-12 / 21-9.

With Manweb now in front by 59 points, Len decided his back had taken enough punishment and conceded his game to Dave Harse.

The final game was between Ray and John, with John winning comfortably 8 and 10.

Manweb won by 431 to 356.

Reported by John Langton



The winning Manweb team

L to R was Dave Harse, Andy Lloyd and Ray Parkinson, being presented with the Trophy by Marjorie Murphy Window of Frank Murphy

Letters to the Editor

137 Copy Lane
Netherton
Merseyside
L30 7RF

Dear Editor,

RE Rubbers:- legal or not legal

As per my telephone call to you re the above article in the December 2001 issue of the digest I feel perturbed at the innuendos that were issued against a player in the Oldham representative team. The article used terms such as 'rumbled' and 'the desire to win heading in the wrong direction' insinuating that the Oldham player was doing something 'illegal'. I realise that you were commenting on a report in the Liverpool Echo but I believe that you, as Editor, have a responsibility to your readers to ensure that when quoting details from the Liverpool Echo, those details are full and accurate. I might add that as the match was so controversial and the Lancashire & Cheshire Committee would almost certainly be involved was it folly on the author's part to publish it in the Echo in the first place?

I've played against two of the Oldham Vets teams and what a nice bunch they are! and I'd like to report their account of what happened..... The agreed start time for the match was 2.30 p.m. and the Liverpool team arrived at 3.40 pm. Rule 11(g) would have allowed the Oldham team to have claimed the match 40 minutes earlier but they didn't so surely the comment 'the desire to win heading in the wrong direction' was uncalled for. Also, the Oldham team were 4 sets to 1 down when the bat was questioned so obviously the player had already played at least one set. Why was the bat not questioned earlier? The rest of the Oldham team refused to continue to play because they felt that they had nothing to play for. If, as the Liverpool Captain insisted, the bat was illegal (I think it was because one of the rubbers did not have the ITTF logo stamped on it!) then Oldham would be 6:1 down, it was getting late and the venue itself was only booked to 6 pm and I think under the circumstances I would have felt a little cheesed off myself.

On reflection perhaps the Liverpool Captain would wish that he had not disputed the legality of the bat so vigorously because the bat used by the Oldham player was in fact completely legal

for that match. The match was in the Lancashire & Cheshire League and this League has not adopted the ITTF Regulations so rubbers need only conform to the ETTA Approved Laws of the Game i.e. they must be red/black, within the maximum thickness, continuous and an even surface. "Slight deviations from continuity of surface or uniformity of colour due to accidental damage or wear may be allowed provided that they do not significantly change the characteristics of the surface". Rubbers used in the Lancashire & Cheshire League do not have to have the ITTF logo stamped on them, as this is an ITTF Regulation.

I hope you will print this letter and which gives the Oldham account and then let the Liverpool League players decide the rights and wrongs themselves.

Regards,
Sylvia Graham

Editors Reply

Dear Sylvia,

Thanks for your letter ref. my article, on reflection my use of the terms mentioned was regrettable, and could have been worded differently, and as such offer my apologies to the Oldham players concerned if offended, **I did not** intend to either 'inuend' or 'insinuate'.

I **did** check the then known facts relating to my article, the bat in question, 'wasn't quite right', and as no one appeared to be aware of the L. & C. ruling on this, everyone seemed to agree. As I am not party to an L. & C. League rule book, I did have a look in our L/pool & Dist. Rule book, which is quite clear on the ITTF logo issue, it must be shown on the rubber, I assumed (wrongly, we now know) this would be applicable to other Leagues. In my "humble opinion", a piece cut out of a commercial vehicle tyre inner-tube, would pass the L. & C. ruling, only question being, how black is black.

But the point I was trying to make with the Article was the fact that, whatever the problem was with the bat, the player agreed, but the rest of the team refused to carry on. I accept that it was a great gesture on the Oldham teams part to wait for the Liverpool team to arrive very late, but I would think it is very traumatic getting the timing right for any match in the Greater Manchester Area.

League Tables compiled up to 31 March .02

DIVISION ONE	P	W	D	L	PTS
CAD.WA	16	15	1	0	131
HAROLDHOUSE	17	9	2	6	88
WAV. LABOUR	15	9	3	3	86
L'POOL YMCA	15	9	4	2	85
MSIDE POLICE	15	7	4	4	83
BATH STREET	15	6	1	8	75
BATH STREET 'A'	16	8	2	6	74
MARCONI	18	3	1	14	69
WATERLOO	17	2	3	12	63
CAD.WA 'A'	15	2	3	10	56
FORDS	13	3	2	8	50

DIVISION TWO	P	W	D	L	PTS
L'POOL YMCA 'A'	19	17	1	1	137
MANWEB	19	15	2	2	134
MAGHULL	19	13	3	3	127
MSIDE POLICE 'B'	18	9	2	7	94
BOOTLE J.C. 'A'	19	7	3	9	90
WATERLOO 'A'	18	8	1	9	89
BATH STREET 'B'	18	9	1	8	87
L'POOL YMCA 'B'	18	7	3	8	87
BATH STREET 'C'	17	4	3	10	74
CAD.WA. 'B'	18	2	3	13	67
BOOTLE J.C.	17	3	4	10	58
WAV. LAB 'A'	18	2	0	16	46

M'Side Police 'A' — Record expunged.

DIVISION THREE	P	W	D	L	PTS
MSIDE POLICE 'C'	18	15	2	1	131
MANWEB 'B'	18	16	1	1	128
FORDS 'A'	18	14	0	4	125
MARCONI 'A'	18	11	1	6	106
MANWEB 'A'	18	11	3	4	102
BOOTLE YMCA	18	8	3	7	96
WATERLOO 'B'	16	9	1	6	93
BATH STREET 'D'	19	5	1	13	82
WAV. LAB 'C'	17	5	0	12	56
WAV. LAB 'B'	17	1	2	14	50
MAGHULL 'A'	17	3	1	13	49
MAGHULL 'B'	18	0	2	16	42

DIVISION FOUR	P	W	D	L	PTS
CAD.WA 'C'	16	16	0	0	132
CAD.WA 'D'	18	10	4	4	99
WAV. LAB 'D'	16	11	1	4	98
BATH STREET 'E'	16	9	1	6	88
BOOTLE YMCA 'A'	17	5	3	9	79
MANWEB 'C'	17	6	2	9	77
AIGBURTH	16	7	1	8	75
L'POOL YMCA 'C'	16	6	2	8	73
WAV. LAB 'E'	15	5	3	7	65
LINACRE	16	2	4	10	57
MAGHULL 'C'	17	2	1	14	57

W— includes 10 points from walkovers

DIVISION FIVE	P	W	D	L	PTS
WATERLOO 'C'	16	14	0	2	129
MARCONI 'B'	16	12	1	3	121
BATH STREET 'F'	15	12	0	3	108
HAROLDHSE 'A'	14	12	0	2	99
AIGBURTH 'A'	14	7	0	7	70
MAGHULL 'D'	16	4	1	11	60
HAROLDHSE 'B'	15	5	0	10	56
GREENBANK	15	4	0	11	54
BATH STREET 'H'	16	5	1	10	51
BATH STREET 'G'	16	3	1	12	47
MSIDE POLICE 'D'	16	4	0	11	45

W
W

There's been quite a few changes in the top and bottom places since the last tables out only 2 weeks ago, with some teams having quite a few matches to catch up.

Fords, bottom in Div.1, 19 points behind Marconi, with 5 games in hand, but can they put the points in the bag ?

I think the only sure bets for the doubles are Div.1 Cadwa and Div.4 Cadwa 'C', + Cadwa 'C' for a 100%, hope I'm not tempting faith !!

Editor

I have had to condense all of the actual match reports sent in by the various reporters at the finals because of their length, (as you can appreciate, this Digest is pretty full), but the full and entertaining reports can be found on the Liverpool T.T. Web site.

Page 2 pin-up

Those of you who have played Eddie Preston in the past will probably remember that look of determination, doesn't growl as much now though.