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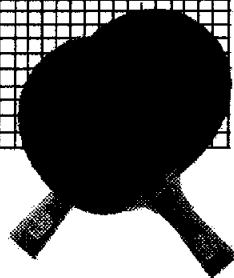
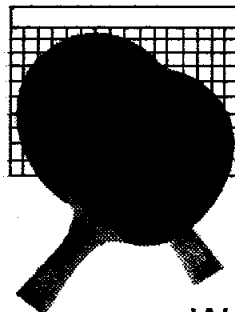
LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT
TENNIS LEAGUE

MARCH 2005



SEASON 2004-2005

TABLE
DIGEST
TENNIS



Web Site. <http://www.ldttl.co.uk>

EDITORIAL

A good indication to me that this season is slowly moving closer to the end than the start, is that I've just gone through the process of arranging venues for the divisional cup finals, and we now know all the teams who will be contesting each final, all club secretaries have been notified and hopefully this information will filter down to all league players, so why not pay a visit to any of the venues and watch a final.

A successful Stiga Junior 4 Star Tournament took place at the Greenbank Academy in January, with the winners as expected, but not without a fright for the top junior boy, full report on page 9 .

A big thanks to the helpers who collected, delivered, erected, dismantled, carted, and returned to the Police Club, all the required equipment.

The next big league tournament will be our own closed competition , (ENTRY FORM in this Digest), it will take place shortly after the season has finished, so hopefully a big end of season turnout will be on the cards, again those same helpers will be asked to help set the Tennis Centre up, with a few more to help, we hope! Please contact any of the Management Committee.

The big TV Table Tennis spectacular, The Super Circuit Masters is again being played at the Fairfield Concert Hall, London, the tournament takes place on Saturday 23rd July, with BBC TV showing an edited hour on Grandstand the following day. Jan Ove Waldner is the top name, but is only one of many taking part from a world who's who of professional table tennis, prize money of £40,000 to the winner.

TMS International (the marketing arm of the ITTF) has concluded an agreement with Eurosport international, the pan-European sports channel (available in 58 countries) to broadcast the World Championships, the Men's World Cup and the European



Championships. This agreement will run until 2009. This means that there will be more than 100 hours of table tennis on Eurosport over the next 5 years. The next events to be shown will be European Championships - Aarhus, Denmark - March 27th to April 4th 2005 World Championships - Shanghai, China - April 28th to May 5th 2005

The 5th Division is still a worry to the league, it can't be expected to survive as it is, and is extremely unfair to those who play in it, the players paying the same as every one else, but playing a lot fewer games because of reducing to 6 teams, and this after all the work the fixture Sec. put in forming a fixture list for an 8 team division. What can be done? A drastic suggestion is to do away with the 5th and spread all teams through 4 divisions, thus making the season longer, but once we lose a division, it would be difficult to resurrect that division (in today's climate) to attract new teams. Could we reduce the number of teams in each division in order to build up the fifth, 11 teams per division, (Div. 1 to 4) giving two

extra spare nights in a 12 team format, maybe have a bigger promotion and relegation between the 4th and 5th, 4up and 4 down. Why can't clubs' put forward new teams from the excessive number of players who appear on some club lists, but don't seem to get many games, (but only if they are prepared to honour the commitment to play, otherwise it's back to square one), I appreciate that availability of nights is a problem to some clubs. The foregoing are only from my thoughts.

It was disappointing to see (especially for the teams concerned) the number of teams who fell foul of the Cup Reg. 5 and had to be disqualified, various sound reasons were put forward in mitigation, but the rule was there, the surprising thing to me is that there hasn't been any requests from Clubs for a rule change, but in light of the circumstances, the Rules Committee have been asked to look at this particular Rule, and make recommendations in time for the 2005 AGM. (see League Sec's report pg.3)

Still a lot of teams playing short, and a number of walkovers. Fines, some clubs must be ruffling up quite an expense in fines, our fixture sec only follows the rules, but it seems in A.N. Other league, they deduct points instead of fines, maybe that would tend to focus players minds a bit more if their own team was penalised rather than the club; and a couple of walkovers earlier in the season could make the difference between promotion and relegation, something to think about.

'Whizz kid' of the computer, fixture secretary Trevor, has been keeping the averages up to date as he updates match information, so as an added interest, I've included the up to date player averages, but with limited space, have only used the top 15 players in each division, these are on the back 2 pages.

EDITOR

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SECRETARY'S REPORT Mike Power

During the course of this season I have had several phone calls basically suggesting some of our rules are either over-the-top or need a dam good looking at. In particular, the rules governing a player's eligibility for cup competitions where several teams have been thrown out this season for playing an ineligible player. I have reminded those people that they can propose rule amendments for inclusion on the agenda at the AGM. I have also stated that if they need any assistance in putting the proposal together, I will always help. The final date for any proposal is **Saturday 26th February**. At the time of writing there are only 8 days to go before this cut-off point is reached and I have to date received the grand total of **zero** proposed amendments! There is little doubt in my mind that you are reading this '*post 26th February*', and I expect we will still have no new proposals on the table! There is no point complaining about the rules to the MC as you, the clubs, have put the rules together over the years. The MC only enforces the rules **you have made** whether originally proposed by the MC or proposed by a club.

The Management Committee are moving towards arranging Public Liability insurance, not only for the MC members and League events, but also for all registered clubs within the League however the earliest this **MAY** be available is September/October 2005. This will hopefully be via the ETTA block policy. If and when this happens the onus will still be on each club to ensure the cover this policy provides satisfies their requirements as under current legislation the League are not authorised to advise you. This cover will obviously come at a price but we do not expect it to be an extortionate amount and will be discussed at the next AGM at the end of May 2005. I would remind all



club secretaries that it is incumbent on you all to ensure you have adequate insurance protection against the inevitable accident. In this litigious society it is vital your club, and each individual, be it one of your own members or a visitor, is covered. You may say that no-one has ever sued us in the past, well I would remind you that Everton have never played in the Champions League either! (Hopefully they never will).

After 10 years in the wilderness Mal McEvoy is back and playing for Fords. After an even longer break, Clive Stretle is also back, also with Fords. It appears that Tim Weardon is assembling quite a squad and seems certain to overcome the 20 points deduction their first team suffered at the beginning of the season and avoid the possibility of relegation. If this team stays together next season with Kevin Dolder at the helm they could be challenging for honours. It appears this season as though Keith Williams and Co. will win another first division championship, this time with Waterloo with only Liverpool YMCA having any realistic chance of catching them. (How many clubs has Keith won the first division with?) It also looks likely that next season the first division will incorporate 3 teams from Liverpool YMCA.

The MC's decision at the beginning of the season to place Greenbank into the 3rd division looks to have been the correct one, as they appear to be well on their way to the 2nd already. I don't know what's going to happen to the 5th division next season. With only 6 teams left it looks as though the writing is on the wall. Any suggestions are always welcome.

Finally, lets try and make sure there are no walkovers given between now and the end of the season. I have commented before that this always seems to happen but it has an extremely annoying affect. Simply by not playing a match, maybe because you are a mid-table side and feel there is nothing at stake, you inadvertently give someone a lifeline and help them to avoid relegation. The problem is of course that someone else gets relegated instead and after battling hard all season this becomes a bitter pill to swallow. It can obviously have the same affect at the top of a division as well. So come on Club Sec's, lets make sure this doesn't happen again. Look forward to seeing you all at the 'Closed', even the Evertonians.

Tell Steve Gittins, I'm looking for a new tie!!!

Mike Power.

Liverpool Closed
8th. MAY
ENTRY FORM
Centre page

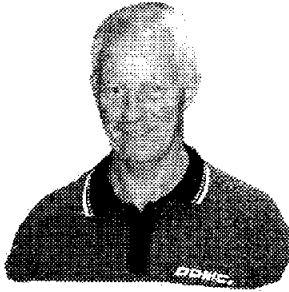
The League's chances of collecting multiple pieces of silverware in the Lancashire & Cheshire League, receded in recent weeks due to a number of disappointing performances. The men look to have the best chance of clinching a major title, and with just one match to play, boast a 100% record, requiring a draw in our last match, to regain the title. With premier division matches staged over the weekend, we were due to play three matches. But with Oldham and Tameside's records' being expunged due to breaking regulations', Bolton, lying next to bottom, who have only one win from four matches, stand in our way, a year after beating us 4-2 when a draw would have meant we retained the title.

The Ladies' division was pruned down to only five teams' with the eventual winners coming from either Liverpool or reigning champions Wirral. The peninsular league team won their first three matches 6-4, 10-0 and 10-0, while our girls' were given 10-0 walkovers by Mid Cheshire and Oldham. Our 'next' match was away to Wirral, and we had the knowledge of knowing we could lose 6-4 and still regain the title if we could limit Manchester to just two sets in our final match. Alice Howard, together with Cherith and Sylvia Graham though, were thrashed 8-2 which, has landed the trophy on the other side of the river for the fourth time in seven years years. The title has remained on Merseyside every year since 1988 apart from Manchester's two triumphs in the middle 1990's. Well done Clare, Terri-Anne, Gemma and Clare Langford.

After winning the J.M. Rose Bowl two seasons ago and finishing as runners-up last year, we were drawn at Nottingham together with Birmingham and Wirral. On the same day, Alice Howard was representing Lancashire and Cherith Graham was playing in the University doubles championships. The hosts tried to obtain a change of date since two of her players' were also involved in county play, but the national organiser refused and with Brenda Buoeuy unfit, it left us with little option but to withdraw. Very unsatisfactory.

The veteran 1st team suffered this term with raising the strongest team which may cost us the title, won for the past four years.

However, with Tameside refusing to play the first team in December, using the unplayed match from December 2003, as the reason, (see Digest No. 1) for the background. Since then though, they have been dismissed from the competition for using a banned player in a league match and subsequently, repeated the act by using another banned player, which makes their refusal



to play us, academic. In conclusion, if that's the correct word to use, they have appealed against the decision!! A calamitous 9-1 defeat at Bath Street by Liverpool Business Houses may have ended our chance of retaining our crown but the less I say about this debacle the better.

The open division A division 2 team, continued their impressive form in the second of three weekend stints, Omid Khaiyat, Keith Bird and Mikael Bellec, remained unbeaten at Hyndburn, the venue having been changed at the last minute from Bolton. This while I was in Australia, could have caused a mix up since the players' were set up with the map to Bolton. Mike Power handled the issue and only he knows the problems attached to this and other aspects of inter-city play, where things change almost by the hour.

Liverpool Veterans made it through to the National Finals with a superb performance at Matlock in the Alec Brook Memorial Trophy.

The hosts, who suffered a crushing 5-1 defeat to Northumbria, were routed 5-0 by the Liverpool team of Chris Ford, Keith Williams and John Rankin.

With Slough withdrawing late on, Liverpool then edged a tight encounter with Northumbria to win a place in the May Derby Final.

Chris Fords straight games win over John Williamson opened the match, but Northumbria forged a 2-1 lead, Dave Godbold and Geoff Salter recording victories over Rankin and Williams respectively. The fourth set was the turning point of the match when Ford completely outplayed England No. 11 Godbold, beating him 11-8, 11-8, 11-7, to level matters. Williams made it 3-2 against Williamson, before Salter kept his side in it against Rankin. The two top players then faced each other, and Williams ranked at 6, bounced back from losing the first game to clinch the set with a 13-11 thriller in the final game. Ford then saw off double winner Salter in straight games to clinch the match by 5-3.

The Maghull Club will been missing one of their regular players for a while, Huyton GP of 35 years, Dr. Naresh Tagore, of the Princess Drive Medical Centre, flew out to Malasia to help with the many medical problems from the recent Tsunami disaster, he will be based in a hospital on the island of Thinadhoo, still inundated with the injured from the disaster, I'm sure we all wish him well, and a safe return. Editor.

APPEALS PANEL

BOARD of APPEAL MEETING 16th February 2005

The APPEALS PANEL, namely, Brian Leeson, Jack Lambert and Dave Graham.

The Panel decided unanimously to uphold CADWA's appeal against the Management Committee's decision to declare void the three singles games in the CADWA v M/Side Police (Div.1) match, in which an alleged illegal bat was to be used by a CADWA player, the Panel decided that the three un-played games should be awarded to CADWA for the following reason.

An individual player, or players, cannot refuse to play, for whatever reason, if an opponent is there willing and waiting to play. When there is no qualified official appointed, no one player or players can make that decision. A complaint in **writing** to the Organising Secretary / Management Committee should be made within the specified time limit as per rule (*Management Rule 3 page 4*) and the match card returned unsigned. The opponent (s) must be informed of the proposed action.

To sum up, all sets and games must be played and complaints registered later in the correct way.

Signed. Brian Leeson
Appeals Panel Chairman

EDITOR

To give a bit of background for this appeal to the readers, a member of the Police team complained about the surface of the bat of a CADWA player, which although a perfectly legal rubber; in the opinion of the Police player, the rubber had two alleged creases in it as like a "back to front" Nike tick, and that the surface on the blade was not consistent. The CADWA player pointed out that he "neither sought nor obtained any advantage from the creases, but that it is very difficult to glue these particular sheets on without causing bubbles", so the three games involving this bat weren't played. At the last Management Committee meeting it was decided that in view of the circumstances surrounding this issue, the 3 singles matches involved be declared void, and the Clubs concerned be advised of the procedure they should follow should such circumstances arise at any future match. CADWA appealed against this decision.

As the appeal panel point out, unless there is a "qualified" umpire to check the bat no one can decide if the bat is illegal or not, the games must be played, as many facts as possible should be recorded, then an official written complaint made.

On looking through the various rules on Bats / Rackets, there isn't a lot of help on this regards condition of rubber, the ETTA rule does go somewhat, but who's to judge weeks after the event. Our own rules only ask for the ITTF Logo as well as the red / black sides, I remember many years ago I was cutting a new sheet of rubber,

I laid it out, marked around the bat, cut it out, turned it over to glue to the blade, and yes, the logo was at the top of the bat, what a waste, had to get a new rubber, but on reflection now, that logo was "near the edge of the striking surface" even though it was the wrong end of the bat, could I have saved myself £20 !, wishful thinking, but could a good barrister get round that one, gladly commonsense prevails.

ETTA & ITTF

2.4.7 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.

2.4.8 At the start of a match and whenever he changes his racket during a match a player shall show his opponent and the umpire the racket he is about to use and shall allow them to examine it.

I.&DTTL

RACKET

The covering material on a side of the blade used for striking the ball shall be of a brand and type currently authorized by the ITTF and shall be attached to the blade in such a way that the trademark and ITTF logo are clearly visible near the edge of the striking surface. The surface of one side of the racket shall be bright red and the surface of the other side shall be black, whether or not both sides are used for striking the ball

NETS and EDGES Ken Armson MBE

Arranging a date for our Closed is never easy due to venue availability a packed Calendar and a number of our players being involved in various events and this season it has proved more difficult than ever. After much heart searching the league came up with the best possible date only to find the venue was not available. The next best possible date available being April 24 the Management committee were left with no option other than to accept this even though it clashed with an ETTA Grand Prix. The alternative would have meant moving to May and take us way past our end of season matches. Those members who enter Grand Prix tournaments will now have to decide which event they will support and hopefully they will support their league.

Good and bad news on the health front Frank Lacey suffered a heart attack at Christmas and spent the festive period in hospital. He is now recovering and doing well. The good news being that Dave Roberts also spent part of the festive period in hospital having been admitted on 29 December to have two knee replacements. He is out and he tells me he is making good progress and hoping to be back playing next season. Dave has his sights set not only on a return to league play but also to get back to winning ways and in particular against players he used to beat but found himself losing to when his mobility worsened forcing him to eventually stop playing. Good to hear Bill Clayton is back playing after his accident when he fell and broke a bone in his ankle. Although still not fully fit his return ensured his team reached the semi final of the Frank Murphy cup. Billy (Limp Along) Clayton getting enough points in the final set v Bob Edwards to give his team a 6 point win.

Another piece of good news is the return to Liverpool of Tom



(Big backhand) Purcell who will be back playing with the Police next season and again become a fully home-based qualified umpire. During his absence absent Tom has qualified as an International Umpire.

A problem concerning the legality of a racket occurred in a 1st division match resulting in several matches not being played and leaving the Management Committee to try and resolve the issue culminated in a club appealing against the decision. Nothing wrong with that but I find it surprising that players will take issue over the legality of a racket and yet totally ignore illegal serving. Stan Clarke often comments when this subject comes up that some offenders don't comply with the previous service rule let alone the current requirements. No one should be offended when serving if they are asked to throw the ball up the required minimum height of 16cm or 6 inches as the player is often unaware that they have not done so and often it will be accidental. The reason why many will not make such a request and why illegal servers get away with it is because the worst offenders invariably take umbrage and this creates bad feelings and generally ruins the evening.

All players should be prepared when umpiring and unhappy with a

player's service action to tell them what the problem is and request they comply with the basic requirements i.e. throw the ball up at least 16cms. don't throw it blatantly backwards and don't serve straight off their palm. This need not be accompanied by faulting the player and if everyone adopted this friendly approach illegal serving would lessen and eventually be eliminated. The players concerned know who they are but until we all start pointing it out to them they won't see any need to change. I am sure that at times I don't throw it high enough not because I am trying to gain any advantage but because I am concentrating on other aspects of the game and all it needs is for someone to point this out. If you deliberately and knowingly foul serve then you are cheating, surely no one wants to be known as a cheat?

Nominations for the re-election of ETTA Chairman, Deputy Chairman (I once referred to this position as Vice Chairman and was rebuked by the incumbent) and Treasurer have closed and the present holders re-elected unopposed but you can be assured that in 2 years time they will be opposed by the Old Guard and not without good cause as the welter of fine words and promises has so far produced little of notice and many will still be bemoaning the loss of 21 up.

I made reference to PESCCCL in the previous issue and make no apologies for returning to this subject. Halton and St Helens (a town without a table tennis league) each now have an ETTA Community coach funded via PESCCCL working 25 hours a week and going into schools etc to promote table tennis and no doubt there already large squad of young players will multiply. What then is the future for table tennis in Liverpool, a major city boasting one of the strongest leagues in the North West but having only two home

grown junior players in its league with the majority of its players showing total disinterest in getting involved in promoting their sport and club venues disappearing on a regular basis. A cynic would say there is no future for table tennis in our city unless we all wake up and start getting involved.

Couple of interesting items floating round, firstly our National councillors have given their provisional blessing to the Individual Player Registration scheme even though no positive information on what it is going to cost players or what impact financially it will have on our sport is available. I have to say that I am a supporter of the IPRS but I am also concerned as to the lack of financial information available to enable it to be fully assessed. Leagues have virtually no information but will hold the key to its acceptance or rejection.

Why so, because if the proposal to amend the current voting procedures is carried at the ETTA Annual Meeting then National Councillors who support IPR and who currently hold the bulk of voting rights will lose their voting

strength if changes to the voting procedure are carried. I wonder how many National Councillors tested the water in their County before voting for IPR to go on the AGM Agenda?

Why do I ask? Because I have just been reading about this same proposal for amateur athletics and the concerns being raised about it with some commenting that it could be the kiss of death for athletics rather than its saviour.

So we move to the next step, finance. With much trumpeting the ETTA have proudly announced the Sport England funding for the next few years and amongst the welter of words I note there is reference to grassroots. Now your version of grassroots will no doubt be local level but if there is anyone out there who thinks any of this funding will ever get down to the real grassroots level then they are living in cloud cuckoo land.

So what is the connection for all this? Quite simply our sport along with many others is funded mainly by Sport England or in some cases UK Sport and it is the faceless wonders of Sport England and UK Sport who call

the tune and tell Associations such as ours not only how they think an Association should operate and conduct its affairs but also what it can or cannot do and if they don't toe the line then they get no funding. The government appoints these faceless people and this allows our elected MP's to wash their hands of funding sport by passing this responsibility to an un-elected Body.

Yes, I would agree that lottery funding has brought many improvements such as Regional Development Officers, additional posts within the ETTA and the availability of grants. But it comes at a price and that price is freedom to decide how you operate. The saying the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world can be amended to read the hand that holds the purse strings rules sport.

You might be all in favour of others dictating how your sport should conduct itself but remember that nothing is for nothing and what they give grudgingly with one hand they can speedily remove without explanation with the other and there is no right of appeal. Democracy has no place when money is involved.

Club / League Welfare Officers

The L&DTTL has received correspondence from the ETTA requesting that Nationally every Club (or League) nominate a Club / League Welfare Officer to be the local Child Protection point of contact.

In November 2004 the ETTA began the process of asking Clubs and /or Leagues to appoint welfare officers. These volunteers will be the local point of contact for any child protection issues, although they will have, other than in an emergency situation, a reporting role ensuring that the ETTA's Child Protection Officer is kept informed of any reported suspicions relating to child abuse. These officers will never be put in the position of deciding whether or not abuse is taking place. In addition they will provide a local network for the dissemination of information to our members. A requirement of the local post would be attendance at tournaments run by the L&DTTL.

It is anticipated that the role should take no more than 1-2 hours maximum per week.

During 2005 the ETTA's Child Protection Officer will be holding a number of 2 hour evening workshops with welfare officers looking at the ETTA's processes and procedures relating to child protection. The nominated person would receive an induction pack with information to assist him / her in their roll.

The Club/League Welfare Officer is **NOT** expected to make judgements on whether child abuse has or has not taken place but to ensure that either the appropriate authorities or the ETTA's National Equity and Child Protection Officer are informed of any suspicions as soon as possible. The Club/League Welfare Officer will be expected to advise the ETTA's National Equity and Child Protection Officer of any such reports and any local action taken

More information on this matter can be obtained from L&DTTLeague Secretary.
EDITOR pp. Man. Com.

LIVERPOOL STIGA 4 STAR JUNIOR TOURNAMENT 2005

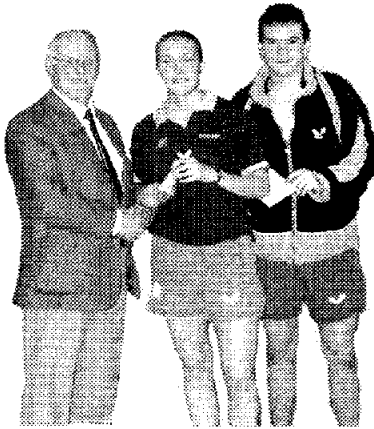
held at THE GREENBANK ACADEMY 8th/9th, JAN.

Paul Drinkhall, 15, the England number one Junior and top seed in the Stiga Liverpool Junior 4 Star Open, generously supported by Liverpool City Council, swept aside all opposition, taking both the Cadet and Junior boys' singles titles. The Cleveland youngster didn't drop a game in the Cadet event, Bath Street's Jamie Hewitt being his first victim, 11-4, 11-2, 11-4. Not until he faced Scotland's Craig Howieson, did he lose more than eight points, taking the title and a £100 cheque with an 11-4, 12-10, 12-10 final victory.

Drinkhall, England's match winning hero in the recent European League encounter with The Netherlands, repeated the feat in the Junior Boys' singles, accounting for Howieson in the second round, 11-5, 11-5, 11-8, after the Scot had taken the first game. He didn't have it all his own way though in the last eight, Damien Nicholls (Shropshire) taking a 2-1 lead before losing 12-10, 8-11, 11-4, 4-11, 5-11. The semi-final was an up and down affair. Drinkhall overcoming David Meads 11-8, 11-5, 10-12, 11-1, 12-10 to qualify for a final clash with Surrey's Darius Knight. The England's number two junior, sailed into the last four without dropping a game which left him facing Kenny Lindsay, who had also kept a clean sheet up to that stage. This included an 11-7, 11-7, 13-11, victory over Tom Bray (Bootle JC). Knight took the first game, lost the next 11-5, won the third 11-9, before dropping the fourth 10-12. It was neck and neck in the decider but the youngster from the Kingdom of Fife, edged home 12-10 for a famous victory.

The final was a tense affair, Drinkhall, not in his best form, nevertheless, did enough to take the title, winning 11-9, 11-8, 11-6. Just out of interest, this title was previously won by such greats as Bonnie Casofsky, Ken Stanley, Geoff Pullar, Denis Neale, Chester Barnes, Alan Hydes, Trevor Taylor, Jimmy Walker, Donald Parker, Desmond Douglas, Mike Johns and the last Liverpool League player to claim the title, Peter Flint in 1980.

Warwickshire's Kelly Sibley eased her way through the Junior Girls' singles event, her only blip coming in her semi-final clash with Sarah Perks (Nottingham), dropping the opening game 11-7, before recovering to win 11-4, 11-6, 12-10. This earned the England senior number 4, a final clash with Scotland's Rebecca Russell, who trailed 2-1 in the



Lancashire County Chairman Stan Clarke presenting winners cheques to Kelly Sibley and Paul Drinkhall

quarters' to Susie Steeples (Lincs') but went on to oust Wirral's Sophie Byron 12-10, 11-9, 11-1, in the semi's. Miss Sibley, took the first game 11-7 and despite dropping the next 11-9, comfortably disposed of the Scottish lass, 11-3, 11-5, to lift the trophy and a cheque for £100.

Surrey's Wing-Yung Chan, justified his top seeding position in the Junior Band One singles, dropping just one game in the event to overcome Stewart Mudie (Lincolnshire) in the final, 11-8, 11-6, 11-6, while the Junior Girls' singles was won

by Caroline Hallows (Cheshire), the second seed defeating Scottish top seed Corinna Whitaker, 16-14, 11-7, 11-8 in the final. Wirral's Jordyn Layfield led Martha Travis by 2 games to 1 in the quarter finals before succumbing 8-11, 10-12, 10-12.

Miss Hallows also reached the final of the Cadet Girls' singles but after disposing of fourth seed Rebecca Russell in the last four, bowed out to top seed Emma Vickers (Derbyshire) 5-11, 12-10, 7-11, 5-11.

Yet another top seed justifying his position was Hampshire's David McBeath in the Under 13 Boys' singles, overcoming Liam Pitchford (Derbyshire) 11-4, 11-9, 11-4, in the final while in the corresponding Girls' event, second seed, Lancashire's Rachel Baker, upset top seed Martha Travis, 12-10, 11-6, 11-7, in the final.

Jamie Hewitt was the only Liverpool League player to make the main draw in the Cadet Band One singles, where he faced top seed Stewart Mudie. Although finishing second to the Lincolnshire boy to qualify for the first round, the Bath Street youngster departed via an 8-11, 11-5, 9-11, 14-12, 8-11 reversal to Tom Maynard. Mudie however, didn't drop a game en-route to the final where he overcame Damien Piper (Yorkshire), 11-8, 11-5, 12-10.

Another Warwickshire player taking a title was top seed Rachel Pilgrim in the Cadet Girls' singles, her progress couldn't be halted by Lucy Davidson, Catherine Hayes or second seed Lancashire's Reena Ardeshana, who despite taking the first game in the final, lost the next three games 9-11, 6-11, 6-11.

Don Davies
Tournament Press Officer

I'm afraid, once again, Paul has missed the deadline. I put Paul's last report out as a supplement after Christmas, not good policy, as it detracts from the integrity of the Digest, so rather than white space, and no report at all in this Digest, I am using 'parts' of his report from the last Digest, many readers may not have seen Paul's supplement, but for those who have, I'm sure you will agree, it's better than nothing. My apologies to Paul, but if we don't set some sort of a time limit, and try to adhere to it, the publication of each Digest just drags on.

DIVISION 1 Paul Gittins

Many best wishes to you all for 2005 and I hope that you all had a good and joyful Christmas. My Christmas was somewhat tarnished by a thieving, brainless postal worker who pillaged and stole vouchers from a Christmas card bound for my five year old son Jack. Having previously fallen victim to this type of incident and having received little sympathy from the Postal Service, I decided to wreak some revenge. The one thing that causes their computerized system to go bonkers and is of great annoyance to the 'sorters' is the quite simply but heinous offence of placing the stamp in the middle of the envelope. The 'sorters' then have to legitimately open the envelope with the task to try and trace and then subsequently chastise the sender. Having sent two blank Christmas cards I went for the kill and sent my third card which was the coup de grace. I would've loved to have seen the 'sorters' face when he read the following simple inscription..... "Hey diddle diddle the stamps in the middle."

The **Waterloo** team of Keith Williams, Wayne Percival, Alan Chase and Ted Birch take the New Years honours by leading the division at the half way stage. You would get few odds against the lads winning the title, particularly now that Wayne is playing almost as regular as Keith and coupled with the fact that **YMCA** have, I'm told, lost the services of Lawrence Kenwright. The clash between the two saw **Waterloo** merge as 8-2 victors with both Keith and Wayne comfortably beating Lawrence who, to his credit, readily accepted that he had been outclassed on the night by both players. **YM's** Mikael Bellec had a good win over Alan Chase but Alan then



ended the night on a high by beating Keith Bird in three.

I was unaware that a large contingency from the **Waterloo** club travelled to Japan and took part in the Vets World Championship. Alan Chase told me that the trip was fantastic. Can you imagine the return trip - walking through customs with the **Waterloo** crew having sampled 17 hours of the flight 'hospitality'. You would end up having to 'Declare' Richie Cragg and pay 'Duty' on him.

The Crosby Methodist church may be looked upon as the venue which staged the performances of the season and perhaps gave rise to two new stars of the future. If you don't know what I'm taking about then quite simply**where have you been !!!** The defeat of Wayne Percival to the **BJC's** youngsters Tom Bray and Cherith Graham injected a refreshing buzz throughout not only the division but the whole league. The manner of the victories are also impressive with Cherith winning in four sets and Tom in straight sets. They both then went on to beat Alan Chase comfortably but were unable to impact on Keith. The match finishing 6-4 in **Waterloo's** favour. Tom has a natural, stealth touch around the net

and works well from his backhand whereas Cherith's aggressive play (she gets that from her dad - her looks are thankfully from her mum) stems from decent serves followed up with consistent attacking strokes. Both players are a breath of fresh air to the division and are a testament to the dedicated work of Dave and Sylvia Graham at their Table Tennis academy up in Formby. They must be very proud and I'm sure that more seedlings will flourish from the academy.

It would appear that the **YM** 1st team are on the heels of the Crosby leaders, being only ten points behind with a game in hand, but looks can be deceiving and a lot depends on the availability of Lawrence Kenwright. I'd heard that he wasn't too happy with his performances to date and has decided to take some time out. It's a shame if that's the case as players of Lawrence's calibre are a rarity and add to the status of the division. All was well at the start of the season with a 9-1 win over **Wavertree** albeit Lol was pushed all the way in his five setter win over Mick Tierney. **Wav's** single point came from a great win by Alice Howard over Tony Whelan. Their winning ways continued in their 6-4 defeat of **Fords**. Kevin Dolder comfortably beat Lol, Ohmid Khayat and Keith Bird with Terry Turner picking up the only other point with a five setter win over Ohmid. Terry also went to five with Keith Bird but on this occasion the **YM** man proved too strong. Tim Weardon failed to make his mark but was unlucky to lose out in the fifth to Ohmid.

Both **Fords** and **Wavertree** are battling it out for the third spot with **Fords** just two points ahead at present. The **Way** team of Roy

Smith, Alice Howard and Gary Watson have started well having recovered from their initial 9-1 thrashing at the hands of **YM**. A 6-4 win against **Harold House** saw the unorthodox Gary Watson taking all three against Ken Connor, Steve Whally and Alec Bryce. Roy lost out to Alec and Ken but was successful against Steve, and Alice completed a good night's work with a good win over Steve Whally. **Wav** shared the spoils with their next opponents **Bath St**, with Gary Watson again being the star of the show with competent wins over Kenny Jackson and Fred Bainbridge. Kenny was made to work hard for his two remaining games, beating Roy and Alice in the fifth. Roy made amends against Peter Kirby who then went on to have a fine win over Alice.

The match ball was truly in the grip of hat trick queen Alice Howard when she rose to the occasion, winning all three in **Wav's** 7-3 defeat of the newly promoted **Manweb** team which consisted of Les Molyneux, Paul Evans and Neil Powell. Neil's disappointment was short lived having attained fine wins over Gary Watson and Mick Tierney. Les, who incidentally is having a great season, took home the wooden spoon having uncharacteristically lost all three. The painful one being 15/13 in the fifth to Mick. Alice's good form continued in **Wav's** 6-4 defeat at the hands of the **Cadwa** boys. Chris Ford went all the way with Alice (steady Chris), just pinching it in the fifth but fortunes soon changed when Alice reversed roles beating Peter Taylor in the final set. Mick Tierney had mixed fortunes with a fine win over Ken Hartley but losing out to Peter. The hat trick queen struck once again in their 4-6 defeat against **YM 'A's** Peter Lee. Ahmed Thabet and Mikael Bellec. Roy Smith couldn't match Alice's form, losing out to Peter and Ahmed but managing to secure a point against Mikael. An example of conflicting styles saw Gary Watson beating Peter and Ahmed but was on the end of a great

win by Mikael. A good night of table tennis.

The priority for the **Fords** team is not securing a particular placing but simply finishing twenty one points ahead of the two relegated teams. Having twenty points deducted at the end of the season for playing an ineligible player is a worrying prospect for any team and just to put some perspective upon their plight, if the points were deducted now then they would see themselves plummet from third spot to rock bottom. **Fords** will appeal against the ruling but I personally don't hold much hope. Terry Turner, regardless of the pending appeal, has been deemed an ineligible player and I just can't see the committee making a mistake in their judgement. They must be pretty confident to announce the penalty at such an early stage. **Fords** future clearly depends upon the availability of Kevin Doldor coupled with the ability of supporting players Tim Weardon and Bob Hughes to pick up a decent bag of points as was the case when they played **Police**. Jon Dyson stepped in for the absent John Rankin and although Jon played well, he was unable to impact on a 7-3 defeat. Kevin Doldor wasn't troubled but I managed to beat Tim and Bob, with Steve Gittins picking up the other point against Bob.

The **Police** team is now (touch wood) settled, particularly with John Rankin now working days and thus available for most matches. The only games he has missed were when duty calls and he's off to the Home Office in London. His claim to fame to date is that he did have sight of the Queen's Christmas Speech prior to its broadcast. The rumour is that it began with the words, "Hey diddle diddle..." John certainly makes the difference in our team and like any good number one, instils a comfort zone for the rest of the team. John eased to victory in our 6-4 defeat of **Harold House** although Steve Whally upset the Gittins clan with wins over Steve and I. Alec Bryce added to Steve's woes but I upheld the family honour with a fourth set win

over Alec. The family honour was however well and truly dented when **Manwebs'** Les Molyneux and Paul Evans both beat Steve and I. Les had a good game against John losing in the fifth. Les Molyneux commented during the match that his googley shots echoed the style of Mick Tierney. I quickly told Les that he didn't resemble Mick whatsoever due to the fact that Mick had more hair and was by far better looking.

The clash against **Bath St** and **BJC** resulted in yet another great night of table tennis. Ken Jackson beat Dave Evans and Tom Bray but lost in three to Cherith. Both Fred Bainbridge and Brenda Buocoy then went on to beat Cherith but both lost to Dave and Tom resulting in shared points all round. A draw was also on the cards when the **Bath St** first team faced their 'A' team on derby night. Ian McElwee was man of the match beating Kenny, Fred and Brenda. Claire Peers could only manage a win over Fred whilst Eddie once again left empty handed but had a great five setter against Kenny. Kenny was also influential and stole the show when his team faced the **Police** squad of Paul and Steve Gittins, and able rescuer Jon Dyson. Fred Bainbridge came back from two down to beat me 14/12 in the fifth and was as equally successful against 'our kid', again in the fifth. Jon Dyson excelled himself and spoilt Fred's night with a four setter win.

YM'A' are having a great start to the season and were at one stage above their first team. The team of Tony Whelan, Peter Lee and Ahmed Thabet possess a collective tenacious spirit which is good to see. Too many times do we see fellow team members reading a book or simply day dreaming throughout another match. Let's have the passion back and openly encourage our team. I have no problem with this so long as it's carried out within the spirit of the game and it's not done by the umpire whom I feel has to remain independent whilst umpiring. **Manweb's** Les Molyneux managed to dampen this spirit with a great nights performance

beating Tony, Peter and Ahmed. Paul Evans will also be pleased with his success over Peter and Ahmed. The spirit was rekindled however when YM faced a two man Cadwa team. Peter Lee had few problems with Ken Hartley and Peter Taylor, and although Ahmed lost out in four to Ken, he made amends against Peter Taylor. YM's Mikael Bellec was disappointed losing to Peter in the fifth but went home smiling with a great win over Ken.

I wish to make an open apology to Bath St's Peter Ross for not mentioning a great five setter win over Wav's Alice Howard last season. I don't know how I missed that one but God knows that I've paid for it. The man has hounded me to death. So Peter, the record is set straight. However I think that it's

only fair to point out to our readers that the week after obtaining such a great victory the 'Howards' took revenge in the shape of Alice's mum. Can I sleep in peace now Peter?

With regard to the bat saga the decision from the committee was for the three single matches to be deemed as voided. A sensible solution in my view as I've got no great desire to claim the points. However I'm uncertain as to whether that decision was made in the light of the matches having not been played or the fact that the bat was illegal.

The league table at the moment paints a dismal picture for the likes of Manweb but is deceiving with regard to the other possible relegation contenders. BCJ, Harold House, Bath St 'A' and the Police are all nervously tied together and with

the prospect of Fords having the twenty points deducted at the end of the season makes it interesting viewing. It's still all there to play for but lets not forget that it matters not whether you're on the verge of a title or sitting at the foot of the table, it's still a great game

Before I go can I give you some sound advice when using your L&DTTL handbook to order table tennis equipment, for goodness sake don't do what I did and mistake 'Jenkins & Sons Undertakers' for Bill Thornton's telephone number, the poor woman nearly collapsed when I asked if she did discount for bulk orders.

See you through the season

10 YEARS AGO VOL 49 No. 2

Jack Lambert was still Editor, and his Editorial was taken up by a letter from recently retired (from the fixture Secs. post after 39 years) Eddie Cameron who was "intrigued" by Ken Armson's dilemma over the new formation of the five league divisions because of two new teams starting, changing the league from 57 teams to 59 teams. The previous recent seasons had Divisions 1, 2 & 3 as 11 team divisions, and 4 & 5 as 12 team divisions, the new season format started with divisions 1, 2, 3 & 4 as 12 team divisions, and div. 5 with 11 teams, *(so a bit of turmoil over promotion and relegation. my reading of this change is that Ken's "dilemma" wasn't the necessity for doing it, but the suddenness of the change, but some rule changes may not wait a season to implement!)*

Division 1:- Ken comments that Manweb continue to stagger from crises to crises, *(the aftermath of M.M. getting banned)* and now find the non availability of their stars has resulted in Alan Biggs playing too many games up, *(the stars won't play without the stars star)*. Ken Jackson is having an inspired season with 2 wins over Stuart Richards, could Ken win the Vets title at the closed. *(afraid not, Peter Lee won it this season)*

Ken wants a rule to cover "regular non appearances which enable clubs to keep players ranked lower than they should be" *(have we sorted that one out).*

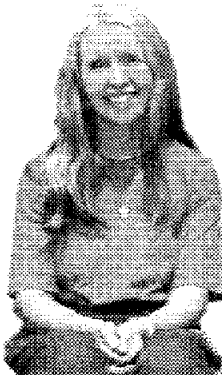
Division 2, was Sylvia, and it has come to her notice that someone has been upset because he doesn't get a mention, so not to miss a chance Sylvia honoured him with a personal profile full of complimentary table tennis stuff with a friendly disposition, like her dog *(she does have one, it chews match cards!)* but Steve does not have a wet nose or a bushy tail, *(mmm, what's that under his nose still!)*. Jay, Alan and Paula French all appearing in the 2nd. div., not in the same team though, Alan Reid had 3 good wins against Mike Power, John Henshaw and Rob Davics in the same match.

Division 3 was Editor Jack with a mention of Barbara Smallwood and the University team, doing an incredible job of practically catching up with their fixtures. *(if only the Uni. could have had a TT. secretary who was a member of the permanent staff. what a turnover of good teams they could have turned out)* and the 'Dyson' twins were playing together, Tony Whelan got L/pool YM's only two against Bootle YM. How about Bootle YM 10 - Bath St. 'B' 0; Bootle YM 5 - Bath St. 'C' 5. Jack didn't have much to write about, so he mentions that Bootle YM's John, Tom, (Kilip) Roly and Danny are sitting on the top of the division, *(I still remember just those heady days)* Poor Jack, he writes "it doesn't have to be the Captain, any comment, by any team member, on the back of the card will do" *(that's still true today, most like to see their name in lights, a*

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DIVISION 2 Sylvia Graham

Well the season isn't over but I think that the league is well and truly sewn up. Liverpool YMCA 'B' have had a tremendous season so far and have consistently beaten the opposition and deserve to take away the divisional title...however there is still a slight chance that they could be caught but they would have to put out some really disastrous performances to falter that badly. Maghull are the other team that look ready for the first division and I think they will manage it too! although Manweb 'A' are finishing on a flourish with 7:3 wins over Liverpool YMCA 'B' and Fords and a 10 nil against Police 'A'.



It's nice to see Police 'A' out of the bottom two for the first time this season but they must still continue fighting 'cos the road away from relegation is a very slippery slope that can easily cause problems if not treated with respect. Still, they could play some of the players from the 'B' team but I know that they will play their regular team if possible because that's what being a team is "one for all and all for one" as the

saying goes and Police 'A' have stuck together for the last couple of years. The Police 'B' team are doing remarkably well this season...but who would have thought it at the beginning of the season. Gavin and Jonathan are the mainstay of the team and I think it's good for the Liverpool league to have these youngsters coming through although once again they have been nurtured outside Liverpool. We do need something within the Liverpool and District area that can be available most days of the week for

coaching and matches: something that can be maintained by the League for the players and be run as a profit making concern with the profits ploughed back into the game. This is open for discussion ... so lets discuss!!!!

Off the soapbox and back to the divisional notes. Propping up the division are Manweb 'B' and Marconi 'A' and at this time I think both are doomed. I don't really want to give them the kiss of death but this isn't a division where it's easy making up points from the bottom and although they have respectable amounts of points I can't see them spanning the rift now that Police have move into third place from bottom.

Everyone else I think is safe but I think Manweb 'A' will be disappointed to have to spend another year in the second when they are so close but not quite at the heels of the leaders. I await the next matches with baited breath and I promise to give a complete full rundown of matches in the next digest.

10 YEARS AGO From page 11

simple comment on the match card will usually get the green light).

Division 4 with Tony (*did he ever write a book?*) Connor, Tony tells us about George Higham's highly unusual pen holder style, actually gripping the handle between the first and second fingers. the effect is that the bat is angled for back hitting of a standard quite rare in penhold playing. (*not many players would notice that, only another penholder, Tony, are they still the only two who still practice this dying art. George did try 'normal' play a couple of seasons ago, but has reverted back to what he's used to).*) So Bootle YM's Eddie Preston is delighted with his 19 & 16 win over George. Steve Graham's 3rd ball kill game, with the set up serve to match, but such a style, with small margins of error, give opponents a chance, amongst a minority of defeats were against Jack Davidson and Tony Sales. Harold House seem to break all team records by ONLY fielding

eight so far, Bob Hudson lost to Ray Lavin, Mike Poole (H.H.) lost to Matt Wilson and Dave Evans (*are they the Matt & Dave playing in the 1st. Div now?*), and Paul Morgan was out hit by Kathy Haydon, but for the regular 4 man squad, 40 sets played 33 won. Bootle YM 'A' have settled into the 4th. Div., "but won't go up or down", Bert Rivers is most consistent with 70%, Tony want's to know "what happened to Chris McGuire who was so prominent in winning the 5th. Div. last season. Linaere suffered a 10 - 0 whitewash at the hands of Harold House 'A', with David Cohen suggesting that this was the first whitewash in Linaere's history. Tony saves his best till last, his own team Labour 'D', and fancies his chances for going up, sitting in second spot, but having drawn to many matches, 6 out of 18 played, we'll see in the next Digest.

Division 5, by Arthur Garnett, (*what strikes me the most when reading this report about the 5th. division are the names appearing, Graham Rollinson, Mabel*

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DIVISION 3 STEVE KEE

Hello again to everyone, did you manage to lose those pounds you gained over the Christmas break and which have been responsible for the uncharacteristic defeats you've suffered since? Now you're just making excuses aren't you! But to be consistent over a whole season is a tall order and this is going to decide what colour medals we're all getting at the end. As it stood when we last met, it seemed like Bath St 'C' and Cadwa 'B' had made a decisive break from the rest of us, but Greenbank have since broken from the pack and have got both these teams sweating like pigs as they look nervously over their shoulders..

With a nol who has as much chance of losing a match as Billy Clayton has of going on a sponsored silence(!), the Greenbank players are finding the confidence to put most opposition to the sword. In fact, Bath St 'D' are one of the few teams to get a draw from them, Billy (who is recovering from a broken leg I hear - get better soon Bill) defeating the consistently good Tony Edge -12.9.-7.9.4. Where 3 five setters went Bath St's way. In Scott Robinson, Greenbank also have a player who could handle himself (what's that you say? perhaps I could put this more elegantly!) in a higher division. With his Andrew Eden-esque serves, excellent backhand, and reach of an octopus, it is no surprise that to date, I think he has lost only 4 singles.

Included in their big wins is a 10-0 walkover against Harold House 'A'. Every club (or team for that matter) has its own policy regarding scratches. The only thing I would say is that from a personal point of view, my team Liv YM 'C' owes its presence in this division down to an act of generosity last season from Cadwa 'D', where they could have claimed the game against us but gave us another chance, and in so doing got themselves relegated.



This act stuck in our memory when we might have claimed (but never did) in the first division earlier in this season. Yes Doug, you are proper angels, and not forgotten.

So be honest now, what do you think of our (YM's) new venue? A trifle chilly? Conditions a bit fast? When we prepared it for action it was in the summer, little did we know that by wintertime, we would be playing on a shiny icy rink of a table and the room would be so cold that a yeti lives in the cupboard. Never have we looked forward to away matches so much! Our home match with Way Lab 'A' saw us getting whopped 2-8, with newcomer Chris Campbell beating Billy 11-7 in the 5th and speedy Peter Howden defeating me in 4. Chris spent some time away from the game but his results are improving as he goes on: there are certainly not that many full backhand loops like his going around. Clara had an off day against us but she put that down to too many debauched times in her first year at uni in Manchester (perhaps I misheard!).

In one of our few good wins at home, a 9-1 over Maghull 'A', Alan Jones took umpiring sensitivities to new levels with a record amount of lets awarded, often for subtle events like a groan, hiccup, a passing thought, or even a passing wind, so if you're playing Maghull, watch what you eat beforehand.

Meanwhile, Bath St 'C' continue their relentless push towards promotion. An impressive 7-3 victory over HH 'A' had the match between Ricky Brown and Eddie Clein going to... wait for it... expedite. Ricky triumphing 5,-10,-3, 9, and 7. Never mind them, I'd like to know who the umpire was and give him a medal. Did I say that Bath St 'C' were all choppers? Well, obviously I wasn't talking about young Jamie Hewitt, who, although he lost to Paul Shaw in that match, has shown his attacking flair throughout the season, as I can vouch for when he beat me 3 straight in the 2nd div without pushing a ball!

Now that George Lennon is back after injury, Cadwa 'B' are growing in power as an ominous force, as their crunch match at home to Bath St 'C' showed, Cadwa crushing them 8-2. Yann Sladek beating Rob Peat 11-3 in the 5th, and Rob Davies twice being unfortunate on this occasion, losing out to Jamie Hewitt and Dave Stoddern. Cadwa's team spirit is typified by the irreplaceable Colin Rourke's efforts to attend every match; the Milk Tray man has nothing on this guy, whose devotion to the cause is such that he drives from Derbyshire each week to arrive in the nick of time to batter all comers to a pulp. Other than John Higham's magnificent victory against him, and Eddie Clein taking him to 5, Colin has been a league apart so far.

A glance at the league table confirms that, with just 6/7 games left, Bath St 'C', Greenbank and Cadwa 'B' have made the sprint for the finish line (HH 'A' could well have been there also but for the concession I've already mentioned). All I can say is that there is bound to be a photo finish, with victory by a short head going to..... Bath St 'C', as long as Lester Piggott isn't riding it. For the other place I think I'd go for Cadwa 'B', but the crystal ball has

clouded over here, and you'll have to cross my palm with silver to hear any more. The battle against the trapdoor to oblivion (or the 4th div as I know it from last season) sees Cadwa 'C' already on death row. Maghull 'A' have managed to extricate themselves from the quicksand thanks to an 8-2 away defeat of Wav Lab 'B' with an important brace each from Alan Jones and Mark Ambrose. Yes, Wav Lab 'B' are currently in the ejector seat and are probably looking very darkly at Manweb 'C' just above them for any stumbles. Whether this will happen all depends, it seems to me, on if Manweb are to persist with their favourite Claudio Ranieri rotation method (Ranieri has just been sacked by the way, sure you're going to stick with it guys?). I feel that Manweb have enough strength available to them to earn a reprieve for this season, but then again what do I know? I thought my team could get promotion this season!

Let's see some notable wins:

Mark Patterson beat George Lennon 7,7,7, and in the same match Mark/Peter Ross beat Colin Rourke/Rob Davics 11-7 in the 5th. Alan Cameron (Manweb 'C') beat Richie Winckle (Bootle YM) 11-8 in the 5th. Francis Lay (Liv YM 'C') beat Alan Cameron 11-6 in the 5th. Tony Connor with a spectacularly close brace of wins against Bootle YM, a hair-raising 19-17 in the 5th against John Higham, and an 11-8 (now I'm back to being your bogeyman!) 5th set defeat of Roly Wright. Roly out-bamboozling Liv YM's bamboozler Billy Cheung 11-3 in the 5th. Billy flat hitting Ricky Brown's chops (!) in a 3 straight victory at Bath St. Mark Patterson scoring a double (again) over Ricky Brown and Rob Peat in the derby between Bath St 'D' and 'C'. Alan Jones (Maghull 'A') beating Rob Peat in 4, and in the same match Tom Downing defeating Jamie Hewitt 11-7 in the 5th. Andy Bird with a double against Dave Foulis and Dave Goulden in the derby between

Wav Lab 'B' and 'A'. Mark Ambrose (Maghull 'A') with a double against Rod Mcpherson and Mike Poolc (HH 'A'). Rod Bulmer winning 14-12 in the 5th (after trailing 2-9) against Ian Lunt (Cadwa 'C'). Mark Palmer (Greenbank) with two wins against Roly and Peter Williams (Bootle YM) and in the same match, Tony Edge with a brace against Peter and Danny Every, in a surprising 8-2 defeat of Bootle YM. Billy Clayton (Bath St 'D') with a 11-8 5th set victory over Chris Campbell (Wav Lab 'A'). Dave Williams (Wav Lab 'B') beating Rob Davics (Cadwa 'B') 11-7 in the 4th, and narrowly losing out 11-13 in the 5th against Steve Graham. Roly defeating George Smith (it can't be THE George Smith surely?) 3 straight.

Finally, a word about the legality of the serves in this division. 'Great', no probs there then. At least according to my team mates Jimmy and Francis. Glad we cleared that one up. Ahem! See you...

DIVISION 4 STAN CLARKE

What a competitive division this is only 44 points separate the leaders and the bottom team and only eight points between second and eight place, I don't think I have ever seen a closer battle in my forty odd years of playing in Liverpool.

Bootle Y.M.C.A. "A" have quietly drawn twelve points clear of the second place team and have a match in hand, the transfer of Len Dyson from Merseyside Police has really strengthened the team, pushing Bert Rivers down to number two, Arthur Garnett to three with Peter Williams, Mike Hughes and Jim Goddes fighting for the fourth spot, they are a formidable combination at this level and seem almost certain to be playing in the third division next season as champions of the fourth division.



The other promotion place is still very much up for grabs, with any one from seven teams in a position to put together a run of wins to pull away from the pack, realistically I think second spot will be contested by Bath St. "E", Marconi "B" and Wavertree Labour "C", but that will depend on the ability of Marconi to regularly turn out their strongest team,

with so many of their players working shifts that regularly clash with their fixtures you can never be sure just which team will turn out. For example when we played Marconi, Bobby Bell was at number four, the following week he was playing at number one, quite a difference. Bath St. "E" have forced themselves into second place at the time of writing, although they are level on points with Marconi and just two points ahead of Wavertree Labour "D" for whom Tony Mitchell is enjoying a fine season, not to mention Steve Perry who seems to be causing some problems at the bottom of the order, his "Style" is different to say the least, but he does have the ability to bamboozle his opponents, or is it just that they are expecting to see snow on the ball when it finally gets to the table?

Maghull "C" are proving a bit of an embarrassment to their "B" team sitting in fifth place, four places above their higher ranked colleagues, with twelve more points, both having played fourteen matches, although in truth there is little to choose between the two teams on paper and which should be the stronger of the two is arguable.

In sixth place are Wavertree Labour "C" with 73 points from thirteen matches, they have a postponed match to play against their "E" team and a similar result to the last time the two met will propel the "C" team into second place. A special mention for Tom Creevy, the baby of the side, who has been promoted to number two in the team, and is beginning to produce some very good wins with his aggressive top spin style. Wavertree Labour "E" are only two points adrift of the "C" team and in John Rowan have one of the more dangerous players in the division, now, rightfully playing at number one in the team, with Eric Spencer dropping down to the fourth place, he can produce tremendous hitting from either wing and his only problem seems to be a lack of self confidence, but be warned this team of bus drivers are a force to be reckoned with, although they will be hampered by the absence of Ian Woods for some weeks due to an injury.

Linacre are enjoying their best season for some years, the signing of Harry Nelson, playing at number two, behind Harry Reeve has strengthened the Crosby side, moving Jack Davidson down to number three, and as a consequence they are still in a position from where they can push into a much higher position in the division in the later stage of the season. Next we have the enigma of Maghull "B" in ninth place, one of the under-performing teams in the division, they do seem to have problems turning out their strongest team on a regular basis, it seems to be a case of any four from six or seven, a problem

that also seems to invade Harold House "B" who seem to have a cast of thousands to choose from, but seldom seem to turn out their strongest team on a regular basis.

And finally we have the two Aigburth teams, with the "A" team two points above the first team who are in bottom place, it would seem that the youth policy is paying off for the "A" team as both Lee Proffitt and Ian Laird are consistently producing wins, it would be a shame to lose either of these teams to the bottom division, but at the moment it looks as though they may well both be relegated as it is hard to see how they can produce the necessary wins to overtake Harold House and Maghull "B".

There have been some notable individual wins to date, Harry Reeve beating both Ted Cramsie and Karen Gibson for Linacre against Bath St. "E" and in the same match Chris Foley beating Jack Davidson. Graham Rollinson of Aigburth beat Dave McMahon and Bill Salter of Maghull "B", John Rowan W.L. "E" beat Bert Rivers and Mike Hughes of Bootle Y.M.C.A. in a 5/5 drawn match. Lee Proffitt, Aigburth "A" beat Russell Thornton and Bobby Bell of Marconi "B". In week eight Ian Laird, playing as a reserve for the Aigburth first team beat Gary Abrams and Dave Cohen, and Lee Proffitt beat Stan Clarke and Stephanie Howard and Ian Laird beat Tom Creevy for Aigburth "A" against Wav.Lab. "C". Phil Christie beat Ted Cramsie and Cieran McAleese of Bath St. "E", against Cieran Phil trailed 10/2 in the fifth game but pulled back to win 15/13, who said you can't get back after a bad start with 11 up.

In week nine Ian Laird had a landmark win when he beat club no.1 Graham Rollinson 14/12 in the fifth game and Lee Proffitt beat Carl Anderson as the "A" team went down 6/4 to the Aigburth first team. In an unexpected reversal for the leaders Ted Cramsie beat Bert Rivers and Peter Williams and Keith Wright beat

Mike Hughes and Jim Geddes as Bath St. "E" beat Bootle Y.M.C.A. 7/3. Stephanie Howard beat Bobby Bell and Bill Stanley beat Ted Gilmour as Marconi thrashed Wav.Lab. "C" 8/2.

In week 10 Tom Creevy beat Ray Jones and Carl Anderson and Stan Clarke beat Graham Rollinson and Eric Wood then the two paired up to beat to beat Eric Wood and Ray Jones in the doubles as Wav.Lab. "C" just scrapped home 6/4 against Aigburth. In an 8/2 thrashing by Wav.Lab. "E" Ted Cramsie won the only singles match for Bath St. "E" against Eric Spencer, and then teamed up with Graham Oakes to win in his doubles game. In the match between Bootle Y.M.C.A. and Maghull "B" Dave McMahon beat Arthur Garnett and Harry McGinley beat Mike Hughes as the Bootle team roared to an 8/2 victory. In the match between Wav.Lab. "D" and Marconi "B" Tony Mitchell beat Ted Gilmour and Bobby Bell, Andy Baird beat Ted Gilmour and Russell Thornton and Gordon Langshaw and Steve Pory both beat ex team mate Ken Roberts in a 7/3 victory for Wavertree, whilst Lee Proffitt was the only success for Aigburth "A" against Linacre, beating Harry Nelson and Ken Ainsworth. In week eight Aigburth played Harold House "B", with Harold House turning out Paul Shaw, who won his two sets. Graham Rollinson made him work his socks off taking the second game 26/24, yes they were playing 11 up.

In week 11, Linacre played Wavertree Labour "C" with Stephanie Howard proving the most successful player for Wavertree, beating Jack Davidson and Peter Barton, Ken Armson lost both of his sets against Harry Reeve and Jack Davidson in five, having lost the first game against Harry 1/11 Ken fought back to win the next two but Harry proved to be too strong, taking the final two games, Stephanie continued her good work by showing Bill the way in their doubles against Harry Nelson

and Peter Barton, still a good win for Linacre. Aigburth "A" lost 3/7 against Maghull "C" but a good win for Derek Traynor against Brian Gregory and a double for Ian Laird beating Steve McGanity and Wilf Gibson. In the match between Wavertree Labour "E" and Maghull "B" John Rowan suffered a rare defeat at the hands of Dave McMahon, Bill Salter and Harry McGanity beating Ian Woods and Eric Spencer respectively, but a treble for Kevin O'Hanlon was enough to give Wavertree the win. Bath St. "E" were held to a draw by Wavertree Labour "D". Karen Gibson winning two for the Crosby club and Tony Mitchell and Steve Perry both, undefeated in three visits to the table, for Wavertree "D". Marconi "B" thrashed Aigburth 8/2, but somehow contrived to lose both doubles.

In week 12 Bootle Y.M.C.A. "A", without Len Dyson, beat Aigburth "A" 8/2, the only successes for Aigburth coming when Ian Laird beat Mike Hughes in the first set and Lee Proffitt beat Jim Geddes in the sixth. Maghull "B" drew with Wavertree Labour "D" thanks mainly from a double from reserve Dave Goulding and a splendid, though close win for Andy Bird against Dave McMahon which was decided 13/11 for the Wavertree man in the fifth game. Aigburth produced a rare win against Linacre, Eric Wood and Ray Jones the heroes with double wins for in the singles, then pairing up to beat Harry Nelson and Peter Barton in the doubles, add a win for Graham Rollinson against Harry Nelson and Aigburth ran out winners 6/4. Harold House "B" held Wavertree Labour "E" to a draw thanks mainly to an undefeated night for John Hughes who beat John Rowan and Kevin O'Hanlon, then to rub salt in the wound teamed up with Paul Morgan to beat John and Kevin in the doubles. Wavertree Labour "C" beat Maghull "C" 6/4, Stephanie Howard again the heroine for Wavertree winning both singles against Steve McGanity and Wilf

Gibson and combined with Tom Creevy beating Brian Gregory and Wilf in the doubles. Marconi "B" beat Bath St. "E" 7/3, only Chris Foley and Laurence Phillip successful for the Crosby team.

Week 13 saw Linacre playing against Marconi "B", but in a tight match they were unable to stop the visitors winning 6/4, once again Harry Reeve produced his customary two wins, with one each for Harry Nelson over Roy Silsby and Jack Davidson over Frank Proffitt but they were unable to win either of the doubles. Wavertree Labour "D" beat Harold House "B" 7/3, mainly due to Andy Bird and Steve Perry who were undefeated on the night. Bath St. "E" thrashed Maghull "B" 8/2, only Bill Salter, who beat Chris Foley and Harry McGanity. Who beat Graham Oates causing problems. Wavertree Labour "C" were the visitors at Bootle Y.M.C.A. "A" and one of the few to walk away with a won, the match started in great style when Tom Creevy beat Arthur Garnett three straight, then Ken Armon and Stan Clarke won their doubles against Len Dyson and Bert Rivers and young Tom and Bill Stanley beat Arthur Garnett and Mike Hughes. Ken put the Wavertree team further in the lead when he beat Bert Rivers in a close fought set, Ken taking the first two games. Bert recovering to level the set at two games all. But in the final game Ken held on to win 11/9 putting the Bootle team firmly on the back foot. Of course it couldn't last and Bootle got back into the match when Arthur beat Stan, Len beat Bill, but Wavertree ensured the win as Ken and Stan both beat Mike Hughes, and so down to the bar for a glass of the amber nectar and excellent refreshments. Maghull "C" administered a sound thrashing to Aigburth, Graham Rollinson winning the only singles and combining with Carl Anderson to win their doubles, but that was all the Aigburth lads could muster in a 8/2 defeat. Aigburth "A" fared little better as they lost to Wavertree Labour "E"

7/3, Lee Proffitt and Ian Laird being their only successes on the night.

In week 14 Linacre drew with Maghull "C", a match most notable for the fact that Harry Reeve lost his match against Phil Christie, who also beat Harry Nelson, Maghull fielding Janette Huichings as a reserve. Aigburth "A" beat Wavertree Labour "D" 6/4, Derek Traynor beating Andy Bird and Tony Mitchell, Ian Laird beating Gordon Langshaw and Steve Perry, Lee Proffitt also beating Steve and Paul Grugel weighing in with a defeat for Andy Bird in what was a bad result for Labour "D"

Maghull "B" inflicted another defeat on Marconi "B" 6/4, Harry McGanity winning both of his singles and his doubles, Tony Mullally unbeaten in singles for Marconi. Bootle Y.M.C.A. inflicted a rare 10/0 whitewash against Aigburth although Graham Rollinson and Ray Jones can feel a little bit unlucky to lose closely in the fifth game against Bert Rivers and Arthur Garnett respectively. Harold House crashed to a 7/3 defeat against Bath St. "E", Rob Midgley being their most successful player on the night by winning both singles against Graham Oates and Keith Wright, only John Hughes who beat Karen Gibson contributing for Harold House. And finally, in a match that was played a week late due to confusion over match nights, Wavertree Labour "C" battered their club mates, Wavertree Labour "E" 8/2, only John Rowan who beat Bill Stanley and Tom Creevy standing in the way of a whitewash.

**DON'T
FORGET
the
CLOSED**
End of season
8th MAY

There are only 2 things in doubt in this division. Who'll be champions and how many teams will be left at the end of the season? **Wavertree 'F'** are now officially gone. **Bath St 'F'** and **CADWA 'D'** are running neck and neck at the top, whilst **Greenbank 'A'** are way off the pace, well behind **Maghull 'D'** in 5th.

No, hang on. Make that 3 things in doubt. As the 2 rivals for the divisional title and hence joint favourites for cup glory, have been thrown out of the cup, both for playing players ineligible due to playing to many games for higher teams.

Everyone seems to have got a hang of the additional fixtures, but there are now fortnightly gaps of nothingness. But it's my job to report on the games that have been played in this mid-term trimester...

Greenbank 'A' have tended to have Claire Harris and Lynne Riding at 1&2, but who appears at 3&4 is more open. Against **Maghull 'D'** they had their best result yet, 3-7. A draw could have been achieved if only the first 2 sets had gone their way. Anthony McMullen narrowly lost 9-11 in the 5th to Janette Hutchings, as did Lynne in her match with Denise Chorley. This after both were 2-1 up. Anthony went back to the table to beat Jimmy Ambrose, but after that it was one way traffic as Maghull moved to a 5-1 lead. However, successive victories; Claire beating Janette and Lynne beating No.1 John Gillibrand over 5, 13-11 in the last, left the match poised for an upset. But that was as good as it got and Claire & Lynne seem to have had all kinds of problems in the last match, losing 3 straight, each 0-11 to John & Jimmy! At least we had the rare sight of a match consisting of 2 teams each having 2 ladies & 2 gentlemen.

For some reason, their game against **CADWA 'D'** which had been postponed due to players representing their country in the



Para-Olympics, was not arranged within the 8 weeks deadline. Thus **CADWA 'D'** were awarded 10 points. The two teams did meet at the appointed hour of their next fixture, **CADWA** winning 8-2. Andy McNabb won his first game against Claire comfortably, but then lost the next 3 narrowly, in the only 4 games of the night. This was strange considering he was so in control in his first match, against Ian Littlewood, whereas I found Ian to good, losing in 3.

In the match against high flyers **Bath St 'F'**, Claire & Lynne redeemed themselves, beating Alan Willis & George Crowley in 3 after experiencing a deuce in the 1st. However this was to be their only success on the night, and unfortunately the 2nd doubles could not be played, 1-9 also "became" the score against **Maghull 'E'**. What was "recorded" on the night was 3-7, however the victories by Mark Morgan & Jerry Kinsella both over Ronnie Cockerost, were scrubbed as Mark & Jerry had played out of order. So, it was just Lynne's win over Alan Smethurst (3-2) that was left to stand.

It would appear that two administrative oversights have cost the team, (pounds and points), but seeing as this is the first time the club have run two teams it's understandable. And which of us hasn't fallen foul of these rules (coughs).

CADWA 'D' in effect tore-up a 10-0 against **Maghull 'D'** and got the match played. Fortunately they won 10-0, as only 3 games were dropped, but at least Andy McCourt gave Don Davies a fright coming from 2 down to force a fifth.

Bath St 'G' welcomed **CADWA 'D'** twice in this period. 3-7 was the score in the first. Dave Batty beat yours truly, in 3 straight (but 2 of them were 12-10!). Keith Wright got the upper hand on Jack Highton (11-9 in t^h 5th), and Ron Georgeson & Dave teamed up for a first doubles win over Andy and Jack.

In the 2nd match, Ron was down to play but turned out to be ill. Dougie Marriott had already moved up the order to replace Keith, and Eugene Berger filled in at 4. Eugene has played for many a year in Manchester and still has tremendous fitness and agility. Dave and myself had another close one, but I edged it this time, going 1-0 up, then 1-1, then 2-1, then 2-2, and finally 3-2; the last game of the night to run up a whitewash.

A week later and a 3 man **Wavertree 'F'** were despatched in the same manner. Perhaps this was a sign of a team in trouble as they bowed out shortly after this?

CADWA then slipped up against **Maghull 'D'** 6:4. At the top of the card Andy needed 5 to beat John G, who could have won it from 9-10 in the 4th. Andy also beat Janette 3-2, the 1st 4 games seesawing 11-6 between them. John O Sullivan won his singles without dropping a game against John & Denise Chorley. Don Davies too had that seesaw feeling, losing his first and last game against Janette 9-11. Student Ian Ambrose (Jimmy's lad) was around to bag a brace, coming from 2-0 down against myself, and holding his nerve in a tense 5 game v Don. Andy & I found John & Janette on inspired form to again win a 5 game.

The last week in November and first week in December, featured 3 intra club matches. This is always interesting as outsiders can reflect on the respective rivalries and ranking lists. **Bath Street** seem to have it done by the book judging by 'F's 10-0 win over 'G'. No 5 gamers, and only 3 4 game sets. (Although a crack at a 5th game would have been deserved by Keith Wright, who lost from deuce in the 4th in both of his games.) No surprise then that the 'F' team are so far ahead of the 'G' team.

Maghull on the other hand, seem to have made teams up on social rather than ability grounds, as the 'E' leads the 'D' in the table. An honourable 5-5 draw was the result of the 1st encounter, and a 6-4 for the lower 'E' team was the 2nd. No doubt this will trigger a deluge of complaining letters to the Digest, with accusations of fiddling aimed at the Maghull Committee. Such correspondents should CC. their missives, to Steve Banks, as he was undefeated in 4 singles. 1st time round Steve beat Captain John in 3, next time with home advantage (!), John came from 2 down to force a 5th game. John also couldn't quite get the better of Alan Smethurst. Whereas Denise Chorley easily got the better of Alan in the 1st encounter, she couldn't prevent his revenge in the 2nd. The 'D' team had been behind in the 1st match up to the 9th game when Janette beat Keith Whitaker 11-9 in the 5th. In hindsight if Janette hadn't won that one, they would have lost both matches. In the 1st match the doubles had been split 1 each. 'E' calling 1&2 1st, 3&4 2nd, whereas 'F' called the reverse; 3&4 1st, 1&2 2nd. Seeing a slightly differently line-up in the 'E' team (Andy McCourt replacing Keith at 3), Captain John made the decision to call the doubles as 1&2, 3&4. And what a good call it was. John & Janette beat Steve & Alan (3-1, 12-10 in t' 4th), whilst Denise & Jimmy beat Andy and Alan Chan (11-6 3 times), to grab both doubles points. Without them they would

have lost even worse! Again Janette had a high-pressure game, going on in the last of the night against Cap'n McCourt, to try and grab a draw from the jaws of defeat. However, 2 games earlier Andy had suffered a narrow defeat at the hands of Jimmy (9-, 12-, -9, 9-) and was in no mood to repeat the experience. He won in 3 (6, 2 & 7 against) to secure victory and Captain's bragging rights.

Buoyed by the above intra club results, the "lower" of the 2 **Maghull** teams then put out their strongest line up for their away game against the "lower" of the 2 **Bath St** teams. Did Steve tire after losing to Ron in 3 and then having a 5 gamer 2 games later against Richard Woodley? I'm only posing this question as Richard had been called on to play his 1st singles in the 1st game of the night. Richard came back from the disappointment of losing the 3rd game from deuce, to win the last 2. Hey, there's a lot to be considered in a TT match, especially what games to call on. It was also good to see Richard and Andy McCourt, trying to revive the old times by slipping into 21 up mode in their 1st game, which finally finished 16-18. Andy won that set and teamed up with Steve in the 1st doubles to record a very good win over Ron & Chris Blackburn, again in 5. This put the visitors 2-1 up in sets, and things were looking good. But fine wins by Chris & Albert in the singles, left Alan playing Ron for personal gain in the last match of the evening. Alan had had a good stab at (an undefeated) Chris earlier, and rolled Ron over 11-8 in each game.

Bath St 'G', met the other **Maghull** team, the 'D', in a dress rehearsal of their Cup Semi-Final, and beat then 7-3 in the league. **Maghull 'D'**'s points came from 3 very close encounters. Firstly Jimmy Ambrose beat George Crowley 9-, -11, -9, -10. John Gillibrand bounced back from 2 down against Norman Lindsay, to win 3 in row 11-9. John & Janette stumbled in their doubles from 2-0 up to eventually win 11-9 in the 5th over Dave & Norman. Dave had already

had another close encounter of his in own in his singles with John. 3 straight, but 10-, 9- 13- to Dave.

Alan Willis again had a trouble free night, winning both singles and doubles in straight sets, his favoured score being to 6, as he did that in 5 games out of 6.

Stalemates **Bath St 'G'** also managed to beat **Maghull 'D'** 7-3. Again Jimmy grabbed a point, but John had a drought except for his doubles win with Janette, who won over 5 against Doug Marriott. Ron, Dave and A.Parker each bagged a brace in their singles. At **Greenbank 'A'** with Richard replacing A.Parker, they achieved the same score. Ian Littlewood upset Ron & Richard to claim both his singles and Claire & Lynne again won their doubles. Dave & Doug won both their singles, which included good performances against Lynne.

The last game I wish to comment on (but have to!) is **CADWA 'D' v Bath St 'F'**.

The Championship rivals met for the 2nd time and this time out Bath St 'F' got some recompense for the unfair 8-2 result in the 1st match, as they won 6-4. Andy and myself had "mares", as Andy would say. Credit has to go to Norman in winning his 2 singles against us two. A strong finish in the 5th game with me, and a close 5th with Andy. Andy, admittedly under the weather, slipped up against Dave to lose the set 2-3. I must have upset the Gods as George had a mixture of luck and magnificence to come from 11-5 in the 1st game, to ascend the next 3, 7-, 8-, 9-. Jack Highton was again a strong man at #4, beating George and Alan. Called on 1st to play Alan, the game went with serve, up to the 5th when Jack sneaked it 11-9. John O'Sullivan put CADWA ahead 2-1 in sets by beating Dave in a game that exchanged 8's & 9's, till John finally won the 5th -8. Then it all went Bath St's way to put them 5-2 ahead with 3 to play. Alan Willis enjoyed a rare victory over John who mistimed his shots, to inflict his first defeat of the campaign. John later

put this down to his hearing aid batteries running out. (John will ensure he has spares for all future games.) Andy & Jack won 2nd doubles, and Jack stayed on to play George. The turning point in his game was the 4th were Jack somehow managed a comeback to win 14-12. The last game on was the 1st doubles and try as we might. John and I could not win to secure the draw that would have kept our 100% record intact. So not only did we suffer our first defeat, but also we lost the chance to narrow the gap with Bath St 'F', who have been beating teams better than we have. The next match will no doubt be crucial again, but then it will be on Bath St's ground!

Divisional K.O. CUPS - Semi Finals

Div.1. READMAN

CADWA (Chris Ford, Peter Taylor & Colin Rourke v **M/Side Police** (John Rankin, Paul Gittins & Steve Gittens).

Cadwa had brought Colin in to replace Peter Kirby, the only change from their last meeting. The first 4 sets went with the call. John beat Peter in 3, Chris beat Paul in 3, John beat Colin in 3, and Chris beat Steve in 3, but Steve was 10-6 up in the 3rd game, unable to get that extra point. Then Police call on Paul v Peter, which didn't go to plan, Paul won the first game 12-10, but Chris must have threatened Peter with something as Peter changed his game and went into attack mode, winning the next 3, 5 / 10 & 4. Cadwa call on Colin v Steve, now anyone who's played Colin knows he's a gentleman on the table, extremely sorry for any nets or edges that may go his way, and if not careful, opponents can get lulled into a trance. Colin is also a great player and despatched Steve in 4, 4-2 now for CADWA, John calls himself on v Chris to hold on. John wins the first, Chris the next 2, and with Chris having match point in the 4th, John saves it, wins 12-10 and the 5th 11-4, 4-3 now CADWA call on Paul v Colin, Colin winning the first two games before Paul shakes himself out of that trance, winning the next 3 in 8 - 8 & 9. So down to the last set Peter v Steve, first game to Steve 12-10, second to Peter 11-7, but the next 2 to Steve 8 & 6 to give the match to Police 5-4, how critical that match point Chris v John, great match!

Fords (Kevin Dolder, Terry Turner, & Tim Wearden) v **Waterloo** (Keith Williams, Wayne Percival & Alan Chase) The recent league match Fords lost 7-3 with a player short

Waterloo started the match with Keith beating Tim in 3 then Kevin beat Wayne in 4. Waterloo called Alan on against Terry, Terry excelling by winning a straight 3, then every set going with the call after that, Trevor beat Keith in 4, Wayne beat Tim in 3, Tim beat Alan in 4, Wayne beat Terry in 3, and finally Kevin beating Alan in 3, so 5-3 to Fords, and Keith still to play! That's the dilemma for captains, whether to play the bankers early or late, Kevin v Keith, who'd know which way that one would go.

Div. 2. RUMJAHN

Marconi (Bob Edwards, Trevor Owens & Frank McCann) v **Manweb 'A'** (Andy Lloyd, Sharon Norman & Trevor Barraclough)

A full strength Manweb 'A' team won this fixture 6-4 in the league, against the same Marconi team, (currently 5 places below), but with two reserves out tonight, Manweb found it tough going. Manweb had first call and sent on Sharon v Frank, things looked good with Sharon winning the first 11-8, but canny Frank settled down to take the next 3. Marconi call Bob to play Trevor B, who takes the first game 13-11, but Bob ups a gear to win the next 3. Andy calls on Trevor O, against himself, Andy winning in 3. Next set to Marconi, Andy calls on himself against Frank to pull one back, but Frank won the only 5 gamer of the match. So with a lead of 4-1 Trevor O calls Bob v Sharon, no shocks here, Bob sealing the match with a 3 straight win

M/Side Police 'A' (Gemma Lloyd, Jon Dyson & Terri-Anne Nolan) v **M/Side Police 'B'** (Gavin Lloyd, Jonathan Taylor & Tony Harris).

The only whitewash of the round and it has to be a 'B' team battering its 'A' team! a case of youth triumphing over 'looks', senior Mr. Harris only needing to play once. Closest game of the night was in set 3. Jon v Jonathan, first 4 games going to 11-9 each, but Jonathan getting the 5th, 11-7. So at 3-0 down Terri-Anne puts Jon back on v Gavin, Jon winning the first game 9, which must have eased things a bit, but whatever Tony said to Gavin worked. Gavin taking the next 3, the 4th game 14-12. The 5th set saw Jonathan polish off Gemma in 3 straight to give the 5-0 success to the 'B' team, and diplomacy prevailed, sister didn't have to play brother.

DIV. 3. HYDE

Wav. Lab. 'A' (Chris Campbell, Peter Howden, Dave Foulis & Paul Banks) v **Bath St. 'C'** (Ricky Brown, Rob Peat, Jamie Hewitt & Dave Stodden)

Mid table Wav. Lab. 'A' took on top of the table Bath St. 'C', Bath St. won the recent league match 6-4, but

both teams have added strength since, Chris joining Wavertree and Jamie playing regularly for Bath St. 'C'. Bath St. had first call, with Ricky beating Peter in 3, Chris did the same against Rob. Jamie beat Paul in 3, Chris pulled it back to 2-2 with a good 3-2 win over Ricky, after being 2-0 down. But that was the end of Wavertree's challenge, Bath St's strength in depth running out 5-2 winners, Rob beating Dave F. in 4, Rickie & Rob beating Chris & Peter in the doubles, and finally Dave S. beating Dave F. in 3

CADWA 'B' (Colin Rourke, Yann Sladek, Steve Graham & Rob Davies) v **L/Pool YMCA 'C'** (Steve Kee, Billy Cheung, Alvin Tso & Jimmy Clewett).

Must have been a short night this one with only 6 sets all in 3. YM started with Billy beating Steve, but that was it. Yann beat Alvin, then Steve K. calls Yann back to the table v himself, but Yann wins in 3, CADWA calls Billy on against Colin. Colin winning, at 3-1 down Steve K. goes for the doubles. Steve K. & Billy v Colin & Rob, I would have put this one to go the full 5 games, CADWA winning a close first game 14-12, then 11-6 and finally 12-10 to put CADWA into a 4-1 lead. So set 6 and Rob puts himself on against Jimmy, Rob cruising through in 3 straight, so all over and a 5-1 win to CADWA 'B'. Last league encounter finished 7-3 for CADWA, but that time Steve beat Yann.

At least CADWA's bar is handy and does a nice mild!

DIV. 4. FORREST

Wav. Lab. 'C' (Bill Stanley, Tom Creevy, Ken Armson & Stan Clarke) v **Wav. Lab. 'E'** (John Rowan, Kevin O'Hanlon, Ian Woods & Eric Spencer)

The Derby match Wavertree Labour "C" against Wavertree Labour "E" started with the "E" team taking a 2/1 lead when Kevin O'Hanlon beat Ken Armson, Stan Clarke levelled by beating Eric Spencer, then John Rowan beat Bill Stanley. Ken Armson then levelled the score by beating Eric Spencer, in the fifth match the "E" team made a tactical blunder when they selected Kevin to play Bill, only for Bill to win 3/1, the sixth match paired Tom Creevy and Ian Woods and although the set required all five games Tom kept plugging away to win 11/9 putting the "C" team 4/2 up, the final miscalculation by the "E" team was to call the doubles as the seventh match, big mistake. Ken and Stan of the "C" team are a very experienced doubles pair and had beaten John and Kevin in the league encounter and so it was to be again, although it was a very close set. Ken and Stan winning 11/8,9/11,6/11,11/5,11/7. to give the "C" team the match 5-2.
Report from Stan Clarke

Bath St. 'E' (Karen Gibson, Graham Oats, Dave Cunningham & George Crowley) v **Marconi 'B'** (John

McCann, with Ted Gilmour, Russell Thornton & Bobby Bell)

Two matches ago, 3rd placed Marconi 'B' beat 2nd, placed Bath St. 'E' 7-3, but for this Cup match, both teams fielded different teams, Bath St. had lost their No.1, while Marconi gained their regular No.1 John McCann. John started with a 3 straight win over Graham, Karen levels with a 3 straight over Ted. Russell wins 3 straight over George and Dave levels again with a 3-1 win over Bobby. But that was it, John beat Karen in 3, John and Ted won the doubles and Bobby clinched the match with a 3-1 win over George, so 5-2 to Marconi.

DIV. 5. STAMP

Bath St. 'G' (Ron Georgeson, Dave Batty, Richard Woodley & Dougie Marriott) v **Maghull 'E'** (John Gillibrand, Jeanette Hutchings, Denise Chorley & Jim Ambrose)

Last time Bath St. 'G' met Maghull 'D', Bath St. had a convincing 7-3 win, for the Cup match both teams had one change, Richard Woodley for Bath St. and Jim Ambrose for Maghull, no cup shocks here though, Bath St. going into a 4-0 lead, all 4 players adding one, but John making Ron work hard for his 3-2 win. Denise saved the whitewash by beating Dougie 3-1 after losing the 1st. game 11-7. But the next set clinched it, Dave beating John 3-1, so 5-1 to Bath St.

Greenbank 'A' (Claire Harris, Ian Littlewood, Lynne Riding & Mark Mogan) v **Maghull 'E'** (Steve Banks, Alan Smethurst, Andy McCourt & Keith Whitaker)

This one must have been tention all the way, Maghull starting with a win in 4 from Steve over Claire, Greenbank's call brought Mark on, losing in 3 to Andy. Maghull's next call Alan v Claire must have had everyone on the edge of their seats, first game to Alan 12-10, next two games to Claire, both 14-12, 4th. game 11-7 to Alan final game going to Claire 11-7. Greenbank call on Mark again, who goes down in 3 against Keith. Maghull now 3-1 up and call on Ian to play Andy, Ian winning in 3. Greenbank keep Ian at the table to play Steve, Steve winning the first 11-5, but Ian settles down to take the next 3, 1 / 9 & 4. Now at 3 all, Maghull call Lynne to play Keith, another 5 games, Lynne clinching it in the 5th, 13-11, Greenbank's choice at 4-3 up, Lynne to stay at the table or the doubles, Lynne gets the call to play Alan. Alan winning in 3, so 4-4 and the doubles to decide, Ian & Lynne for Greenbank, and Steve & Andy for Maghull, a tough one for Steve and Andy finally going down 12-10 in the 4th. So well done to both teams for an excellent match, and to Greenbank for reaching, what I think is their first cup final.

Frank Murphy Memorial Trophy -- 3rd. Rnd. Results

LINACRE (175 - Harry Reeve, Harry Nelson and Jack Davidson) v **BATH STREET 1.** (51 - Eddie Crowley, Rickie Brown and Ted Cramsie)

Linacre started with a 124 points advantage, other than the 3rd. set when Harry R. beat Ted, Bath St. won all the games, Ted still pulling in 19 points. Even though they were losing the sets, Linacre were still gaining important points and were still ahead going into the last set, 375 to 364. But 1st. div. Eddie was just too strong for Harry R. winning 42 to 26 to give Bath St.1 the match by 5 points.

CADWA 3 (104 - George Smith, Rob Davies and George Lennon) v **MANWEB 1** (20 - Dave Harse, Andy Lloyd and John Henshaw)

CADWA started 84 points in front, and after the first 3 sets Manweb were well on target to catch up, after the next 3 sets, Manweb had taken the lead by 1 point 272 to 271. The next set John beat George to increase the lead to 13 points, the next set Rob v Andy, Rob winning CADWA's only game of the night 21 - 20, Andy winning the next game to put Manweb 17 in front, last set Dave won both games v George to give the match to Manweb 397 to 364.

BOOTLE YMCA 1 (106 - John Higham, Richie Winckle and Danny Every) v **WATERLOO** (- 36 . Keith Williams, Alan Chase and Mike Mahoney)

The holders v the current league toppers, Waterloo gave the YM a 142 point start, but immediately started the demolition process, with the YM holding out until the 8th game, Waterloo won every game as expected, restricting the YM to single figures in too many games, trouble was that Waterloo liked our table, there were some great hard, fast rallies, but Waterloo's ability to place the ball

better paid off, a total team effort and sweet revenge for last season, Waterloo finally winning the match 342 to 309.

BATHSTREET 4 (206 - Billy Clayton, Chris Foley and Graham Oats) v **MARCONI** (22 - Bob Edwards, Trevor Owens & Frank McCann)

Bath St. had a 184 point advantage at the start, and Marconi had to restrict the Bath St. players to only 10 points per game to have any chance towards the end. They did not achieve this until the 5th. match. Chris took 28 points in the first set, followed by Graham taking 21 from Trevor. Bill playing his first match since breaking a bone in his leg in early January, also took 30 points from Frank, Graham then took 23 from Bob. Frank finally steadied things a bit with patient play and only gave 19 away to Chris. Into the final set between Billy and Bob, and Bob had to restrict Billy to no more than 7 points in each game, in the first game he was just outside the target, 21-8, but in the final game Billy got 13 points, to win the match for Bath St. by 6 points. Billy was nearly at a standstill by this time. Great match, with all the umpiring done by Ron Georgeson and John Langton to help the players, greatly appreciated
Report by Ron Georgeson

The draw for the Semi Finals are :-

WATERLOO V MANWEB
BATH STREET 1 v BATH STREET 4
To be played week commencing 14th March
(also Div. Cup Finals week)

Remember - end of season - 8th. APRIL YOUR closed tournament At the Liverpool Tennis Centre

A nice one from the latest T.T. News mag. our National Umpires have formed a Trade Union, well not actually a trade union as we think of it, at a meeting of umpires in October, it was decided to form AETTU, the Association of English Table Tennis Umpires, an Association, not a Trade Union, when I saw who had got the secretary's job, (our own Ken Armon MBE. I.U.), don't

know why trade union sprung to mind, there must be a difference, I'm sure Ken will put me right. Anyway "its aim is to promote the interest and welfare of umpires and should be seen as the official representative body authorised to discuss the welfare of umpires with all other relevant bodies", the concept has got to be good for umpires, and hopefully for Table Tennis, will we ever see

elite 'Professional' umpires at the big competitions, maybe in 10 years time as well as the smart blazers (which I believe they buy themselves) and a free meal, these highly appreciated volunteers might get a fee as well. Stan Clarke I.U. is also on the committee, membership is open to all qualified ETU umpires, I hope it gets 100% support.
Editor

Merseyside Schools Table Tennis Association

Northwest Schools Teams Championships

organised by the ESTTA and held at Shadsworth Leisure Centre, Queens Park High School, Blackburn, on Sunday 16th January 2005. Our representatives were the winners of the 2004 Merseyside School Teams Championships held last November:

Birkdale High Sport College under 16 boys

finished runners up in their age group, having lost narrowly (5-3) to a strong Cumbria side but beating Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, 8-0, 7-1, 8-0 respectively.

Birkdale High Sport College under 13 boys

were winners in their age group having drawn with Cumbria (4-4) and beaten Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, 8-0, 7-1, 5-3 respectively.

Calday Grange Grammar School under 19 boys

were also winners of their group, beating Cheshire, Lancashire and Cumbria.

Formby High School under 19 girls

received a bye following the withdrawal of Barrow School.

North of England Championships

held at the same venue, Saturday/Sunday 5/6 February 2005.

Calday Grange Grammar School

under 19 boys have been invited to take part in the National School Teams Championships, after winning the North of England title for the second time. The team of **Tom Page, Arjun Chandna, Matthew Evans, Mike Horobin and Gwain Wei Tsang** will compete against the champions of East, West, and South of England for the National title on Sunday 12th March 2005 at the Huncley Leisure Centre, Leicestershire

A valiant effort was made by **Birkdale High School** following last year's success. Both their under 13 and under 16 boys teams finishing runners up by the narrowest of margins.

Formby High School under 19 girls finally met some opposition narrowly missing second place, with one win, one draw and one loss. Well done to Sally Duncliffe, Celia Watson, Laura Baxter and Beth Cropper.

The 2005 MSTTA Individual Championships

are held at New Ferry Village Hall on Sunday 27th February. Results will appear in the Liverpool Echo School Tuesday Supplement, the Liverpool and District TTL and the Wirral TTL websites.

Congratulations to two former MSTTA and English Schools representatives for a good performance at the British University Championships held on Sat/Sun 19/20th February at Warwick University, **Cherith Graham** of Edge Hill for reaching the quarter finals and to **Annabelle Sorrentino** of Manchester Metropolitan for reaching the semifinals.

Both Cherith and Annabelle have recently been awarded the full Talented Athlete Scholarship and are joining the ETTA national team to play in a 3-day international tournament in Sweden from the 25th to the 28th of February.

Frank Sorrentino
MSTTA Secretary.

10 YEARS AGO From page 12

Neary, George Wright, Ken Nelson, Arthur Garnett, Stan Clarke, Ken Ray, Peter Williams, and many others who show that the 5th was a fairly strong division). Merseybus's Graham Rollinson's two good wins against Mabel Neary and Ken Ray of Wav.Lab.'F', and up to date, the only unbeaten doubles pair in the division. Merseybuses' Williams & Foster also taking a point. Bootle YM had a 'B' team with Tommy Wong leading. Arthur reports that Alan Wood is back from Australia and is playing for the Police again, the early return had something to do with an expiring visa, (or did those Austies get him on a technicality).

The passing of English Electric and Bohemians player Pete D'Arcy is reported by Jack. Jack was also Secretary of the English Electric Club. Pete was Captain of the E.E. Cup and Championship sides, and instrumental in reaching the semi finals of the English Club Cham-

pionships twice, in Jacks words, "A great bloke, a Secretary's dream"

Letters

Dear Editor, Congratulations to Ken Armson on his retirement, may it be a long and happy one, and do you think he might find time to write more than a FEW lines for his divisional notes, B.M.

One thing I notice about reading these old Digests are the large number of names who are no longer playing today, the majority I'm sure are still around, Ken Armson labours on the number of star players who are regularly missing in the top division, do we still have an apathy of not wishing to play lower than their status

My comments in *italics* EDITOR.

Hi Roly

Although I have not played so far this season (due to illness and pressures from non TT related matters - work !!) I did manage to pick up a bat and play against Paul Banks (Wav. Lab.) on the island of Kuredu, Maldives. Of all the bars in all the world there was Paul and his intended munching their way through lunch one day when we spotted each other. Disbelief is one word to describe our surprise. Couldn't resist it then to play a match in the enclosed bar area of the resort. Late one afternoon as the beer was chilling nicely Paul and I set about each other (in the TT figure of speaking). Cadwa won the day but only just in 5. Then to add more interest my wife and Paul's fiance took to the table and were more entertaining than two cautious gents who preceded them.

Gestures at the bar - cold beers all round.
Cheers Rob Peverall (CADWA)



What an amazing turn of events, not long after this photo was taken, that devastating Tsunami struck the Indian Ocean and swamped the Maldives, Paul's holiday finished a week before, and Rob's, a matter of days before that disaster, otherwise I may have been reporting this meeting under a different title. Thankfully we have the photo, and all is well!! (Paul beat me last night)
editor

DIVISION THREE

	Name	Club	P	W	%
1	ROGALA Michal	Greenbank	12	12	100.0%
2	ROURKE Colin	Cadwa 'B'	28	26	92.9%
3	CLIEN Eddie	H. House 'A'	25	21	84.0%
4	STODERN Dave	Bath St 'C'	25	21	84.0%
5	ROBINSON Scott	Greenbank	21	17	81.0%
6	KEE Steve	L/pool YM 'C'	30	24	80.0%
7	SLADEK Yann	Cadwa 'B'	14	11	78.6%
8	EDGE Tony	Greenbank	22	17	77.3%
9	HEWITT Jamie	Bath St 'C'	22	17	77.3%
10	ROBERTS Martin	H.House 'A'	21	16	76.2%
11	CAMPBELL Chris	Wav.Lab 'A'	18	13	72.2%
12	BANKS Paul	Wav. Lab 'A'	28	20	71.4%
13	BROWN Ricky	Bath St 'C'	30	21	70.0%
14	CHEUNG Bill	L/pool YM 'C'	30	21	70.0%
15	PALMER Mark	Greenbank	26	18	69.2%

DIVISION FOUR

	Name	Club	P	W	%
1	CHRISTIE Phil	Maghull 'C'	28	25	89.3%
2	REEVES Harry	Linacre	32	28	87.5%
3	WILLIAMS Peter	Bootle YM 'A'	15	13	86.7%
4	ROWAN John	Wav.Lab 'E'	28	24	85.7%
5	GARNETT Arthur	Bootle YM 'A'	24	19	79.2%
6	CRAMSIE Ted	Bath St 'E'	30	22	73.3%
7	RIVERS Bert	Bootle YM 'A'	29	21	72.4%
8	FOLEY Chris	Bath St 'E'	14	10	71.4%
9	PERRY Steve	Wav.Lab 'D'	26	18	69.2%
10	ARMSON Ken	Wav.Lab 'C'	22	15	68.2%
11	HUGHES John	H.House 'B'	22	15	68.2%
12	WOODS Ian	Wav.Lab 'E'	24	16	66.7%
13	GILMOUR Ted	Marconi 'B'	14	9	64.3%
14	McCANN John	Marconi 'B'	14	9	64.3%
15	PROFFITT Frank	Marconi 'B'	14	9	64.3%

DIVISION FIVE

	Name	Club	P	W	Ave
1	FOLEY Chris	Bath St 'F'	12	12	100.0%
2	O'SULLIVAN John	Cadwa 'D'	17	16	94.1%
3	WILLIS Alan	Bath St 'F'	18	16	88.9%
4	HIGHTON Jack	Cadwa 'D'	14	12	85.7%
5	LINDSAY Norman	Bath St 'F'	20	17	85.0%
6	McNABB Andy	Cadwa 'D'	16	13	81.3%
7	CUNNINGHAM Dave	Bath St 'F'	14	11	78.6%
8	CROWLEY George	Bath St 'F'	20	15	75.0%
9	BAKER Doug	Cadwa 'D'	14	9	64.3%
10	SMETHURST Aan	Maghull 'E'	11	7	63.6%
11	BATTY Dave	Bath St 'G'	16	10	62.5%
12	BANKS Steve	Maghull 'E'	20	9	45.0%
13	GEORGESON Ron	Bath St 'G'	16	6	37.5%
14	McCOURT Andy	Maghull 'E'	19	7	36.8%
15	AMBROSE Jim	Maghull 'D'	18	6	33.3%

Divisions 1 & 2 on back page

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LEAGUE TABLES AS AT 02/03/2005

Division 1	P	W	D	L	Pts
Waterloo	17	14	3	0	122
L/pool YMCA	17	13	2	2	115
Fords	17	10	2	5	102
Wav.Labour	17	8	3	6	89
L/Pool YMCA 'A'	17	7	4	6	78
M/Side Police	16	6	2	8	77
Bath St	17	5	6	6	75
Bootle JC	17	3	2	12	73
Cadwa	16	6	2	8	71
Bath St 'A'	16	4	3	9	69
Harold House	17	3	2	12	64
Manweb	16	3	3	10	62

Division 2	P	W	D	L	Pts
L/Pool YMCA 'B'	16	13	1	2	115
Maghull	17	12	1	4	112
Cadwa 'A'	17	10	4	3	99
Manweb 'A'	17	10	2	5	91
M/Side Police 'B'	18	7	5	6	90
Marconi	18	8	1	9	87
Bootle JC 'A'	17	7	2	8	86
Fords 'A'	17	5	4	8	76
Bath St 'B'	17	4	4	9	76
Marconi 'A'	18	4	4	10	70
M/Side Police 'A'	17	3	3	11	69
Manweb 'B'	17	3	3	11	59

Division 3	P	W	D	L	Pts
Cadwa 'B'	17	12	1	4	112
Bath St 'C'	15	12	2	1	106
Greenbank	16	10	4	2	106
Harold House 'A'	17	10	3	4	99
Bath St 'D'	17	10	2	5	96
Bootle YMCA	16	9	1	6	88
Wav.Labour 'A'	17	7	1	9	85
L/Pool YMCA 'C'	16	6	2	8	80
Maghull 'A'	17	5	1	11	66
Manweb 'C'	16	5	1	10	58
Wav.Labour 'B'	17	2	3	12	54
Cadwa 'C'	17	0	1	16	40

Division 4	P	W	D	L	Pts
Bootle YMCA 'A'	16	12	1	3	111
Wav.Labour 'C'	17	10	2	5	96
Bath St 'E'	16	11	2	3	91
Marconi 'B'	16	11	0	5	91
Wav.Labour 'D'	17	8	4	5	91
Wav.Labour 'E'	16	7	4	5	83
Maghull 'C'	16	6	4	6	83
Linacre	17	4	3	10	80
Maghull 'B'	17	7	2	8	78
Harold House 'B'	16	1	6	9	63
Aigburth 'A'	16	2	1	13	57
Aigburth	16	4	1	11	56

Division 5	P	W	D	L	Pts
Bath St 'F'	13	12	0	1	107
Cadwa 'D'	11	9	0	2	85
Bath St 'G'	11	6	0	5	53
Maghull 'E'	13	5	1	7	52
Maghull 'D'	10	1	1	8	29
Greenbank 'A'	10	0	0	10	14
Wav.Labour 'F'	Withdrawn Records				
M/Side Police 'C'	Withdrawn Records				

Fixture Secretary Trevor has been keeping Player averages up to date as the season progresses, so with limited space available, here are the top 15 in each division

DIVISION ONE					
	Name	Club	P	W	Ave
1	DOLDER Kevin	Fords	42	41	97.8%
2	WILLIAMS Keth	Waterloo	40	39	97.5%
3	FORD Chris	Cadwa	24	21	87.5%
4	RANKIN John	M/Side Police	31	25	80.6%
5	PERCIVAL Wayne	Waterloo	40	31	77.5%
6	WATSON Gary	Wav.Labour	41	31	75.6%
7	JACKSON Ken	Bath St	45	34	75.6%
8	TURNER Terry	Fords	21	15	71.4%
9	MOLYNEUX Les	Manweb	42	29	69.0%
10	BRAY Tom	Bootle JC	41	25	61.0%
11	JACKSON Ray	Harold House	27	15	55.6%
12	POWELL Neil	Manweb	18	10	55.6%
13	PEERS Clare	Bath St 'A'	39	21	53.8%
14	SMITH Roy	Wav.Labour	26	14	53.8%
15	GITTINS Paul	M/Side Police	40	20	50.0%

DIVISION TWO					
	Name	Club	P	W	Ave
1	BLACK Graemo	Cadwa 'A'	48	42	87.5%
2	BELLECK Mikael	L/pool YMB'	46	39	84.8%
3	CAMPBELL Ian	Bath St 'B'	26	22	84.6%
4	WILSON Matt	Maghull	38	30	83.3%
6	MILLER Nick	Maghull	29	24	82.8%
6	TAYLOR Jon	Police 'B'	18	14	77.8%
7	LLOYD Gavin	Police 'B'	38	29	76.3%
8	TIMWELL Alan	Cadwa 'A'	15	11	73.3%
9	EDWARDS Bob	Marconi	45	33	73.3%
10	HUGHES Rob	Fords 'A'	21	15	71.4%
11	ROWE Steve	Marconi	21	15	71.4%
12	HARSE Dave	Manweb 'A'	47	32	68.1%
13	LAU John	L/pool YMB'	43	28	65.1%
14	TAGG Dave	L/pool YMB'	46	29	63.0%
15	QUIRK Julian	Bootle JC 'A'	20	12	60.0%

Divisions. 3, 4 & 5 averages on page 23

Div One Fords 20Pts Deducted at the end of the season twice playing ineligible player.