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**TABLE
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TABLE **DIGEST** TENNIS

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Editorial

Firstly my apologies for the late arrival of the February issue which was due to circumstances beyond our control.

Entry forms for the 'Closed' championships were delivered with the last issue and we are hoping for a record entry to christen our new venue. I have not myself seen the playing conditions at New Hey, but I understand they are far superior to last year's venue. We hope you will let us have your views on this venue for publication.

We are experimenting this season by printing the 'Closed' tournament rules in the "Digest" and you will find them on Page 7 of this issue. If this is considered successful it will probably be extended next season to include the entry form.

The service rule continues to be ignored by the majority of players and I have heard of a number of cases of ill-feeling as a result of umpires trying to enforce this rule. Can we hope that players and umpires at the 'Closed' will observe this rule correctly and avoid any unnecessary incidents.

The A.G.M. will soon be with us and now is the time to put into concrete form any ideas you may have to improve the league in any way. We have already received one suggestion which is well worth consideration in these days of ever increasing costs. One of the divisional writers has also aired his views in his article, and the "Digest" is available for anyone else who would like to put forward their views.

Two clubs, Liverpool Paraplegice and C. F. Mott, have at this late stage withdrawn their teams from the league. In the case of the Saraplegics this is very unfortunate as the Management Committee have tried to fit them in and I am sure their opponents have made every effort to assist them. Their opposite numbers in Southport are very successful members (don't I know it !) of the Southport & District League and I can see no reason why the Liverpool Paraplegics should not have been successful with us.

Since the commencement of the season we have lost no less than 10 teams. Some of these have been the result of clubs over-estimating the number of players they would have available. This is a matter of concern to all and we must try and make sure that it does not occur again.

The failure of clubs who win League Trophies to have them engraved is causing some concern, and in an effort to overcome this it has been decided that clubs who win a cup this year must return it at the Liverpool Closed. The cups will be engraved and will be returned at the A.G.M. So, don't forget, if you win a cup this season make sure you return it as requested, for this is in your own interests.

While Jim Green is recovering from his unfortunate disposition, I am trying to carry out his Match Secretary duties, one of which involves writing these notes for the "Digest". It is a pleasure to report first of all, however, that Jim is now out of hospital and making good progress.

Jim's notes in the February issue made much of the success of the Ladies' 1st team, and quite rightly so. Since then the team has defeated Manchester 6-4, and now everything depends on the match against Stockport at Crawfords on March 22nd. As long as Judy, Barbara and Mabel keep fit we ought to . . . but no, let's wait and simply wish the team Good Luck.

The Ladies 'A' team finished their season with a defeat, 7-3 at Southport, so their final record is two victories (Bury and Burnley) and three defeats (Oldham, Warrington and Southport). I hope, however, that Sam, Jean and Janet have learned a lot from this year's experience of inter-City matches and this perhaps will be evident next season.

The Men's 1st team recently gained a 6-4 win at home to Sreston. Gordon Birch was unable to play in this match and George Smith (YM), who replaced him almost at the last minute, played brilliantly to win his three singles and, with Peter D'Arcy, took the doubles. Arthur Taylor and Peter won one set each to complete the six. With one match at Lytham still to be played (March 22nd) the team's record now reads Won 3, Lost 3, Drawn 1.

The 'A' team has not had a successful season and with only one match left (at home to Preston 'A'

on March 29th) a win of no less than 8-2 must be achieved if relegation is to be avoided. Roy Smith has been the only really successful player, but so often a last minute reserve has had to be called out, it's been difficult to field a settled team. One win and six defeats is the present record, but maybe it will be two wins after March 29th. I hope so.

The Youth team, with one game at Salford still to play, has won three, drawn one and lost five. Richard Heath has produced the best results, beating thirteen opponents and losing only two, but it must be pointed out that he missed the hardest matches against Blackburn and Blackburn 'A'. Alan Dean has played in all the matches with a 50 per cent. average to date. While Ian Wensley has been the least successful of the team.

The Juniors, although their record has been rather disappointing, have gained in experience this season. Alan Williams has played in all matches and also on occasions acted as reserve for the Youth team, all in his first season in competitive Table Tennis. Michael Jones is now improving steadily, while John Barton, who also began playing only this season, should have much success ahead of him. With Peter Fleming, Ian Shaw and Harry Evans in addition, next season's results should be more pleasing. Only one match has still to be completed, against Chester on March 22nd. I must, incidentally, thank Gordon Birch, who has been coaching the Junior boys during the season nearly every Sunday afternoon. I hope the time and work he has put in with the boys will bear fruit in the near future.

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