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COMMENT

WE have no desire to be pretentious but it is safe to say that this is the most important issue of the *Digest* that has yet appeared. For once the body of the League seems to have been aroused, and we have received more letters than we can accommodate in the correspondence column with comfort. Nearly all concerned with this problem of team-ranking and so-called "fiddling."

The Management Committee tackled the problem with energy and spent many hours in producing the scheme which is now presented within our pages. This elected body considers that the present trends demand such a proposal which undoubtedly is far reaching, but it is *you*, as a member, who has to decide if this is the answer to the problem.

We feel that these proposals demand very serious consideration, if only because they represent the unanimous opinion of people who have all spent many years in the game, and know the problems of our League better than most. But on this vitally important matter it is essential that every single member of the League should give it his serious thought, and fully understand the reasons for the various clauses. It would be a great tragedy if even one secretary came to the special meeting with no clear conception of his members' views. It is up to all clubs to talk over the question and ascertain clearly the feeling of members.

There may be still a few who do not realise just how important it has become that this problem should be tackled, but a reference to articles and viewpoints in this season's *Digest* will almost certainly convince him on this point.

The major question is whether the Management Committee's proposed scheme is the answer to the problem. We ask you to consider it, together with the explanations as given by the Secretary, most carefully, to decide the best solution. Speaking personally we feel it is, but in the end it is the League members, as represented by their secretaries, who must decide.

May we utter a gentle warning considering the matter from a purely selfish point of view. Try to look at the welfare of the League as a whole. The Management Committee have an advantage in this respect, but it is *you* who must decide if they are right. It is important that the opinions of everybody should be given on a most momentous question.

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR LEAGUE'S RECONSTITUTION

By W. STAMP.



FOUR years ago the Management

Committee discussed the possibility of three or four clubs with multiple teams dominating the First and Second divisions, but the matter was shelved as being too remote. The time has arrived however, when this problem must be tackled, together with others in its wake.

It has become apparent that the rules are being abused to gain advantages for clubs with more than one team, and that players are being regrouped into lower teams than is justified by their merits. This is particularly taking place when promotion or relegation issues are at stake, and operates most unfairly against clubs who have only one team.

The Committee have sufficient evidence to prove that the position is getting out of hand and bringing discredit on our organisation. For instance, teams X and Y are at the bottom of a division and Z is third from bottom and are a one team club, while X has 2, 3, or 4 teams, one of which may be highly placed in the same division or half way up the table in a higher division.

Strangling Competition

What happens? Club X decides to regroup its teams and strengthen the team that might suffer relegation, by drafting a player or players from a higher team that has no chance of achieving promotion or suffering relegation, with the result that X climbs to safety and Z, who have been fighting hard and think they will just about avoid relegation, find they are for the big jump. THEY have no other teams to do any regrouping.

We know it is all "in the rules," but this is an amateur organisation,

and surely there is such a thing as Sportsmanship. Apart from the abuse of the rules, it is grossly unfair to the small clubs, is slowly strangling the healthy competitive spirit we used to have, is one of the causes of the apathy that is creeping in, and matches are becoming farcical.

A recent letter suggested "Why not two Leagues?" This is not an original idea as it was discussed in Committee four years ago but discarded then as too revolutionary. We must put our house in order and reorganise to meet the needs of the times.

The Management Committee have spent many hours on this complex subject, and whilst respecting the feelings and problems of the large clubs, we also have to reconcile them with our duty to the small clubs.

Our unanimous recommendations are as follows:—

The present organisation to be divided into two sections and to be known as The Liverpool & District T.T. League, comprising four divisions of 12 teams, and The Liverpool & District T.T. Alliance with two divisions and four Third divisions—North, South, East and Central (corresponding to the present Regions).

Regrouping Rule

NO club may have more than two teams in the LEAGUE but they will be allowed four men's teams in the organisation, i.e. two in the League and two in the Alliance, one in the League and three in the Alliance or none in the League and four in the Alliance.

We consider that two teams is a fair representation for any club in the League,

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Composition of the League

Continued from page 3

and if they are large enough, they can still enter two more men's teams in the Alliance. While there is no promotion for third or fourth teams from the Alliance to League, players with the ambition to play in a higher sphere will have an incentive to gain promotion through their teams.

The LEAGUE shall comprise first teams and A teams taken from our present four divisions, plus eight teams from the present Regions, who will replace the present B and C teams now in the divisions, who will be transferred to the Alliance.

All teams in the League must draw reserves from a lower team in the Alliance, and if they have no team in this section, then they will draw from their additional registrations as they do at present.

A club with more than one team must submit their teams in order of merit (first five for first team, second five for A team, etc.). Regrouping will be allowed only twice during the season and must be in the hands of the Fixture Secretary before October 31st, to take effect from the 2nd Monday in November, and before December 31st to take effect from the 2nd Monday in January, PROVIDED they have been accepted by the Management Committee.

There have already been over 100 regroupings this season, and apart from other considerations, this means the burning of midnight oil by one or two officials. We feel that twice in a season is quite enough, and the last date gives clubs ample opportunity of assessing the form of their players.

A team captain may play his team in any order he may decide, but the GROUPS of five must be in order of merit where there is more than one team, and NO splitting of strength as at present practised, will be permissible.

This is to try to prevent the unfair advantages that have been gained during the past season in particular, by clubs with multiple teams.

Apply for Re-election

There will be promotion and relegation within the League as at present, but the bottom two teams in the lowest division shall apply for re-election. The first two teams eligible for promotion from Division 1 of the Alliance may apply for election to the

League, and the Management, at their discretion and by ballot, shall decide which of the applications shall be ratified.

The first two teams due for promotion from the Alliance may already have two teams in the League, and the two eligible teams may have finished eighth or ninth in the table, and not be as strong as the teams due for relegation. Therefore the Management should have these powers and so keep up the standard in the League.

The ALLIANCE shall be composed of first, A, B and C teams with the exception of the eight changes outlined above. The first and A teams may be from clubs who, in the opinion of the Committee, are not strong enough to play in the League. They can always win their way into the top flight as they do at present from the Regions.

Clubs with more than one team must draw their reserves from a lower team, provided that lower team is not in the same division. In this case, reserves must be drawn from a team in a lower division or from additional registrations.

Two regroupings per season as in the League, and clubs with more than one team must submit their teams in order of merit as in the League.

Number Per Team

Promotion and relegation shall be two up and two down in Divisions 1, and two up from Division 2 but the bottom four to be relegated to the third regional divisions, the top team in each of which to be promoted to Division 2.

The bottom two teams in each Third Division (eight in all) shall apply for re-election, and shall be considered by the Management Committee, together with new clubs or teams applying for admission.

Our aim is not to increase the number of divisions by accepting too many teams. We want to encourage quality rather than quantity.

Team registration throughout the organisation to be a minimum of eight players for one team, 14 for two teams, 20 for three teams and 26 for four.

There must be more reserves on account of short teams, as up to February 28th we have instances of 140 absent players.

New registrations after the second regrouping on December 31st shall be

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MANDATE WANTED FROM CLUBS

Continued from page 4

decided on their merits by the Management Committee under Rule 36, and will take care of players joining or being discharged from H.M. Forces and any unforeseen circumstances, but the Management Committee will not accept new registrations without good and sufficient reason.

Women's Division

Clubs may only have one team in the Women's First division.

In view of the proportion of women to men in the organisation, the Management Committee consider this a fair proportion.

There will be a Special General Meeting on TUESDAY, March 30th, 1954, at 7-00 p.m., at the Deaf Institute Parkway, Liverpool 8. Secretaries are asked to call meetings in their clubs so that they can come to this meeting with the views of their members and whether they are in favour of this reorganisation, which the Management feel will be to the benefit of all concerned.

If the vote is favourable, then the Management Committee can proceed to draft the necessary amendments to the present rules for presentation to the Annual General Meeting in May.

Extract from Rule 27. "Any club failing to be represented at an Annual General or Special General Meeting shall be fined 5/-."

Matches can be re-arranged if necessary, but they must be played not later than Tuesday, April 6th, and notification made to the Fixture Secretary.

SPECIAL NOTE:—The Closing date for application forms, with particulars and number of teams, will in future be JUNE 30th, to enable the Management Committee to allocate the teams to the various divisions, draw up the fixtures and get on with the printing of the handbook. Club secretaries are therefore asked to call club meetings before this date to decide their programme for the next season. Fees will not be required until the September meeting.

Thanks are Due to them

MR. W. Stamp, the Organising Secretary and Treasurer, says a big "Thank you" to all those who helped once again to have a successful Closed Championship tournament, with special mention to Referee Fred Farrell and his assistant, John McKim; Margaret Lindner, who stuck manfully (or should it be "womanfully") at her job on the microphone despite an attack of bronchitis; Jack Hughes, in keeping the Wall sheets up to date; Sam Sturgeon for installing the lights, tables, surrounds and microphones, assisted by his wife Rene and Ken Eodan. And to the ladies who once again did a real backroom job of work with the refreshments—always an essential service at any Tournament.

The finals at the Y.M.C.A. were better patronised than on any previous occasion, and whilst there are still some black spots, the majority of the clubs gave their support.

"ARCTIC" PROTEST

SIR:—Although the cold spell was officially over it returned with a vengeance when I visited Anfield to play for my team in a Third Division fixture.

Leaving the warm, wet Liverpool pavements I climbed up some steep unlit wooden stairs and entering through an "air lock" I found myself in what must be the coldest room this side of Siberia.

I looked across and saw our three blue-nosed supporters huddled together for warmth.

The Anfield team had no supporters and I supposed them to have all died months ago from "exposure."

These "arctic regions" were provided with a small stove, but there were no signs of it having been lit in recent years. Long before the end of the match, in which we were well beaten by the acclimatised Anfield side, our three supporters left for warmer climes, being unable to sustain themselves any longer against the "deep freeze."

Anfield, please get some fuel for your stove! H. COHEN, (Cadwa).

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Maxwell Fyfe and Foulis Cups

THE final round of the Maxwell Fyfe and Foulis Cups will be played on Friday, March 26th, at the Florence Institute. They will take place during the Central Region tournaments by courtesy of Rene Sturgeon, who is allowing the use of one of her tables.

There is every prospect of a keen fight in both events, and it must be admitted that the big advance this season made by some of the longer handicapped players makes the chances of one or two of them very rosy indeed.

Play will begin at 7-15 and the same importance of keeping to time as in earlier rounds will apply. Directions to the Florence Institute can be found in the handbook under the heading of Florence Oxtou.

The draw for the two events is:—

Maxwell Fyfe, first round:—
M. Cohen (Anfield) 12 v. C. Cassleman (Rafters) 11; R. Mason (Panto) 13 v. E. F. Anderson (Litherland) 17.

Second round:—Cohen/Cassleman v. J. Seddon (Waterloo Dock) 11; W. Bintley (Anfield) 8 v. I. Rogerson

(Bootle Y.M.) 15; A. Harris (Bootle Y.M.) 14 v. J. Grant (Oakhill) 12; J. Brierley (Anfield) 14 v. Mason/Anderson.

Foulis Cup, group final:—K. Rumjahn (Rafters) 11 v. M. Hoey (Dunlop) 13.

Semi-final:— Rumjahn/Hoey v. J. Richardson (Balfour) 15; M. Jones (Bohemians) 5 v. A. Brown (Linact) 13.

North of England

THE North of England is being staged at the Drill Hall, Rusholme, Manchester, on Saturday, March 27th. A coach has been booked to leave St. John's Lane at 9 a.m., the return fare being 8/6.

The response has been disappointing to the time of going to press, and unless there is an improvement the coach will have to be cancelled. The closing date for reservations is Tuesday next, March 23rd. Applications should be made to Mr. Stamp, accompanied by a 5/- deposit.

Oakhill's Draw was Outstanding

BALFOUR A, who suffered their first defeat to Crosby by 6-4, look like winning the League championship. Their challengers, Crosby and Rafters A, do not appear to have a chance of overtaking them. In addition, of the remaining fixtures, Crosby have the most difficult opponents to meet while Rafters A become weakened by loss of players.

At the foot of the table, African Oil do not seem likely to register even one point and their next rivals, Livex, are well behind Anfield A.

In the Crosby v. Balfour A game, Bernard Hand lost to Smith and Gaulton in straight sets, while veteran Bamford succeeded against Smith 21-15, 21-10 and Harris 21-16 in the third game. Pendlebury gained two sets from Gaulton and Wilcock; Coogan took a set from Sayer and lost to Harris, and Joe Watts lost to Wilcock and then beat Sayer.

McCaig Their Saviour

Crosby, having table advantage, probably would not have done so well had the match been played in the slower conditions at Balfour. However, the following week they could only make a draw with Rafters A. Hand played well to beat Ted and Ron Rumjahn; the others winning a set each, except Watts who lost to Casselman and D. Ferguson. Jack McCaig's win over Coogan seems to have been Rafters' salvation.

The convincing win of 7-3 of Y.M.C.A. over Anfield, shows much credit to Rigby and Mandaluff. Bill Pierce's wins over Lawson and Hobbs we take for granted, but Rigby did

well to beat both Lawson and Lijinsky, although each set was tight. Mandaluff produced that fighting spirit I've previously mentioned to beat Hobbs 24-22, 21-19 and Greensmith, who is no mean performer.

The most commendable result these last few weeks was Oakhill's draw with Balfour on their opponents' table. M. Oakes beat Reg Hetherington 24-22 in the third, this success being followed by Doncaster and Grant both beating Eileen Mansell and Read and Grant beating Rooney.

The point they gained places Oakhill in a healthy position and is the demonstration of a successful, well balanced team which has good team spirit with no particular "stars" filling the first two positions, though Maurice Oakes is asserting his strength.

Record Reflection

At this time of the season, with the Closed just over and only one or two more fixtures and the cup finals coming as an anti-climax, we cannot do more than reflect on the records of some players who have overcome the strain and vagaries of conditions.

Brother Ted has a 91 per cent record in league and cup matches; Bill Pierce has 88 per cent in league and 91 per cent in all matches, and Ron Rumjahn has 87 per cent in league and 89 per cent in all matches. Fred Bamford 78 and 84 respectively; B. Hand 75 and 83, and K. Gaulton 76 and 79. Other good records of consistency are:—L. Davies 88 per cent and 81 per cent; H. Wilcock 78 and 78; A. Smith 76 and 78; J. Watts 75 and 80, and D. Ferguson 76 and 72.

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Every Set Will Count

AT this near final stage of the battle to win First Division Status, it appears to me that Linnets, Lucem or Victoria Park are the only teams with a chance, and they are too close for each others comfort.

At the bottom of the table, Rafters B and Waterloo Dock are certain for relegation. But let me say now that they are two good teams and are quite capable of winning the Third Division next year.

Rafters' line-up of D. Adams, E. Caird, D. Ridgeway, A. Montgomery, and W. Lamb is no easy victim, and Waterloo Dock, if strengthened by just one player, could become good, but the present team of J. Seddon, L. Burrows, A. Byrd, C. Dunn and J. Lightburn lacks a wee bit of bite at the tail-end.

None Good Enough

I am certain that none of the top teams in this Division, unless considerably strengthened, are good enough to enter the First Division next season, despite what anyone says. This point was made clear to me when Anfield defeated Lucem 8-2 in the Readman Cup. Believe me, it was no hard luck story; just an exhibition of superior skill.

Don Foulis, Lucem's veteran, and J. Rimmer were the only players to win a set, this being against D. Hobbs and M. Lijinski, a good effort on their part. But as a team Lucem were beaten easily. Let this be a warning to Linnets and Victoria Park, because you have a chance of strengthening your teams.

Two teams in the division, I think, have got a great future, and both are lying around the centre—Litherland and Bootle Y.M.C.A., the latter team in particular. It's a great pity that one of our star players could not strengthen this growing club so full of youngsters. Of their reserve teams, two are top of the respective regions and one second in the Fourth Division, while this Second Division side only needs one strong player keen enough to guide them on.

Litherland are in a similar position, with their A team second only to Bootle

in the region. What a difference it would make to these two young clubs if say two of the Rumjahn's left Rafters and joined them. They would look upon them as gods, and their advice I am sure, would be willingly accepted. Still, I have no right to talk; it's only my idea.

From my records I note that only two players kept the Second Division flag flying in the Closed. They were Jack Seddon and Eric Wall. Both got through to the semi-finals of the consolation singles and when Eric was beaten, Jack Seddon went on to win. Good for Waterloo Dock. They may be bottom of the division, but they have a good No. 1 player in Seddon.

I am sorry to say that in the Readman Cup semi-final, Bootle Y.M.C.A. lost easily to 15th Crosby, 9-1, J. Stewart winning the only set. Tough, but we expected the worst.

G. Smith (Oakhill) and J. Storey (Victoria Park), the most improved players this season, both came out of the regions into the Second Division.

Rafters B beat Litherland 6-4. Good show—but A. C. Taylor failed to arrive, and they really needed him.

Only new boy to the division this second half is Ted Morris, a Wirral player on Linnet's books. And his record, so far, is good.

PUBLICISE THEM

SIR:—I am fascinated by the inter-city match position as shown by Kay Rumjahn's letter, especially when this is taken conjointly with that written by John Taylor (Liverpool Y.M.C.A.) earlier in the season.

We are constantly urged to support the city teams, yet the players themselves appear to get only 24 hours' notice of the matches. How then are the ordinary league members supposed to know—by crystal gazing?

Of course, it should be possible to arrange matches and publish dates and venues beforehand in the Digest, and I would offer it as a serious suggestion which does appeal to many members of the League. JAMES R. GREEN, (Linnets).

PARK UPSET Y.M.'s OUTLOOK

LAST month we spoke of the private fight between Liverpool Y.M.C.A. and Anfield for the leadership. Both are assured of promotion and having met each other twice, there appeared to be little doubt that the Y.M.C.A. would hold on to the one point lead.

Just to prove me wrong my own club, Victoria Park, decided to take a hand in things and recorded a fine 7-3 win over the leaders. Ian Morris, home on leave, helped out and took a useful set from Cunliffe, but his lack of match practice told against a very steady Young, who recorded two wins for the Y.M.C.A.

Sid Barrett, back to form, and Alan Pearson each scored a double for Victoria Park, and a very sad Y.M.C.A. side left with a vision of medals floating away. They are, however, hot favourites for the Rumjahn cup and entered the final after disposing of a strong Panto team.

Difficult Ascent

At the bottom, Linacre and Technical Students are still trying hard but finding it very difficult to rise from the bottom rungs. The recent clash between these two ended in a five-five draw.

A spot of mystery surrounds things, however, because the North-enders had won five sets and lost three but decided they would not play against Barooah. Another point may have helped Linacre to climb clear but it does look as if they will lose their third division status this time.

Several comments have reached me regarding the reference to a 'pen-shaped' policeman. Well maybe you call it pen grip or pen hold; I can assure you, however, that the description was not intended to refer to the physique of the gentleman in question. His shape could not be described so readily.

A sad loss to I.C.I. and to the Liverpool league, is that of C. C. Holtum who is leaving Liverpool on promotion. "Joe," as he is called by all, had

improved considerably this season and joined the select band of victors over Basil Townsend which is always worthy of a mention. I.C.I. will find it difficult to replace Joe, with their limited reserve resources.

Just in case any wrong impressions are reached following the report of the dispute between Technical Students and Linacre, let me say how much goodwill and good sportsmanship permeates through our division.

I know of two recent instances in which match points have been disputed. In both cases the winner refused the point because of a table-ender just touching, and in both cases neither the umpire nor the spectators noticed the touch. In at least one case the game was lost and a league point sacrificed.

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THE RUMJAHNS STILL SUPREME

By J. D. LOUGHREY

SOME little time ago, a local player suggested that as the dominance of the Rumjahn family showed no sign of coming to an end, their filling of three of the four places in the semi-finals of the men's singles at the Closed Championships might be ended by the luck of the draw, if seeding was temporarily discontinued.

Frankly the interest, as in so many previous years was to find who would occupy the fourth place, to face the unenviable task of trying to best two Rumjahns in a night. A. T. Smith did it a few weeks ago in a League match for Balfour, and there was the memorable occasion last season when Bernard Hand did it to win the title, but with present standards as they are, it is a task which is likely to defeat the lesser lights for some considerable time to come.

Ron and Ted gave a fine exhibition in the final, one worthy of the occasion, and it was pleasing to see the latter showing more aggression than usual.

The record book suggested that Ted, with a fine record in League and cup this season, might be the winner, but Ron always appears as his best in this event and his success was well deserved.

Something to Remember

Hobbs was never in the running against Ted in the semi-finals, but he will nevertheless remember with satisfaction that he eliminated the holder, Bernard Hand, in an earlier round. Bernard has not been at his best recently and his play lacked the fire of twelve months ago. Still he was only defeated 21—23 in the third.

There was no sensation in the Junior singles as F. Cuff, First Division player, beat L. Cairns from the North Region as expected. I must confess that it was not until the second game between them that I could settle down to appreciate a match which was of a higher standard than has distinguished this event in recent years.

Frankly the vigorous gum chewing of both youngsters struck me as most annoying. The harder they played the more their jaws worked away, and I would suggest that this is a mannerism which they might eliminate as soon as

possible. It is a mannerism which looks terrible at a table tennis match.

A popular success in the Men's Consolation Singles was J. Seddon's comfortable victory over Don Bruce (Anfield). The Waterloo Dock player must be one of the most stylish players in the League, and deserves credit for continuing year after year with such a struggling club, in the playing sense, when without doubt, he would be a welcome acquisition to any First Division side.

Bruce never got the measure of his opponent, and might have been considered a trifle fortunate to have reached that stage, as he had only beaten Eric Wall (Oakhill) after a hair-raising struggle 21—5, 21—23, 26—24.

No Serious Challenge

Eileen Mansell had no serious challenger in the women's singles, and here too the only question was who she would be beating in the final. It proved to be Beryl Waterson (Lofters). Beryl, while some way behind her, put up a useful performance and might yet offer a serious challenge, but there to be no one else at the moment.

A big disappointment was the limination of Moya Jones, who, with a big advance this season, might have been expected to cause a lot of trouble in closing rounds. As it was she went out quietly and with hardly any resistance 17—21, 9—21 to Nan Lamb, who must be congratulated on triumphing over a limitation in attacking strokes and reaching the semi-final.

It comes as almost a relief to record the success of a virtual unknown in the Women's Consolation, J. Harley (Brenka), who beat clubmate D. Wilson in a close final. This sensation sent me hurrying to my record book to discover who this intruder to the oh-so-familiar list of finalists might be. Apart from the fact she has only recently appeared for Brenka and had a 50 per cent average, there was not much, but the fact she beat our May Alcock in an earlier round was good enough for me. Indeed this was the most pleasant surprise of the tournament so far as I was concerned.

Continued on page 13

LEAGUE TABLES

up to week ending 13th March, 1954

First Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Balfour A	19	14	1	4	134	56	32
Rafters A	19	12	1	6	128	62	30
15th Crosby	19	12	3	4	118	72	28
Balfour	19	11	5	3	119	71	25
Oakhill	19	10	7	2	101	89	22
Anfield	19	7	8	4	99	91	18
Balfour B	19	7	8	4	86	104	18
Rafters	19	7	9	3	98	92	17
L'pool Y.M.	19	6	8	5	96	94	17
Anfield A	19	5	11	3	66	124	13
Livex	19	3	14	2	74	116	8
African Oil	19	0	19	0	21	169	0

Second Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Lucem	19	13	4	2	118	72	28
Linnets	19	13	4	1	106	74	27
Victoria Park	19	12	5	2	107	83	26
Oakhill A	19	11	6	2	97	93	24
Litherland	18	9	4	5	98	82	23
Bohemians	19	8	8	3	101	89	19
Bootle Y.M.	19	8	8	3	98	92	19
C.L.C.	19	7	7	5	97	93	19
W'tree C.C.	19	5	10	4	88	102	14
Balfour C	19	6	12	1	81	109	13
Waterloo Dock	19	2	14	3	72	118	7
Rafters B	19	3	15	1	67	123	7

Third Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Anfield B	19	16	2	1	123	67	33
L'pool Y.M. A	18	14	2	2	123	57	30
Cadwa	19	11	5	3	105	85	25
Bath Street	17	10	3	4	101	69	24
Osterley	18	8	6	4	103	77	20
L.P.A.S.	19	7	9	3	92	98	17
Victoria Park A	19	6	10	3	92	98	15
I.C.I.	18	6	9	3	83	95	15
English Electric	19	6	10	3	79	111	15
Bohemians A	19	5	13	1	76	114	11
Tech Students	18	3	13	2	62	118	8
Linacre	17	3	13	1	59	111	7

Fourth Division

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bootle Y.M. A	19	16	0	3	137	53	35
Panto	19	16	1	2	138	52	34
Lofters	19	10	5	4	105	85	24
Waterloo Park	19	10	8	1	116	74	21
Victoria Park C	19	8	9	2	93	97	18
Livex A	19	7	8	4	88	102	18
Bohemians B	19	7	9	3	84	106	17
Oakhill B	19	7	10	2	96	94	16
Domestic Miss.	19	6	9	4	86	104	16
W'tree C.C. A	19	7	11	1	86	104	15
Victoria Park B	19	3	13	3	63	127	9
African Oil A	19	1	15	3	48	142	5

WOMEN'S—Division 1

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Rafters	19	14	1	4	131	59	32
Bohemians	18	14	2	2	127	53	30
Lofters	18	13	1	4	122	58	30
Balfour	17	12	4	1	108	62	25
Oakhill	19	11	6	2	114	76	24
Anfield	19	9	8	2	99	91	20
Bibby's	19	7	10	2	90	100	16
Linnets	18	7	11	0	86	94	14
Littlewoods	18	6	10	2	79	101	14
Cheshire Lines	17	3	13	1	56	114	7
Brenka	18	2	16	0	42	138	4
Linnets A	18	1	17	0	36	144	2

WOMEN'S—Division II

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Waterloo Park	19	16	0	3	140	50	35
Osterley	19	13	2	4	132	58	30
Beauclair	19	13	3	3	133	57	29
W'tree C.C.	19	10	6	3	112	78	23
Littlewoods A	19	10	7	2	93	97	22
Aigburth	19	9	7	3	104	86	21
Bohemians A	19	8	7	4	114	76	20
Leyfield	19	6	8	5	88	102	17
Lucem	19	8	10	1	85	105	17
Dunlop	19	2	13	4	58	132	8
Beauclair A	19	1	16	2	47	143	4
Catholic Metro	19	0	17	2	34	156	2

NORTH REGIONAL 1

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bootle Y.M. B	19	17	2	0	130	60	34
Maghull	18	14	3	1	115	65	29
Litherland A	19	12	3	4	118	72	28
Littlewoods	19	12	6	1	108	82	25
English Elec. A	18	10	5	3	106	74	23
Everton Y.M.	19	9	7	3	102	88	21
Brenka	19	8	7	4	94	96	20
Warbreck Moor	19	4	12	3	85	105	11
W'loo Park A	19	4	12	3	73	117	11
Lofters A	19	3	13	3	74	116	9
W'loo Dock A	19	4	14	1	74	116	9
15th Crosby A	19	2	15	2	51	139	6

NORTH REGIONAL II

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Bootle Y.M. C	19	19	0	0	150	40	38
English Elec. B	19	15	2	2	130	60	32
W'loo Park C	19	11	5	3	117	73	25
Brownmoor Park	18	11	5	2	111	69	24
Bath Street A	19	10	7	2	106	84	22
Litherland B	19	7	6	6	101	89	20
Anfield D	19	5	9	5	83	107	15
English Elec. C	18	5	10	3	73	107	13
W'loo Park B	18	3	10	5	75	105	11
Co-op	18	3	11	4	65	115	10
Maghull A	19	2	13	4	55	135	8
Bootle Police	17	2	15	0	44	126	4

LEAGUE TABLES

SOUTH REGIONAL

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Cheshire Lines A	17	17	0	0	148	22	34
Beauclair	17	15	2	0	134	36	30
Linnets A	17	13	4	0	120	50	26
Cadwa B	17	8	5	4	87	83	20
Aigburth	17	8	7	2	85	85	18
W'tree C.C. B	17	7	8	2	80	90	16
Dennis	17	6	9	2	80	90	14
Linnets C	17	6	10	1	75	95	13
Dunlop	16	4	10	2	61	99	10
St. Peters	16	2	14	0	36	124	4
Domestic Miss A	18	0	17	1	24	156	1
Aigburth Meths	Resigned.						

EAST REGIONAL

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Vagabonds	19	17	1	1	156	34	35
L.P.A.S. A	19	17	1	1	146	44	35
Balfour D	19	13	4	2	117	73	28
Osterley A	19	11	6	2	104	86	24
Cadwa A	19	10	7	2	104	86	22
W'tree Labour	18	9	7	2	98	82	20
Cadwa C	19	9	8	2	96	94	20
Leyfield	20	4	13	3	79	121	11
Edwardians	19	4	13	2	75	115	10
L.P.A.S. B	19	4	13	2	60	130	10
St. Dominics	19	2	14	3	57	133	7
Fairlawn	19	3	16	0	48	142	6

CENTRAL REGIONAL 1

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Anfield C.	19	17	1	1	147	43	35
L'pool Y.M. B	19	13	3	3	122	68	29
Panto A	19	13	4	2	122	68	28
Old Xaverians	19	10	4	5	112	78	25
R.A.F.A. (Liv)	18	11	4	3	106	74	25
Oakhill C	19	9	6	4	108	82	22
Linnets B.	17	9	6	2	95	75	20
Lucem A	18	5	11	2	74	106	12
Post & Echo	19	4	12	3	79	111	11
Vagabonds A	19	3	12	4	66	124	10
Lussac	19	1	16	2	50	140	4
Catholic Metro	19	1	17	1	39	151	3

CENTRAL REGIONAL II

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
R.A.F. M'ments	19	16	2	1	145	45	33
Cheshire Lines B	19	15	4	0	123	67	30
Stanley House	19	12	4	3	122	68	27
Pell Hall	19	7	6	6	103	87	20
Livex B	19	7	6	6	92	98	20
Beauclair A	19	8	8	3	86	104	19
Florence Oxtou	19	7	8	4	88	102	18
C.L.C. C	19	5	7	7	88	102	17
Oakhill D	19	5	9	5	87	103	15
Tech Students A	19	4	11	4	71	119	12
Old Xaverians A	19	4	12	3	72	118	11
Deaf Institute	19	1	14	4	63	127	6

The Closed Championships

Continued from page 10

Dare I suggest that to put on the finals of the Consolation Singles at the Y.M. instead of the Men's Singles semi-finals, might be one way of giving us a little more variety and giving some of the lesser players a bit of deserved limelight.

Like most of those present I was disappointed that Pierce and Hand could not beat Ron Rumjahn and Vic Chesham in the Men's Doubles final. A year previously they had only themselves to blame, but this time there was an element of hard luck.

In the second game they had two set points and again in the third. In neither case did they throw them away but somehow the opportunity was lost. There was much good table tennis and a few rallies were really excellent, but as usual experience triumphed over youth, even if fortune played just a little part this time.

Trusty Firm Again

This was also true in the Women's Doubles final, where the tried and trusty firm of Dickenson and Mansell again triumphed. How disappointing it was, however, that none of the younger players could not pierce this barrier of experience as presented by the winners and L. Rumjahn with J. Brennand. Moya Jones and Muriel Wilcox did make Eileen and Olive go hard in the semi-finals, but it was a pity that none of this younger group were represented at the final.

Mr. and Mrs. Rumjahn retained their Mixed Doubles title, winning fairly easily against a new combination in Bernard Hand and Moya Jones. This might well have been much closer but Moya took a little time to get into her stride and this possibly made a difference to the result.

Credit mentions to D. Hunter for beating E. Wall 21-18, 25-23; J. Ley for beating M. Morison 24-22, 21-17; A. Harris for beating T. Ridgway 21-17, 23-21; T. Johnstone for beating P. Short 21-18, 23-21; Miss J. Benson for beating Miss L. Robinson 13-21, 21-19, 22-20; and to J. Bleaddale in just failing against C. Coogan 16-21, 21-18, 18-21.

BOOTLE-PANTO DUEL A CLASSIC

THE position in the centre of the table is now changing rapidly as the relegation scramble, referred to last month, gets under way.

The latest club to experience direct danger is Domestic Mission—a strange alteration from the picture at the start of the season when they were being freely tipped for promotion.

The fault at Mill Street is hard to pinpoint. Perhaps it lies in the other interests and occupations of most of the players.

African Oil are definitely for a voyage to distant regions and wish them a speedy return. They have done remarkably well to participate at all this season and have never given up trying. Victoria Park B, too, looks a near certainty for the drop.

Point Separates Five

The other two relegation spots are at the moment engaging the attention of no fewer than six clubs, five of whom, Oakhill, Livex, Wavertree, Domestic Mission and Bohemians, are separated by only a single point.

But each of our teams has some player worthy of being regarded as a sheet anchor, and none deserves the title more than Charlie Manning of Victoria Park C, who has won his last 12 sets. Another player whose graph shows a steep upward curve since his reclassification in team order is Les Harris of Livex.

Bootle Y.M.C.A. are now assured of promotion, and virtually the same can be said of Panto, who require one point from four games—a task which hardly seems beyond their capabilities.

These two sides provided probably the best Fourth Division table tennis seen this season when they met on the latter's table recently. Bootle's win came as a result of solid teamwork, with particularly inspiring displays from Albert Harris and Ian Rogerson. The Harris-Harkness duel was perhaps, the best set of the season.

Congratulations to these two sides, by the way, for their excellent showing in the Rumjahn Cup, in which they kept the division flag flying as far as the semi-final. There Bath Street and Liverpool Y.M.C.A. A—members of last season's Fourth Division—

accounted for Bootle and Panto respectively, the score in each case being 7-3.

In previous rounds the two teams had accounted for three sides from a higher sphere, Panto beating Bohemians A 7-3 and Bootle triumphing over I.C.I. and Police each time by 6-4, although the latter tie necessitated a replay.

Top players in the averages at the moment are:—

	P.	W.	%
H. Harkness (Panto)	33	27	81.8
B. Waterson (Lofters)	31	24	80.7
I. Rogerson (Bootle)	48	38	79.1
C. Manning (Vic. P.)	40	30	75.0
A. Harris (Bootle) ...	40	29	72.5
R. Slater (Panto) ...	47	34	72.3
P. Coulter (Panto) ...	40	20	70.0

Resignation of Chairman

THE Management Committee have to announce the resignation of the Chairman of the League, Mr. D. M. Foulis, on the grounds that he is not in agreement with the major reorganisation of the League as envisaged by the Committee.

He stated in his letter of resignation, "I have no strong objections to a major operation, although I still favour a series of injections, which will in the long run make the operation unnecessary."

The Committee, whilst appreciating the views of Mr. Foulis, feel that small rule amendments are quite inadequate, and as there was this divergence of opinion between the Chairman and the Committee, the resignation had to be accepted with regret, although it must be pointed out that it was received before the Committee had arrived at any decision on reorganisation.

The Management wish to place on record their appreciation of the services Mr. Foulis has rendered to the game, both as a player and an administrator. He was our first International in 1929-30 and was in the Swaythling Cup team in 1933-34. He has been Chairman since 1947-48. He still plays for the Lucem club, with whom he has always been associated, and we hope he will retain his interest for many years to come.

All Must Have Fair Deal

By J. H. C. HUGHES

I believe the League is in need of reorganisation. This is a personal view, as is everything else in this letter.

I want reorganisation because the composition of our League has altered so much in recent years that the methods of the past do not fit the present, let alone the future.

I regret the accent has been put on fiddling. For me it is only a by-product of our out-dated system, a system that allows clubs to have an unlimited number of teams in the same division.

Twenty years ago a club with two teams was a comparative rarity; to-day we have clubs with as many as five men's teams. Mr. Pattison has, however, made fiddling his main theme, so I wish to answer him.

Team Game

I have always held that our game is a team game—five against five—and the way a captain places his men is his business. To vary the order of those five in an attempt to win I do not consider unsporting or to be a fiddle.

The question of altering the order within a team is entirely different from regrouping first team players into a lower team. It is the difference between liberty and licence.

“But has there been this great fiddle, this abuse of rules?” he asks. In this form he suggests not, yet proceeds to tell us that the smaller clubs are being unfairly treated by this fiddling.

He goes further and says the most heavily hit are the works clubs. All very paradoxical. He, however, accepts this treatment for the small clubs, saying it is impossible for officials to legislate without excessive restrictions on the large clubs.

May I remind him the officials do not legislate; the clubs do that at the A.G.M., the officials merely carry out the legislation.

His use of the word excessive is interesting. Apparently excessive is in order against the small club but not against the big ones. I do not want excessive treatment of any kind against any club.

In answer to his point re the Football League. They have fined clubs for not turning out a representative team—what we would call fiddling. The Lancashire F.A. have also taken similar

action on two occasions against one of our local clubs.

He is careful in this connection to refer to playing this or that player in their premier side. Our problem is this or that player in junior sides—rather different.

While on the question of The Football League, can he imagine Arsenal, Arsenal Reserves, Arsenal A, with the possibility of B and C, all in the First Division. Or a Second Division match Bury v. Burnley C.

It is because of things like this that I want reorganisation.

He says surely the fundamentals of all sporting organisations are the same. If by that he means your first team should be composed of your best players, the A team the next best and so on, then I agree with him.

But is that the position with “X” club or “Y” club in our League?

He questions anyone's ability to compare the amount of fiddling between now and pre-war on the grounds that it is only in recent years that we have had the records of Des Loughrey.

Post-War Product

There is no question of comparing them for the simple reason that 20 years ago there was nothing like the number of A teams, not to mention the almost complete absence of B, C and D teams. This playing of first team players in lower teams is purely a product of post-war years.

As I have said earlier, the League set-up has changed, we must realise it and act accordingly. To merely trust that fiddling will level itself out is not good enough. We must organise to suit our present conditions so that all are given a fair deal.

Mr. Pattison ends with an appeal that if any changes are advocated, then those advocating them should be certain they will benefit the League.

May I also end with an appeal—that any changes that are proposed should be viewed from the angle of the whole League and not from that of a club. In this respect I am fortunate in not being connected with any club. My only concern is for the welfare of the League.

Mr. Pattison may claim a similar position, but might I suggest, as they say in Twenty Questions—with strong animal connections.

These are your Letters

RESTRICT ORDER CHANGES

SIR:—May I endorse Mrs. Kay Rumjahn's remarks in the February Digest? The only inter-city match (v. Bolton at Bootle Y.M.) that I heard about beforehand was supported by myself and some clubmates. Inter-city matches should be arranged and advertised well in advance, instead of being surrounded by an air of secrecy.

Re the poor entry for the women's events in the Closed. May this not be due to the day chosen? We should face the fact that T.T. is limited in its appeal, and apart from other sporting calls, Saturday is a bad choice, especially Saturday evening when many of us, for one reason or another, find it inconvenient to attend. Some girls may work at a place such as Littlewoods and find it impossible to play on a Saturday.

Now to cross swords with J. D. Pattison. There may have been "fiddling" by some captains pre-war but it was not widespread and I am sure such things have been greatly exaggerated and the facts over the years become distorted, as some of us know. The big pre-war grouse was the drifting of top-liners to the same club—Clubmoor being the last example. Pray that that habit does not return.

Undoubtedly fiddling in clubs with more than one team (including my own club), has grown to such an extent it is time the rules were revised. I suggest:—

Teams from one club in the same division be treated as entirely separate entries; players not being allowed to interchange teams after original registration, and reserves to be drawn only from a team in a lower division.

Players for each team to be registered in nearest possible assessment of order of merit and not being allowed to be moved more than one place up or down without fresh registration with—and permission from—the League. The freedom to move a player one place would make reasonable enough allowance for a captain to take account of such things as current form.

Another irritating rule. That applying to cup-ties being decided (after a replay) on games or even points when sets are even, should be done away with—horrible rule.

May I add how pleasing it was for me, and I am sure many others, to hear through friend Jack Hughes that Mr. J. Lecce—one of the finest sportsmen ever to grace a table—is still hale and hearty. He will always be remembered by those of us who were his adversaries or colleagues. GUS READ (Oakhill).

The Organising Secretary writes:—Until we went to Dingle Vale School, Saturday was always included in the Closed Championships. I am in favour of avoiding this day for our local event and for the past three years we have played during the school Easter holiday Monday to Friday inclusive. The last A.G.M. decided they wanted the Closed brought forward, and we had to fit it in when the school was closed for their half-term holiday, and Saturday play was inevitable. We could, of course, return to a former venue, but remember that we left there because of complaints about inadequate dressing accommodation. We were told that by bringing the date forward we would get a much bigger entry—actually it was the lowest we have had since the war.

SUGGESTED REMEDIES

SIR:—Volumes have been written about the "fiddle" within clubs, whereby "judicious handling" of registered players has enabled this or that team to win honours or to dodge relegation. Like others before me, I deplore this state of affairs, but, further, I can offer some remedial suggestions.

1. Allow only one team per club in any one division. "Big" clubs would be penalised—the many innocent must suffer for the few guilty—but League standards of play would benefit, by the "spreading" of star players with the resultant increase of the competitive spirit.

2. Permit all players to play unlimited number of matches but reserves, when playing for a higher