**Local players take British League title**

**Table tennis notes by Chris Blake**

A number of players from the Sunderland & District Table Tennis league helped Hartlepool TTC to win the Senior British League title.

The matches were played over a four month period in a variety of venues across the country including Derbyshire, Nottingham and Cambridgeshire.

Hartlepool TTC were undefeated in the campaign winning 12 of their 14 matches and drawing the remaining 2 games. This was a fantastic achievement by every concerned given the very high standard of table tennis being played. Hartlepool will now look to mount a sustained promotion push next season to help secure a place in the very top division.

In **Division 1** of the Sunderland & District Table Tennis League Silksworth IM A and St Chads leapfrogged Thompson Insurance A (whose match with Redby CA A was postponed) to go top and 2nd respectively.

Silksworth had a fine 9 – 1 win over St Gabriels A and St Chads having an excellent 7 – 3 away win over the fast improving West CA A.

Anthony and Graeme Barella were undefeated for Silksworth and combined to win the doubles – they were closely supported by Bernie Morris who had wins against Tom Bainbridge and Norman Pescod (15 – 13 in the 4th) but lost narrowly 9 – 11 in the 5th to George Gibson in a very closely fought game.

Keith Weatherby and Adam Curran both starred for St Chads in their match against West CA A by winning all of their sets against very strong opposition in the form of Anthony Ainsley, John Williamson and Mark Shingler. This was an excellent match with each and every player doing their bit and playing some great attacking table tennis. Jimmy Scope eventually ensured a maximum 4 points victory following his narrow 11 – 7 win over West’s Ainsley to keep up St Chad’s title hopes.

The match between Thompson Insurance B and Durham CA ended in a 5 – 5 draw. Colin Hunt remained unbeaten and combined with Stuart Anderson to win the doubles – Gavin Bestford secured a draw following a fine win over Shirley Gelder.

Lynn Herrington (2), Maurice Cheek (2) and Shirley Gelder (1) helped ensure Thompson’s at least received a share of the points for their draw.

**Week 15 results:**

Silksworth IM A 9 vs. St Gabriels A 1

Thompson Ins. B 5 vs. Durham CA 5

West CA A 3 vs. St Chads 7

In Division 2 Sacriston St Bedes A reinforced their lead at the top with a hard fought 6 – 4 over 2nd placed Mortimer CA. This was an excellent match with some unbelievable close scores throughout. Every game went into either a 4th or 5th end with the outcome of each game being decided by the narrowest of margins.

Each player played their part – it would be hard to single any player out for the man of the match award – perhaps that should go to table tennis!

All of the remaining league matches were decided by the smallest of margins.

Silksworth IM B remain in contention for the league title following their 6 – 4 win over St Gabriels B. Once again this was an exceptionally close game with 6 sets being decided in the 4th or 5th ends.

Dave Revell was man of the match for St Gabriels having remained unbeaten throughout the match - including an epic 10 – 12, 7 – 11, 11 – 8, 12 – 10 and 13 – 11 win over Silksworth’s Alan Bickle in the final set of the match to ensure the Saints at least gained a point for their efforts. Silksworth’s Bickle (2), Howard Brown (2) and an excellent performance from George Carlyon (2) helped them to a 6 – 4 win.

The two remaining Division 2 matches ended in a 6 – 4 win for Redby CA over close rivals West CA B and a 5 – 5 draw in the match between Sacriston St Bedes B and Redby CA B – despite the Saints being only able to field 2 players.

West’s man of the match was Michael Redfearn who won 2 of his sets including an 11 – 4 in the 5th win over Redby’s number one player Dave Thomson.

**Week 15 results:**

Mortimer CA 4 vs Sacriston St Bedes A 6

Redby CA 6 vs. West CA B 4

St Gabriels B 4 vs. Silksworth IM B 6

Sacriston St Bedes B 5 vs Redby CA B 5

The results in Division 3 went very much to form.

St. Johns B remain in pole position following their 9 – 1 win over Sacriston St Bedes C – Ian McPherson picking up the only set for Sacriston following his narrow and hard fought win over Gary Anderson (12 – 10 in the 5th).

Second placed St Johns A had a comfortable 10 – 0 over Lanchester CC which included some good performances from the Lanchester side – most notably from Frank Clarke who lost out narrowly to Saints Craig Burton (10 – 12, 10 – 12 and 9 – 11).

In the final league fixture Sacriston St Bedes D had an 8 – 2 victory over St Johns C – Nicki Irwin (3), Debbie Irwin (2), Terry Charlton (2) and the doubles with Jacob Helm and Sean Gleghorn picking up the sets for St Johns. Robert Renton played well for the Saints and was unlucky in his final match of the night – losing out 10 – 12, 9 – 11 and 3 – 11.

**Week 15 results:**

Lanchester CC 0 vs. St Johns A 10

Sacriston St Bedes D 8 vs. St. John’s C 2

St Johns B 9 vs. Sacriston St Bedes C 1

**(Correction – Lanchester CC 0 vs. Sacriston D 10)**