**Sacriston St. Bedes ‘A’ march on**

**Table tennis notes with Chris Blake**

**Division 1**

St Chads had a comfortable 9 – 1 win over Durham CA. Colin Hunt winning Durham’s only set by beating Saint’s debutant Adam Curran. Hunt, who is just returning to the game after a number of years away from the sport also played extremely well against the experienced Jimmy Scope but was narrowly defeated in the 5th and deciding end.

Thompson Insurance A continued their unbeaten start to the season with a 7 – 3 win over West CA A - but were pushed all the way in a very entertaining game. Thompson’s Dave Blackburne was ‘Man of the Match’ with wins over Northumberland County player (Salter), Durham County player (Williamson) and former Durham County player (Shingler). Thompson’s Chris Blake (Durham County player) was narrowly defeated by Salter 9 – 11, 11 – 9, 9 – 11, 11 – 9 and 8 – 11 but won his remaining 2 sets and the doubles set with Blackburne. Allan Thompson’s vital win over West CA’s Williamson ensured a hard fought 7 – 3, and maximum points, win for Thompson Insurance A.

St Gabriels A recorded their 2nd win of the season with a 9 – 1 victory over Thompson Insurance B. Saint’s Dave Robson (Durham County Player) eased through his sets without losing an end and was closely supported by his teammates George Gibson (3) and Tom Bainbridge (2) – Robson and Bainbridge combining to take the only doubles set.

**Week 6 results:**

Redby CA A 3 vs. Silksworth IM A 7

St Chads 9 vs. Durham CA 1

Thompson Ins. B 1 vs. St Gabriels A 9

West CA A 3 vs. Thompson Ins. A 7

**Division 2**

The stand out game in Division 2 was the entertaining match between hosts St Gabriel’s B and runaway leaders Sacriston St Bedes A. St Gabriel’s were forced to concede three sets due to the late withdrawal of their number 3 player, Mark Burton - immediately placing the Saints on the back foot. Despite this early setback St Gabriel’s Dave Revell and Geoff Young played extremely well and in the end were unlucky not to pick up a point from the game.

With only seven sets left to play for the players fought valiantly. Six out of the remaining seven sets went into either the 4th or 5th and deciding end where key points and excellent play effectively decided the outcome of each set and ultimately the match result.

The match between Dave Revell (St Gabs) and Jon Manson (St Bedes) saw contrasting styles – forehand attack from Revell and the more measured style of the left handed Manson. Manson took the first end deuce 13 – 11. The 2nd end ebbed and flowed with Revell looking to play his strong forehand smash wherever possible to dictate the play – eventually taking the 2nd end 11 – 9. The 3rd end saw more of the same with some excellent attacking play from Revell and retrieving from Manson – with the home player just having the upper hand to take the end 11 – 5 to lead the set 2 games to 1. Revell grew in confidence as the match progressed choosing the right ball to attack and eventually took the 4th end 11 – 6 to win the set for St Gabriels.

The next set saw the match between Geoff Young (St Gabs) and Paul Dale (St Bedes). This set was a very tactical affair with Dale looking to play his forehand drive wherever possible and Young aiming to control points with his backhand block and topspin. The match saw some excellent table tennis from both players. Dale took the 1st end 11 – 7, Young the 2nd 11 – 5 with tighter serves and right shot choice. The 3rd end effectively decided the match, and it could have went either way, Young had game point (10 – 9) but Dale played a forehand winner to take the end into deuce, Dale eventually winning this end 13 – 11 with another forehand smash. Despite this set back Young continued to play well and eased his way into a 6 – 4 lead with the point of the match - retrieving a forehand smash before unleashing a backhand winner. Young gained in confidence and edged into a demanding 8 – 4 lead. Then, just as the set looked like going into the final and deciding end, Dale took the next six points to lead 10 – 8 and effectively have 2 set points. Young managed to save the 1st but unfortunately failed to win the 2nd and ultimately lost to Dale by the narrowest of margins.

Smith (Sacriston) lost to Young, 6 – 11, 8 – 11, 11 – 6 and 7 – 11, but went on to beat Revell in a very entertaining game. Revell was leading 2 games to 1 and was playing some excellent forehand winners. However, in the 4th end he let a 5 – 1 lead slip to eventually lose the end 11 – 8, forcing the game into a 5th and deciding end. Revell got off to a bad start losing the first 4 points finding himself on the wrong side of some great backhand smashes from Smith. Revell never really recovered from this bad start and eventually lost 11 – 7 in what was a very entertaining game.

Manson, who has just returned to the game, capped a good display with a great 3 - 1 victory over St. Gab’s Young.

Good table tennis played in a great spirit.

**Week 6 results:**

Sacriston St Bedes B 8 vs. West CA B 2

Silksworth IM B 10 vs. Redby CA B 0

St Gabriels B 3 vs. Sacriston St Bedes A 7

**Division 3**

Sacriston St Bedes C had an excellent 7 – 3 win over St Gabriels C to continue their strong start to the season which has seen them winning 4 out of their opening 5 matches - losing only to current leaders St Johns A by the narrowest of margins 6 sets to 4. McPherson (2), Grant (2) and Maher (2) did the damage for St Bedes with Wooding, Ray and Douglas winning one set each in reply for St Gabs. St Bedes took the doubles set 3 games to 1 to ensure they gained maximum points for their 7 – 3 victory.

St John B had a straight sets 10 – 0 win over Lanchester CC to continue their unbeaten start to the season. Alex Smith, Gary Anderson and Tony Watson remained unbeaten for the Saints.

**Week 6 results**

Redby CA C 5 vs. St Johns C 5

Sacriston St Bedes D 3 vs. St Johns A 7

St Gabriels C 3 vs. Sacriston St Bedes C 7

St Johns B 10 vs. Lanchester CC 0

**League Tables (as at 30.11.2011)**

**\*\*\*Please insert attached tables\*\*\***