**????**

**Table tennis notes by Chris Blake**

**Division 1**

Silksworth IM A have leap-frogged St Chads to go 2nd in the table with a 6 – 4 victory over St Gabriels A. Man of the Match Ryan Richardson (Silksworth) was unbeaten in his 3 sets which included an excellent win over County No. 1 and British League player Dave Robson – edging a very close match to win 3 games to 1 with some outstanding attacking play and power.

Richardson was supported by Bernie Morris who won both of his sets and was awarded the set against Dave Robson who was forced to concede through injury.

Each player for St Gabriels won a set each with Gibson and Bainbridge combining to take the doubles set. Bainbridge could count himself unlucky when he was narrowly defeated in his set against Richardson – losing 11 – 8 in the 5th and deciding end.

In the 2 remaining Division 1 fixtures St Chads were defeated by West CA A by 6 sets to 4. Excellent individual performances Geoff Salter (2), John Williamson (2) and in particular Tony Ainley (2) who had a great 3 games to 0 win over County Player Keith Weatherby. Thompson had a 10 – 0 win over newly promoted Redby CA A – however, the score is slightly harsh on the Redby players who played really well on the night with very little reward. The point of the match saw Redbys’ Amanda Paxton turn the clock back – a really long rally was followed by 4 forehand smashes off the bounce to leave Alan Thompson desperately trying to retrieve the point. However, Thompson recovered to go on and win the set and his remaining 2 sets together with the doubles set (with Darren McVitie) which helped to secure a maximum points victory for their win.

**Week 8 results:**

St. Chads 4 vs. West CA A 6

St. Gabriels A 4 vs. Silksworth IM A 6

Thompson Ins. 10 A vs. Redby CA A 0

**Division 2**

Sacriston St Bedes A were dealt a bitter blow to their title challenge when they were defeated by close rivals Mortimer CA. The epic match saw 9 out of the 10 sets going into 4 or 5 ends with many of the sets being decided by the smallest of margins. Some very good table tennis was played in an entertaining game. Man of the Match was Mortimers’ Ray Purves who had excellent wins over Paul Dale (13 – 11 in the 5th), Kevin Smith (11 – 7 in the 4th) and Jon Mawson the only set of the match to be decided in 3 straight ends (11 – 4, 11 – 5 and 11 – 8).

Purves was closely supported by his team-mates Dave Cutler and Ian Moore who chipped in with 2 sets a piece to seal a maximum 4 points victory for their win over the current division leaders.

Cutler had an excellent 3 – 1 win over Saints No. 1 player Paul Dale – winning the 4th end by the narrowest of margins (14 – 12) to ensure the set did not go into the deciding end. In his other victory Cutler defeated Kevin Smith, again by the smallest of margins. The set ebbed and flowed throughout with both players looking capable of taking the set. Smith was leading 2 games to 1 before Cutler stormed back to win the 4th end 11 – 2 and edge the final end 11 – 9 in a very entertaining game.

Mortimers’ Ian Moore had victories over Jon Mawson (11 – 6 in the 5th end after trailing 2 games to 1) and Kevin Smith (11 – 9 in the 5th end after trailing 2 games to 0 – storming back to win the final 3 ends to win the set).

The Saints 3 sets were won by Paul Dale (1), Jon Mawson (1) and the only doubles set of the game. The match result could have easily been 8 - 2 in the Saints favour had they won all of the 5 sets which were ultimately decided in the 5th end – 2 of these ends went to deuce and 2 were decided by the smallest of margins 11 – 9.

The victory by Mortimer over the Saints leaves the league wide open – Sacriston St Bedes A remaining top closely followed by Silksworth IM B, Redby CA, Mortimer and St Gabriels B all of which have games in hand. With a maximum 4 points being awarded for a 7 – 3 win or more the final outcome of the league could potentially go right down to the wire.

Silksworth IM B had an excellent close fought 6 – 4 win over St. Gabriels B to remain very much in the hunt for promotion back into Division 1. Howard Brown was Man of the Match winning his 3 singles sets, combining with Bob Sanderson to take the only doubles set (12 – 10 in the 5th end) - which effectively helped to seal the win. Sanderson contributed 2 more sets with wins over Young and Revell. Graham Sleep played well and was unlucky not to pick up a set on the night. This was a real team effort from both teams with everyone contributing to what was a very entertaining game.

**Weeks 8:**

Sacriston St. Bedes A 3 vs. Mortimer CA 7

Silksworth IM B 6 vs. St. Gabriels B 4

**Division 3**

Division 3 results saw 2 relatively straight forward victories for St. John’s A (10 – 0 over Lanchester CC) and Sacriston St Bedes D (9 – 1 over St. John’s C). Particular mention should go to Lanchesters Callum McCabe who played particularly well on the night – giving a very good account of himself.

The match between Sacriston St Bedes C and St Johns B ended in a 5 – 5 draw to ensure the points were shared. Andy Grant was Man of the Match remaining unbeaten in his 3 sets – he was closely supported by his son Chris (1) and Lee Maher (1). Alex Smith (2) and Dave Pringle (2) did the damage for St Gabriels and combined to win the doubles set.

**Week 8 results**

St. John’s A 10 vs. Lanchester CC 0

Sacriston St. Bedes C 5 vs. St. John’s B 5

St. John’s C 1vs. Sacriston St. Bedes D 9

**\*\*PLEASE INSERT TABLES\*\***