



READING & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Editor: DEREK WAVELL

April/May 2012



The two nearest photos are donated by Didier Garçon, and so are all photos and videos inside that show the Junior Masters (PP 30-31). Well done, Didier!

End of Season - Start of What?

Here be accounts of **exciting final clashes** in all divisions - illustrated with some **sizzling photos and videos** taken at the Senior and Junior Masters and the Impact Challenge Shield Final, Incidentally, if you are disappointed that your own photo never appears (as I would like too) - **why not turn up for the occasions when these photos are taken?** The annual prize giving and the tournaments, many of which give real opportunities to players from all Divisions. Too few players enter at present.



One season ends - what of the next? The hot topic is - **will the league continue its long shrinking process, or can it expand again, in this Olympics year?** Reading minds have been thinking about this at all levels - and now I hope you will **make your own comment** by clicking on a yellow speech balloon on this Newsletter! (It should work if you have the latest version of Adobe Reader). You can look at 3 pages of ideas already given. Some of them sound odd. But remember, the minds that count are not only ours but those outside the league - who won't be attracted in if we just go sailing along, pleasing ourselves in the old way.

So please speak up - and **recruit more players yourself too**. Why not take a bat on your next trip to the takeaway, and bounce a ball in the queue? If you spot a wistful smile anywhere then that's someone who is already interested!

Have a good summer - and a fine next season.

Derek

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Liam plays with the PM at Downing Street Reception

Sixteen year old Waingels College student, Liam McTiernan, played table tennis with Prime Minister David Cameron at Downing Street recently, having been invited to take part in an Olympic Games Celebration reception. The event was also attended by Jacques Rogge and Members of the IOC, Princess Anne and Lord Coe. He said afterwards that the experience was one of the best in his life.



Over the Easter holidays, Liam took part in the ISF World Schools' Table Tennis Championships in Cagliari, Sardinia. Playing in his first international tournament and representing English Schools, he shone in a four boy team which finished fifth overall (out of seven countries).

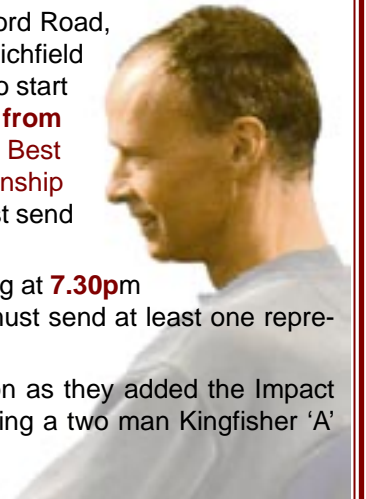
Up against some of the best players in Europe and the Far East, Liam won a highly creditable 7 out of 12 matches, including fine victories over highly ranked Dario Loreto (Italy), Leo Perrin and Joe Seyfried (France) and further doubles against the Turkish and Greek national schools teams. Four of these wins came in the deciding game.

Liam couldn't quite muster a win in the matches against very strong Chinese or Chinese Taipei (Taiwan) teams, but did take individual games and played exceptionally well against world class opponents.

Liam went on to compete in the English Schools Under 16 Individual Championships in Doncaster - which he won! See [report](#) on page 32.

Announcements from our Chairman, Nigel Maltby

1. **The RDTTA Awards Presentation evening** will be held at the **Curzon Club** in Oxford Road, Reading on **Tuesday 8th May 2012**. Parking will be in the Tesco's car park off Richfield Avenue. We would ask that attenders arrive by 7.30pm with the presentations due to start shortly afterwards. As well as all the winners and runners-up **trophy presentations from the league and the Reading Closed** there will also be the annual awards for the **Best Junior Performance, Most Improved Junior** and the **Harold Larcombe Sportmanship Award** and many others. All recipients of trophies are asked either to attend or at least send a representative to collect their award on their behalf.
2. **AGM** - The RDTTA AGM will be held on **Wednesday 6th June 2012** at **OLOP** starting at **7.30pm** prompt. Club Secretaries will be notified shortly. All Clubs are reminded that they must send at least one representative to the AGM.
3. **Impact Challenge Shield** - Our Lady of Peace 'A' made it a treble winning season as they added the Impact Challenge Trophy to their Division 1 title and Team Handicap successes by defeating a two man Kingfisher 'A' side in the final - see [more](#) (with photos) on P4.



A Relegation Day Toast!

by a Team Captain

Thanks in advance for the sympathy, and I suppose I should be feeling miserable about so many lost matches, but honestly I have to confess I loved every fixture. Looking at the figures, you wouldn't know how we fought, with what optimism and game plans in every match, or how much we enjoyed every point. Even the one match which we lost 10 – 0 was tightrope-walking stuff all the way. Only by the fiercest of contests did our opponents beat us.

Over the years I've been in lots of teams. Some which won everything – and then felt they had wasted a season because the opposition wasn't up to scratch. Some where one strong man kept his team going single handed – e.g. a

defensive player who could never find scope to develop his attack because his team mates needed every point he won.

Maybe we were in the best position of all this year. Although we didn't win matches, we had excellent teams to play against who were just a bit better than us all through the season – the ideal situation for improving our game!

So I'll drink to my team mates, who never once lost heart or (barring injury) turned down an invitation to play, always giving it their most brilliant shot. Good health to them! A thousand years! And to our opponents too, who played superbly and always gave us such a good time. Good health to them too, and a lot of it!



PHOTOS ON FRONT COVER: *Top Left:* Josh Gallen (foreground) plays Ka Lo Chiu at the Reading Closed. *Middle right:* Chris Moses helps Michael Slingo at a Sunday morning coaching session at OLOP. *In the circle:* PM David Cameron with Liam McTiernan (see top of this page).

READING SENIOR MASTERS *by Nigel Maltby*

Hari Gehlot won the Reading Senior Masters tournament in a day of surprise results and

knocked him out of the competition after he had previously lost to Tony Reynolds 11-13 11-8 10-12 6-11. He then recovered from two games to nil down in his semi-final to beat Martin Chodounsky 7-11 8-11 11-7 12-10 11-7. Adams meanwhile knocked out reigning champion Daniel Moses in their semi-final clash 11-6 4-11 11-6 11-3. Hari though capped a sensational day's play when he came back



HARI GEHLOT

superbly entertaining table tennis at the Kingfisher Club last weekend. Hari had earlier beaten Martin Adams 11-9 11-5 11-8 in his group, where defeat would have



IAN COLE (R) BEAT STUART WILLIAMS

from two games to one and 4-10 down in the final to win 11-8 9-11 7-11 12-10 11-8.



MARTIN ADAMS

In the earlier groups Hari, Martin Adams and Tony Reynolds had picked up three wins apiece with the top two places decided on a games count back. By taking a game in his 3 - 1 defeat to Tony, Hari finished top, with Adams finishing as runner-up after he had opened the group with a 3 - 0 defeat of Tony 11-2 11-6 11-5. Tony was unlucky to miss out after his fine win against Hari had looked certain to put him through, only for Hari to gain an unexpected 3 - 0 victory against Adams. Bradley King finished in fourth place after he struggled to a 5-11 13-11 8-11 11-5 11-9 victory over Division 2 representative Neil Bird.



KRASI IVANOV (L) v MARTIN CHODOUNSKI

In Group 1 Daniel Moses and Martin Chodounsky both qualified for the semi-finals with Daniel topping the group after he defeated Chodounski 13-11 11-4 12-10. Ian Cole managed a fine 11-6 10-12 7-11 11-6 11-9 victory over Stuart Williams to finish in fourth place, while Krasi Ivanov was



OLOP 'A' (FRONT ROW - NORMAN SWIFT, LIAM McTIERNAN & DANIEL MOSES)
WON THE IMPACT CHALLENGE TROPHY FROM KINGFISHER 'A' (2ND ROW - HARI GEHLOT & STUART WILLIAMS).

third with some stylish play to beat both Stuart and Ian,

back, winning point after point as Adams visibly tensed up near the end. Hari won eight points in a row to sensationally take the game 12-10 and set up a fifth game decider.



DANIEL MOSES

indeed he almost pulled off a shock win against Daniel before eventually losing out 11-3 9-11 8-11 11-6 7-11.

Martin Adams played some of his best table tennis to defeat Daniel Moses in their semi final, while in the other semi final Martin Chodounsky played exceptionally well to open up a two game lead over Hari Gehlot, however Hari hit back, just holding his nerve in the fourth game to win that 12-10 and wrapping up victory in the fifth game decider 11-7. Chodounski went on to finish in third place overall after winning a play-off with Daniel 11-3 11-9 11-9.

The final was a very close affair. Hari took the first 11-8, Adams hit back to win the next two games, content to sit back mostly and block Hari's loop with his deft touch play. At 10-4 ahead in the next Adams looked to have the match in the bag, however somehow Hari clawed his way

Adams again led early on 5-3, however good play from Hari saw him level at 5-5 after the change of ends, and he took the next two points as well to lead 7-5. Adams responded well to put the match back in the balance at 7-all, but two forehand errors by Adams gave Hari a vital two point lead which he stretched to three points at 10-7 ahead. Hari then served off the end of the table to give Adams a glimmer of hope at 10-8, but in the next point Hari played a good length shot that Adams failed to deal with, leaving Hari as the Masters Champion for 2012.

Our Lady of Peace 'A' made it a treble winning season as they added the **Impact Challenge Shield** to their Division 1 title and Team Handicap successes by defeating a two man

Kingfisher 'A' side in the final. Daniel Moses and Liam McTiernan both managed victories over Hari Gehlot, Daniel winning 11-6 12-10 8-11 14-12 and Liam winning 6-11 11-7 11-3 11-6. Norman Swift also got in on the act by defeating Kingfisher's Stuart Williams 10-12 11-8 11-4 11-7.



THE CHALLENGE

by Nigel Rowland

Ed: In the Letters section of the February Newsletter, Duncan Abbott sounded a warning for the future of League table tennis. Here is an endorsement to Duncan's plea from Nigel Rowland of the RDTTA Committee:

We are getting close to the magic 60 team mark where we may drop to five divisions.

Currently we are running with a number of blanks throughout the divisions. A number of you have commented on the lack of games during the season as a result of these blank teams. You can all help by:

- 1) Encouraging non-league players to come on board and play in the lower divisions.
- 2) Enlisting the support of our younger players to join a

team for experience in the lower divisions. Support from parents is crucial here, perhaps having a 19.00 start time and allowing them to finish first is a way forward to get the younger players home at a reasonable hour.

- 3) Asking all club secretaries to look at the size of teams and where possible split larger teams into two.

Reading is still one of the largest leagues in the country and with your help we can increase the number of divisions not reduce.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Ed: Since February I have been experimenting with a mechanism by which readers can respond directly to points in a Newsletter by just clicking on a page and typing. This method has already produced quite a lot of responses to the questions: A: Should our League grow or dwindle? B: If it is to grow, how can we encourage more players in? And these responses in turn posed two more questions: C: How can we encourage more women to play in the League, and D: Do you think we need to change our rules to bring about all the above - and if so, how?

There have been technical difficulties, and only some people knew they were invited to contribute. But anyway, here is what everyone said, so that you can see what is possible - and do feel free to chip in from now on. Please, be brief if you want to be read! You will find ideas both sound and imaginative, and some big and small names. At the end I include rather a full personal analysis of these topics by Bob Woodmansee.

A. Do you think our League should grow, or shrink?

Derek Harrison:

Since I first started playing I have seen the number of clubs and teams dwindle and in about 1974 there must have been about 60 clubs and lots of teams. Over the years I have spoken to many players who told me they were packing it in at the end of that season. I asked why and they said that they were too old despite the fact they were younger than I am now so perhaps we should be more persuasive in asking them to carry on playing. Having said that we should also encourage people to join local clubs by articles in the local newspaper.

Mike Childs:

Perhaps smaller specific divisions, run over three months, might socially encourage players without having to make a long commitment.

For example

- All divisions become 6 team and promotion/relegation happens at xmas.

- To address falling numbers and encourage players into the main league, smaller fun leagues should be tried. Club affiliation should be ignored.

6-team Family Division (4 players including parents and children) (redefine format to include more doubles). Played over a 5 week period at a central venue to improve social element). Encourage family time and increase number of children and women in leagues.

6-team mixed (two men and two women).(redefine format to include more doubles). Played over a 5 week period at a central venue to improve social element).

Well that's my thoughts.

B. How can we get more League players?

Ed:

Why is it that some clubs are growing and some shrinking? Is it just those clubs with practice sessions for everyone that expand, while the others shrink?

AB:

Why don't we just try to recruit more players? We can start with people who come to our house - the gas man, plumber, milkman etc. I've tried it. You ask: what sport do they do? They reply by asking: what sport do you do? Table tennis! And then pretty often it turns out that their daughter in law, or uncle, or old mate, has also played, and wants to do some more. And they'd be only too pleased to introduce you.

Duncan Abbott:

Despite the increase in alternative activities there are surprisingly a good number of people keen on table tennis. However a fair number of them either don't realise there is a table tennis league or don't think they're good enough. But when they do start playing in the league quite a few of them are hooked on the adrenaline and excitement that comes with it.

In order to reverse the recent trend of decline we need a vision. We need to do whatever we can to encourage newcomers. Perhaps some of the long standing rules need to be changed to accommodate this.

But having a vision isn't an optional extra - it's a necessity if the game that we all love is to survive.

Alistair Richardson:

I think we can help the sport grow, but I think we can do some smaller things smarter to help ourselves. This day and age is all about convenience, and availability of information.

The RDTTA have a website, it's generally a good one, content

(Exchange of views)

is useful and valid. However it doesn't get out there. I'm thinking of rss feeds and popping up in google.

Is there an element of social media? Portfolio of services (one for the clubs possibly more than the league).

The next trick will be converting initial interest into people who actually engage enough to play regularly in a team – that is the piece we struggle with a little.

Geoff Chivers:

I have recently spoken to old playing colleagues (unfortunately these meetings normally take place at funerals.) Has the Management Committee ever thought of forming a league during the daytime? Although I don't attend (due to golf) many ex players attend the 50-plus sessions on a Monday and Friday morning at the Rivermead Leisure Centre. I appreciate finding venues may create a problem, however, I feel a large number of people might be interested. I might even consider coming out of retirement.

C. How could more ladies be persuaded to play?

Ed

I'd say it is a high priority to attract more girls into TT. An all-male environment makes the sport less fun. But what would that involve?

Duncan Abbott:

Not quite sure why the fascination with women - if it's a woman you need I'm sure there are one or two dating agencies that could help! ;)

Seriously I'm quite happy to see more women in the game, but realistically they are likely to be encouraged to play by other women - not sure why but that's the way it works!

Ed:

I don't think 'boy meets girl' is ever much of a factor in table tennis, though the ladies are treated well. I just think matches are more fun with women taking part, because the girls bring along kindly and agreeable qualities which the men lack. And sometimes they bring along home-made cakes and biscuits too!

Ed:

I don't know how the ladies will react - but why don't we have an annual summer dance? I.e. a "Table Tennis Ball" ;-). I would guess the wives might like it, as well as female players.

Ka Lo ("Carol") Chiu:

You say "the ladies are treated well". This may be usually true, but just occasionally a man who lost will turn angrily away and refuse to shake your hand. That can be very hurtful, and even make one wonder if one wants to keep playing. Also, I don't agree that ladies are at no disadvantage when they play against men.

Ed:

As for differences in size and strength – you will, I am sure, acknowledge that Chinese players are pre-eminent in table tennis – despite often being smaller than their foreign opponents. And a little slip like Megan Knowles has beaten a lot of Reading's top male players.

Ka Lo ("Carol") Chiu:

'Treated badly by other players' means only a few of them, most of them are still very friendly.

For the female against male thing, I think the major difference is the play style. Female depends more on speed while male depends more on Spin and Power. Maybe this is only my personal opinion. However, I used to play a lot in Hong Kong. When being coached, female and male always have different training programmes in order to emphasize our strengths. In general

female is not as good as male. In Hong Kong, if the male can offer a +6 handicap to a female, they are considered as the same level.

Ed:

Maybe ladies should be given a standard handicap in our League – to make the playing field more level? But 6 sounds an awful lot – is that in the normal 11-up game?

Ka Lo Chiu:

A standard handicap in the League for ladies seems attractive to me, but I am sure there would be many objections from the male players. But this would make me more willing to play against men. 6 points for an 11-up game is generally the standard in Hong Kong when practising among teammates. In the Reading League, I will suggest around 3 to 4. We could always have a trial to see how it goes.

Derek Harrison:

Ladies getting a start? I do not think so. Ladies like Carol Chard, Lisa Williams, Jan Wright and Linda King could all give me a start and I am sure there are a lot of players in their divisions who will agree with me. Also I am certain that any lady would not want a start anyway.

Ed:

Maybe some of our ladies would like to comment on that personally. And, even more to the point, what are the feelings of the much greater number of girls who DON'T play in the League, but might like to if things were different?

Ka Lo, your description of what happens in Hong Kong is interesting, but I wonder how many people would take advice from a newcomer to the Sixth Division?

Carol Chiu:

I know I haven't been here long, but I was the ladies table tennis team captain of both University of Hong Kong and University College London. I can say I am quite experienced in coordinating activities related to table tennis.

Ed:

Some snags in the handicapping system - what does one do with under-15's and over-75's. Logically, if the ladies get a start, shouldn't they get one too? And how much? I wonder if this arose in Hong Kong?

Carol Chiu:

In Hong Kong, the official competitions will have separate ladies' and men's match with all age groups. However, in some smaller or local competitions, ladies do have an advantage. However, with the age difference, in Hong Kong those below 9 and above 75 will have some advantages, not below 15. Actually those players in between 9 and 16 are always the best among all non-professional players. They have fast reaction, not nervous, do exactly what the coach teaches them. More importantly, they have more time to practice than all other people. They may practice 5-6 times a week, while others can only practice on average 2-3 times a week.

Derek Harrison:

I have been playing in the Reading league for 53 years and have played at various levels and found the challenge of either trying to go up a level or trying to avoid a drop make it worth while. So that's what it is all about without having to think about handicaps.

D. What changes in our rules would help?

Duncan Abbot:

In order to reverse the recent trend of decline we need a vision. We need to do whatever we can to encourage newcomers. Perhaps some of the long standing rules need to be changed to accommodate this. **(Continued on next page)**

(Exchange of views)

But having a vision isn't an optional extra - it's a necessity if the game that we all love is to survive.

Ed:

Good post! I agree that we need a new vision, as well as a new attitude to rules. (Even the ETTA, which used to be so stuffy about rules, now has a video on its web site showing lots of teenagers in ordinary clothes playing round-the-table!! Incredible!).

What do you think the new vision might include - and how would you suggest we should adjust the rules?

Duncan Abbott:

I was looking through the rule book recently and I came across the rule which says no players can be transferred during the season unless special dispensation is given by the committee. My response was - why? Are we still living in the dark ages? Are we really so out of step with the rest of the world?

A few years ago a new team formed playing in Div 6, but their squad soon shrunk to 3 players and one or two were finding it a struggle to play every game due to work commitments etc etc. Some games were postponed, other times only 2 players turned out, no doubt fines began to accumulate and half-way through the season the team folded.

At the same time an OLOP team in the same division had 10 players in their squad, including 2 or 3 newcomers who had been directed to that club but who became frustrated at the lack of opportunities to play.

There was no solution for either set of players and as a result 5 or 6 players were lost to the game!!

My question is - why not allow transfers or even loans to help these teams and players out? Loans take place all the time in football so why not table tennis? Shouldn't we be doing more to encourage new teams rather than putting obstacles in their way? I know for a fact that the Milestone C team this season would have very much appreciated some outside help instead of being left to struggle on with their own resources.

I think sometimes we need to realise that rules are there to serve the clubs and the players, not the other way round.

Richard Fifield:

Children are the lifeblood of any sport. The main activity of table tennis is the league programme. This is designed for adults who want to start late (i.e. 7.30pm) and finish late (often 11pm). This is not an option for many youngsters.

My own son loves the sport but there are far too few opportunities to just play regular competitive matches in a nice atmosphere. The Friday youth league is a good idea but feels too disorganized, and Fridays are not good for family life!

How about running some lower divisions on a 2 person basis where each person plays two singles and a doubles and it finishes by 9.30pm? There could be additional competitions lower down to ensure matches are held every week, so that 4 people registered in a particular team could be assured of match participation every other week.

Should the League Grow - or Dwindle?

by Robert Woodmansee

I read with interest Duncan Abbott's letter in the last newsletter about the reduced number of teams in the League and the consequent gaps in all divisions. With 62 teams spread over 6 divisions this gives, in my opinion, far too many gaps - in fact, with 4 divisions having just 10 teams it means that 40 of the 62 teams in the League are really 'short changed' to the extent of only getting 18 matches a season instead of 22 (in fact, many teams have had to put up with this for some time now).

During the course of a season I hear so many players complaining about the number of gaps that one does have to question whether the League is really acting in the best interests of - and in accordance with the preferences of - the majority of its members by continuing with this structure. Personally, I think the League needs to adopt a slightly harder approach to the problem and, unless there is an influx of at least 4 new teams bringing the League up to at least 66 teams enabling there to be six divisions each with 11 teams, then it should 'cap' the number of teams in the League to 60 (5 divisions of 12) - and find a way to 'lose' two teams (assuming that there are still 62 teams registering for next season - or 'lose' one team if there are 61, etc). And, by the way - I do not think Division 1 should get special treatment here - why should Division 1 have 12 teams and no gaps when other Divisions in the same League have 10 teams and two gaps?

Here are a few suggestions as to how the 60-team structure might be achieved:-

- Invite the Club (or Clubs) with the most teams to withdraw one team - the larger Clubs could more easily absorb the players from the withdrawn team into other teams within their Club 'pyramid' than the smaller Clubs - indeed don't

many players from the larger Clubs play in other Leagues as well as playing in Reading?

- Or - if no volunteer team(s) withdrawal is forthcoming then make the above a League rule - and create a 'waiting list' for teams who want to play in the League - i.e. teams who can step in if a Club withdraws a team from the League at any time up to and including the first week of scheduled League matches

- Or - fill Divisions 1 to 4 with 12 teams and re-jig the remaining teams into smaller Divisions 5 & 6 - maybe playing each other more than twice - or just a big Division 5 of 14 teams - maybe the extra fixtures could be squeezed into the blank and cup weeks.

- Or - demote the team (or 2 teams) who finish bottom of Division 6 next season

- Or - change the number of teams to make a League with 8 divisions of 8 (or 7 divisions of 9 - or whatever works out best) - with teams playing each other 3 times - surely someone could re-do the fixtures grid to make this work out for the home & away fixtures scheduling?

Now that the League website has an active forum for discussion on this and other topics it would be interesting to read the views of the 'masses' - this subject has been such a regular topic of conversation at our matches in recent years it would be both surprising and disappointing if no-one shared their views.

I know that this isn't an easy situation for the League to deal with - and whilst it seems unfair to deny players who want to play League table-tennis the opportunity to do so, I do think that giving 60 teams a full programme of fixtures and just having to disappoint a couple of teams is much fairer than the current situation where at least 40 teams are being treated unfairly.

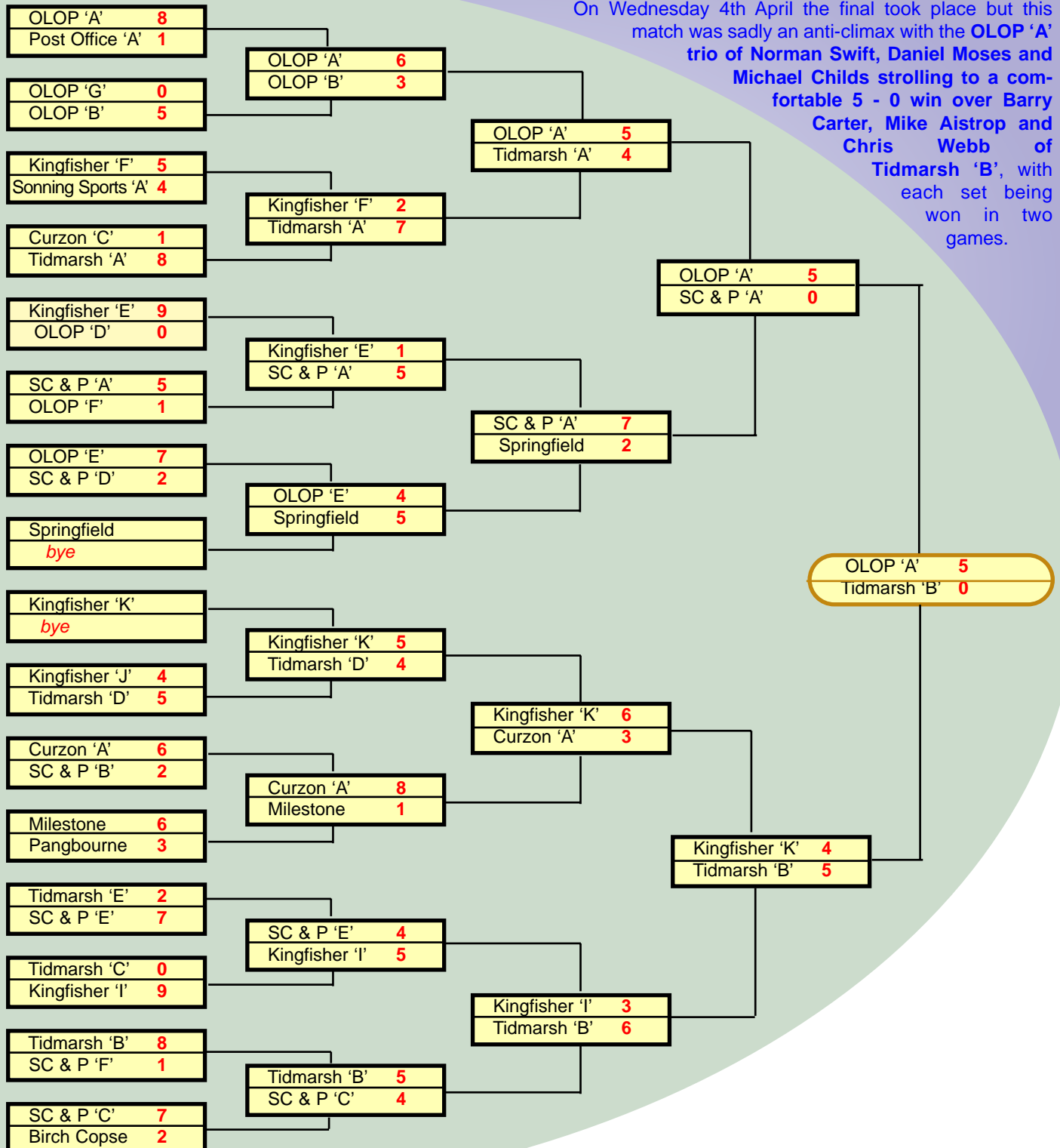
[NB - see reactions of John Freeman on P33.](#)

Team Handicap Competition 2011-12

organised by Duncan Abbott

After the first three rounds had been completed before Christmas, it was a long wait before the semi-finals which took place at Kingfisher club on Friday 30th March. **Favourites OLOP 'A'** beat holders **Sonning Common & Peppard 'A'** 5 - 0, whilst a Jean-Noel Thepaut treble was not enough to stop Div 2 strugglers **Tidmarsh 'B'** winning 5 - 4 and reaching the final at OLOP club.

On Wednesday 4th April the final took place but this match was sadly an anti-climax with the **OLOP 'A'** trio of **Norman Swift, Daniel Moses and Michael Childs** strolling to a comfortable 5 - 0 win over Barry Carter, Mike Aistrop and Chris Webb of **Tidmarsh 'B'**, with each set being won in two games.



DIVISION ONE by Mark Banks

Phew! Thank god that's over with. The season that had it all and then some. Never before in my time of watching over this have we had a season full of so much controversy, incident, fighting and pettiness. And that was just me & Ramesh! Who said ping pong was dull hey? Just when you think you're over one issue another three or four come hurtling round the corner faster than an Andy Yon backhand. I'll be honest with you I thought about quitting this. More than thought about it to be fair and coupled with the fact that I'm moving away it kind of makes sense to give somebody else a go. If there are any takers – let myself or Nigel know. On the table OLOP 'A' were crowned champions albeit in somewhat controversial fashion and Kingfisher 'D' inevitably were the team to drop to D2. In amongst the bad stuff there's been a lot of good stuff too of course. Ramesh moving away for one but some great entertaining play at times and some big unexpected wins for more than one or two of you. Hope you all have a great summer. Weather's looking good and will hopefully see you all again for what will hopefully be a much quieter next season.



Love & Peace

Mark x

Congratulations then to **OLOP 'A'** who win their first title for what must be decades with a draw against a weakened Kingfisher 'A' side - fair enough and then (and this is the controversial bit) a 10-nil claim over YMCA 'A' (who were 2nd at the time). Not sure that would happen in any other sport. But the chances are they would have beaten them anyway and no hard feelings. The real damage was done at the



DANIEL MOSES, MVP

Kingfisher Club with OLOP looking like they were going to have to settle for second place but somehow Liam and Daniel managed to pull off the doubles win of their lives with an enthralling win over Richard Andrews and Hari. Super stuff and if ever a league title was deserved on one performance alone then that was it. Having said that, as soon as Ramesh said that he was leaving for warmer shores they must have

known at that stage that the title was theirs. Great play once again from pizza boy Daniel. Played pretty much every game and Richard & Tom aside only lost to me – Get In! er, and where's my tenner??? Liam too. Had a fantastic match with Richard and is gonna be some player if he keeps on improving the way he has done this season. Brave Childs. So called not for his fighting spirit on the table but for being the only guy in a women only keep fit class on a Tuesday morning. Haha. What a sight. Trust me and you thought he was a bad mover around the table. Some of those old sweaty ladies were running rings round him. You just don't know who's gonna be walking past do you Michael? Excellent! Ian Cole has had a great season too. Reading Vets champ – can't be bad. Sean came in and did a great job when called upon and Norman as we know is a quality play-



LIAM McTIERNAN



IAN COLE

er who was somewhat blighted by injury but it didn't matter with the other great players in the team. He can move down South happy at a job well done. So well played then guys grrrrrrr. OK OK, so you probably would have beaten YM anyway and have a great summer.

M.V.P. Daniel Moses

Fantastic effort from **Kingfisher 'A'** who were always gonna be up against it when Ramesh decided he was gonna open a Fruit & Veg stall on the streets of Dubai, Hari decided to take a mid-season 8 week break and then I got injured at the worst stage possible of the season. And it's still bad now with no signs of recovery. Gutted. We brought in Richard and Tom just to get through – not to win it and we can hold our heads high at the effort we made when everything that could have gone wrong did. Not sure what the future holds for Kingfisher 'A'. Clearly we've proved that a 3 man team is not enough and I may be even less available next term. Gonna need at least 1 probably 2 extra players then so all change then for us and for now watch this space. By the way it won't get him the

MVP but fair play to Hari for winning The Masters. At his age too! WOW!

M.V.P. Mark Banks

Another side who had massive availability issues (grrrrrrrr) were **YMCA 'A'** who lost their way somewhat after Big Bad Bob's relocation to Devon and ended up conceding not only to OLOP but to Polish too. Shame. Again, like us, they find themselves with some questions to be answered in the close season. Will they be able to keep together? I'm not so sure. Martin Chodounsky is so good at table tennis that he's put that to one side and started playing proper tennis. Bet he's great at that too. I understand that his children could be future budding Wimbledon Champions!! Let's hope so. The rest of them all did good. Tony in particular whilst not playing as many matches as he has in the past has certainly done well when he's come in. Beat Hari – top win. Elson comes over from Oxford and is handy and Andy and Steve haven't been involved hardly at all. Shame to see them fizzle out as it could have been interesting but hey ho have a good one in any case!

M.V.P. Martin Chodounsky



NORMAN SWIFT

One side who did finish the season well were old favourites **Polish 'A'** and if they can keep Ian Girdler in the side then even at this early stage you'd have to make them favourites for next year. Martin picked up an injury the weekend before the game with OLOP (yet another thing that went in their favour – haha I'm not bitter) but still plays that great game of his and whilst not quite at his best this year is still way too good for most of the rest of us. Ian as I say has come in after a massive operation and hasn't practised at all hardly but is definitely up there as one of the best 4 players in the Division – I'll let you work out who the other 3 are. Ramesh – before you ask – it's not you OK. Steve Dobbins – the marmite player. Love him or hate him he's undoubtedly a good player – a noisy one granted. God knows what happens when him and Barclay play each other. And Richard has played well without always getting the victories that his play has deserved. Hopefully Coach Nicky will be back to full fitness next season and if they wanted too I reckon they could give it a real go you



MARTIN CHODOUNSKI

know. It's been way too long since their last title some would say. Not us though. Enjoy your summer!

M.V.P. Martin Adams

Everybody's favourite veterans **YMCA 'B'** have had their usual consistently good season. No problems for the big boys but rarely if ever lose to the teams that they shouldn't. It bugs David but the stats say it all buddy. Neil Hurford is the MVP. He's always the MVP. If you want to settle it privately then you could always have a best of 5 with him and see how you get on and let us all know but as far as this goes he's your number one! The stats don't lie – unless your name is Ramesh and insist on only ever playing KFD, OLOP 'D' or any other team with D at the end of their name! So Neil missed most of the second half of the season but still gets the MVP nod. David will no doubt be looking to get his cricket bat out and smacking a few fours in frustration – the cricket season must have started – it's raining outside and new Vet Keith will still be wondering how his beloved Forest failed to stop Reading clinch promotion the other night but he does have the consolation of finding himself a much better team than he ever had with Fenwick Prady!!! Peter and Dave great guys. Still doing OK at this level and have even had the odd win here and there themselves. What you see is what you get. Always enjoy themselves in victory or defeat. Nice to see and have a great summer off.

M.V.P. Neil Hurford (it's true)

Great end to the season too for the Friday (boooo) night guys of **Tidmarsh Integrals 'A'**. Jackpot's season was unfortunately over before it began but at least he had more time to study the form and plan his next touch. Great signing with Sander. The Raymond Van Barneveld of ping pong and definitely one of the best there is. Mr Barclay's picked up some notable wins. Must have been incredibly lucky to win those hey John and Duncan too found some form in the closing matches that improved his average no end. Squirrel as steady as ever. Flashes of his old brilliance. Never in dan-



HARI GEHLOT

ger of going down. Not sure what Lee's plans for next year but if he's out for good then I'm sure you will all join me in wishing him well. Have a good one guys!

M.V.P. Sander De-Riemer

Interesting team then were **OLOP 'B'**. Quite brilliant on their day and with Krasi playing more and Daniel improving by the day you'd have to say that they'll certainly be giving the big guns something to think about if they all stay together next season and can avoid the availability issues that have plagued them and many teams this season. Bradley too. Incredibly keen to improve his game and has had some notable results. Good to see Big John taking time out from his holidays to trouble the scorers too. Raph seems over his injury and is back playing some good stuff - as is the windmill JT.

Quite a mixed bunch of characters then but when it clicks it clicks and a healthy mid-table position means they can all be proud of their efforts this season. Have a great summer!

M.V.P. Daniel McTiernan



KRASI IVANOV

Relative newcomers (well some of them anyway) **Kingfisher 'C'** have had a tidy time of it and have something to build on if they give it another go next season. Keen cricketer and marathon runner Keith Newell picked up an injury (there's a lot of it about) that kept him out for much of the 2nd half but from what we saw of him he's obviously good enough to hold his own in this company. Eric – has been up and down by his standards. You would think that giving up the Korfbal would have helped but consistency has been an issue. He's doing some great work on the KF committee though – a rising star in that respect. Giving something back to the game. Brilliant. James and Richard have both had their moments. Each with their own unique but effective styles. Good first season together guys and hope it continues – have a good one!

	PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLOP 'A'	20	18	1	1	166	34	37
Kingfisher 'A'	20	15	4	1	157	43	34
YMCA 'A'	20	14	2	4	136	64	30
Polish 'A'	20	13	3	4	138	62	29
YMCA 'B'	20	10	1	9	109	91	21
Tidmarsh 'A'	20	9	2	9	87	113	20
OLOP 'B'	20	9	1	10	93	107	19
Kingfisher 'C'	20	8	1	11	81	119	17
SC&P 'A'	20	3	2	15	56	144	8
Kingfisher 'B'	20	2	1	17	39	161	5
Kingfisher 'D'	20	0	0	20	38	162	0

M.V.P. Keith Newell

A massive 8 (yes 8!) points then for **Sonning Common & Peppard 'A'** who find themselves in a dizzy 9th place in the League, a position that easily cements their place in the Division for another season. Super stuff. Much of their success must go down to Simon Berry who has been in inspired form this season and was always relied upon to do a job on the teams immediately around them. This coupled with Jason chipping in here and there with his usual solid wins meant that the pressure was off Nigel and Jarv somewhat and they could just pitch up and play. And play very well they did too. OK so victories were few and far between for them but this is D1 – it's as good as it gets and the fact that they both have wins to their name is good stuff and I know they enjoy it up here! Will be just as tough next season mind but if they can keep Simon interested then they will be fine. Enjoy your summer.

M.V.P. Simon Berry

Not the best of seasons then for **Kingfisher 'B'** but with the announcement of only one team dropping they did what they had to do to retain their D1 status – beat Kingfisher 'D' twice. Tough season but some good individual performances. Geoff Civil – in all fairness probably in the



TONY REYNOLDS, OF YMCA 'A'

point. This game's all about teamwork and whilst individual successes are welcome it's not so good if you do it on a night when your team mates are struggling. Points make prizes and unfortunately nil points means D2 tt. They've enjoyed themselves once again though. Ivor and Trevor have both played some good matches and will have fond memories of the ones that they have won. Johnny Morris will be more gutted about losing an FA Cup semi final to dreaded rivals Liverpool than this and Dave unfortunately failed to get off the mark this term. Not sure how the division will be structured next season so they may be back but realistically D1 is a little too tough and they'd be the first to agree. Have a good one guys.

M.V.P. Trevor Organ



BRADLEY KING

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	PL	W	%
Andy Misseldine	YMCA 'A'	12	12	100
Richard Andrews	Kingfisher 'A'	9	9	100
Nicky Heaps	Polish 'A'	9	9	100
Tom Maynard	Kingfisher 'A'	3	3	100
Ramesh Gehlot	Kingfisher 'A'	21	20	95.24
Martin Adams	Polish 'A'	36	34	94.44
Daniel Moses	OLOP 'A'	54	50	92.59
Mark Banks	Kingfisher 'A'	36	33	91.67
Martin Chodounsky	YMCA 'A'	50	45	90
Sean Pickin	OLOP 'A'	9	8	88.89
Hari Gehlot	Kingfisher 'A'	42	36	85.71
Daniel McTieman	OLOP 'B'	14	12	85.71
Sander De Riemer	Tidmarsh 'A'	14	12	85.71
Tony Reynolds	YMCA 'A'	25	21	84
Norman Swift	OLOP 'A'	33	27	81.82
Ian Cole	OLOP 'A'	15	12	80
Bob Davis	YMCA 'A'	23	18	78.26
Liam McTieman	OLOP 'A'	18	14	77.78

form of his life. Regularly picking up 2s and 3s – just what you need when you're fighting for survival. He can have a great summer on the golf course safe in the knowledge that he'll be playing D1 again. The other guys in fairness have struggled a bit – hence their lowly position. Dave, Cliff, Colin yep! and even Rog have all had wins but not enough of them I'm afraid. I get the feeling that one or two would prefer D2 (or D4 in Roger's case) but personally I think they still have a part to play and can all do a job on their day. Have a great summer!

M.V.P. Geoff Civil

I'm pretty sure that if I asked you all at the start of the season who you thought would find themselves in the relegation spot then pretty much all of you (er, including the players in KFD) would have said **Kingfisher 'D'** and they didn't disap-

DIVISION TWO

by Barry Carter

Welcome to the final newsletter of the 2011/2012 season. The closeness of the division meant that promotion and relegation weren't confirmed until the last week of the season. OLOP 'D' ended up as champions as predicted in the last newsletter, Sonning C & P 'B' were the surprise runners-up having in previous seasons seen promotion snatched from their grasp, so congratulations to those two. At the bottom Sonning C & P 'C' were relegated even earlier than Wolves could be, come this weekend and they will potentially be joined in division three by OLOP 'E' who lost their final two matches of the season to finish one point short of safety.

OLOP 'D' won their last five matches to clinch the title, the procession started with a 7 - 3 victory over Tidmarsh 'B' and finished with an 8 - 2 win over OLOP 'E' which consigned their opponents to division three. Neil Bird was missing from the win over Tidmarsh but two each from Steve Purchase, Clive Perry and Richard Skellett (up from division three runners up OLOP 'F'). Neil returned for the match against a two-man Wokingham team and was pushed all the way by Martin Pugh but he eventually ran out 9-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-9. They won 9 - 1 against a two-lady Kingfisher 'F' team that put one foot in division one and it was confirmed after the 7 - 3 win over Curzon Club 'A'. Congratulations to OLOP 'D' on winning the division and to what seems like an avid Reading fan in Neil, enjoy the seasons you have in the top divisions.

Team Stat : Were the only team unbeaten at home all season, winning seven, drawing two.

Neil Bird : Won all eight of his sets that went to five games

Clive Perry : Won the same amount of sets 3 - 1 and 3 - 2 as he lost 1 - 3 and 2 - 3

Steve Purchase : Won the same amount of sets 3 - 0 and 3 - 1 as he lost 0 - 3 and 1 - 3

Doubles : 67%

Sonning Common and Peppard 'B' have finally reached the promised land after several years of near-misses. Not sure if they miscalculated the points tally but congratulations to Keith, Brian and Malcolm anyway. They confirmed promotion at the end of a great second half to the season that saw them win eight and draw one of their last nine matches. Since Keith lost to yours truly the first week after Christmas (sorry couldn't resist it) he won 24 sets in a row. The countdown to promotion began with an 8 - 2 win over Curzon Club 'A' then continued with another 8 - 2 win over Kingfisher 'E' where Brian Meheux had a really good win over Daniel Grover in a tight five-game set. The third 8 - 2 win in succession came against relegation threatened OLOP 'E' and the match that clinched promotion was a 7 - 3 win over Post Office 'A' where Keith won all three, Brian two and Malcolm only a single win over Simon Hopkins. Good luck in division one guys!

Team Stat : At Christmas were one place above the relegation zone to becoming runners-up come the end of the season (sound familiar Royals fans?)

Keith Swain : Best sequence of wins 24 & won the most maximums (11)

Malcolm Gregory : Won the most sets 3 - 1 on 15 occasions

**Brian Meheux : The only player in the division to play in all 18 matches and be involved in the most 3 - 1, 1 - 3 sets (26)
Doubles : 72%**

Kingfisher 'F''s hopes of hitting the big time floundered in the run-in as they only picked up five points out of the last ten to finish in third. The two victories came against teams that ended the season in the bottom three. Niall McGrane won all three although lost an end to Jeremy Willis in the 7 - 3 win over Sonning C & P 'C'. Carole Chard had one of the longest games of the season as she finally triumphed 18-16 in the fourth against Matt Stone, whilst Sharon Mitchell defeated Paul Treadgold. The other victory came against Tidmarsh 'B' where Niall achieved his almost customary maximum but this time it was Lisa Williams who got the brace as she overcame François Durand and Chris Webb, the end result was 7 - 3. Their promotion hopes were dashed as they lost to the three teams that finished as champions, runners up and fourth. If they had managed to pull at least one win from those three matches they would have been promoted.

Team Stat : Won 7 - 3 on the most occasions, 6 times.

Niall McGrane : Won the most sets 3 - 0 on 25 occasions.



NEIL BIRD

Carole Chard : Whenever Carole won one set in an evening Lisa did the same

Lisa Williams : Only maximum came against Post Office 'A'

Sharon Mitchell : Her run of results were 2 , 1 , 0 , 1 then a break of two before 2 , 1 , 0 , 1

Doubles : 72%

Wokingham 'A's bid for promotion suffered availability problems which probably cost them five points in the end, with those five points they would have ended up vying for the championship with OLOP 'D'. They narrowly lost 4 - 6 at OLOP 'D' when they turned up with two players. Brian Chinneck defeated Clive Perry 12-10, 11-9, 12-10 and Martin Pugh followed it up with a brace, with wins over Clive and Steve Purchase and was very close to snatching a point for Wokingham but he lost 11-9, 11-8, 9-11, 7-11, 9-11 to Neil Bird. They battled back from 0 - 1 down to overcome Tidmarsh

'B' 9 - 1 with both Daryl Griffith and Jim Spencer winning all three. Jim and Brian both won two in the 5 - 5 draw with Kingfisher 'F' that effectively ended both sides' hopes of promotion and they finished the season with a 7 - 3 win over mid-table Curzon Club 'A'.

Team Stat : Had a better away record than when playing at home: 11 points at home, 12 away

Brian Chinneck : Won 19 out of his 31 sets in three straight

Martin Pugh : Didn't lose a set by the 1 - 3 scoreline

Jim Spencer : All three maximums occurred in the second half of the season

Daryl Griffith : Won all six of his encounters with Post Office 'A' (he can play you every week)

Doubles : 61%

Kingfisher 'E' have sat in mid-table for all of the second half of the season, never really in with a shout of promotion or in danger of relegation. They won two and lost two of the final four matches to finish in fifth place. The two wins came against what turned out to be the two relegated sides in OLOP 'E' where three from Peter Goatly his second maximum of the season and one each from Allan Bruton and Peter Bennett saw them to a 6 - 4 scoreline and Sonning C & P 'C' where Peter Bennett took the honours with a maximum that included wins over Paul Treadgold, Matt Stone and Ian Ayres. Eric Holmes also contributed with an 11-8, 11-9, 7-11, 11-5 victory over Ian. The 2 - 8 defeat to Sonning Common & Peppard 'B' seemed a little harsh looking at the scorecard as four of the ten matches went to five of which only Daniel Grover and Eric Holmes prospered. The other match ended in a 3 - 7 defeat to Post Office 'A'.

Team Stat : Used the most players that played in 50% of the matches (5)

Allan Bruton : Both his ducks came against Wokingham 'A' and both his maximums were won at home for a more positive outlook.

Peter Bennett : Of the 3 - 0, 0 - 3 sets he only won one out of 11.

Peter Goatly : Won all six of the sets that went to four.

Eric Holmes : Didn't win a set by the 3 - 0 scoreline but managed to lose 12 0 - 3.

Daniel Grover : Won both of his maximums in the first half of the season.

Doubles : 44%

	PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLOP 'D'	18	13	2	3	115	65	28
Sonning C&P 'B'	18	11	3	4	109	71	25
Kingfisher 'F'	18	10	4	4	95	85	24
Wokingham 'A'	18	10	3	5	108	72	23
Kingfisher 'E'	18	8	3	7	91	89	19
Curzon Club 'A' *	18	7	3	8	98	82	17
Post Office 'A'	18	7	2	9	76	104	16
Tidmarsh 'B'	18	5	3	10	85	95	13
OLOP 'E'	18	4	4	10	78	102	12
Sonning C&P 'C'	18	1	1	16	45	135	3

Before the bottom half report here are some general stats about the league:-

50% of the matches were home wins, 34% away wins and 16% were draws.

7 - 3 was the most popular score with 31% closely followed by 6 - 4 on 30%.

To underline the closeness of the division, 46% of the matches ended either 6 - 4 or 5 - 5 with 54% being 10 - 0, 9 - 1, 8 - 2 or 7 - 3.

Curzon Club 'A' only won once in the final lap of the season but by then it didn't really matter as they had already assured themselves of finishing sixth at the worst. The only win occurred at Sonning C & P 'C' where they routed the home side 10 - 0. The performing trio that night were Mick Maynard, John Willcocks and Jon Willis. Mick was taken to the wire by Tim Raby before triumphing 11-2 in the fifth and Jon Willis lived dangerously on two occasions as he was taken to five by both Tim and Matt Stone before he won 11-2 and 11-6 respectively. John Willcocks was the sole winner as he won two against Sonning C & P 'B' duo of Malcolm Gregory and Brian Meheux, although John Walker gave Keith Swain a little scare as he won the first end against him but in the end he lost 11-9, 7-11, 4-11, 4-11. It was once again John Willcocks that gave them hope against OLOP 'D' as he beat both Steve Purchase and Clive Perry, the other winner was Jon Willis as he won 15-13 in the fifth against Steve. It was all in vain as they lost 3 - 7. The other match was a 3 - 7 defeat to Wokingham 'A' where John Walker took the first end off of Martin Pugh but finally succumbed 11-6, 4-11, 9-11, 6-11.

Team Stat : Won the most matches by the 10 - 0 scoreline: 2 occasions.

John Willcocks : Won the most braces in an evening, 9 occasions.

Jon Willis : Won 9 out of 12 sets that went to four ends.

Mick Maynard : Only won one set in an evening on 1 occasion, the rest he won 0, 2 or 3.

John Walker : Won both his sets by the 3 - 0 scoreline.

Doubles : 61%

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	L%
Niall McGrane	Kingfisher 'F'	44	40	90.91
Neil Bird	OLOP 'D'	46	40	86.96
Keith Swain	Sonning C&P 'B'	51	43	84.31
John Willcocks	Curzon Club 'A' *	48	39	81.25
Martin Pugh	Wokingham 'A'	27	20	74.07
Jeremy Willis	Sonning C&P 'C'	33	23	69.7
Daryl Griffith	Wokingham 'A'	33	22	66.67
Malcolm Gregory	Sonning C&P 'B'	48	31	64.58
Mike Aistrop	Tidmarsh 'B'	42	27	64.29

Post Office 'A' looked destined for the trapdoor at Christmas but some really good results in 2012 saw them climb from 9th place to finish in 7th. The highlight over the last few weeks was a fantastic 6 - 4 victory over the champions (albeit a slightly understrength team) OLOP 'D'. John Simmonds won all three against Steve Purchase, Harry Brough and Richard Skellett although two were very close and went to five games. Simon Hopkins defeated Steve Purchase and then Denise Weller beat Harry Brough 11-5, 10-12, 11-4, 11-2. John's second-half form was a major factor in them avoiding relegation as he returned to the form of a couple of seasons ago and won 14 out of his last 18 sets. The other win came against Kingfisher 'E' as both John Simmonds and Andrew Walker returned home with maximums in a 7 - 3 win. They made themselves mathematically safe with the 5 - 5 draw away to Tidmarsh 'B', John took both Andy Stephens and Steve Ricks (part of the Tidmarsh 'C' championship winning team) to five before he lost 11 - 8 and 11 - 4 respectively. The other match saw them lose 6 - 4 to the eventual runners up, Sonning C & P 'B'.

Team Stat : Lost 0 - 10 on the most occasions, twice

John Simmonds : Was involved in the most five-game sets, 18, winning 10 and losing 8

Simon Hopkins : Won 10 out of the 11 five-game sets he was involved in

Denise Weller : Played in five of the seven victories that Post Office 'A' won

Doubles : 56%

Tidmarsh 'B' had a nightmare second half of the season as they managed to only pick up five points from a possible eighteen. In the end they needed to rely on other results going in their favour and they all did, one of which was a surprise to say the least. Mike Aistrop won all three of his sets in the 3 - 7 defeat to OLOP 'D' as he had fine wins over Steve Purchase (11-8, 6-11, 12-10, 7-11, 11-4), Clive Perry (11-6, 11-9, 10-12, 11-9) and Richard Skellett (11-5, 11-5, 11-6). The only victory in the last six matches proved to be the most important as they came from 3 - 4 down to beat their fellow strugglers OLOP 'E' 6 - 4 with Mike starting the comeback with a 11-6, 10-12, 9-11, 11-2, 14-12 win over Hanson Xu, Steve Callidine made it 5 - 4 with a 11-9, 5-11, 11-7, 11-5 win over Andy Johnson before the win was secured by François Durand's win over Pu Zhang 11-9, 11-8, 11-9. Chris Webb had a disappointing end to what started out as a really good season as he failed to win any in his

last six sets after winning 4 out of 6 in the first two in 2012. They suffered a heavy 1 - 9 defeat to a full strength Wokingham 'A' team where only François was a winner with a five game win over Brian Chinneck. Andy Stephens and Steve Ricks played up in the match against Post Office 'A' and won three and two respectively as they held on to pick up a 5 - 5 draw.

Team Stat : Lost the joint most matches by the 4 - 6 scoreline on 4 occasions.

François Durand : Won one set on an evening seven times.

Mike Aistrop : Won all six of his sets against the champions, OLOP 'D'.

Chris Webb : Won at least one set against the other 10 teams in the division.

Doubles : 33%

OLOP 'E' have to be kicking themselves for getting themselves into the mess of relegation. If they had all performed on the same evening then they wouldn't have found themselves in 9th place and possible relegation. On the final lap of the season they lost four of their five matches with the only victory coming against Post Office 'A' where both Andy Johnson and Hanson Xu won two each and then joined forces to actually win the doubles as well. The two of them both defeated Denise Weller and Simon Hopkins and both lost in five to John Simmonds as did Wendy Porter but she also lost the other two. The key match that sealed their fate was at home to already relegated and winless Sonning C & P 'C'. Wendy Porter was the lady of the match with two good wins over Matt Stone and Paul Treadgold whilst she lost to Jeremy Willis. At 4 - 4 it was still anyone's game but Pu Zhang lost to Jeremy and when Andy lost 2 - 3 to Matt in the final set of the evening it had become a 4 - 6 defeat which left them needing to beat the champions in the final match to stay up. Hanson Xu had a fine evening against the champions as he overcame both Clive Perry and Harry Brough but unfortunately they were the only wins on the night so it ended 2 - 8 and relegation was confirmed. They did suffer two 4 - 6 defeats as well to both Tidmarsh 'B' and Kingfisher 'E' but in the end so near, yet so far.

Team Stat : Picked up five of their 12 points against the top four teams but they also were the only team to lose to Sonning C & P 'C'

Wendy Porter : Won 3 out of the 4 sets in which Wendy went home with a brace

Andy Johnson : Both his maximums came at home

Hanson Xu : Won braces on seven occasions

Pu Zhang : Won a single set on the most occasions, 9 times

Doubles : 28%

Sonning Common & Peppard 'C' have had a really difficult season and were consigned to relegation following their 3 - 7 defeat to Kingfisher 'F'. Jeremy Willis has performed really well and finished in the top ten in the averages and he maintained that form as he won two on the night against Sharon Mitchell and Carole Chard although he lost to Niall McGrane 6-11, 14-12, 6-11, 5-11. The other winner on the night was Matt Stone who came from 1 - 2 down to beat Sharon 11-4, 9-11, 6-11, 12-10, 11-7. Paul Treadgold

took Carole Chard to five but he lost 3-11 in the fifth. Paul and Matt both had victories over Eric Holmes and Ian Ayres recorded his first victory of the season with a great 11-8, 11-8, 11-7 win over Peter Goatly in the 3 - 7 defeat. I'll save the highlight of their season to last and that was their only victory and it came at the eighteenth time of asking away to OLOP 'E'. The 6 - 4 win was inspired by three from Jeremy Willis as he defeated the OLOP trio of Andy Johnson, Wendy Porter and Pu Zhang relatively easily to set them on their way. Matt Stone was the only other winner on the night as he beat both Pu and the all important 11-8, 9-11, 6-11, 11-4, 11-6 set ten victory over Andy Johnson which gave them their only win of the season.

Team Stat : Lost 3 - 7 on the most occasions, 8

Paul Treadgold : Won all three of his sets at Peppard Memorial Hall

Matt Stone : Seven of his ten wins were in five games.

Jeremy Willis : Didn't record a duck all season

Tim Raby : None of his three wins were in five games.

Ian Ayres : His only win was by the 3 - 0 scoreline.

Doubles : 11%

Well that is nearly the end of this marathon ramble, hope you've enjoyed reading some of the information contained. I have to admit some of the stats are a little tenuous but at least I tried it. All the best to the teams that won promotion to division one, I'm sure you'll have a ball. Good luck to the teams heading through the trapdoor to division three, see you in a couple of seasons. Thanks to all team captains for the prompt emails/posting of scorecards through the season. Have a good summer and here's to a fantastic London 2012 Olympic Games...

DIVISION THREE by Nick Lean

Congratulations to Tidmarsh 'C' who won all of their matches throughout the season and are worthy Champions of Division 3, and to OLOP 'F' who are also promoted having lost just one match. I'm sure both teams will do well in Division 2 next season, if they can field their strongest teams - the only shame is that the outstanding match between these two teams could not be played, which has spoilt Tidmarsh's 100% record for the season.



Commiserations go to Pangbourne WMC and Sonning Sports 'A' who finished in the relegation places and will probably play their matches in Division 4 next season. Details on the last knockings of the season follow.

Tidmarsh 'C' completed their scheduled fixtures and played (most of) their outstanding matches in impressive style, with seven more comprehensive wins. In their toughest match of this run Tidmarsh stormed to a 4 - 0 lead at OLOP 'F' before completing an emphatic 7 - 3 win to take control of the top of the table. Barry Carter recorded an impressive maximum and Andy Stephens won twice, but gave up his undefeated record as he lost to Harry Brough in five games. Bizarrely described as their hardest match of the season, Tidmarsh had their biggest win with a clean sweep against Sonning Sports. Four sets went to five games and four more to a fourth, so the match score could have been a lot closer.

Danny Ricks became their 10th different player when he won two against Springfield in his first appearance in the Senior league and went on to show the rest of the team how to do it as he won all three against Kingfisher 'G'. In this run of matches Peter Galea won 6/6, while Andy Stephens, Barry Carter and Steve Ricks all hit three more maximums to leave them on 92%, 87% and 75% respectively. Their doubles record was also best in the Division, losing just three times.

OLOP 'F' won four of their last five matches to clinch promotion, starting with a good 8 - 2 win over in-form

Milestone. They fielded their strongest team for a while as Richard Skellett returned alongside Harry Brough & Sami Almbrok to win all three. He was pushed all the way by John Tucker before finally winning 11-9, 9-11, 7-11, 11-8, 14-12 and was also taken to a decider by John Crosfield. Facing only two opponents from OLOP 'G' they easily won 9 - 1, then confirmed promotion with an 8 - 2 win at Tilehurst Meths, Sami winning his three sets, but Richard and Harry both losing out to Ian Cockling over five games.

OLOP 'F' lost their unbeaten record as they suffered a 3 - 7 reverse at home to Tidmarsh, Sami, Harry & Richard winning one each, then finished the season with a 9 - 1 win over Kingfisher 'H', although all three players were pushed to play at least one deciding game before Sami and Richard came away with maximums, while Harry won two.

At the other end of the table, Pangbourne WMC had a very poor end to their season, losing their last five matches and only picking up 3 points over the second half. They lost 1 - 9 to Tidmarsh, with Howard Taylor doing very well to beat Barry Carter in 5 games. But they crucially lost at Sonning Sports despite Clive Taylor winning two, Leroy one and Roger battling hard before losing to Dave Chard in five games, then to Bob W 15-17 in their decider. They lost a close contest at Kingfisher 'G' in a match that had 6 sets go to a deciding game, but only one of which they one. Pete Welch upstaged his team-mates for the first time this sea-

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tidmarsh 'C'	18	17	1	0	143	37	35
OLOP 'F'	18	13	4	1	128	52	30
OLOP 'G'	18	10	2	6	101	79	22
Milestone 'A'	18	7	5	6	92	88	19
Kingfisher 'G'	18	6	5	7	83	97	17
Kingfisher 'H'	18	7	2	9	81	99	16
Tilehurst Meths 'A'	18	5	3	10	74	106	13
Springfield 'A'	18	5	2	11	70	110	12
Pangbourne WMC	18	2	4	12	65	115	8
Sonning Sports 'A'	18	3	2	13	63	117	8

son, winning two while Leroy & Roger could only win one apiece. Finally they lost 1 - 9 to OLOP 'G', with Pete defeating Alex Fear for their only win of the evening. Despite some of their players actually doing better than last season, Pangbourne didn't have the fire-power to survive another season at this level so after 3 seasons may be happy to return to Division 4.

The Sonning Sports 'A' players will be very disappointed to be relegated for the second season running, having had a number of problems within their team. They attempted a late comeback with wins over Pangbourne and Milestone, but in the end they narrowly lost the crucial matches with Springfield and Tilehurst, when better results could have seen them safe.

In their last few matches they lost to Kingfisher 'H' - another night of woe as Cap'n Bob was ill & couldn't play, so had to field a reserve from Division 6, Ken Stevens, while Nigel still out of action.

Bob won two at Springfield, but despite Nigel Goodman returning, he and Dave Chard both lost out in tight sets and

and Alex Fear only won one each. Then they could only find two players to face their club-mates, so started the match 0 - 3 down and lost it 1 - 9. But they beat Tilehurst Meths 8 - 2 with a maximum from Dan and two each for Mark Kirton & Chris West, plus a marathon doubles which was won 18-16 in the 4th game. They lost 4 - 6 at Kingfisher 'G' as Chris, Dan & Alex won one each, then stormed to a 5 - 0 lead over Springfield before being pegged-back to a 6 - 4 win. Dan had to retire before the end of the match through injury, but Neil Havard who was playing up from Div 4 took an excellent maximum, including the scalp of Phil Burke 13-11 in the fifth.

At Pangbourne they came away with a 9 - 1 win, as Chris and Mark won three each, then finished the season with a draw against Milestone, thanks to a hard-fought maximum from Chris.

Milestone 'A' did well to finished 4th and should be please dwith this position. They fought well at OLOP 'F', as five sets went to a deciding game, with Hugh beating Sami and JT beating Harry, but three other contests were lost in the fifth, as was the match 2 - 8. They lost by the same score at Tidmarsh although Hugh did well to beat Barry Carter in 3 straight, while JT came out on top in a five-gamer against Steve Ricks, 11-9 in the decider. Hugh was taken ill before their match with Sonning Sports and with just two players were unable to prevent a 3 - 7 defeat, despite JT winning two. The match with Kingfisher 'G' was a bit of a muddle, with the opposition only fielding two players, then one of those pulled out of the doubles and his final single, but the match was won 9 - 1. Milestone's season ended with an excellent draw at OLOP 'G', as Hugh and JT won two each and teamed-up to win the doubles.

Kingfisher 'G' had a very good second half, winning four of their last six scheduled matches - only the two promoted teams won more points since Christmas. They had a good 7 - 3 win over OLOP 'G' thanks mainly to reserve Leo Long who hit a superb maximum, plus two each for Allen Pack & Chris Pusey. Dave Duncan & Chris fought well to win three each as they won 9 - 1 at Tilehurst Meths, then they surprised their club-mates in defeating Kingfisher 'H' 6 - 4 for their third win in a row: Allen, Dave and Chris winning two each as they secured the points with two sets left to play. In this match Chris played well to beat Pat Burns having been two games down. At Springfield they might have come away with more than a point, as reserve Michael Houghton won two, including beating Phil Burke, and Allen did the same. They eventually won a tough battle with Pangbourne, thanks to Michael Houghton again winning two, as did Allen, while Chris won the crucial 10th set against Pete Welch 11-8, 12-14, 11-8, 12-14, 11-8. Turning up with two players at Milestone meant they had no chance, and they finished the season at Tidmarsh where reserve Leo Long showed what he's made of by defeating Andy Stephens and Steve Ricks.

Kingfisher 'H' had a topsy-turvy end to the season with alternate wins & defeats, but a better second half meant they finished comfortably mid-table. They won at Sonning Sports, thanks to maximums from Steve Woolnough & Pat Burns, then lost out to 4 - 6 Kingfisher 'G', despite two wins for Pat. Next they beat OLOP 'G' 6 - 4 thanks to Pat win-

LEADING AVERAGES				
Player	Team	P	W	%
Peter Galea	Tidmarsh 'C'	15	14	93.3%
Andy Stephens	Tidmarsh 'C'	24	22	91.7%
Barry Carter	Tidmarsh 'C'	45	39	86.7%
Harry Brough	OLOP 'F'	50	42	84.0%
Richard Skellett	OLOP 'F'	26	21	80.8%
Sami Almabrok	OLOP 'F'	50	39	78.0%
Patrick Burns	Kingfisher 'H'	39	30	76.9%
Dave Reynolds Snr	Tidmarsh 'C'	21	16	76.2%
Phil Burke	Springfield A'	48	36	75.0%
Steve Ricks	Tidmarsh 'C'	24	18	75.0%
Chris West	OLOP 'G'	31	23	74.2%

could only win one each in another frustrating defeat. They picked up their first win since November as they overcame Pangbourne 7 - 3, as Dave Chard battled to his first maximum of the season, while Cap'n Bob won two. Sports had a stoke of luck as Milestone could only field two players and took full advantage as Nigel won both his contests 3-straight, Dave won one and they won the doubles to come away with a 7 - 3 win. In this match Bob Snellgrove was unlucky to lose twice in the deciding game. They fought and played well at Tidmarsh, but with no reward whatsoever, as Nigel and Dave both lost out in the deciding game on two occasions. Tidmarsh commented: "If they had played like that all season they wouldn't be in the relegation places."

This left Sports with one last thread of a chance to stay up, if they could win their last match, but they narrowly lost at Tilehurst Meths, losing out in 3 of the 4 sets that went to a deciding game, as Bob won two while Nigel and Dave could only win one apiece.

So to the remaining teams, who will still be playing in this Division next season.

OLOP 'G' finished at the head of the chasing pack having won 3 of their last 7 matches. They would have been surprised to lose at Kingfisher 'G', but they did as Dan West

ning 3, Steve 2 and Carol Byers returning to win one, but then lost to a resurgent Tilehurst Meths as Steve and Carol could only win one each. Finally, they finished the season with a heavy defeat at the hands of promoted OLOP 'F', losing 1 - 9 despite half the sets going to a deciding game - all of which they lost. Pat had the only win, beating Harry Brough in four games.

Tilehurst Meths 'A' were in danger of being dragged into the relegation scene, as they had a poor second half which included a run of 5 defeats on the trot. They were well beaten by Kingfisher 'G' and although five singles contests went to the deciding game and the doubles too, they lost them all including Mel Lovegrove suffering this way for all three of his sets. They then lost at OLOP 'G' as Phil Jones picked up the only two wins of the evening, although Ian Cockling did well to win long contests with both Harry Brough and Richard Skellett, defeating both of them deuce in the fifth and had the same result against OLOP 'F'.

The run of defeats was ended by a comprehensive win over Kingfisher 'H', thanks to maximums from Ian and Phil, a result which effectively removed any relegation concerns. They were unlucky not to take something from their visit to Springfield; after leading 4 - 3. they lost the last three singles, but confirmed their safety with a 6 - 4 win over Sonning Sports thanks to a maximum from Phil.

Having been in the bottom two for much of the season, Springfield 'A' got themselves clear of relegation with two wins and a draw in their last five matches. Unsurprisingly well beaten by Tidmarsh with Phil Burke winning the only set, they gave themselves a chance of avoiding relegation by defeating Sonning Sports 6 - 4 for a second time this season. Des Hele won two, including an 11-9 in the fifth over Nigel Goodman, while Phil beat Dave Chard in the final end of the last set to complete his maximum and seal the win. They drew with Kingfisher 'G' in a hard-fought match they so nearly won, as Des won two, Ian one and Phil just the one as he was out-gunned in a topspin hitting battle with Michael Houghton in the final set of the match. After a narrow 4 - 6 defeat at OLOP 'G' despite 2 more wins for Phil Burke and still needing a point from their last match to be safe from relegation, they took both points in a nip & tuck match with Tilehurst Meths. At 4 - 4 Seth Martin beat John Virgo in five games to secure a point, then Phil Burke completed his maximum with a 3-straight win over Ian Cockling to seal the win. Good comments were made about the sportsmanship of the Tilehurst players following a couple of dodgy calls during the match, which is always nice to hear.

Finally, thanks to all the team captains (and their deputies) for their help and comments throughout the season.

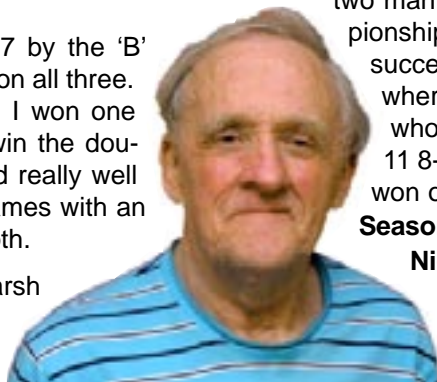
DIVISION FOUR by *Derek Harrison*

Before I start my final run in notes I will mention the two matches that were played just after the Feb notes.

The Curzon derby was won 3 - 7 by the 'B' team thanks as ever to Geoff who won all three. Nick weighed in with a double and I won one besides teaming up with Geoff to win the doubles. For the 'C' team Linda played really well and beat Nick and myself over 5 games with an 11-9 scoreline in the 5th game in both.

Sonning then entertained Tidmarsh and went down 4 - 6 with Jon getting a nice double and Derek a single by beating Terry. For Tidmarsh Dave Edwards gained his first treble since the 2009/2010 season and with Dave Smith winning two and Terry one this was enough for them to give themselves some breathing space at the bottom.

In the 1st vs 3rd battle Tilehurst Meths were held to a draw by OLOP. Nigel Rowland and Richard Lownsborough both gained doubles and Chris Taylor got a very vital single by beating Chris Moses. Nigel was missing from their important match at Wokingham and as a result they lost 6 - 4. Nick won two and Chris and Richard both won one by beating John Beardmore. In the top of the table clash they faced a weakened Polish 'B' side and romped home 8 - 2 with Nick Barnes obtaining a three straight maximum. Nigel and Richard both won two each. They then clinched



promotion by beating bottom side Sonning 0 - 10 with Nigel, Richard and Nick getting trebles. Then by beating a two man Kingfisher team 9 - 1 they clinched the championship so I congratulate Nigel and his boys on their success. They finished their season at Curzon 'B' where they gained a draw mainly thanks to Nigel who obtained a great hat trick which included a 6-11 8-11 8-11 win over Geoff. Richard and Chris both won one each by beating Jim.

Season's record:

Nigel 47 / 53 = 88.68% 11 trebles best win Geoff Johnson

Richard 34 out of 50 = 68% 4 trebles best win Jacek

Martin 6 out of 9 = 66.67% 1 treble best win

Terry Spice

Chris 16 / 33 = 48.48% 1 treble best win Derek Harrison

Nick 25 out of 32 = 78.13% 4 trebles best win Jacek

Doubles 15 out of 20 = 75%

Nigel and Nick had the best doubles record: 8 out of 9 17 points first half, 16 points second half.

One final comment - hope you are playing again next season, Martin.

Polish 'B' continued to march towards promotion by beating Curzon 'B' 3 - 7 with Jacek winning all three, Darek gaining a double and Marcin picking up a single. Jacek and Darek showed no mercy in the doubles by beating Nick and Geoff 3-11, 7-11, 4-11. At home to Sonning they

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tilehurst Meths 'B'	20	15	3	2	146	54	33
Polish 'B'	20	14	3	3	125	75	31
OLOP 'H'	20	12	3	5	119	81	27
Wokingham 'B'	20	11	2	7	114	86	24
Curzon 'B'	20	9	6	5	112	88	24
Birch Copse 'A'	20	10	4	6	105	95	24
Kingfisher 'I'	20	6	4	10	91	109	16
Tidmarsh 'D'	20	5	4	11	74	126	14
Curzon 'C'	20	2	7	11	79	121	11
Polish 'C'	20	3	3	14	66	134	9
SC&P 'D'	20	2	3	15	69	131	7

were given a hard game before winning 8 - 2 with Jacek again winning all three. Darek and Marcin both picked up doubles. At Tilehurst Meths they were without Jacek and as a result lost 8 - 2. Darek won one by beating Richard and Marcin had a brilliant victory over Nigel. They then drew with Kingfisher with Jacek winning all three but it took a set 10 win over George getting home 13-11 in the 5th end. Darek won the other singles game by beating Michael. He also won the doubles with Jacek. They then clinched promotion by beating their 'C' team 9 - 1 with Jacek and Darek both hitting trebles. The skipper Marcin weighed in with a double. They finished their season by beating Curzon 'C' 3 - 7 with Jacek, Darek and Marcin all gaining doubles.

Season's record

Jacek 48 / 57 = 84.2% 12 trebles, best win Neil Havard

Marcin 22 / 60 = 36.7% 6 doubles, best win Nigel Rowland

Darek 42 / 60 = 70.0% 5 trebles, best win Tony Eames

Doubles 13 out of 20 = 65.0%

16 points first half, 15 points second half.

Jacek and Darek had the best doubles record winning 10 out of 14

OLOP gained a great draw at Tilehurst Meths thanks mainly to a brilliant treble from Dave Godfrey. Alistair Richardson did well to win one and he also teamed up with Dave to win the doubles three straight. If only Neil had been available they would have romped home. They then lost 3 - 7 to Kingfisher with Neil, Alistair and Dave all beating Diane. Away to Curzon 'C' they came away with a 2 - 8 victory thanks to maximums from Dave and Neil who were supported by Alistair who beat Oliver. At home to Polish 'C' they won 8 - 2 thanks to trebles from Alistair and Neil with Dave getting a single. Against Birch Copse they won 7 - 3 with Neil and Dave winning all three. For Neil they were all three straight.

Season's record

Alistair 25 / 48 = 52.08% 4 trebles best win Terry Hardie

Dave 34 / 48 = 70.83% 6 trebles best win Nigel Rowland

Neil 45 / 54 = 83.33% 10 trebles best win Geoff Johnson

Chris 0 out of 18

Doubles 11 out of 20 = 55.0%

Dave & Alistair's doubles record was best, with 8 out of 13

13 points first half 14 points second half

Birch Copse had a good 4 - 6 win at Curzon 'C' thanks to a great team performance with Jes Eassom and reserve George Sandford both winning two each. Mike Williams did his bit by picking up a vital single besides teaming up with Jes to win the doubles. They then beat Polish 'C' 7 - 3. Richard won all three in straight games with Jes gaining a double. Mike played his part by beating Krys. At home to Curzon 'B' in a very good evening the match ended in a draw with Richard winning two and also teamed up with Jes to win the doubles who won one as did Mike who both beat Jim. At home to Tidmarsh Richard gained a treble three straight and with Jes winning two and

Mike one this helped them to a 7 - 3 victory. Away to OLOP they went down 7 - 3 with Mike, Jes and Andras all winning one each.

Season's record

Jes 26 out of 50 = 52.0% 10 doubles best win Richard Lownsborough

Mike 19 out of 50 = 38.0% 1 treble best win Michael Houghton

Richard 36 out of 44 = 81.82 8 trebles best win Leo Long
Doubles 10 out of 20 = 50.0%

Mike and Richard had the best doubles record winning 4 out of 7

11 points first half 13 points second half.

Curzon 'B' finally accepted that their promotion dream was over by going down 3 - 7 to Polish 'B'. Geoff won two and Nick won one. Nick was unlucky against Jacek only going down 9-11 in the 5th end. At home to Sonning we bounced back by winning 9 - 1 with Geoff and Nick both obtaining trebles. I played my part by winning two. At Birch Copse Geoff was again in top form by gaining a great maximum and with Nick winning two this gave us a point. Away at Tidmarsh Geoff and Nick both won two each in a 6 - 4 defeat. We finished by holding the champions Tilehurst to a draw with Geoff and Derek winning two each and the two of them won the doubles. As a result of that point it means we have finished in 5th place for three seasons in a row.

Season's record

Geoff 38 out of 45 = 84.44% 8 trebles best win Neil Havard

Nick 27 out of 42 = 64.29% 2 trebles best win Nick Barnes

Derek 22 / 42 = 52.38% 10 doubles best win Neil Havard

Jim 11 out of 42 = 26.19% 3 doubles best win Darek

Doubles 9 out of 19 = 47.0%

Derek & Geoff's doubles record was best, with 5 out of 6 13 points first half 11 points second half

Wokingham won their second match in a row for the first time this season by beating Sonning 2 - 8 with Mike Shore winning all three. Richard Neville and John Beardmore both picked up doubles. Mike was again in top form by winning all 3 three straight against Tilehurst Meths and also

teaming up with Ken to win the doubles. Ken did well to obtain a nice double. At Kingfisher they lost 7 - 3 with Richard winning two and Ken one. Next came Curzon 'C' who they beat 9 - 1. Tony and Richard both gained trebles with Ken winning two. In their final match of the season they won 2 - 8 at Polish 'C' with Tony winning all three and Ken and John Beardmore both obtaining doubles.

Season's record

Tony 28 / 33 = 84.8% 7 maximums best win Neil Havard

Mike 12 / 15 = 80.0% 3 maximums best win Nick Barnes

Richard 25 / 33 = 75.8% 5 trebles best win Nigel Rowland

Ken 20 / 39 = 51.3% 2 trebles best win Darek Kaminski

John Beardmore 10 / 27 = 37.0% 4 doubles best win Alistair Richardson

John Belcher 1 out of 18 = 5.6% best win Diane Taylor

Doubles record 13 out of 19 = 68.4%

12 points first half , 12 points second half

Tony & Richard had the best doubles record winning 6 out of 7

Tidmarsh without Terry lost 8 - 2 at Kingfisher with the two Daves beating Derek Spicer. At home to Curzon 'C' in a very sporting evening the points were shared with Terry picking up a fine double besides winning the doubles with Dave E who won one as did Dave S. In their vital game at Polish 'C' they were without Terry who was watching Reading beat Portsmouth 1 - 0; however Dave Edwards did the business by winning all three and then teaming up with Dave S to win the doubles. Reserve Pete Sinclair did well to pick up a single. One big comment I must make is on Dave's loss 12-14, 11-6, 11- 4,11-8 to Stephen. You may wonder why I picked this out so I will tell you that Dave was 10-0 down in that first game. They then went down 8 - 2 at Kingfisher with Dave E and Dave S winning one each. At Birch Copse again without Terry they went down 7 - 3 with Dave E winning two and Dave S one. They then finished their season by beating Curzon 'B' 6 - 4 with Terry on top form, winning all three. The two Dave's both won one each by beating Jim .

By the way Dave, thanks for your email with your kind comments . It is nice that my efforts are appreciated.

Season's record

Terry 24 / 39 = 61.54% 4 trebles best win Nigel Rowland

Dave E 27 / 60 = 45.0% 2 trebles best win Richard Lownsbrough

Dave S 9 out of 36 = 25.0% 1 double best win Jes Eassom

Mick 2 out of 33 = 6.06% 2 singles best win Marcin Kolat

Doubles 11 out of 20 = 55.0%

Best doubles record Terry & Dave E 9 out of 12

8 points first half 6 points second half

One final comment. I hope that your back gets better Mick and that you are able to play again next season. And as for you Bob I have missed playing against you and I hope you also are able to play again.

Kingfisher helped themselves to two points by beating Tidmarsh 8 - 2. Michael Houghton and George Dodd both obtained maximums with Derek Spicer picking up a single. They then won 3 - 7 at OLOP with Leo and George both winning all three and teaming up to win the doubles to beat Dave and Alistair. At home to a two man Wokingham they won 7 - 3. Leo won his two sets with George winning one. At Polish 'B' Leo and George both obtained doubles with Michael winning one which helped them share the points. At home to Sonning they won 7 - 3 with Michael and George both winning all three. Derek did well to beat Simon.

At Tilehurst due to a lash-up they only had two players and went down 9 - 1. Michael won the game by beating Richard.

Season's record

Michael 34 / 53 = 64.15% 5 trebles best win Nick Barnes

Leo 15 / 17 = 88.24% 3 trebles best win Richard Neville

George 29 / 44 = 65.91 5 trebles best win Richard Green

Derek 4 out of 36 = 11.11% 4 singles best win Jan Polnik

Diane 0 out of 12

Doubles 6 out of 20 = 30.0%

**Best doubles record 3 out of 9 for Michael & George
3 points first half 13 points second half**

Curzon 'C' despite a great treble from Terry Spice went down 4 - 6 to Birch Copse. Linda King won the other game by beating Mike. At Tidmarsh they gained a valuable point with Terry obtaining a superb maximum. Linda did very well by winning two. They then lost 2 - 8 to OLOP with Terry and Linda both defeating Alistair. They then went down 9 - 1 at a full strength Wokingham with Linda beating Ken. At home to Polish 'B' Linda obtained a great maximum by beating Jacek 11-8, 11-8, 11-7 Darek 6-11, 12-10, 11-5, 5-11, 11-7 and Marcin 8-11, 11-5, 11-9, 11-5. Well done Linda but sadly the side lost 3 - 7. At Sonning

DIV 4 LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Nigel Rowland	Tilehurst Meths 'B'	53	47	88.7%
Tony Eames	Wokingham 'B'	33	28	84.8%
Geoff Johnson	Curzon 'B'	45	38	84.4%
Jacek Krzyzanowski	Polish 'B'	57	48	84.2%
Neil Havard	OLOP 'H'	54	45	83.3%
Richard Green	Birch Copse 'A'	44	36	81.8%
Nick Barnes	Tilehurst Meths 'B'	32	25	78.1%
Richard Neville	Wokingham 'B'	33	25	75.8%
Dave Godfrey	OLOP 'H'	48	34	70.8%
Darek Kaminski	Polish 'B'	60	42	70.0%
Richard Lownsbrough	Tilehurst Meths 'B'	50	34	68.0%
George Dodd	Kingfisher 'I'	44	29	65.9%
Nick Lean	Curzon Club 'B' *	42	27	64.3%
Michael Houghton	Kingfisher 'I'	53	34	64.2%
Terry Hardie	Tidmarsh 'D'	39	24	61.5%



in their final match they gained a draw thanks to a very good maximum from Terry and a good double from Linda.

Season's record

Linda 30 out of 57 = 52.63% 3 trebles best win Jacek

Terry 39 / 60 = 65.0% 9 trebles best win Nigel Rowland

Mike 2 / 27 = 7.41% 2 singles best win John Beardmore

Oliver 2 out of 36 = 5.56% best win Chris Moses

Doubles 6 out of 20 = 30% with Linda & Terry playing in 19 of them

8 points first half 3 points second half.

One final comment for Oli. I hope you will not be to upset about your first season and hope you will practice during the summer with Mike Maynard to give you a good start next season.

Polish 'C' went to Birch Copse and went down 7 - 3 with Grant Wheatley winning two by beating Jes and Mike. Stephen won the other set by beating Mike. At home to Tidmarsh they gained a draw with Stephen and Grant both winning two each and Krys getting that important single. They then lost 8 - 2 at OLOP with Stephen and Grant both beating Dave. In their match with their 'B' team Grant beat Marcin in a 9 - 1 defeat. At home to Wokingham in their final match they lost 2 - 8 with Krys and Stephen both picking up singles. As a result they are relegated.

Season's record

Jan 2 out of 24 = 8.3% 2 singles best win Oliver Lister

Stephen 25 / 60 = 41.7% 8 doubles best win Nick Barnes

Krys 9 / 45 = 20.0% 1 double best win Derek Harrison

Grant 24 o/ 51 = 47.1% 9 doubles best win Terry Spice

Doubles 6 out of 20 = 30.0

3 points first half, 6 points second half

Stephen & Grant had the best doubles record winning 5 out of 17

Sonning at home to Wokingham lost 2 - 8 with Jon Abbott beating Richard and Derek Wavell beating John

Beardmore. At Polish 'B' they again lost 8 - 2 and here Derek beat Darek and Jon beat Marcin. At Curzon 'B' it took a set 10 win for Derek against me to save a white wash. Sadly the following week they were whitewashed by Tilehurst. I won't say who played lads! At Kingfisher they went down 7 - 3 with Derek and Jon both beating Derek which now means they are relegated. Against Curzon 'C' a good team performance gave them a point. Derek won two and Jon and Jim both picked up singles. Derek and Jon also won the doubles by beating Linda and Terry.

Season's record

Derek 16 out of 48 = 33.33% 3 doubles best win Darek

Mark 11 out of 15 = 73.33% 2 trebles best win Jacek

Jim 3 out of 24 = 12.5% 3 singles best win Jan

Anthony 8 / 27 = 29.63% 1 double best win Terry Hardie

Jon 20 out of 48 = 41.67% 1 treble best win Neil Havard

Simon 1 out of 15 = 6.67% best win Dave Edwards

Doubles 9 out of 20

Derek & Anthony had the best doubles record winning 2 out of 3

6 points first half 1 second half

One final comment I have to say that if Mark had not been injured for most of the season they would not have gone down. I hope you will be fit soon Mark and be playing again next season.

One extra stat. Only five players played in every match. They were Marcin, Darek and Stephen (all of Polish), and Dave E from Tidmarsh and Terry Spice from Curzon 'C'

Finally I would like to thank Derek for his great newsletter which goes from strength to strength and to Nigel for the great press coverage. I hope you will stay on not only as the press officer but to continue as the Chairman. And to Nick for all of his help and advice regarding my TT spreadsheet.

That's it see you next season.

Derek

DIVISION FIVE by *Duncan Abbott*

We've finally come to the end of another season and it's time to sum up the triumphs, disasters and the downright quirky things that happened during the 2011-12 season.

Triumphant is certainly the word to sum up the season for **Tilehurst Methodists 'C'**. Having finished the previous season in mid-table they lost the services of prolific scorer Martin Wetherell to the 'B' team and captain Chas Dean and Ryan Arch to the newly formed 'D' team. Mal Collis moved down from the 'B' team to take over as captain and was initially joined by his team-mate Chris Taylor. However Chris was off after one match having been recalled to the 'B' team and was replaced by Catherine Venning who last played in Division 5 about 5 years previously (it might be more but my memory isn't as good as it used to be).



On paper they seemed to be weaker this time around but in reality Mal's team stormed the division. Bob Winter was in irrepressible form throughout the season and upped his previous season's average by over 10% to nearly 90% overall. However the real success story was Catherine who was an instant hit, scoring trebles with amazing consistency and almost matching Bob's illustrious figures. With Bob and Catherine playing together (which happened for every match bar two) victory was almost certainly assured. And just to make sure, No.3 player Dave Jones upped his average by over 10% to 52% despite well into his 80s. A superb all-round effort and well done indeed! On the down side Mal failed to repeat the form of previous years and amazingly managed to win only one set all season! Part of the problem of course was the superb form of his colleagues which meant he found it hard to justi-

fy selecting himself!

The team suffered only two defeats all season, at Springfield 'B' early in the season when Catherine was unavailable and at home to a very powerful Kingfisher 'K' side. Coincidentally these were the only two occasions when they lost the doubles.

Biggest win : 9 - 1 v Kingfisher 'K' (away), Tidmarsh 'E' (home & away) and Kingfisher 'J' (away).

Biggest defeat : 4 - 6 v Springfield (away) and Kingfisher 'K' (home).

It was also an amazing season for last year's Division 6 champions **Kingfisher 'K'** who followed last season's success with a second promotion (assuming the league set up stays the same) and a highly impressive runners-up spot. After taking 15 points from a possible 16 in mid-season they threatened to mount a serious challenge for title. However two defeats at the business end of the season handed the title to their rivals.

I sincerely hope that Jean-Noel Thepaut has enjoyed his table tennis over the last two seasons. He is the best player I have ever witnessed playing regularly at this level by much more than the proverbial country mile!! No opponent came even remotely near to defeating him, although a special mention has to go to Sonning Common's Phil Turton who was the only player this season to take a game off him!! Well done Phil, you'll have to share your secret with me some time!

However even without Jean-Noel this team would have held their own in this division. Nils Wedi looked a bit rusty at first but once he got into his stride he became a very formidable opponent, as his average of 80% testifies. Gabor Radnoti (58%) also had his moments, including a 4-match spell where he won 10 sets out of a possible 12 – but his lack of consistency sometimes let him down. Joaquin Munoz-Sabater had a handful of matches but his best performance was his brace at Birch Copse 'B' which helped secure the points in a very tight match. Stuart Mitchell won one set against club rivals Kingfisher 'J', and although captain Didier Garçon failed to trouble the scorers the scorecards suggested that with a little bit more luck and maybe a few more matches he would almost certainly have broken his duck. Didier did team up for some doubles successes and did some clever team selections which were confirmed by the number of close victories.

Biggest win : 10 - 0 v Springfield 'B' (home).

Biggest defeat : 1 - 9 v Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (home).

Post Office 'B' occupied one of the relegation places last season but earned a reprieve over the summer. This eventually proved justified as the team finished in the dizzy heights of third place. The experienced Feliks Ziembra was added to the squad which lost John Gatward and Pat Davis to retirement, and Ted Cripps replaced Barbara Gatward as captain.

After taking just one point from their opening 4 matches another season of struggle looked likely. However from then on the team really hit form and despite injury problems to Feliks (which ruled him out of the second half of the season) and Linda Davis they lost only 2 of their remaining matches, away to eventual champions Tilehurst Methodists 'C' and bang-in-form Tidmarsh 'E' at the end of the season when there was only pride to play for.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tilehurst Meths 'C'	18	15	1	2	130	50	31
Kingfisher 'K'	18	13	1	4	108	72	27
Post Office 'B'	18	9	4	5	102	78	22
Springfield 'B'	18	10	0	8	93	87	20
Milestone 'B'	18	9	2	7	91	89	20
OLOP 'I'	18	7	5	6	91	89	19
Tidmarsh 'E'	18	6	2	10	74	106	14
Birch Copse 'B'	18	5	3	10	83	97	13
Sonning C&P 'E'	18	4	3	11	76	104	11
Kingfisher 'J'	18	0	3	15	52	128	3

Ted was the catalyst to their revival, upping his average by 25% from last season to an impressive 71%. Mick Grantham continued last season's excellent form, winning 2 out of every 3, his best performance being a maximum at Tilehurst Methodists 'C'. Both Feliks (58%) and Linda (44%) produced dogged performances throughout the season and Barbara battled hard but without any success. The doubles was once again a strong point, in particular the Ted/Mick partnership. Who knows what this team could have achieved had Feliks and Linda remained injury free?

The team also reached the Div5/6 KO Cup final after thumping a Birch Copse 'B' side that was badly hit by injury and availability issues. In the cup final they lost to Kingfisher 'K' - a team they had beaten twice in the league, thus ending Kingfisher's league title hopes.

Biggest win : 8 - 2 v Kingfisher 'J' (away), 8 - 2 v Kingfisher 'K' (away), and Springfield 'B' (away).

Biggest defeat : 3 - 7 v Milestone 'B' (home), OLOP 'I' (away), Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (away) and Tidmarsh 'E'(away).

Last season's other relegation place was taken by **Springfield 'B'** who finished comfortably adrift at the foot of the Div 5 table. Personally I was expecting them to compete in Div 6 this season but they strengthened their squad during the summer and won a reprieve. Out went captain Colin Jones and replacing him at the helm was Paul Jenkins who played in Div 6 last season. However their most notable addition was the vastly experienced John Burke and all of a sudden they had a much more solid look about them.

They came out of the traps like the proverbial train with four straight wins and shot to the top of the pile. Despite a trio of defeats against in-form teams they carried on their winning ways and by the start of February had a formidable record of 10 wins out of 13 and at this stage the title race looked to be a three horse race between Springfield 'B', Tilehurst Methodists 'C' and Kingfisher 'K'. An exciting end of the season beckoned for this re-vamped team, but then disaster struck.

Title rivals Kingfisher 'K' showed no mercy and sent them from Woodley with their tails between their legs and a 10 - 0 hiding. Sadly the Twyford outfit never recovered from this and their season ended with four further defeats and a mid-table position, although admittedly three of these were by a 6 - 4 margin.

However despite their end-of-season nosedive they can look back on the season with pride. John's 88% average was the third best in the division, although he admits that he played more matches than he really wanted to. Chris Speight's 52% average was an improvement on last season, but after starting the season with two maximums one might have hoped that things would turn out even better. Dan Mortimer's 39% included a full score at Tidmarsh 'E' and Paul's 36% included five braces, the most impressive being at OLOP 'I' in an impressive 6 - 4 win.

Biggest win : 8 - 2 v Kingfisher 'J' (home & away) and Tidmarsh 'E'(home).

Biggest defeat : 0 - 10 v Kingfisher 'K' (away).

After their struggles in the previous season **Milestone 'B'** were much brighter this time around. Having lost Pratik Kothari to the newly formed 'C' team and Geoff Gygi to retirement (in the Swiss Alps so I am told) they were left to soldier on through the whole season with three players – captain Gerard Thorp, Oliver Bonser and John Simpson. The fact that these three players played in all 18 league fixtures is a rare accolade in these days of unavoidable absences and squad rotation systems, so well done to Gerard, Oliver and John for achieving this feat.

The team had a particularly fruitful spell in February and early March when they won five games on the bounce (the first four by a 6 - 4 margin) which took them to the fringes of the promotion picture but were never going to be enough for them to mount a serious challenge.

Oliver's game has improved noticeably (apart from one blip), so much so that his average from last season improved by nearly 20% to 75% as he established himself as one of the leading players in this division. Although he was fairly consistent throughout the season Gerard (51%) surprisingly failed to win all three on any occasion although he picked up two wins on several occasions. John also had his moments, his best being a treble in the 9 - 1 demolition of Kingfisher 'J' in Woodley. Their doubles form was patchy but that was an improvement on last season's consistently bad showing. However against Birch Copse 'B' they won both doubles sets 3-straight, which well and truly put me in my place for previous comments!

Biggest win: 9 - 1 v Kingfisher 'J' (away).

Biggest defeat: 1 - 9 v Kingfisher 'K' (away).

OLOP 'I' finished last season as runners-up in Division 6 and improved this time around as one would expect from a young side. They never threatened to make a push for the title but at the same time were never in danger of finishing near the bottom. They took over the mantle of draw specialists with five of their 18 fixtures ending in a tie.

Pick of the youngsters was Siad Cole (82%) who impressed throughout the season with his vast array of attacking shots. Mac DeGuzman (75%) was an addition to the squad and featured regularly in the first half of the season. For some reason however he played only twice in 2012, and perhaps this was a factor in them not making a push towards the top. Phil Saunders (54%) made a steady improvement throughout the season although somewhat surprisingly he failed to register a full score in any match. For captain Daniel Thorne this was a season of struggle and

he went through a particularly difficult spell from October to February when he recorded only one set win in 7 league fixtures. However he did much better towards the end of the season which bodes well for the future – his best score was a brace in the 8 - 2 win over Kingfisher 'J'.

Biggest win : 8 - 2 v Tidmarsh 'E' (home) and Kingfisher 'J' (away).

Biggest defeat : 2 - 8 v Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (away).

If ever there was a season of two halves this was it for **Tidmarsh 'E'** – and boy what a contrast!!! Only one point from the first half of the season and another defeat at the start of January, things were looking particularly grim for Bob Sunerton's boys. Personally I always thought they were in a false position and when one opposition captain (I won't reveal his identity) told me they were relegation certainties he looked shocked when I told him I thought they would survive. But I didn't expect them to win 6 of their last 8 matches and it must be testament to their resilience that they pulled off the mother of all escape acts and finish in a very comfortable 7th place. The turning point came in a home match against Sonning Common & Peppard 'E' and a slightly fortuitous first win of the season courtesy of an untimely injury to an opponent. But you have to make the most of the luck you do get and Tidmarsh 'E' certainly did that! Perhaps their most impressive win was a 6 - 4 triumph over title-chasing Kingfisher 'K' despite the presence of Jean-Noel Thepaut in the opposition camp.

There were no stars in the Tidmarsh camp but the experience in the squad ultimately proved decisive. Top player was John Harland (58%) who played only 8 matches but featured strongly in the revival, scoring an impressive maximum in a 6 - 4 win at Birch Copse 'B'. Captain Bob (47%) made a very poor start by his standards but stepped up to the mark when it mattered. Steve Andrews (41%) didn't win a single game until the clash at Kingfisher 'J' on October 31st, a match which was remembered more for an allegation by home captain Derek Crombie against Tidmarsh's Dave Humphrey for use of an illegal bat, an issue which has yet to be resolved. Apart from a brace at Sonning Common & Peppard 'E' Dave struggled throughout the season and if he was using an illegal bat it was certainly doing him few favours! The other squad player Mike Bundy (37%) had some sprightly performances and on his day is very difficult to beat.

Biggest win : 7 - 3 v Milestone 'B' (away) and Post Office 'B' (away).

DIV 5 LEADING AVERAGES				
Player	Team	P	W	%
Jean-Noel Thepaut	Kingfisher 'K'	36	36	100
Bob Winter	Tilehurst Meths 'C'	54	48	88.89
John Burke	Springfield 'B'	33	29	87.88
Catherine Venning	Tilehurst Meths 'C'	48	40	83.33
Siad Cole	OLOP 'I'	39	32	82.05
Nils Wedi	Kingfisher 'K'	30	24	80
Oliver Bonser	Milestone 'B'	53	40	75.47
Mac deGuzman	OLOP 'I'	24	18	75
Ted Cripps	Post Office 'B'	42	30	71.43
Duncan Abbott	Birch Copse 'B'	48	34	70.83
Mick Grantham	Post Office 'B'	39	26	66.67

Biggest defeat : 1 - 9 v Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (home & away).

At the start of the season I had **Birch Copse 'B'** down as one of the relegation favourites. No disrespect to the players but this was a new team and the initial set of players were lacking in experience at this level. Neither captain Melanie Griffiths nor son Jack had any previous experience in Div 5; Duncan Abbott was a bit-part player in the 'A' team's title winning season, and George Sandford was not available for most matches due to his involvement in the Newbury League.

After opening defeats against the league's eventual champions and runners-up, wins away to Post Office 'B' and Tidmarsh 'E' proved very timely. In the first both Duncan and George played, Duncan netting a treble and in the second the experienced Roy Hull played up and hit a maximum. However the next five matches before Christmas produced only two draws. In the first of these rookie Andras Ardanhazi played up from Div 6 and produced a stunning maximum. Andras' next appearance followed his re-registration to the 'B' team and was in the other draw at Kingfisher 'J'.

The second half of the season started with identical scores to the initial matches against the top two, then a draw against Post Office 'B' gave them hope but a decisive defeat at home to Tidmarsh 'E' pushed them into the bottom two. Even a 6 - 4 win at Sonning Common & Peppard 'E' couldn't lift them out and further defeats against Milestone 'B' and at OLOP 'I' left things looking very grim indeed. However the team received a timely boost with the availability of George for the last two games, and they took full advantage. A maximum for Duncan and braces for George and Andras gave them a storming 8 - 2 win at Springfield 'B' in what was their best performance of the season. They repeated the dose against bottom club Kingfisher 'J' (amazingly their only home win of the season) courtesy of a full score from George and safety had been secured!

Duncan finished with a very creditable 71% from 16 matches, performing very consistently throughout the season. However Andras was without doubt the success story of the season – discovered by Duncan playing in a church hall in the summer, he was drafted into the 'C' team at the start of the season. Impressive performances saw him promoted to the 'B' team in December, and his final average of 45% in Div 5 (not to mention his aggressive hitting style) made him a very popular player with his team mates as well as remarkable success for someone who had never played competitive table tennis before. Melanie played well in the first half of the season, her highlight being a brace in the 5 - 5 draw against Sonning Common & Peppard 'E'. However in the second half she managed to win only one set in the 6 fixtures she played in. Jack showed promise scoring 4 singles in the 7 fixtures he played in up to the end of November, but after being dropped he appeared to lose heart and didn't play another fixture. The experienced Peter Sheppard played one match, scoring a single in the 3 - 7 defeat at Milestone 'B'.

Doubles play showed a big improvement: the pairings of Andras/Melanie and Andras/Duncan were very successful winning 7 out of the last 8, the only loss coming naturally against those aristocrats of the doubles game, Milestone 'B'.

Biggest win : 8 - 2 v Springfield 'B' (away) and Kingfisher

'J' (home).

Biggest defeat : 2 - 8 v Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (home & away).

At the mid-season stage **Sonning Common & Peppard 'E'** were comfortably sitting in mid-table having won 3, drawn 3 and lost 3, and last season's draw specialists seemed to be living up to their previous reputation. From last season they had gained an additional player in Phil Turton who moved down from Div 4, although injury effectively ruled out captain Peter Harman for the entire season. Wins had come against the bottom two teams at the time and defeats were against the top three in the early stages; they won the local derby against Milestone 'B' and the rest were drawn.

Everything seemed normal in this part of South Oxfordshire and no-one could have foreseen the disaster that was to follow, especially as Tony House was playing well and following this full score against Milestone 'B' with another one at Tidmarsh 'E', who at the time were sitting at the bottom with only 1 league point. Unfortunately things went against them in this fixture, Phil had to pull out of his last game with injury and the match was lost. Worse was to follow and the next 4 matches were all lost, the last one crucially at home against struggling Birch Copse 'B' who as a result drew level on points although Pete's side were still out of the bottom two on points difference. Victory at bottom club Kingfisher 'J' gave them a brief respite but further defeats in the last three matches left them hoping for similar results for Birch Copse 'B' to let them off the hook. Unfortunately the Tilehurst outfit found their form when it mattered and this consigned Sonning Common & Peppard 'E' to a place in the dreaded bottom two.

Tony and Dave Aust both finished with a respectable 59%, Dave played in all matches bar one and Tony in only half of them. Perhaps if Tony had played more matches the above scenario would have been avoided. Dave surprisingly failed to record a maximum, a feat Tony managed twice, at Milestone 'B' and Tidmarsh 'E'. I notice Tony played in only one home match in the entire season and that was the opening one – something of a surprise as I know he normally enjoys playing on home soil. Phil also hit the jackpot twice, at home to Tidmarsh 'E' and away to Kingfisher 'K', but his final average of 42% was a bit lower than might have been expected. As mentioned above he was the only player to take a game from Jean-Noel Thepaut. Mike Casserley had his moments, the best being a brace in the 5 - 5 draw with OLOP 'I', and Derek Maltby had late season wins against Melanie Griffiths and Dave Jones.

Personally I don't expect to see them playing in Division 6 even if there is one, but this season's experience shows how even an experienced side can hit the buffers.

Biggest win : 7 - 3 v Kingfisher 'J' (home & away).

Biggest defeat : 2 - 8 v Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (away) and Kingfisher 'K' (away).

What can be said about the season **Kingfisher 'J'** have just endured? Their captain Derek Crombie told me it was the first time any of his teams had gone through an entire season without winning a single match, although I confessed I myself had both seen and experienced worse! The fact they gained 3 league points through draws (against Tidmarsh 'E', OLOP 'I' and Birch Copse 'B') means they will miss out on an unwanted

ed place in the Guinness Book of Records. However all those results came in the first half of the season so the fact that there was no improvement throughout the season will I'm sure disappoint Derek.

Last season they escaped relegation right at the death, and during the summer they lost their No.2 Maureen Allchurch who was replaced by Gill Bennett and Helen Sparkes who competed in Division 6 last season, so in one sense the writing was on the wall before the season started.

Andrew Talaga was once again top dog finishing with a cool 64% average. The highlight of his season was a highly impressive maximum at OLOP 'I' including wins over Siad

Cole and Mac DeGuzman, and he also hit full scores in the two matches against Tidmarsh 'E'.

Sadly all other squad members finished with averages of below 25% and this was really the reason for their plight. Derek hit a brace in the draw with Birch Copse 'B' just before Christmas; Phil Cunnington did the same at home to club rivals Kingfisher 'K' and at Post Office 'B'; Helen hit a brace in the home match against Tidmarsh 'E' and Gill had wins against Mal Collis and Stuart Mitchell (twice).

Biggest win : None – draws as mentioned above.

Biggest defeat : 1 - 9 v Milestone 'B' (home) and Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (home).

Titanic Tussles (last six weeks)

Melanie Griffiths (B Copse 'B') v Bob Sunerton (Tid 'E') 8-11,9-11,11-8,12-10,9-11.

Dave Jones (Tile Meths 'C') v Linda Davis (Post Off 'B') 8-11,11-7,11-7,5-11,12-10.

Dave Jones (Tile Meths 'C') v Ted Cripps (Post Off 'B') 8-11,11-8,5-11,11-9,11-9.

Paul Jenkins (Spring 'B') v John Simpson (Mile 'B') 7-11,5-11,11-8,11-6,9-11.

Gerard Thorp (Mile 'B') v Phil Saunders (OLOP 'I') 9-11,12-+10,11-9,8-11,11-9.

Chris Speight (Spring 'B') v Siad Cole (OLOP 'I') 11-9,11-7,3-11,10-12,10-12.

Gerard Thorp (Mile 'B') v Derek Crombie (King 'J') 11-2,7-11,9-11,11-9,16-14.

Ted Cripps (Post Off 'B') v John Burke (Spring 'B') 8-11,11-8,11-7,11-13,12-10.

Paul Jenkins (Spring 'B') v Andras Ardanhazi (B Copse 'B') 11-9,9-11,11-7,6-11,11-9.

Paul Jenkins (Spring 'B') v Duncan Abbott (B Copse 'B') 3-11,11-4,10-12,11-7,10-12.

Dan Mortimer (Spring 'B') v Andras Ardanhazi (B Copse 'B') 11-5,6-11,7-11,11-6,10-12.

Dave Jones (Tile Meths 'C') v John Simpson (Mile 'B') 5-11,13-11,14-12,7-11,11-9.

George Sandford (B Copse 'B') v Derek Crombie (King 'J') 6-11,11-6,14-12,9-11,15-13.

DIV 5-6 K.O. CUP by Duncan Abbott

For the first time ever this took the form of a doubles competition. There was a further change in format with groups of three or four teams and the winners progressing to the semi-finals. And to maintain interest in all group matches, points were awarded for each set won rather than two league points for a match win.

This last regulation had an impact in Group A where Div 6 side OLOP 'J' failed to progress despite winning both their group matches. Honours went to Post Office 'B' who progressed courtesy of a thumping 7 - 2 win over Tidmarsh 'E'. As a result OLOP 'J's two 5-4 wins (including one over the eventual group winners) were not quite enough.

The matches in Group B were not completed due to Milestone 'C's team problems. However the one team that did play them, Kingfisher 'K' had amassed enough points to deem that even maximum points for OLOP 'I' and SC&P 'F' against Milestone 'C' would not have been enough to see either team claim top spot.

In Group C two Div 5 teams, Birch Copse 'B' and SC&P 'E' finished level on 22 points each. SC&P won their group clash 5 - 4 but crucially Birch Copse outscored them on games by 12 to 11. Birch Copse won both their matches against Div 6 opponents Sonning Sports and Springfield 'C' by 9 sets to 0. If SC&P had matched their scores they would have progressed but in the last match Sonning Sports nicked a set off them so Birch Copse progressed on number of games won.

Finally in Group D, Milestone 'B' amassed 26 points out of a possible 27 finishing 10 points clear of Div 5 rivals Kingfisher 'J', with Div 6 sides Springfield 'D' and Birch Copse 'C' finishing well adrift.

In the first of the semi-finals Post Office 'B' had a thumping 8 - 1 win against a Birch Copse 'B' team hit badly by injury and unavailability of players. And in the other one Kingfisher 'K' walloped Milestone 'B' 9-0 to set up a mouth-watering final.

The final itself took place on Tuesday 3rd April at OLOP club. Post Office 'B' put out their strongest available trio in Ted Cripps, Mick Grantham and Linda Davis whilst for Kingfisher 'K' their French aristocrat Jean-Noel Thepaut was accompanied by their two weakest players (on paper anyway), Stuart Mitchell and Didier Garçon.

Now Jean-Noel had not experienced defeat of any kind this season, and he teamed up with Didier to thrash Ted & Linda in the opening set. Then came a shock to the system when Ted & Mick defeated Jean-Noel and Stuart to level things up. The next six sets went according to form with Didier/Stuart losing their sets and Jean-Noel winning the sets he was involved in to set up a dramatic finale. Could Ted partner Linda to victory over Jean-Noel and Stuart like he did with Mick? Sadly for his team the answer was no and Didier's team had snatched a dramatic last gasp victory!

DIVISION SIX *by Nigel Rowland*

Congratulations to both OLOP 'J' as champions and Polish 'D' who are also promoted.

Commiserations go to Tilehurst Methodists 'D' who just miss out on promotion having remained with the chasing pack until the final week. Birch Copse 'C' and BBC were also in with a shout, but fell away just weeks from the end of the season.

At the other end of the table Sonning Sports 'B' kept on plugging away but were unable to pick up any further points apart from a conceded match. Milestone 'C' suffered badly as a result of injuries to their squad despite a late player addition.

Then came two teams intent on getting one over on each other, Springfield 'C' followed by rivals Springfield 'D'. SC&P 'F' finish a comfortable mid table, their final results of the season showed they can take points of the top teams of the division.

The team with the best doubles record goes to Birch Copse 'C' losing only 3 sets the whole season.

On an individual basis I should like to congratulate Roy Hull and Reza Amini who finished at the top of the individual table based on sets played. Alexandre Mihalciuc finished the season unbeaten in six sets.

OLOP 'J' finished strongly to take the title by one point but did not get all their own way on the season run in. They had a scare losing 3 - 7 against BBC, Chris getting a double and Kamran a single. Then came a 9 - 1 win against Springfield 'C', Joshua and Nigel returning to the team with trebles and a double from Chris. Then came a 10 - 0 win over Sonning Sports 'B', Joshua, Nigel and Chris all getting trebles. Trebles from Joshua and Nigel along with a double from Chris saw off Springfield 'D' 9 - 1. Trebles from Joshua, Nigel and a double from Kamran gave a stunning 9 - 1 win over promotion hopefuls Tilehurst Meths 'D' to win the title in the final match of the season. Joshua Gallen 46/51 including 12 trebles, Kamran Samdani 24/39 including 4 trebles, Lorcan Gallen 1/9, Sonia Gallen 0/12, Nigel Antell 29/33 including 7 trebles, Chris Bunn 13/18 including 2 trebles. Doubles 13/18.

Polish 'D' just managed to hang onto second spot but could have run away with the title had they not conceded two matches. Jakub and Alexandr got trebles along with a single from Szymon K to see off the promotion challenge from BBC by defeating them 8 - 2. Trebles from Alexandr, Szymon K and Eddy defeated Sonning Sports 'B' 10 - 0. Then followed another 10 - 0 win over Springfield 'D' thanks to trebles from Szymon S, Jakub and Szymon K. Milestone 'C' were the next victim of the 10 - 0 score lines, Szymon S, Piotr and Szymon K scoring trebles. In the final match of the season they came



across a determined SC&P 'F' trying to spoil the promotion party by forcing a draw. Alexandr had his work cut out to score an amazing treble, the key wins were against Danny Dockree and a five game thriller against Ka Lo Chiu winning 11-9 in the fifth. Szymon S got an important single along with a key doubles win to snatch a point. Szymon Szor 20/32 including 3 trebles, Piotr Wilczak 7/11 including 1 treble, Grzegorz Romek 9/15, Maciej Sianos 7/11 including 1 treble, Alexandr Mihalciuc 18/18 including 6 trebles, Szymon Kubinski 15/23 including 4 trebles, Jakub Langowski 19/24 including 4 trebles, Eddy Holweger 4/6 including 1 treble. Doubles 11/16.

Tilehurst Methodists 'D' came a very creditable third just missing out on promotion. They started with a close

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLOP 'J'	18	12	3	3	126	54	27
Polish 'D'	18	11	4	3	113	67	26
Tilehurst Meths 'D'	18	10	4	4	100	80	24
Birch Copse 'C'	18	9	4	5	101	79	22
Sonning C&P 'F'	18	9	3	6	101	79	21
BBC Club	18	8	4	6	100	80	20
Springfield 'D'	18	7	1	10	84	96	15
Springfield 'C'	18	5	3	10	76	104	13
Milestone 'C'	18	2	3	13	52	128	7
Sonning Sports 'B'	18	2	1	15	47	133	5

5 - 5 draw against Birch Copse 'C', Patrick and Tim with doubles and Chas an important single. Then came a well earned 7 - 3 win over SC&P 'F', Patrick scored a good treble with Tim a double and Chas a single. Patrick and Ryan won doubles and Chas a single to come away with a point against BBC. Unfortunately they took a battering losing 1 - 9 to champions OLOP 'J' in the final match of the season, Patrick saving the blushes with the only win of the evening. They also were credited with two conceded matches. Patrick O'Sullivan 38/48 including 9 trebles, Tim Kendall 17/36 including 2 trebles, Chas Dean 11/36, Ryan Arch 5/18. Doubles 9/16.

Birch Copse 'C' came in fourth having been promotion contenders for most of the season. They had a close match against Tilehurst Meths 'D', Roy with a treble, Elizabeth an important single and teaming up together to get a doubles win to secure a draw. A further draw resulted against Milestone 'C' once again Roy a treble and singles from Elizabeth and Trevor. They surprisingly lost 3 - 7 to Springfield 'C' Roy getting his usual treble. In the final game of the season they lost 4 - 6 to SC&P 'F', Roy with a treble and a close doubles win. They had one conceded win. Roy Hull 47/48 including 15 trebles, Andras Ardanhazi 15/21 including 2 trebles, Chris

Dummett 5/20, Elizabeth Hull 6/30, Trevor Stanter 4/24, Jason Taylor 0/6, Paula Smith 0/3. Doubles 14/17.

SC&P 'F' showed themselves to be the 'end of season' form team. Trebles from Michael, Danny and Ka Lo crushed Sonning Sports 'B' 9 - 1 and then a week later went one better 10 - 0. A close 6 - 4 win against Springfield 'D' resulted with a Danny treble, Ka Lo double and single from Steve. Danny had a colossal five game set against Alan Gould just winning 11-3, 6-11,11-7,17-19,14-12. Then came a 9 - 1 win over Milestone 'C' Danny and Ka Lo with trebles, and a double from Steve. Then followed a good 6 - 4 win over Birch Copse 'C' Michael, Steve and Albert all sharing two sets apiece. They finished the season with a well earned draw against promoted Polish 'D' with doubles from Danny and Ka Lo and an important single from Michael. Both Danny and Ka Lo just lost out in epic five game sets with Alexandr Mihalciuc. Steve Knott 7/30, Michael Legg 24/43 including 3 trebles, Danny Dockree 29/40 including 6 trebles, Richard Legg 1/2. Albert Shephard 4/12, Ka Lo Chiu 23/29 including 5 trebles. Doubles 7/18.

BBC Caversham finished the season mid table. They lost heavily 2 - 8 against promoted Polish 'D', David and John with a single apiece. Then they had a stunning 7 - 3 win over champions OLOP 'J' thanks to a Reza treble, Kyrill double and John S single. Sonning Sports 'B' were shown no mercy with trebles from Jack, David and Reza to win 10 - 0. Then followed a 2 - 8 loss against Springfield 'D', John S and John L getting singles. The game against Tilehurst Meths 'D' resulted in a draw thanks to a treble from David and a single from Gordon. They had one conceded win. Reza Amini 20/21 including 6 trebles, Kyrill Dissanayke 11/21 including 2 trebles, John Lancashire 4/15, Phil Peat 3/9, Dave Pearson 19/27 including 2 trebles, Gordon Ayres 5/21, John Scott 11/18, Jack Mitchell 8/24. Doubles 9/17.

Springfield 'D' found it difficult to pick up points during the run in to the end of the season. They suffered a close 4 - 6 loss against SC&P 'F', David getting a double and a notable win over Ka Lo Chiu and a single from Alan. They then took a 0 - 10 hammering from Polish 'D', Bob getting the closest to a win with a five game set against Szymon Kubinski. They returned to form with a good 8 - 2 win over BBC, David with a treble and doubles from Bob and Alan. In their final match of the season they suffered a 1 - 9 loss against champions OLOP 'J', Tom getting the single. They had one conceded win. Alan Gould 21/41 including 1 treble, Bob Sibun 19/36 including 1 treble, David French 18/29 including 4 trebles, Peter Greator 0/3, Derek Edney 3/21, Tom Berryman 3/18. Doubles 7/17.

Springfield 'C' finished the season with a flurry of wins. They had an amazing 7 - 3 win over Birch Copse 'C', Colin, Ashley and Nigel all with doubles. Then came a 1 - 9 hammering from champions OLOP 'I', Colin saving the blushes. Then followed a

good 8 - 2 win over Milestone 'C' Nigel with a treble, doubles from Colin and Adam. Finally a good 8 - 2 win over Sonning Sports 'B' thanks to trebles from Colin and Ashley with a single from Adam. Colin Jones 32/54 including 4 trebles, Tim Carr 4/15, Ashley Jones 12/24 including 1 treble, Nigel Outhwaite 13/39 including 1 treble, Adam Sheen 8/31. Doubles 7/18.

Milestone 'C' continued to have problems fielding a team due to player injuries despite the emergency signing of Vivek Pandey to replace John Evans. Very soon after they also lost Pratik to injury. They managed a very creditable 5 - 5 draw against Birch Copse 'C', Pratik and Vivek with two apiece and an important doubles win. Then followed a collapse losing 1 - 9 against SC&P 'F', Vivek with the single. In what turned out to be their final game of the season they had a 2 - 8 loss against Springfield 'C', Vivek with a double. Four matches were conceded. John Evans 24/27 including 6 trebles, Pratik Kothan 15/24 including 2 trebles, Sean Samashee 2/39, Santram Samashee 1/21, Vivek Pandey 5/12. Doubles 5/14.

Sonning Sports 'B' continued with their bad run of form having not picked up a point since November. That does not take away their determination and team spirit. They lost 1 - 9 against SC&P 'F', a rare Tom and Derek doubles win. Tom and Derek fought hard but just lost out in five game sets. In the return match they got hammered 0 - 10. Then they lost 0 - 10 against BBC, Ken came closest just losing out in a five game set against Jack Mitchell. Another 0 - 10 against Polish 'D', Sue came closest with a five game loss against Szymon Kubinski. Yet another 0 - 10 loss followed against OLOP 'J'. In the final match of the season they lost 2 - 8 against Springfield 'C' Tom and Sue finally getting on the score sheet. They had one conceded win. Suzanne Brownhill 5/27, Dave West 6/36, Derek Somerville 4/24, Tom Gordon 12/31 including 1 treble, Ken Stevens 8/30. Doubles 2/17.

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Alexandre Mihalciuc	Polish 'D'	18	18	100
Roy Hull	Birch Copse 'C'	48	47	97.92
Reza Amini	BBC Club	21	20	95.24
John Evans	Milestone 'C'	52	46	88.46
Nigel Antell	OLOP 'J'	33	29	87.88
Joshua Gallen	OLOP 'J'	39	34	87.18
Ka Lo Chiu	Sonning C&P 'F'	29	23	79.31
Patrick O Sullivan	Tilehurst Meths 'D'	48	38	79.17
Jakub Langowski	Polish 'D'	24	19	79.17
Danny Dockree	Sonning C&P 'F'	40	29	72.5
Chris Bunn	OLOP 'J'	18	13	72.22
Andras Ardanhazi	Birch Copse 'C'	21	15	71.43
David Pearson	BBC Club	27	19	70.37
Eddy Holweger	Polish 'D'	6	4	66.67
Szymon Kubinski	Polish 'D'	23	15	65.22
Maciej Sianos	Polish 'D'	11	7	63.64



John Cunningham Youth Division

by Danny (son of Steve) Ricks

So the John Cunningham youth division has come to an end for this year, and it's been a thoroughly entertaining season for the future stars of Reading table tennis. We have seen the emergence of many new players, as well as the continued participation of some slightly more experienced faces.

Division 1

Congratulations go out to **OLOP Attackers**, winners of the Division 1 title. They had a superb season in which they remained unbeaten throughout, winning 9 out of 10 matches and finishing on 19 points. Siad Cole was their star man, winning 18/19 of his games. This was a superb effort from a player who has improved immensely over the past 12 months; the only match he lost was against Sam Ricks, who finished at the top of the averages. Also on top form was the experienced Phillip Saunders, winning 18 of his 21 matches. Attacker's third player Mike McAllister contributed well, winning 9 of his 18 matches. Since the last newsletter, Attackers' most impressive win was perhaps the 8 - 2 victory over third placed OLOP Strikers. Siad grabbed a hat-trick, with Phil and Mike taking two apiece and the doubles.

Predictably finishing up in 2nd place are the **SCP Tigers**. They were unable to keep pace with runaway winners OLOP Attackers, but did well to maintain the 4 point gap between themselves and third place. All three players contributed well to their season, and with a bit more consistency could have made it even closer. They remained remarkably close in the averages throughout, all of them finishing around the 70% mark. Jonny Abbot, Danny Dockree and Max Sweetman can be incredibly proud of their effort this season.

Third place goes to **OLOP Strikers**. They have managed to leapfrog fellow OLOP team Trojans, to finish up on 12 points, not troubling the leaders, but nowhere near the bottom. The key game was in the final round of fixtures when

they played their closest rivals Trojans, who were hoping to draw level on points with them. Sam Ricks wasn't available on the night or the result may have been different. As it was however, Strikers held on to third place with a comfortable 7 - 2 win, Gus Thomis and Chris Johnson taking maximums and finishing up on 64% and 59% respectively. Strikers suffered without a consistent third player as Rafael Thorne struggled to cope with the standard of Division 1, and finished the season still looking for his first win.

OLOP Trojans take 4th spot, beating Kingfisher Knights on game difference. Despite their lowly position in the league, Trojans do boast the

player at the top of the averages. Clearly vigorous training and constant encouragement from his big bro has proved beneficial for Sam Ricks, as he finishes on 13/13, including being the only person to defeat Siad Cole. If Sam had been available more often, Trojans would undoubtedly have been further up the league. We have also seen the emergence of what will surely be a future star of Reading table tennis in Sam Liu. Clearly a player to keep an eye on, he took 10 wins from his 18 matches in this, his first competitive season. Saif Maher is another player who struggled to compete in Division 1, and was unable to record a win in his 21 starts.

Kingfisher Knights finish in the penultimate position in the league, although well clear of 6th



DANNY RICKS



GUS THOMIS

DIV 1 TABLE

Team	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
OLOP Attackers	10	9	0	1	73	22	19
SCP Tigers	10	7	2	1	62	35	15
OLOP Strikers	10	5	5	0	51	44	12
OLOP Trojans	10	3	5	2	50	47	8
Kingfisher Knights	10	4	6	0	39	59	8
OLOP Avengers	10	0	10	0	12	84	0

DIV 1 AVERAGES

	P	W	%
S Ricks	13	13	100
S Cole	19	18	95
P Saunders	21	18	86
D Dockree	22	16	73
J Abbott	18	13	72

DIV 2 AVERAGES			
	P	W	%
A Fearnside	14	14	100
R Lego	13	12	92
J Liu	14	9	64
K Morfill	18	11	61

DIV 2 TABLE							
Team	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
SCP Raiders	9	6	3	0	47	31	12
OLOP Eagles	9	5	3	1	46	31	11
Sonning Spartans	9	4	4	1	33	41	9
OLOP Lions	9	1	6	2	36	49	4

placed OLOP Avengers. By far the largest team in the league, the Knights had the luxury of alternating between players, something that no other team had. Although no one player finished on more than 33%, they shared enough wins around between them to stay 8 points clear of bottom spot. This team comprised Tom Snape, Isaac Farnworth, David Fifield, Gideon Lewis, Tim Kenyon, Alex Leeming and Joe Barraclough.

OLOP Avengers bring up the rear in Division 1. They really struggled to pull a team together every week, and could not be expected to win games with only one consistent player. Credit must go out to Jim McAllister for his tremendous maximum against Kingfisher Knights, as he alone went down 3 - 7, despite winning all his matches. He finishes up with 5 wins from his 18 games.

Division 2

Division 2 as it turns out was a terrifically competitive league this year, with only 3 points separating first and third place. It was **SCP Raiders** that took the title however, winning 6 of their 9 matches to finish up on 12 points. Adam Fearnside will be looking to play in division 1 next year, after he proved his ability by winning all 14 of his matches. Liam Ruiz has found the going a lot easier than he did earlier in the year, and finishes on 50% (7/14.)

OLOP Eagles missed out on top spot by just a single point, ending on 11. Much like his brother, Jamie Liu has improved vastly over the year, and is without doubt one of the big prospects for the future. He finishes up with 64%. James Bridger and Jamie Filby have contributed well, finishing on 40% and 33% respectively.

Taking third spot are the **Sonning Spartans**. Richard Lego finished second in the averages, with an impressive 12 wins out of 13 games. Daniel Jordan has found the second half of the season a lot easier than the first, and won 6 out of 18.

OLOP Lions finish up in fourth place, and some way off the pace of the three leaders. Kieran Morfill remained their most consistent player, and took an impressive 61%. His team-mates Austin Ellerton (12%) and Hassin Khan(10%) have continued to struggle towards the end of the season and take just three victories between them.

So that brings an end to this year's John Cunningham Youth Division. Congratulations again to OLOP Attackers and SCP Raiders for taking their respective divisional league titles. It's important for young players to continue practising over the summer, even with the lack of competitive play, so you can maintain your current levels and continue to improve. To this end, make sure you all get out to your local clubs and get some good, hard practice in, all ready for more competitive play next season!

Another big thank you goes out to Wendy Porter and Jade Fudge for taking the time out of their day, to run the youth division. They do a terrific job and it often gets overlooked just how much effort they have to put in. Thanks as well to Steve Ricks and Ian Cole for lending a hand whenever available.

Thank you to everyone that has participated this year, have a great summer, and we'll see you all again for the start of next season!



JAMIE LIU



SAM LIU

JUNIOR MASTERS TOURNAMENT

Adam McTiernan



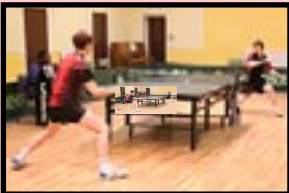
LIAM THE CHAMPION RECEIVES HIS PRIZE MONEY FROM ANDY YON

Liam McTiernan has won this season's most prestigious local junior tournament – the Reading & District Junior Masters.

He last won the title as a 13 year old in 2009 but has been unable to enter in the last two years due to clashes with the national schools finals.

The annual event was again sponsored by local player Andy Yon, who was on hand to congratulate the top four players and award them prize money totalling £105. Trophies will be presented at the annual presentation evening next month.

CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO OF THE FINAL:



In the final, top seed Liam beat defending champion Sam Ricks 3-0 (12-10, 11-5, 11-9).



RUNNER UP SAM RICKS (UMPIRE: LEO LONG)



DANIEL McTIERNAN

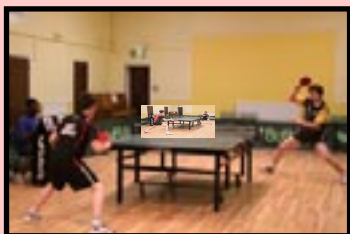
Sam, who has helped Tidmarsh 'C' win the Reading Division 3 title this season, earlier produced the result of the day in an enthralling semi final in which he came back from 2 - 1 down to beat second seed Daniel McTiernan (11-8, 8-11, 5-11, 11-5, 11-7)

Liam beat Danny Ricks in the other semi final 3 - 0 (11-5, 11-4, 11-7).



DANNY RICKS

**CLICK HERE FOR
VIDEO OF THE
DAN-DAN DENOUEMENT**



In the battle between the two Dan's for third place, (see left) Daniel McTiernan beat Danny Ricks by another 3 - 0 scoreline (11-6, 11-4, 11-7).



LEO LONG



SIAD COLE

Leo Long and Siad Cole each won one of their three matches in their respective groups - against Joshua Gallen and Hanson Xu respectively.

MORE YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

Liam McTiernan Wins National Schools Championships



LIAM RECEIVES HIS AWARD FROM ESTTA CHAIRMAN JOHN BLACKBAND

Liam McTiernan won the Boys Under 16 title at the 39th English Schools' Table Tennis Association Butterfly Individual Championships, held at the Dome in Doncaster on 21 April.

Representing Berkshire Schools, Liam was top seed in the Under 16 event (for pupils in years 9-11) but with 42 other county representatives, it was always going to be a stern test of his ability and so it proved.

After he negotiated his six player group without losing a set, his real test started in the Last 16 knock out round where he unexpectedly faced third seed and last year's semi-finalist, Tyrone Wells (London West). He raced into a two game lead but was then pegged back before emerging a 3 - 1 winner after a tense fourth game.

In the quarter final, his opponent was the fast improving Joseph Langham-Ferreira (London Central). Liam was outplayed in the first game and down in the second, but somehow found the inspiration to stage a spirited and ultimately successful fight back, closing out a high quality encounter in the fourth game for another 3 - 1 win.

The semi finals pitched Liam against one of his Our Lady of Peace TTC Junior British League team mates, Miles Chan (Northampton). Miles started the brighter

and quickly took a one game lead. Again Liam was struggling to match his opponent's free flowing style. He needed a time-out to compose himself before adopting a tighter style of play which began to pay off as he took a close second game in which he survived a game point. Liam was now fully focused on reaching the final and finished the match off in some style in the fourth game for yet another 3 - 1 victory.

In the final, he faced the second seed and England team mate from the recent World Schools Championships, Adam Harrison. The Lincolnshire schools' champion had progressed through the knock-outs without drama, winning all three matches in straight games. In contrast Liam was battle-hardened and after a series of blistering shots he took the first game. Harrison came back strongly in the second though and it became a battle after that with both players going toe to toe and every winning shot accompanied by a loud roar.

Liam took the third set with the steely determination that he had displayed throughout the day. He took an early lead in the fourth set and never let it slip until at 10-7 up he suddenly looked nervous again, losing two points in quick succession. With the tension mounting and a deciding set looking likely, Liam served wide and with his opponent out of position managed to close the game out to take a hard fought and well deserved first ever national title.

The Waingels College year 11 pupil described the achievement as the best of his career to date and dedicated it to his long time mentor, Alan Dines, who passed away earlier this year.

Liam's younger brother **Daniel McTiernan**, who also attends Waingels College, finished third in the Boys Under 13 event.

This far exceeded expectations as Daniel wasn't seeded this year but nonetheless promptly won his group, beating two higher ranked players in the process – James Hobson (West Yorkshire) and Joshua Bennett (East Sussex).

In the Last 16 round he recorded a comfortable 3 - 0 win against Will Bell (Humberside), which took him into a quarter final with Surrey's Liam Grant, the conqueror of top seed Alec Ward (Cleveland) in the quarters. Daniel twice came from a long way behind to win the first two games, the first from 9-3 down. With his opponent wondering what he had to do to win, it was little surprise that Daniel quickly wrapped things up in the third game for a gutsy 3 - 0 win.

In the semi-final he faced the in-form fourth seed Luke Savill (Kent). Daniel was looking to go one better than he had in the last two years and make his first English Schools Final. He started well winning the first game but was then outfoxed by his opponent's uncanny knack of switching play and after some great rallies he succumbed having failed to take a game point to make it two all.

This was a solid performance from Daniel and his best of the season to date.

One other local player, **Katie Shepherd**, made her debut at the Championships in the Under 11 Girls event. She enjoyed the experience and will benefit a great deal from the matches she played.



DANIEL McTIERNAN

STOP PRESS:

Additional comment by John Freeman, on ideas expressed on the letters page

I will not comment on the letters suggesting changes, except to say that I doubt whether many of our members would accept some of them.

I would however like to respond to a question raised by Duncan Abbott which reads "I was looking through the rule book recently and I came across the rule which says no players can be transferred during the season unless special dispensation is given by the committee. My response was - why? Are we still living in the dark ages? Are we really so out of step with the rest of the world?" It is one thing to make suggestions regarding changes, giving reasons, but quite another to ask questions implying that there is no answer. Anyone involved for a long time in Reading table tennis administration, and most players who have been playing for a long time in Reading, will know very well that all of our 'restrictive' Rules have evolved and been adopted by General Meetings to combat considerable abuse forcefully complained about by our members, most of which wish to play on a level playing field and not on one which meets the immediate purpose of the odd one or two to the detriment of the others. In any event the reason for the particular Rule mentioned is explained on the "History" page to be found on our website.

I also have to respond to the suggestion by Ka Lo. There seems to be a misunderstanding of the structure of Table Tennis in Reading and no doubt throughout ENGLAND. Our structure enables female players to play league table tennis on an equal footing with male players of the same standard. A female player playing in a Division of her own standard will win some and lose some as indeed will male players. What exactly would be the point

of a female who was of Division 3 standard receiving 6 points start to enable her to win matches in Division 1. We have young girls who are able to beat many Division 1 male players. A long time ago, we had two Ladies Divisions in Reading each full with 12 teams. The Ladies Divisions were dropped as the ladies of the day indicated they would rather play with men. I don't see what style has to do with it. Everyone has an own style. The physical difference is taken care of by the standard of the Division, and is recognised in our Closed Championships where female players have their own events. I expect that such a provision of handicapping would be contrary to the sexual discrimination laws which we now have in ENGLAND. In any event allowing a handicap in a League match in ENGLAND is not permitted in the ETTA "Approved Laws of Table Tennis" which are mandatory for everyone in ENGLAND, whether aged, young, male or female, so there cannot be any trial. The ETTA has given a specific dispensation for an "additional competition" which allows for our Individual Handicap Competition and our Team Handicap Competition. The ETTA Approved Laws follow ITTF "The Laws of Table Tennis" and it is not for me to speculate how these are not applied in HONG KONG.

A suggestion of my own. There is a understandably a desire for team matches to end earlier. The main suggestion seems to be to play with a two man team which does not seem to find much favour. As I have suggested to our Chairman, I think we should consider changing to a 'best of three' match (which our Rules define as a set). All players in the team would still have their three singles matches (sets) but the team match would finish at the very least an hour earlier and many considerably more. There would be a huge advantage for the Reading Closed Championships. I have not done a mock Schedule (no inclination) but I feel confident that the full tournament could be played on one day, something I know the Committee has desired for some time.

